

Christmas Bird Count in Henderson

Art Straub of Le Sueur was featured in a story by KARE 11 TV about the recent Christmas Bird Count in the Henderson area. To see the video of the bird count, http://www.kare11.com/news/news_article.aspx?storyid=534389

Those old-fashioned barn raisings are good model for today

By Tom Conroy, DNR Information Officer

It's 5 a.m. and cold, dark and quiet outside a western Minnesota motel. Cold and dark it will remain for a while longer. Not so the quiet.

In the warm glow of light from our motel room, my brother and I sip steaming coffee and load gear into the vehicle as Charlie the lab saunters off to sprinkle the snowy ground. As more lights come on in rooms up and down the lodge, other sleepy-eyed souls and eager canines begin stepping out into the cold November air.

Soon, hunters are barking commands to dogs, dogs are barking at each other. Truck doors open and slam shut, equipment rattles about. The commotion, the banter and laughter, doesn't last long. Engines turn over and vehicles begin rolling out of the parking lot.

For the entire story go to, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/tatankabluffscorridorproject.pdf>

Rural Advantage Announces 2009 3rd Crop Winter Series Producer Meetings

Rural Advantage is proud to announce the program topics for their 5th Annual Third Crop Winter Series Producer Meetings. These meetings are intended to provide the public an opportunity to learn about various 3rd crops and emerging issues in agriculture and renewable energy. We invite anyone with an itch to learn this winter to attend. Anyone bringing a friend will have their name put into a drawing for a special prize at each meeting. Each session will be held at the Knights of Columbus, 920 East 10th Street, Fairmont, MN 56031. Admittance is free of charge. Speakers will be announced at a later date.

Dates and topics for the 5th Annual Third Crop Producer Meetings are as follows:

- Biomass: Production and Uses **Monday, February 9, 2009**
- Fruit Production **Monday, February 23, 2009**
- Rural Entrepreneurship **Monday, March 9, 2009**
- Payments for Ecological Services **Monday, March 23, 2009**

For more information contact: Jill Sackett; email: sacke032@umn.edu at Rural Advantage: 507-238-5449

Job Announcements

Water Quality Specialist – Upper Sioux Community

This individual must be able to conduct a water quality program including water quality sampling, analysis, and reporting. Opening Date: January 6, 2009 to Closing Date: January 20, 2009 (Or Until Filled).

Qualifications:

- Required: Four-year degree in Environmental Science or related field (i.e. Biology) major with emphasis in macroinvertebrates, aquatic biology, ecology, or related science, or two to four years related experience and/or training.
- Good physical health and the ability to lift 50 lbs are required to perform field tasks. Position required work a portion of the time in an office setting and a portion of the time outdoors to perform field tasks.
- Must have valid driver's license and a clean driving record.

- Preference may be given under the Indian Preference Act.

Please submit resume, including three (3) references to: **Upper Sioux Community Board of Trustees; Attn: Sandra Berthelsen; PO Box 147; Granite Falls, MN 56241**

State Fair Coordinator – Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation

To coordinate, create and manage an effective Minnesota State Fair display for the Minnesota Farm Bureau. The coordinator will serve as point person for the management and administration of the Sesquicentennial Farms Recognition Program.

Responsibilities:

- Develop and implement new programs and displays for the state fair building.
- Serve as the onsite manager for the Farm Bureau state fair building at all times leading up to and immediately following the fair.
- Coordinate and work with volunteers at the state fair building.
- Recruit volunteers to work at the state fair building and coordinate volunteer schedule.
- Conduct media interviews.
- Organize and update agricultural educational projects as directed.
- Administer the Farm Bureau Sesquicentennial Farm Recognition Program.
- Review applicants for the Sesquicentennial Farm Recognition program.
- Communicate with awarded Sesquicentennial Farm recipients, county Farm Bureaus and county Ag Societies.
- Develop a Sesquicentennial Farm database with all of the yearly recipients.

Qualifications Desired: Possess a positive attitude; Excellent written and oral communication skills; Working knowledge of agriculture; Organizational skills; Creativity; Ability to work with print, sign and display project; and Computer experience is required.

Job Location: Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation state office building, Eagan, MN

Starting Date: March 30, 2009 - This position will be flexible part-time to complete tasks on deadline, requiring an estimated 20 hours per week for the months of April – September.

