
Workshops & Conferences

The Natural History of Maple Syrup Production

March 16, 2010

6:30-8:00 p.m.

St. John's Arboretum, St. Joseph

Cost: Free - Students (any age) & Arb members; \$5 – nonmembers, nonstudents

This workshop is part of the Minnesota Natural History Lecture Series, held the 3rd Tuesday each month, September-May. Other events include:

- **April 20** Climate Change and its Effect on MN Trees
- **May 18** Purple Martins

Interested in learning more about Minnesota's natural world? Join us each month during the school year for a lecture and discussion on a variety of natural history topics. Lectures will take place indoors.

All ages are welcome to all of our lectures; however, we have designated some lectures as kid-friendly when the topics/presentation styles are more suitable for kids. Lectures that are designated as teacher-friendly indicate that there will be classroom resources available for teachers at the lecture.

For more information visit <http://www1.csbsju.edu/arboretum> or call 320-363-3163.

Happy Dancing Turtle Events -- Grafting Fruit Trees

March 18, 2010

10:00 AM

Lakes Area Senior Activity Center – Brainerd

Choose from apple, apricot or plum trees for your grafting project. Call 218-829-9345 for more information.

Brainerd Lakes Area Environmental Learning Network (BAELN) Event:

Deconstruction + Reuse = Green Opportunities

March 25, 2010

3:00-5:00 p.m.

MN Pollution Control Agency, 7678 College Road, Suite 105, Baxter/Brainerd.

Speakers: Scott Hall, manager of the Lakes Area Habitat for Humanity's ReStore and Sarah Dagg, who is building a green home with materials purchased from the ReStore.

In this presentation we will look more closely at how recycling can create jobs, profit, improved environmental health, and savings for do-it-yourself home remodelers. We will track the reuse of building materials that would typically end up in a landfill, but instead, end up in a new "green" home. Scott Hall will talk about the ReStore deconstruction service whereby they go into a home about to be demolished and salvage as much as possible (windows, doors, cabinets, flooring, appliances, etc).

They also remove potentially hazardous materials like fluorescent light bulbs and mercury from old thermostats that would otherwise find their way into a landfill.

Last year, deconstruction by ReStore volunteers raised \$325,000, which supported Habitat for Humanity, and diverted over 2,000 tons of material from the landfill. Those salvaged materials are sold at reduced prices to do-it-yourself home builders and remodelers. One such home builder is Sarah Dagg, who is building a "green" home. Many of the materials she has used in the construction process have come from the ReStore. We hope you can come and hear for yourself how Deconstruction + Reuse = Green Opportunities.

If you have questions concerning this presentation, please contact Phil Hunsicker at 1-218-824-5095 or phunsicker@1000fom.org

Other Events:

April 15: Putting Green Practices into Action: MN GreenCorps and MN Conservation Corps

May 20: Greening Transportation - Northstar Rail

June 17: Training the next generation of green workers (and a few old dogs too)

Maple Syrup Festivals

Saturday, March 27 & Saturday, April 10

St. John's Arboretum, St. Joseph

Cost: \$7 - Adult nonmembers/scouts; \$3 – Child members/scouts; \$3 Adult members; Free – Child members. \$1 off per person if you pre-register by the Friday before the festival you attend. (Up to \$10 – does not apply to scouts)

Join us for what has become our most popular event of the year! Sap collecting, syrup cooking, horse-drawn rides, demonstrations, and hot maple syrup sundaes await the whole family during this fun-filled event! Preregistration for families is preferred but not required. Preregistration for scout groups is required.

Happy Dancing Turtle Events -- "Preserving Food Safely" Webinar

April 20, 2010

7:00-9:00PM

For 4-Hers and anyone else interested! Learn about preservation methods, available resources, and techniques on how to safely preserve your food. Pre-registration required! Call Cass County Extension 218-587-8280 or e-mail: trout022@umn.edu

An Invitation to Take the Next Step In the Battle Against Aquatic Invasive Species

April 21st, 2010

9:00 a.m. to Noon

MPCA Office, Baxter

Agenda

9:00 - Welcome coffee and rolls

9:30 to Noon – Presentations and Discussion

The North Central Lakes Collaborative (NCLC) is an affiliation of citizens, organizations, local governments and state agencies working together to identify and promote strategies for sustaining healthy lakes in North Central Minnesota. One of the biggest threats to the continued health of our lakes, our local economies, and our quality of life are Aquatic Invasive Species (AIS).

Minnesota's response to AIS has struggled to keep pace with the size and scope of the challenge – but the NCLC believes it can play a role here in North Central Minnesota. Our strength lies in the diversity of individuals, organizations, and government entities that we bring together in Minnesota's lake country. Some of the questions that come to mind ... can lakes infested with AIS be labeled as "impaired waters" thus giving them priority funding status? Why isn't more money available to combat AIS through the LCCMR process and the Legacy Amendment funds? How do we as a state do a better job promoting and coordinating bottom-up strategies like Lake Improvement Districts (LIDs) or training of volunteer monitors? What about more aggressive top-down initiatives such as development of rapid response action capabilities?

