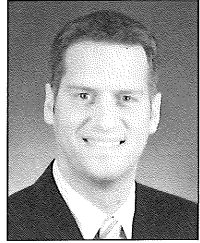


A farmer with wings

Green acres is Daudt's place to be

By SUE HEGARTY

Rep. Kurt Daudt (R-Crown) has more in common with Rep. Sondra Erickson (R-Princeton) than just being new members.



Rep. Kurt Daudt

Erickson was Daudt's high school English teacher.

After graduation, Daudt attended college in North Dakota to become a pilot. Now the 37-year-old legislator has a private pilot's license and

dreams of owning a plane.

He lives with his brother on their grandparents' farm in Crown, where he enjoys deer hunting. He also spends time at his lake cabin and working as a business manager.

Daudt's introduction into politics began

as Stanford Township supervisor, followed by election as Isanti County commissioner. When former Rep. Rob Eastlund did not seek reelection, Daudt was persuaded to run.

Repeal of the 2008 changes to the Green Acres tax program is one thing he hopes to accomplish in St. Paul. One farmer in his district clear-cut 100 acres of wooded property to return it to tillable acreage so he would still qualify for Green Acres.

"It's pulled a lot of those properties in my area out of the Green Acres program, which in turn increased their property taxes," Daudt said. "There was no more revenue created because of the changes. All it does is shift that burden," he said.

Daudt said farmers are generally good stewards of the land.

"They use their entire property. If there's a windfall in the wooded portion of their

DISTRICT 17A
Population: (2009 est.) 47,187
Largest city: Cambridge
Counties: Anoka, Chisago, Isanti
Top Concern: Repeal of Green Acres

property, they'll cut that up to heat their home. This is how we operate. We live off the land."

From a class of 31 first-time GOP lawmakers, he was chosen as a caucus assistant majority leader.

He serves on the House Commerce and Regulatory Reform, Higher Education Policy and Finance, Redistricting, Rules and Legislative Administration committees.

But what he's most proud of is being co-founder of Project 24, a non-profit organization with a goal to raise enough funds to build 24 orphanages in Kenya. Six orphanages have been built so far.