

### **Ney Nature Center's Fall Festival – Becky Pollack**

Here's your opportunity to spend a lovely autumn afternoon at the second annual Fall Festival on October 16<sup>th</sup> (Saturday) from 1:00 p.m. to 6:00 p.m. Ney Center staff and volunteers will have a host of seasonal, fun activities to celebrate the arrival of fall. New this year will be a maze and a corn challenge.

Last year kids especially enjoyed the pumpkin painting, corn husk doll crafting and story hour. Adults participated in Ney homestead demonstrations and tours, and guided nature hikes. The most popular event was the wagon ride. As soon as one load of passengers debarked, the wagon was full of passengers eager for a ride. Riders were treated to a beautiful view of the valley, the native prairie grasses and the Ney homestead. The wagon is handicapped accessible. Refreshments are available also throughout the afternoon.

Call or email Becky to make reservations or for additional information – 507-248-3474, [Rebecca@neycenter.org](mailto:Rebecca@neycenter.org). The Ney Nature Center offers visitors a splendid view in the fall. You don't want to miss the prairie and woodlands at this exciting time of the year.

### **COMMUNITY INVITED TO SHARE RIVER EXPERIENCES - A Free Workshop with Cottonwood Author Florence Dacey**

Teens and adults will have an opportunity to write about their personal stories and reflections about the Minnesota River, its valley and tributaries at writing workshops in Montevideo on Thursday, November 4<sup>th</sup> and on Monday November 8<sup>th</sup> in Granite Falls. The workshops, entitled, *Words for Our Great River*, will be led by Cottonwood writer and teacher Florence Dacey. Both workshops will be held from 7 to 9 p.m.

The Montevideo workshop will be held at the CURE (Clean Up the River Environment) office at 117 South 1<sup>st</sup> Street and the Granite Falls workshop will be held at Minnesota West Community and Technical College on Hwy 212.

Participants will get tips on writing about fishing, boating, river floods, animals, birds, plants and trees, favorite moments and fond memories connected to the Minnesota River and any of the rivers and streams that are part of its watershed. This informal writing and sharing session is free, and no previous creative writing experience is needed. Light refreshments will be served. Pre-registration is requested to [dixie@cureriver.org](mailto:dixie@cureriver.org) or by calling the CURE office at 320-269-2984.

This activity is made possible in part by a grant provided by the Southwest Minnesota Arts and Humanities Council (SMAHC) and is funded, in part, by the Minnesota Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund as appropriated by the Minnesota State Legislature with money from the vote of the people of Minnesota on November 4, 2008. CURE is co-sponsoring the event.

"Personal memories and reflections preserved in writing become family treasures," according to Dacey. Her most recent poetry collection, [\*Rock Worn by Water\*](#), features some river poems. "I want to encourage local writing and appreciation of the Minnesota River watershed. The workshop would be a fun activity for several generations in one family – so I hope that everyone comes!"

### **MPCA OFFERS TIPS ON WINTERIZING YOUR SEPTIC SYSTEM AND CABIN**

Our kids are back in school, baseball season is over, and football season is in full swing; all of this means fall and winter are knocking at the door. It also means it's time to start thinking about preparing your septic system and cabin for the cold months ahead. The Minnesota Pollution Control Agency offers a list of tips that can help you save energy and prevent costly problems.

- Septic system maintenance - It is important to have your septic tank pumped out regularly, and how frequently depends on how often the cabin is used and by how many people. Keeping your cabin septic system working properly avoids the risk of it leaking and possibly contaminating groundwater. To help prevent septic systems from freezing, spread a layer of straw or leaves over the system to provide insulation.

