



A bit of history

Civil War encampments are scheduled at The Landing in Shakopee May 1 and May 29-31.

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Fun summer camps

Registration is now open for youth summer camps hosted by Three Rivers Park District and 4-H.

Pages 8 & 13

Check it out!

Master Gardeners will once again host "Evenings in the Garden" beginning April 2.

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Have you been counted?

Census forms should be returned by April 15

Every ten years, the Census Bureau undertakes a count of every person residing in the United States, as mandated by the U.S. Constitution. They encourage everyone to "Take 10" minutes to answer the ten simple questions on the 2010 Census form to make sure that everyone is counted fairly and accurately.

During the 2000 Census, 72 percent of occupied households mailed back their forms. In 2010, the Census Bureau is challenging communities to do even better. Last month, more than 130 million addresses received a 2010 Census form by mail or hand delivery. The 2010 Census will document the changes in our nation since the last decennial census in 2000, and tell us how we've evolved as a country. Because Census data affect how more than \$400 billion in federal funding is distrib-



Complete your 2010 Census form and mail it by April 15.

uted to tribal, state, and local governments, the Census also will frame the future of our country and our community for the next ten years.

Here's what else you should

know about the 2010 Census:

It's easy. One of the shortest Census forms in history, the 2010 Census form asks ten questions and takes about ten minutes to complete. The individual in whose name the housing unit is rented or owned should complete the form on behalf of every person living there, both relatives and nonrelatives.

It's important. Census data are used to reapportion seats in Congress and ensure proper district representation in state and local governments. Information from the Census helps determine locations for childcare and senior centers, new roads, hospitals, schools, and community centers.

It's safe. By law, the U.S. Census Bureau *cannot* share respondents' answers with anyone, including other federal agencies and law enforcement

CENSUS to page 7

Greenlight! 494/169 interchange is a go...

A significant transportation priority for the State of Minnesota – the reconstruction of the 494/169 interchange – took a dramatic leap forward March 17 when the Transportation Advisory Board (TAB) for the Metropolitan Council approved the use of \$34 million in Regional Federal Funds, allowing the project to move forward.

"As recently as a year ago," said Scott County Commissioner Jon Ulrich, "we were wondering if this project would be completed in our lifetime." The project, when fully complete, will eliminate the current mainline stoplights and hours of congestion they cause, greatly reducing the crash rate on both I-494 and TH 169. "These improvements can't come too soon for anyone who travels this corridor," Ulrich added.



Approval of funding to rebuild the interchange at 494/169 will eliminate the current mainline stoplights and hours of congestion they cause.

Some have questioned why a project technically outside the boundaries of Scott County — particularly one of such scope and size, not to mention cost – was designated as paramount importance to the Board of Commissioners. Indeed, the 169

Corridor is one of the highest volume freight corridors in the state of Minnesota and the gateway to southern Minnesota. "And this project's significance is second only to the Bloomington Ferry bridge project, **494/169 INTERCHANGE to page 7**

Loaves and Fishes provides free evening meals at Shakopee site

The Shakopee Tri-Parish Social Justice Committee (comprised of members from St. Mark's, St. Mary's, and St. Mary's of the Purification Churches) and Saint John's Lutheran have decided to address the growing issue of hunger in Scott and Carver Counties. The Committee is working with various churches, businesses, and organizations to offer a Loaves and Fishes dining site offering **free evening meals** in Shakopee. St. Mark's has offered its kitchen and dining facility for the events, located at 350 S. Atwood Street in Shakopee.

This pilot Loaves and Fishes meal program is taking place every Thursday evening in April, from 5 to 6



p.m. After April, the program will be evaluated to determine whether it should continue more permanently.

In 2008, over 347,000 meals were served at eight Loaves and Fishes locations throughout the Twin Cities. In 2010, the need is even greater. Loaves and Fishes is a private, non-profit Twin Cities meal program that operates using the philosophy that everyone has a right to be treated with dignity. It strives to maintain dining sites that serve as safe places where guests can expect more than just a meal, as hunger manifests itself spiritually as well as physically.