Benefits: Competitive wages

Application Procedures: Resumes with cover letters accepted until February 11, 2009. Please include qualifications, background, education, references. Resumes can be mailed, faxed or emailed. Interviews will be scheduled following application deadline.

Resumes should be sent to: Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation; Attn: Karin (Nordling) Schaefer; PO Box 64370; St. Paul, MN 55164-0370; Email: kschaefer@fbmn.org; Fax: 651-905-2159, Attn: Karin (Nordling) Schaefer

Questions: Contact Karin Schaefer at office 651-905-2115

Events:

January 7th (Wednesday) is the first “**Community Wealth**” **Lunch Talks** from 12 noon to 1:00 p.m. at the new Clean Up the River Environment (CURE) office on the main street (117 South 1st Street) of Montevideo. For more information, www.curemnriver.org

January 15th (Thursday) is a **Chippewa River Turbidity TMDL Public Meeting** at McKinney’s on Southside in Benson at 7 p.m. Each meeting will include a review of the TMDL process, water quality data that led to the impairment listing and a presentation by Wenck and Associates on the modeling processes that will be used during the TMDL study.

January 16th (Friday) is a **Chippewa River Turbidity TMDL Public Meeting** at McKinney's on Southside in Benson at 10:30 a.m. Each meeting will include a review of the TMDL process, water quality data that led to the impairment listing and a presentation by Wenck and Associates on the modeling processes that will be used during the TMDL study.

January 20th (Tuesday) is the **Minnesota River Watershed Alliance's Quarterly Meeting** starting at 6 p.m. with a social hour and food. The meeting starts at 7 p.m. and will take place at the Hutchinson Event Center. For more information contact Scott Kudelka at 507-389-2304 or scott.kudelka@mnsu.edu

January 21st – 23rd (Wednesday thru Friday) is the **Radical Abundance – A Theology of Sustainability (39th National Theological Conference)** at Gustavus Adolphus College. The full three day conference experience features keynotes live via webcast from New York, and interfaith discussion small groups to consider radical ideas about abundance, sustainability and well being. Cost is \$20 per person and includes printed materials and refreshments. For more information, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/trinityflyer.pdf>

January 29th (Thursday) is the **Local Energy Security roundtable discussion** from 7:00 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. at the Wesley United Methodist Church (202 N. 4th Street) in Marshall. For more information, www.curemriver.org

February 7th (Saturday) is the **17th Annual Meeting of CURE** from 5 p.m. to 10:00 p.m. (meal served at 6:30 p.m.) at the Hollywood Theater on Main Street in Montevideo. Keynote speakers are Dr. Carrie Jennings & Dr. Shawn Schottler talking about "The Real Dirt on the MN River." For more information, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/cureannualmeeting.pdf>

Check out additional upcoming events and workshops on the Minnesota River Calendar at: <http://mrdbc.mnsu.edu/calendar/index.html>

[Water Quality Articles](#)

[Budget deficit looms large as legislative session approaches](#) (Agri News). Tackling a projected \$4.8 billion and growing deficit will be the first and last order of business during the legislative session that begins Jan. 6 in St. Paul.

[Movement builds to repeal changes made to Green Acres](#) (Agri News). Heidi Morlock wants to see the changes made to Green Acres during the last legislative session repealed.

[Living and farming green in Wright County](#) (North Crow River News). How many people would dream of retiring at 35 to become a farmer? My guess is, most of us would love to retire at 35, but would rather limit the farming aspect to a small garden.

[With dedicated funding in the bag, what now?](#) (Outdoor News). For the past 10 years, the most dominant outdoors-related theme at the Legislature has been dedicated funding for natural resources.

[LETTER: Big Stone II: A disaster waiting to happen](#) (Hutchinson Leader). Big Stone II, for those who are not familiar with the topic, is an extension to an existing coal-burning power plant, Big Stone I, in Milbank, S.D. Plant Manager Mark Rolfes stated in a letter to this page on Dec. 16 that Big Stone II has been put under "rigorous scrutiny about how it will impact the environment ... responsibly use public natural resources and honor others' rights." But are these statements true?

[In Minnesota, our wealth is our water -- so keep questioning sulfide mining](#) (MinnPost). Minnesota legislators have been eagerly promoting sulfide mining. They repeat mining-company

statements and projections without question. Many of them suppress, even condemn, anyone who is more cautious. But Minnesotans need to keep asking questions about sulfide mining.

