



## **2008 SLATE OF OFFICERS AND AT-LARGE NOMINEES FOR MISSOURI FARMERS UNION**

Each year, working over a period of months, it is the duty of the nomination committee, to seek nominations from MFU members and determine a slate of officers and at-large board members for election at the annual conference. The slate is sent to all members via the Missouri Farmers Union Family Farm Focus 60 days before the annual convention and business meeting. The nominations committee presents the following slate to be voted on at the annual convention business meeting on January 25-26, 2008 in Moberly.

### **MFU BOARD OFFICERS (Elected each year)**

President-Russell Kremer  
Vice-President-David Ketsenburg  
Vice-President-Nancy Smith  
Secretary-Barbara Ross  
Treasurer- Winston Simpson

### **MFU BOARD MEMBERS AT-LARGE-(Terms to expire January 2011 – three positions are open)**

Tom Coudron  
Tom Kruzen  
Winston Simpson

### **MFU BOARD MEMBERS AT-LARGE-(Term to expire January 2010 – one position open due to resignation)**

David Ketsenburg  
Nancy Smith

**Nominations may be accepted from the floor at the annual convention business meeting.**

### **Board terms expiring in January 2008 are:**

President, Vice-President, Secretary and Treasurer  
At-Large members- Tom Coudron, Steve Maxwell and Winston Simpson

The **call for nominations** was mailed to all members in the August edition of the Farm Family Focus and sent by email to all members with addresses on file. The **call for nominations** included the statement of duties, responsibilities and expectations of state board members as shown below.

*"The board governs MFU statewide, establishes policy, approves program and organizational goals, looks to the financial health of the organization and represents MFU to the state and nation. Serving on the board is interesting, educational, rewarding, a serious responsibility and it is fun. A member of the Board should expect to:*

- *Support the mission of MFU: "To protect and enhance the economic interests and way of life of family farmers and ranchers and the rural communities they represent."*
- *Attend all board meetings*
- *Decide and assist in carrying out Board policy*
- *Support the best interests of the organization free of any special agenda*
- *Hold current membership in MFU*
- *According to one's ability support MFU's financial goals."*

Additionally, they were asked to submit the information below:

1. *Provide a brief biographical sketch including any special skills.*
2. *Describe your interest in serving on the MFU board.*
3. *Provide any additional information you would like to share*

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## Nominee biographies and statements of interest in serving MFU

### **OFFICERS**

**President, Russell Kremer**-Russ has been a lifelong diversified family farmer in Osage County. He administered a Young Farmers' Program for 12 years and daily worked with nearly 300 farm families. He is a past president of the Missouri Pork Producers Association and served five governors on their Advisory Council on Agriculture. He currently serves on the national board of directors for National Farmers Union. With the exception of a few months, he has been president of MFU since its inception in 1999. He states that "he has a passionate interest in serving family farmers and rural residents and helping them obtain a higher quality of life. Farmers Union's mission and philosophies are truly what I believe in and the activities in which I wish to devote my time. I have been honored to serve as MFU's President and vow to continue to lead this organization toward greater membership growth, initiation of community development projects, credible legislative activity, and to work fervently for empowerment of the underserved." Russ has served full time as MFU President since 1999.

**Vice President, David Ketsenburg**-David is currently MFU vice-president and president of the MFU Family Farm Opportunity Center. He has attended many Farmers' Union events and meetings, including cooperative development seminars and trainings. Since joining MFU, David has represented Missouri farmers as a delegate at many NFU annual conventions. He has provided legislative testimony at the state and federal levels on behalf of MFU and NFU. Along with his wife, Laura and son Davy, David believes in the MFU philosophy and is committed to MFU's ongoing development. He seeks to help MFU become a powerful voice for family farm agriculture. Since becoming MFU vice-president in 2000, he has represented MFU on many occasions and states that he enjoys being with farmers from across Missouri. Since becoming president of the MFU Family Farm Opportunity Center, David has worked aggressively to steer MFU toward new opportunities for family farmers, beginning and young farmers, and the revitalization of rural communities. David has made a thorough study of the history of Farmers Union, thus becoming the resident historian for our state organization.