For more information, please contact Deacon Jim Pufahl, St. Mark's Catholic Community, at (952) 445-1229, extension 14 or via e-mail at deaconjim@usfamily.net; Judy Rein, Tri-Parish Social Justice Committee, at (952) 445-1319 or via e-mail at jrein@stmarysofshakopee.org; or Andrea Kish-Bailey, Program Manager for Loaves and Fishes, at (612) 377-9810 or via e-mail at loavesak@visi.com.

Top of the SCENE

By Gary Shelton
Scott County Administrator



Reform, not rhetoric

Regardless of party affiliation, candidates are often aligned with “change” and “reform.” From the President’s “change we can believe in” to the Governor’s website (“...Tim Pawlenty is regarded as one of the nation’s most innovative, energetic, reform-minded and accomplished governors”), the political talk is all about change or reform. At the federal level, we even have a legislative committee – The Committee on Oversight and Government Reform – that has existed in varying forms since 1816. However, as former Vice President Walter Mondale asked of an opponent in the 1984 Presidential campaign, “Where’s the beef?”

While we hear a lot of talk about change, reform, and government “learning to live within its means,” at the federal and state levels this appears to be political rhetoric without any policy or budgeting substance. The federal government continues to accomplish much of its work in an ivory tower, increasing public debt at an alarming rate; the state continues to balance its budget by failing to fund much of what it mandates in the form of county-delivered services, cost shifts, and accounting gimmicks without addressing the inefficiencies of a growing bureaucracy. Compounding the problem is the fact that this significant cost shift from the state to the counties is often hidden from view, misleading many residents to the erroneous conclusion that local government is “The Problem.” Simply stated, local government is *not* the problem.

Local governments – counties, cities, townships, and school districts — that deliver the majority of the services that most of us want and, at times, rely upon. From educating our youth to protecting our communities; from providing a safety net to adding to the local culture; from improving health to enhancing the quality of life, local governments have always been the service providers. Moreover, local governments are the ones that have led actual reform initiatives and changes in the manner in which these services are delivered.

From the Scott County Association for Leadership and Efficiency (SCALE) to Families and Individuals Sharing Hope (FISH) and such things as the schools’ technology collaborative, there have been any number of creative, efficient, and effective methods put into place at the local level aimed at improving how, when, where, and why we deliver services. Even before the current budget crisis, local governments had been working to make positive changes that have been fiscally responsible and organizationally innovative... so it is all the more painful and frustrating when local governments are unfairly labeled as wastrels, and subsequently penalized through arbitrary and often punitive state funding cuts.

Recently, the Association of Minnesota Counties (AMC) unveiled a series of possible state/county reform proposals that might put some real substance into the rhetoric of change and reform. In some instances, the proposed reforms would result in a dramatic shift in the structure of government and how services are delivered. If enacted, the size and cost of the State Patrol would be reduced as counties and cities would take over many of their road patrol functions, responsibility for summer maintenance, and snow plowing of state highways (except for freeways). Similarly, the three current models for delivering probation services within the state would be reduced to a single community corrections model. These initiatives are aimed at the essence of reform or change – quality public services at lower overall cost – and were designed to help local governments provide the necessary services to the public... and for the state to get out of the way in the process. While many of AMC’s initiatives haven’t been fully vetted, they represent that local governments are ready, willing, and – indeed – eager to genuinely reform the manner in which services are being delivered.

Everyone recognizes that the ability to raise new revenue (in the form of taxes) is both economically and politically impractical right now. However, it is time that the state makes the needed spending cuts more proportional between state agencies and local governments, and begins to make reform at the state level *real* instead of *rhetorical*.

Might it be time that we actually consider eliminating, or substantially reducing, some of the “specialty boards” and councils? How does the state of Minnesota benefit from an Amateur Sports Commission or a Dietetics and Nutrition Practice Agency?

Isn’t it time to simplify Minnesota’s complex property tax system? The current system serves only to make life difficult for local elected officials, often by making it appear as though they increased taxes when they did not. Worse yet, this method makes Minnesota’s rates appear higher than those of other states, even though actual property tax burdens are often very comparable.