On April 21st, the NCLC will host a discussion of these questions and more. This forum will include a presentation by Minnesota Waters Executive Director Marian Bender. Marion will discuss Minnesota Waters' position paper that calls for major changes in how we deal with AIS. In addition, Laura Herman of the University of Wisconsin will be on hand to discuss Wisconsin's experience training citizen volunteers to recognize and report aquatic invasives. Laura is the Citizen Lake Monitoring Network Coordinator at UW – Extension. DNR AIS specialists will also be on hand to answer questions. Following the presentations, you will be invited to participate in one of three facilitated breakout sessions focusing on the following theme areas:

- Prevention Strategies – what's working and what can be done better?
- Bottom-Up Approaches – what role can our volunteer lake monitors and Lake Improvement Districts, for example, play in the fight against AIS? What other tools can be employed?
- Top-Down Strategies: What is the state's role? From rapid response capabilities to how we fund AIS efforts, hear what Minnesota and other states have tried and help us design our own approach.

You have been specifically chosen to participate because of your knowledge of the subject and the respect others share for your opinions. The ideas that come out of this initial discussion will lead us to the next step - and while it is too early to say what that outcome might be, we are currently considering the launch of an AIS Pilot Project that would involve the efforts of multiple interest groups and agencies here in north central Minnesota. The NCLC would like you to help us take that next step toward beating Aquatic Invasive Species.

Minnesota Master Naturalist Training

April 22 – May 27, 2010

Tues./Thurs. 6:00 – 8:30 p.m.

Northland Arboretum, Brainerd

Do you enjoy learning about the natural world? If so, consider becoming a Minnesota Master Naturalist volunteer! This program will offer classes focused on one of the three major MN ecosystems "North Woods/Great Lakes" Training to be held at Northland Arboretum in Brainerd Starting April 22nd through May 27th, Tuesday and Thursday evenings, 6 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., Two Saturday Field Trips will be required. Cost for the course is \$200 including materials. Some partial scholarships are available.

Register online at www.MinnesotaMasterNaturalist.org, Call 1-888-241-4532 or email info@minnesotamasternaturalist.org

Happy Dancing Turtle Events -- Week of the Young Child

April 26, 2010

6:00-8:00PM

Pine River Backus School Commons.

Celebrate with your child! Activities are geared toward pre-school age children - 3rd grade.

Save the Date: 6th Annual Small Wind Conference

June 15-16, 2010

9 am – 6 pm

Stevens Point, Wisconsin

A Gathering of Installers, Manufacturers, Dealers, and Distributors. The 6th annual Small Wind Conference is the premier event for small wind-electric system designers and installers, and for those involved in sales, specification, management, funding, and permitting of small wind systems.

More than 300 small wind professionals and industry representatives from across the United States and nine countries attended the 2009 conference, a key opportunity for open and honest dialogue, networking and education within the industry.

"This conference is the only conference that I am aware of that addresses the entire gamut of issues pertinent to the small wind community," said Trudy Forsyth, Small Wind Coordinator for the National Renewable Energy Laboratory.

Topics to be covered will include:

- Updates from wind turbine manufacturers and importers
- Test results and updates on new wind turbines and equipment
- Wind-electric system cost and design
- Zoning and permitting processes
- Advancements in resource and site assessments
- Problems encountered in the field and how they were solved
- Input from dealers and installers-what works and what needs work
- Updates on installer and turbine certification as well as new NEC code for small wind

Who should attend?

Wind system installers, site assessors, equipment dealers and distributors, manufacturers, renewable energy program implementers, state funding agencies, educators, zoning officials, policy makers, and other stakeholders are encouraged to attend. Those considering entering the small wind industry are also invited. This conference is not intended for homeowners or end users

For more information on the event, including sponsorship opportunities, visit www.windustry.org or contact: Samantha Smart Merritt, Windustry, 612-870-3474, Samantha@windustry.org.

You can also contact: info@smallwindconference.com or visit www.smallwindconference.com.

Things to Know

Job Opportunity: Executive Director, Audubon Center of the North, Sandstone

ACNW is looking for a talented and visionary leader with proven management skills, preferably in a nonprofit or educational organization.

The Co-Director of ACNW is responsible for jointly overseeing the Center's key operating functions including K-12 educational programming, authorizing more than 23 Minnesota charter schools, and providing a variety of residential and day use opportunities for youth, families, and adult groups. The Co-Director supervises five staff members, a dozen or so student interns and trainees, many volunteers, and occasionally contractors. The Co-Director provides day-to-day management of the

Center's annual budget of over \$1 million in conformity with the Center's comprehensive strategic plan.