[Train derailment impact on river due today](#) (Winona Post). Water sampling and monitoring continues on the Mississippi near Dresbach after the December 17 train derailment which left broken tankers leaking fertilizer into the river.

[Afield: Lessard Council asking for wish lists](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). A gathering set up to generate ideas for the Lessard Council had some focused on water and everybody savoring a new opportunity.

[Gas spikes up; follow these tips to keep costs down](#) (Alexandria Echo Post). Here are a number of steps to make you a smarter gas consumer.

[Groups sue MPCA to examine impact of Eyota ethanol plant](#) (Rochester Post Bulletin). Three conservation groups and more than two dozen Olmsted County residents are going to court to try to force the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency to perform a full environmental impact statement for a proposed ethanol plant in Eyota Township.

[The dark side of falling energy prices](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). As natural gas prices drop and funding gets scarce, there is not enough cash to finance current drilling levels. Then, when the economy -- and demand for gas -- picks up, supplies are short. So look for prices to spike then.

[Minn. lawmakers going to the source of dirty car emissions: fuel](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Minnesota lawmakers will take up a bill meant to get fuel producers to make their products cleaner.

[Minn. lawmakers going to the source of dirty car emissions: fuel](#) (Twin Cities Daily Planet). Last spring's warm weather brought something less desirable for Laura Muessig: an unpleasant scent that she described as "like lighter fluid for an outside grill."

[The Budget Squeeze](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). A historic budget shortfall is certain to dominate the 2009 legislative session, with all parties predicting, for now, that the scale of the problem will bring together Republican Gov. Tim Pawlenty and majority DFLers in the Legislature. But don't be surprised if a few disagreements arise.

[DNR must sell land to raise money](#) (Pioneer Press). The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources has six months to identify and sell hundreds of acres of state land to meet a 2005 legislative mandate.

[Engineers to inspect 3 state dams for waste ash](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). The state inspections at power plant ash pools are prompted by the disaster last month at a Tennessee sludge pond.

[Tales of the wild \(rice\)](#) (Shoreview Press). Like most grocery store items, wild rice often gets passed by without a second thought about its origins or how it is so widely available for our consumption.

[Fertilizer prices falling but few are buying](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Fertilizer prices are finally falling, but farmers aren't buying -- yet. And Mosaic expects the situation to get worse before it gets better.

[A dozen ways to save after wage cuts or job loss](#) (Minneapolis Star Tribune). Money-saving tips after a decrease in income, including when to 'fess up to creditors and when to keep quiet.

[Bill Boyne: U.S. agriculture policy needs a makeover](#) (Rochester Post Bulletin). There are new signs of hope in this country as President-elect Barack Obama prepares to take office. It is a good time to address a serious problem: the need to make substantial reforms in the nation's farm programs.

[Minnesota PUC to hold Big Stone II hearing](#) (Associated Press). The Minnesota Public Utilities Commission has scheduled final hearings on permits for transmission lines that would carry electricity from the coal-fired Big Stone II power plant, proposed to be built in extreme northeast South Dakota.

[Price tag for Willmar's treatment plant will cost city's residents plenty over next 3 years](#) (West Central Tribune). Sewer rates would double over the next three years to pay for the new \$86 million wastewater treatment plant under a proposal presented Tuesday.

[Viewpoint: Raingardens keep working through winter](#) (South Washington County Bulletin). During 2008, the Washington Conservation District, local watershed organizations and the county created more than 50 new raingardens in Washington County.

Earth provides enough to satisfy every man's need, but not every man's greed. – Mohandas K. Gandhi

Global warming is one of those things, not like an earthquake where there's a big bang and you say, 'Oh my God, this really has hit us.' It creeps up on you. Half a degree temperature difference from one year to the next, a little bit of rise of the ocean, a little bit of melting of the glaciers, and then all of sudden it is too late to do something about it. – Arnold Schwarzenegger

The Minnesota River Watershed Alliance (Watershed Alliance) is an organized network of citizens, public agencies, and private organizations dedicated to communicating the benefits of an ecology healthy Minnesota River Watershed to others and are actively working towards its improvement and protection. We meet four times a year and encourage landowners and recreational users of the river to be part of the effort. For more information on the Watershed Alliance: <http://www.watershedalliance.blogspot.com>

Please register at the Minnesota River Watershed Alliance's bulletin board at <http://mail.mnsu.edu/mailman/listinfo/mrwa> to receive regular updates on what is happening in the Minnesota River Watershed.

Thanks,

Scott

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