Shouldn’t we truly give local elected officials more tools and actual control over local services and issues? For decades, we have heard the principle of “local control” touted, but very few – if any – actions have followed the rhetoric. As the state continues to rescind its financial obligations to local governments, it only stands to reason that it eliminate some of the more onerous restrictions that it once bought through state aid. Local elected officials are very accountable to the public, generally very conservative, and should have the ability to make choices as to what is the best fit within their communities.

The first step in a comprehensive effort to fundamentally revamp the way programs and services are provided is for the state to come to the realization that they must make real changes. A good first step would be enacting reductions in their *own* bureaucracy by working cooperatively with their partners – e.g., local governments — who have some pretty good ideas on the table already.

Commissioners’ Corner

County Board meetings through June 2010

April 13	—	County Board meeting
April 20	—	<i>no meeting</i>
April 27	—	County Board meeting
May 4	—	County Board meeting
May 11	—	County Board meeting
May 18	—	<i>no meeting</i>
May 25	—	County Board meeting
June 1	—	County Board meeting
June 8	—	County Board meeting
June 15	—	<i>no meeting</i>
June 22	—	County Board meeting; County Board of Equalization, (6 p.m.)
June 29	—	County Board workshop

The Scott County Board meets at 9 a.m. on Tuesdays (except if indicated above) at the Government Center in Shakopee. Visit the Scott County website at www.co.scott.mn.us to view streaming video of Board meetings, Board agendas, minutes, and “Board Brief” summaries. The Board proceedings may also be re-broadcast on your local government access cable channels. For further information, contact the County Administration office at (952) 496-8100.

Citizen Committee Vacancies

The Scott County Board of Commissioners is looking for interested citizens to serve on the following advisory committees. Members of advisory committees are provided with a per diem and mileage reimbursement for attendance at meetings. If you have any questions or are interested in serving on one of these committees, contact Deb Brazil at dbrazil@co.scott.mn.us or (952) 496-8601. For more information regarding a specific committee visit the Scott County website at www.co.scott.mn.us; click on “Your County Government” then “Citizen Advisory Committees” or “Boards & Commissions.”

Community Development Agency (CDA). (1 vacancy) There is one vacancy on this Board in Commissioner District 3. The mission of the CDA is to strengthen the communities of Scott County by providing affordable housing opportunities to low- and moderate-income families, promoting economic development, and fostering coordination of public and private resources. Meets quarterly.

Community Health Advisory Committee. (1 vacancy) There is one at-large vacancy on this Committee. This subcommittee of the Human Services Resource Council helps with planning and community integration of public health services and makes policy and budget recommendations to the County Board. This committee meets quarterly on Monday evenings.

Human Services Resource Council. (4 vacancies) The Resource Council consists of three representatives from each Commissioner District. Currently, there are four vacancies on the Council, with openings in Commissioner Districts 1, 2, 3, and 5. Members serve two-year terms, and are eligible to serve three terms. The Resource Council participates in the formation of the Strategic Plan for the development, implementation, and operation of programs and services of the County Board; makes recommendations concerning the annual budgets of the Community Services Division; develops and recommends human services programs, needs, priorities, goals, and objectives to the County Board; and receives, reviews, and comments on special interest group and community at-large input regarding Human Services plans, programs, services, and performance. Professional providers and consumers of Human Services programs are encouraged to apply. The committee meets quarterly, on the third Monday at 7 p.m.

Prior Lake/Spring Lake Watershed District. (1 vacancy) The Prior Lake/Spring Lake Watershed District Board of Managers provides technical reviews of land development proposals; coordinates its water management responsibilities with local units of government; and furnishes information to local units of government and the public about protecting the District’s special natural resources. The Board meets the second Tuesday of every month at 7 p.m. Members must reside within the Watershed District.

Scott Watershed Management Organization (WMO) Watershed Planning Commission. (2 vacancies) There are two at-large position vacancies on this Commission. All members must reside within the Scott WMO boundaries. The Scott WMO Watershed Planning Commission reviews and makes recommendations on the Comprehensive Water Resource Management Plan, budgets, and program priorities, the implementation of the Comprehensive Water Resource Management Plan, and associated program goals and projects.