- Furnace tips - A clean, well-adjusted heating system will save money on fuel and prolong furnace life. Tasks homeowners can do themselves include vacuuming the furnace interior, changing the air filter and checking any belts for wear. Call a reputable repair service for more in-depth maintenance. If you don't plan on using your cabin during the cold winter months and are winterizing the plumbing, you can turn the furnace off.
- Winterize plumbing - If you are going to completely close the cabin, you can shut off the water and winterize the plumbing. Bleed pipes and water heater lines completely and use recreational vehicle antifreeze, which is rated for potable water lines and is not as toxic as regular antifreeze. If you have never winterized plumbing before, you may want professional assistance to ensure the job is done correctly. For those using the cabin periodically throughout the winter, set the thermostat to 50 degrees and open the doors of cabinets that have pipes in them so heat can get in. Pipes can also be insulated, or wrapped with heat tape.
- Lawn care - If you absolutely must fertilize, use a phosphorus-free product and do not apply any fertilizer within 20 feet of lakes and streams. Even if your home is not located near a lake, it is important to go phosphorus-free because stormwater runoff from lawns carries phosphorus into nearby water bodies. Raking leaves and composting them will also help keep lakes clean and provide you with a great natural fertilizer in the spring. Also, don't forget to clean out gutters and add the material to the compost pile.
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- Sealing windows and air leaks - Going through the cabin and sealing windows and air leaks will help conserve energy and save dollars for those who heat a cabin year-round. While you check for air leaks you may also want to have some steel wool on hand to plug any holes large enough to invite critters into the cabin while you are away. Mothballs or dryer sheets around the cabin also to keep unwanted pests out.
- Appliances - If you are shutting off the heat in the cabin for the winter you will want to drain any appliance that uses water. Check the owner's manual for specific guidelines. Many electrical appliances use energy when they are plugged in — even when they are not in use. Conserve energy, prevent fires and protect appliances and electronics by unplugging them when they are not in use. Finally, don't forget to cover the outdoor air conditioning unit if you have one.

For more environment-friendly tips for homeowners, visit the MPCA's Web site at [www.pca.state.mn.us/index.php/living-green/citizens.html](http://www.pca.state.mn.us/index.php/living-green/citizens.html).

### **Grant Opportunities:**

#### **MN River Board Announces RFP to Assist with Outreach Programs this spring!**

Hello MN River Basin Professionals – please find attached a request for proposals that some of you may find helpful to provide funding for upcoming events, educational programs, and outreach efforts. The MN River Board has some funds remaining in a program budget from a larger grant that we received and we want to extend an invite to you to consider submitting an application. Applications must be received by 4:00 p.m. CST on October 22, 2010. These funds is that they MUST BE EXPENDED by June 30, 2011. Scanned copies of proposals are acceptable and can be sent to [susan.carlin@mnsu.edu](mailto:susan.carlin@mnsu.edu). Please contact the Minnesota River Board at 507-389-5491 if you have any questions. The grant application can be found at <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/mnriverboardapplication.pdf>

### **Job Opportunities:**

#### **Brown County Full Time Recycling/Water Plan/Wetlands Administrator**

Brown County is hiring a full time Recycling / Water Plan / Wetlands Administrator to develop, coordinate and implement county water plan, recycling and related solid waste programs and educational activities;

administrator Wetland Conservation Act of 1991 in Brown County; assist in Planning & Zoning Department activities including feedlot registration and inventory management and review and approve designs of Individual Sewage Treatment Systems; and provide staff support for county park department.

For more information, <http://mavdisk.mnsu.edu/kudels/brownwaterplan.pdf>

### **County Program Technician**

The Program Technician is responsible for carrying out office activities and functions pertaining to the technical assistance and program support related to FSA programs at the field office level. Utilizes various types of computer systems to maintain producer data and process automated program forms and processes. Uses a high degree of initiative and judgment in planning and carrying out assigned tasks and resolving problems encountered. Applications are due by October 20<sup>th</sup>, 2010.

For more information visit <http://jobview.usajobs.gov/GetJob.aspx?JobID=91103352>

### **Research Microbiologist/Plant Pathologist/Geneticist**

The applicant will be a member of a team investigating the genetics, population biology, and host-pathogen interactions of cereal rust diseases. The project involves the application of molecular markers to the study of cereal rust diseases.

The applicant will use of virulence analysis, SSR, and other PCR based markers to study variation and gene flow in populations of *Puccinia graminis* f.sp. *avenae* and *P. coronata*; develop new genetic markers suitable for population genetic studies of *P. graminis* f.sp. *avenae* and *P. coronata*; identify QTLs for partial resistance to *P. coronata* in oat and suitable molecular markers for marker-assisted selection; and develop methodologies to identify and select for partial resistance to *P. graminis* f.sp. *avenae*. Applications are due December 31<sup>st</sup>, 2010.