HOW TO APPLY: Please submit resume, cover letter, and references to Bryan Wood, bwood@audubon-center.org.

Visit <http://audubon-center.org/employment.htm> or contact us by telephone at 1-888-404-7743 for more information.

Help Minnesota Waters Reward the Leaders in Lake and River Conservation!

Do you know a citizen group or volunteer who has done amazing things for their lake or river? Minnesota Waters' annual awards celebrate individuals and groups who have demonstrated extraordinary commitment to improving and protecting Minnesota's lakes and rivers. With the gracious support of our sponsors, Minnesota Waters is proud to honor these water heroes with a plaque, a cash award, and publicity in our statewide publications.

We are currently soliciting nominations for the following 2010 Awards: Lake Association of the Year; River-Friendly Community/Group of the Year, Outstanding Volunteer Monitoring Program of the Year, and Volunteer of the Year. Nominations are due by May 14, 2010. Winners will be announced mid-June, 2010. Visit www.minnesotawaters.org for more information.

Assessing the Economic Impact of Scenic Byways

The Paul Bunyan Scenic Byway Association, together with Lake Country Scenic Byway to our north, have undertaken the task of assessing the economic impact and significance of these two officially designated scenic byways. Grant funds provided through the Carlson Chair, University of Minnesota and Explore Minnesota Tourism are funding the research to do just that.

Assessment of information gathered from the past 10 years during which these two byways have been a part of their local communities has already revealed a few eye-opening statistics.

- PBSB has generated more than \$630,000 in local economic activity with an investment of less than \$420,000.
- PBSB has helped leverage funding for many physical infrastructure projects, including Veterans Walking Trail, Footbridge and Wetlands Walk; Chiarella Walking Trail; Gateway Gazebo; 14 interpretive panel kiosks; Paul Bunyan footprints at seven locations.
- PBSB project spending has created seven jobs in the area generating more than \$270,000 in labor income.
- LCSB has generated more than \$475,000 in local economic activity with an investment of \$327,000.
- LCSB has leveraged funds to help organize an annual fall color bus tour as well as design and install byway community welcome signs.
- LCSB project spending has created five jobs in the area generating more than \$180,000 in labor income.

There's more to come! Beginning this summer, University of Minnesota trained surveyors will gather information from both byway visitors and byway area residents. This information, gathered over the summer and fall, will then be assessed and compiled into a report that will be completed in December. Surveys are now being developed at the University of Minnesota's Tourism Center.

For more information: Paul Bunyan Scenic Byway, www.paulbunyan scenicbyway.org; Lake Country

Scenic Byway, www.parkrapids.com/lakecountryscenicbyway; University of MN-Tourism Center, www.tourism.umn.edu; Explore Minnesota Tourism, www.exploreminnesota.com.

Randall Arendt's Conservation Design Presentations Now Available on DVD

Back in October 2009, Randall Arendt, a highly sought-after land-use planner, came to Minnesota and gave two insightful presentations on "Rethinking Main Street" and "Smarter Subdivisions." His presentations, which offer a fresh take on planning and zoning, were filmed and broadcast on Twin Cities Public Television. If you missed the live event, as well as the television broadcast, it's not too late to learn what many communities across the country are doing to create places of quality -- places with thriving and attractive commercial districts as well as nature-sensitive residential developments.

The complete DVD set is available for \$15 by contacting: 1000 Friends of Minnesota, RA DVD Set, 1031 West 7th St., St. Paul, MN 55102. If you have questions, call Klara at 651-312-1000.

Tools for Active Living in Rural Communities for

Active Living can be defined as a way of life that integrates physical activity into daily routines, like walking to the store or biking to work. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation has been supporting research in this area over a period of several years, and has supported the development of Rural Active Living Assessment (RALA) Tools to help assess the physical environment features and amenities, town characteristics, community programs, and policies that could potentially influence levels of physical activity among residents in rural communities.

The web site <http://www.activelivingresearch.org/node/11947> describes these tools, which are each downloadable from the site.

Interestingly, according to a policy brief at the site (*Active Living for Rural Youth* - http://www.activelivingresearch.org/files/ActiveLiving_Rural.Youth_Brief.pdf), childhood obesity and inactivity are significant and growing problems in many rural areas where the prevalence of obesity and overweight has been shown to be 25 percent higher than urban rates, even after controlling for income, race, physical activity and other known risk factors. This points to the relevance of active living efforts in rural areas, which have not received the focus that urban and suburban areas have.

This newsletter is designed to share funding opportunities, resources, and conferences or training events of common interest for program participants and supporters of the Initiative Foundation. For more information about these and other training opportunities, contact Don Hickman, dhickman@ifound.org.

If you wish to be removed from this mailing list or if you have other names/e-mails to add please contact Jolene Howard, jhoward@ifound.org.