Commissioner Districts:

- **District 1** (Commissioner Joe Wagner) – Jackson, Louisville, St. Lawrence, Sand Creek, Blakeley, Belle Plaine, and Helena Townships; and the Cities of Jordan, Belle Plaine, and the portion of New Prague within Scott County.
- **District 2** (Commissioner Tom Wolf) – Spring Lake, Credit River, Cedar Lake, and New Market Townships; the City of Elko New Market; and precincts 6 and 8 in the City of Savage.
- **District 3** (Commissioner Jerry Hennen) – The City of Shakopee, precincts 1-6, 8, and 10.
- **District 4** (Commissioner Barbara Marschall) – The City of Prior Lake, and City of Shakopee precincts 7, 9, 11, and 12.
- **District 5** (Commissioner Jon Ulrich) – The City of Savage, except precincts 6 and 8.



Reduce, Reuse, Recycle.

...make it second nature!

Get Ready for "The Five Best Days of Summer!"

Scott County Fair set for July 28-Aug. 1

Mark your family calendar for a summer trip to the Scott County Fair! The Fair has entertainment and education for *all* ages with prices that fit in your budget. Imagine your summer outing...

Parking fee: \$5.00 per vehicle per day, *no per person admission fee* at the gate!

Free activities: Stroll through the barns and see farm animals up close; see first-hand how our future agricultural leaders show their talents in growing food, caring for animals, and learning about our natural world; gather pencils, brochures, and knowledge in the commercial buildings; sit on a tractor or a snowmobile; watch a 4-H *Arts-In* performance; relax at the Gazebo while listening to live music; cheer on the Tug of War teams; see an alpaca; take in the Stock Dog Challenge; visit the Master Gardener's Rain Garden; watch a draft horse show, open horse show, or a rodeo; catch a band in the entertainment garden; see our new shorthorn cattle show; enjoy one of our strolling entertainers; and *much, much more!*

Fair experience: Priceless family fun!



Animal exhibits are popular at the County Fair.

All this, for only a few dollars!

Don't forget the food, available for purchase, reasonably priced, and worth every penny. Visit the midway and take advantage of a wristband for more savings on rides, catch a grandstand show... the opportunities for entertainment are virtually endless, with

something for all ages!

Show your talents at the Fair! Put together your team now for our Tug-of-War Challenge, back this year and sure to be a great event! Do you have a unique skill or craft? Plan on showcasing one of your own projects in the open class exhibits, whether it be an animal, craft, food, plant, art project, or something totally different. Students can also bring projects made in school to be judged. See our website below for information on what you can bring to the Fair, how to enter it, and deadlines.

Businesses, organizations, political candidates, and vendors are invited to reserve a space in our commercial buildings. Contact the Fair office for more information at (952) 492-2436 or visit our website at www.scottcountyfair.com. Start a new summer family tradition with the Scott County Fair this year. See you at the Fair!



Youngsters enjoy creative activities.

Nominate an outstanding senior volunteer for County recognition

Do you know of a Scott County Senior Volunteer who excels at giving their time back to the community? Submit their name for the award of *Outstanding Scott County Senior!*

A nominee must be age 65 or older, a resident of Scott County, and be active in the community volunteering their time and talents for others. The awards ceremony to honor the winners will be during the Scott County Fair, **Friday, July 30, 2010**

at 3:30 p.m. at the Fair Gazebo. Two winners in Scott County will be honored at the Fair and are then invited to compete at the Minnesota State Fair. The 2009 winners were **Norm Shutrop** of Shakopee and **Bea Slavik** of New Prague.

To request a nomination form, please contact Fran Barten at (952) 758-3729 or visit the Scott County website at www.scottcountyfair.com.

2010 Savage juried art competition: Call for entries

This is a juried show open to *all* Minnesota amateur and professional artists. Each artist may submit two pieces (not all works entered will be accepted by the jury into the show). Categories include...

- Oil
- Water media (watercolor and acrylic)
- Digital, mixed media
- Pastels and drawing
- Photography
- Three-dimensional (sculpture, pottery, and glass)

The prizes to be awarded total \$1,200: first and second place cash

awards will be \$100 and \$50 respectively per category, as well as two honorable mentions per category. One "Best In Show" award will earn \$200.