For more information visit <http://jobview.usajobs.gov/GetJob.aspx?JobID=88144344>

### **Support Staff – MN Farm Bureau Federation Public Policy Team**

The support staff person will work jointly for the Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation Public Policy Team and the Minnesota Agriculture Water Resources Coalition. They will assist in all activities including but not limited to; administrative assistance, letter writing, promotional material development assistance, meeting planning and promotion assistance, and scheduling assistance. The position is in Eagan, MN and will start in November. Resumes should be sent to: Minnesota Farm Bureau Federation; Attn: Chris Radatz; PO Box 64370; St. Paul, MN 55164-0370; Email: [cradatz@fbmn.org](mailto:cradatz@fbmn.org); Fax: 651-768-2159. For more information, contact Chris Radatz office 651-768-2104 or cell phone 612-756-1498

### **Events:**

October 14<sup>th</sup> (Thursday) is **Panel Discussion on Climate Change** at Gustavus Adolphus College at 4:30pm in the Olin Hall Room 103. Following the discussion, there will be a public lecture beginning at 7:30pm in the Alumni Hall. For more information, contact J. Drake Hamilton at 651 726 7562 [hamilton@fresh-energy.org](mailto:hamilton@fresh-energy.org) or visit [www.fresh-energy.org](http://www.fresh-energy.org)

October 16<sup>th</sup> (Saturday) is **Annual Fall Festival** at Ney's Nature Center from 1-5pm. For additional information, call/email Becky Pollack at the Ney Nature Center, 507-248-3474, [rebecca@neycenter.org](mailto:rebecca@neycenter.org)

October 15<sup>th</sup> (Monday) **Module 4 - Climate Change** from 12:00 pm to 1:00 PM (Eastern) **Presented by** Dr. Steve McNulty: Team Leader, Ecologist Eastern Forest Environmental Threats Assessment Center. USDA Forest Service. To participate, visit [forestrywebinar.net](http://forestrywebinar.net) on the day of the webinar. *No registration required*

October 19<sup>th</sup> (Tuesday) is the **Prairie Mass Harvest Field Day** at 3:00 pm near Crookston, MN. The harvest and field day will occur on Conservation Reserve Program land near the intersection of US Hwy 2

and MN Hwy 32 close to Mentor Wildlife Management Area. For more information contact Jill Sackett, UM Extension / Rural Advantage, 507-238-5449 [sacke032@umn.edu](mailto:sacke032@umn.edu)

October 21<sup>st</sup> (Thursday) is **Geography of Montenegro** from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Melva Lind Interpretive Center. Montenegro, a tiny country in the Balkans with jaw-dropping scenery—from harsh mountains to Mediterranean beaches—has an equally jaw-dropping history at the crossroads of contending East-West armies for the last several centuries. English Professor and Fulbright Scholar Dr. Gregory Mason will talk about Montenegro's unique geography and how it drives the country's history, a history full of old hatreds and hopefully brighter futures in this fascinating part of the world. This event is free and open to the public. For more information contact Bob Dunlap at 507-933-7199.

October 21<sup>st</sup> & 22<sup>nd</sup> (Thursday & Friday) is the **Sustainable Water Resources Roundtable Meeting** at the Gray Freshwater Center in Excelsior. It is free to attend, but seating is limited so registration is necessary. To register, visit <http://freshwater.org/2010SWRR/> For more information, visit <http://acwi.gov/swrr>

October 23<sup>rd</sup> & 24<sup>th</sup> (Saturday & Sunday) is the **5<sup>th</sup> Annual Northland Bioneers Conference** at Macalaster College in St. Paul, MN. The conference includes: keynote lectures and panels given by local and regional experts, workshops on relocalizing our food, solar and wind energy and many other topics, neighborhood networking, facilitated by the [Alliance for Sustainability](#), [exhibits](#) by local businesses and non-profit groups and presentations of national speakers pre-recorded at the 2010 San Rafael, CA, National Bioneers Conference. To learn more visit [www.nbconference.org](http://www.nbconference.org)