**Vice President, Nancy Smith**- Nancy is an experienced business owner and manager, having owned and operated Herbal Comfort Herb Nursery since 1994. She does all her own growing of greenhouse-grown and field-grown herb plants, perennial flowers and heirloom vegetables. In addition, she organically grows vegetables to sell in the store she manages for Jim Byrd, Missouri's Choice Farmers Market. For ten years, she raised Black Angus cattle. She has extensive experience in managerial functions, having owned or managed several businesses, as well as a 225-acre farm, since 1980. Nancy is also experienced in developing creative financing systems in order to help enable small investors borrow money and invest it wisely. She serves as president of the new Southern Woodlands chapter of MFU, past president of SEMO chapter of MFU, and president of the board of Ozark Quality Hardwoods. Nancy says "MFU has been the most effective organization I have worked with in terms of revitalizing the rural community. I intend to spend the rest of my life working on MFU projects."

**Secretary, Barbara Ross**-Barbara was raised on a diversified family farm in central Missouri. She has earned Bachelors degrees in Social and Community Services, and in Education; utilizing a full fellowship to the University of Missouri-Columbia, she earned a Master degree in Education. Working in the Catholic community, she has 23 years of experience in public policy and social advocacy work with a strong focus on family farming, food and agriculture. She has served as MFU state secretary since 2001 and has been a member since the organizations founding in 1999. She states, "I want to work with others who are committed to a progressive, grassroots movement that seeks to preserve and revitalize family farming, that cares for the environment, and that will work to rebuild vital

rural communities through alternative, sustainable and localized social and economic institutions. I am especially interested in groups and organizations that seek to promote public policies and programs that serve the common good." Barbara was a member of the formation committee for the MFU Credit Union and continues to serve as vice-chair on the board of directors. For the past 18 years, she has been the Director of the Social Concerns Office of the Catholic Diocese of Jefferson City. Barbara lives in Jefferson City where she farms container-grown flowers and plants, and ranches a herd of two cats. She says she plans on expanding her operation as soon as she can purchase a larger spread.

**Treasurer-Winston Simpson** Winston farms 1000 acres of row crops, hay and cattle in north central MO. He is a University of Missouri, Columbia graduate with a degree in Animal Husbandry. After graduation he returned to the farm to continue the family farming operation. He has spent over 50 years living on the same farm in Shelby County. Winston states that his interest in Missouri Farmers Union is "to assist in the promotion and development of cooperatives and other opportunities that will keep family farmers on the land and that will help rural communities remain vital. MFU is a vehicle to help me and other farmers engage in the issues that are important to us as farmers and our rural communities." Winston is active in the Macon, Missouri, Disciples of Christ Christian Church. He and his wife, Marilyn, have two grown children. Winston has served on the MFU board of directors for the past six years, and served one term on the Missouri Farmers Union Credit Union board of directors.

### **AT-LARGE MEMBERS**

**Tom Coudron-** Tom Coudron was raised on a family farm in Minnesota where they specialized in corn, soybean, alfalfa, feeder cattle and feeder hogs. He is familiar with sustainable and holistic management farming practices. He has over 30 years of research experience in disciplines serving sustainable agricultural needs. He has linkages to sustainable agriculture groups in Missouri and he serves on the Technical Committee for the North Central Region Sustainable Agriculture Research and Education Grant Program. Tom works for the USDA Agricultural Research Service in the Biological Control Laboratory at Research Park on the University of Missouri campus. Tom received a B.A. in chemistry from St. John's University in 1973 and a Ph.D. in biochemistry from North Dakota State University in 1978. Tom states "my interest in serving on the MFU board of directors is part of a desire to emphasize the common elements of the MFU and NFU priorities, the USDA sustainable agriculture efforts, the land grant universities and USDA research missions, and the proper implementation of new technology by industry so that collectively these institutions develop a long-term stewardship of the land and promote the professionalism of agriculture. This philosophy [that of a collective effort] is based on a commitment to, and shared sense of, wisdom that is gained through a community and is fundamental to achieving the goals of the institutions within." Tom was first elected to the MFU board in 2006 and has been a MFU member since 2003.

**Tom Kruzen-** Tom is the co-proprietor of Pans Garden Native Plant Nursery, which raises Missouri and North American native plants, along with his wife, Angel. Tom has been involved in agriculture since his grandmother first taught him about organic gardening. He also served in West Bengal, India in the Peace Corps, extolling modern farming techniques and better rice and wheat varieties. The Kruzens' raise their own food and in some years can up to 850 quarts for their three children. Tom served as Central Ozarks Farmers Union President for 2 years. He states "I am very interested in promoting cooperative alternative agriculture and home-mentored agricultural knowledge in these days of globally produced food and of media-controlled paradigms."