October 26<sup>th</sup> (Tuesday) is **Prairie Mass Harvest Field Day** at 3:00 pm near Benson, MN. The harvest and field day will occur at Glacial Lakes State Park (located between the cities of Benson and Starbuck). For more information contact Jill Sackett, UM Extension / Rural Advantage, 507-238-5449 [sacke032@umn.edu](mailto:sacke032@umn.edu)

October 26<sup>th</sup> (Tuesday) is **Water Sustainability: Identifying Drivers and Opportunities** from 8:30am to 1:30 pm in the FC Andersen Conference Room at the Andersen Corporation on 100 Fourth Avenue North in Bayport, MN 55003. Registration is \$45 for MEI members; \$75 for non-members. Contact [Georgia Rubenstein](#) for more information, to check on membership status or to inquire about need-based scholarships. [Click here](#) for more information about the event. [Click here](#) to submit your registration.

November 8<sup>th</sup>-10<sup>th</sup> (Monday-Wednesday) is the **2010 Minnesota/Wisconsin Invasive Species Conference** at the Crowne Plaza St. Paul Riverfront Hotel in downtown St. Paul, MN. The first collaborative Minnesota-Wisconsin conference on invasive species will be held for the purpose of exchanging information on invasive species topics. This is an all-taxa conference covering invasive aquatic and terrestrial plants, animals, pests, and pathogens. The focus is to strengthen awareness of invasive species issues, prevention, and management. Expected audiences include researchers, land managers, natural resource professionals, university personnel, landscapers, nursery, agricultural or forestry employees, environmental specialists, lake association members, and agency and non-governmental organizations. For more information go to [http://www.minnesotaswcs.org/2010\\_mn\\_wi\\_invasive\\_species\\_conference.htm](http://www.minnesotaswcs.org/2010_mn_wi_invasive_species_conference.htm)

November 10<sup>th</sup> (Wednesday) are the **Prairie Harvest Field Days**. 1:00 p.m. to 3:00 p.m. in Waseca, Morris and Windom, MN. Learn about research being done by Dr. Clarence Lehman and colleagues, discuss benefits of using prairie plants for renewable fuels, view the harvest plots, hear about fall 2009 results and observation. For more information contact Jill Sackett at 507-238-5449 or at [sacke032@umn.edu](mailto:sacke032@umn.edu)

November 15<sup>th</sup> (Monday) is a **Minnesota River Board Meeting** in Gaylord, MN. Executive Committee meeting at 8:00 a.m. and Full Board meeting at 9:00 a.m.

November 16<sup>th</sup> (Tuesday) is **Prairie Mass Harvest Field Day** at 2:00 pm near Windom, MN. The harvest will occur at Talcot Lake Wildlife Management Area (located between the cities of Fulda and Windom). For more information contact Jill Sackett, UM Extension / Rural Advantage, 507-238-5449 [sacke032@umn.edu](mailto:sacke032@umn.edu)

November 18<sup>th</sup> (Thursday) is **Get to Know the Birds of MN, Part 3** from 7:00 p.m. to 8:00 p.m. at the Melva Lind Interpretive Center. In part three of this three-part series, learn about our state's rare and local species that are found only in small areas or in very specific habitats. Arboretum Naturalist and lifelong birder Bob Dunlap will give reliable locations and times in which to see some of these birds, some of which are within the St. Peter/Mankato area, along with tips on identification. This event is free and open to the public. For more information contact Bob Dunlap at 507-933-7199.

April 16<sup>th</sup> (Saturday) is the presentation "**Waterfalls and the River Warren**" by Professor Bob Douglas starting at 9:30 a.m. at the Linnaeus Arboretum at Gustavus Adolphus College. Professor Bob Douglas will talk about waterfalls in the Minnesota River including many discovered by him. A tour of the waterfalls will follow the presentation.

May 21<sup>st</sup> (Saturday) is the "**Caring for God's Creation**" with Jim Gilbert, Minnesota's most well-known naturalist and former director of the Linnaeus Arboretum starting at 9:30 a.m. at the Arboretum at Gustavus Adolphus College. Bring your walking shoes.

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

### Environmental/Conservational Articles:

[Ample water, a few birds for duck opener](#) (Minn Outdoor News) For nearly all forms of hunting, scouting is vital. For hunters in southern Minnesota, it was even more important this year, as late-September rains drenched the state from Windom to Caledonia.

[Levee project helps flood-prone area, ducks](#) (MPR) The fields of soybeans, corn and sugar beets in the Red River valley are crisscrossed by a network of ditches built and rebuilt by farmers and the government to speed spring runoff and plant crops early.

[Officials find zebra mussels in Gull Lake near Brainerd](#) (AP) Minnesota Department of Natural Resources biologists have confirmed a report that zebra mussels are now in Gull Lake near Brainerd.

[Landscape artist and musician-composer produce ode to St. Croix River](#)(Pioneer Press) James Wilcox Dimmers and Don Mitchell hiked to the shore of the St. Croix River earlier this week. Pine needles floated downstream from the towering white pines overhead, and the river shimmered in the sunlight. Dimmers, an award-winning landscape artist who lives in Osceola, Wis., looked up and proclaimed that the sky was "Agnes blue."

[Tucker the Turtle needs lift back to Kentucky](#) (AP) If anyone from the Twin Cities is heading to Kentucky, Tucker the Turtle needs a lift home.

[Harold Sirkin: Lessons from the big spill](#) (Pioneer Press) Almost unnoticed, the oil well that caused so much anguish to so many people for so many months was declared permanently sealed on Sept. 19, some five months after the drama began.

[Editorial: Investigate film snafu](#) (MN Daily) President Bob Bruininks upped the ante on the "Troubled Waters" controversy after calling it an "academic freedom" issue last week.

[Genetically modified crops limit corn borer, U study reports](#) (Minn Post) While environmental scientists continue to assess the full impact of genetically-modified crops, a new University of Minnesota study concludes they've seriously set back one insect: the European corn borer.

[Nobel Conference speaker outlines agriculture's future crises](#) (Minn Post) Every age no doubt considers its crises to be the most urgent ever. But Cary Fowler offered a convincing argument that we are, indeed, at an unusually critical juncture in terms of feeding a global population that is projected to grow by 2.6 billion people over the next 40 years.

[Eric Atherton: Grouse abound up north, but down here? Not so much](#) (Rochester Post Bulletin) In the distance, I could hear the persistent "thump, thump, thump" of waterfowlers as they banged away in the Whitewater Valley. Much closer, I could hear the occasional crack of a .22 rifle as squirrel hunters claimed another bushytailon Zastrow Ridge, high above Elba.

[How to test the safety of your well's drinking water](#) (Minn Post) In Minnesota, private well owners are responsible for testing their wells and for their own drinking water safety. Here, the Minnesota Department of Agriculture, with help from the Minnesota Department of Health, show how to screen well water for a common pesticide called atrazine. More information on atrazine is available [here](#).

[Sentinel lakes monitored for effects of climate change](#) (MPR) State and federal researchers are taking a very detailed look at some Minnesota lakes to monitor the effects of climate change and pollution.

[Madison / Northern waters may be protected](#) (AP) The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources is considering giving some northern waters a critical habitat designation. The agency wants to apply the designation to Beaugard Lake, Upper St. Croix Lake, St. Croix Flowage and a stretch of the St. Croix River in Douglas County.

[David Mulla: 'Troubled Waters' tells only part of the water-quality story](#) (Star Tribune) I am troubled by the narrative for "Troubled Waters," a documentary written by Larkin McPhee that aired Tuesday on Twin Cities Public Television (TPT). The film has several strengths, including a powerful story about unintended pollution in the Minnesota River, Lake Pepin and the Gulf of Mexico that was based on interviews with eminent scientists and pioneering Minnesota farmers. Unfortunately, the narrative is marred by inaccuracies, perpetuates popular myths and presents an incomplete synthesis of scientific information about water pollution.

*"Beautiful and graceful, varied and enchanting, small but approachable, butterflies lead you to the sunny side of life. And everyone deserves a little sunshine." ~Jeffrey Glassberg*

**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

Scott Kudelka

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