Visit our website at www.savageartscouncil.org for the forms, fees, prospectus, and more details. **All entries — along with art forms and fees — must be dropped off on Friday, June 4 from 2 to 8 p.m. or Saturday, June 5 from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Hamilton Community Room (next to Savage Art Studios & Gallery), 4795 W 123rd Street, Ste 400, Savage.** Questions? Please call (952) 895-0375.

To spray, or not to spray?

Beginning in May as part of its vegetation management program, the Scott County Highway Department will be scheduling some roadside vegetation work along all Scott County highways. The unwanted brush will be cut and/or treated with herbicide. Your land *may* be adjacent to the roadside scheduled for treatment.

This is a **spot spray** operation, targeting only undesirable vegetation. Highway takes great care to avoid sensitive areas adjacent to the right-of-way, such as tree plantations, ornamental plantings, crops, gardens, front yards, lakes, and streams.

If you would like to maintain the right-of-way adjacent to your land in some other fashion (such as mowing), please follow these instructions:

1. Stop at the Scott County Highway Department building located on Highway 282 just west of Highway 13, **prior to May 1** and fill out the proper form including the property description.
2. Post the "Do Not Spray" signs that you will be given.
3. Remove the brush and/or noxious weeds within that site **by May 15** and continue to maintain it. If the brush and/or noxious weeds are not removed, the Highway Department must treat the area as part of the vegetation management program.

If you have questions, call the Scott County Highway Department at (952) 496-8346, or Pete Shutrop, County Agricultural Inspector, at (952) 496-8497.

Master Gardeners to again host "Evenings in the Garden" Thursdays beginning April 2

The Scott County Fairgrounds Teaching Gardens — 21 small demonstration gardens — were established to provide small theme gardens that everyone can adapt to their own backyard. This year, Master Gardeners have planned the gardens to reflect memorable *Gardens in Literature*. You and your family are invited to explore these gardens and their themes during the *Evenings in the Garden* education series or while visiting with a Master Gardener on Thursday evenings.

Each monthly two-hour session will include fun family activities, informational tours of the gardens during various growing periods, in-depth educational presentations, demonstrations related to the evening's topic, a presentation by a nutritionist, and smaller breakout sessions. *The two-hour sessions are marked below with **.*

Beginning May 27, there will also be weekly small sessions in the gardens. These casual evenings offer an opportunity to talk directly with a Master Gardener about specific garden themes.

****April 22:** Spring Preparation for Summer Success

****May 20:** Mix it Up! Containers

May 27: Building a Water Feature

June 3: Special Garden Highlight Tour (*to be announced*)

June 10: How to Move Houseplants Outdoors for the Summer
****June 17 - Attracting Wildlife (...or Not!)**

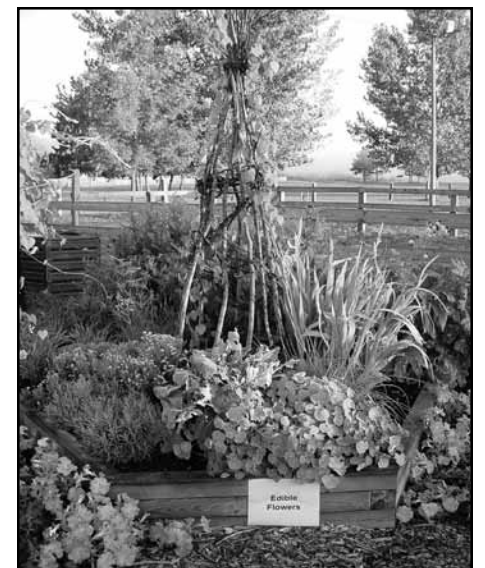
June 24: Creating Salads with Fresh Greens and Flowers

July 1: Special Garden Highlight Tour (*to be announced*)

July 8: Weed Identification

****July 15:** Just for Kids

July 22: Succession Planting for a



Small demonstration gardens will again be featured during the "Evenings in the Garden" series.

Fall Harvest

July 29: Scott County Fair Garden Tours

August 5: Toxic Plants

August 12: Flower Arranging

****August 19:** Beetles, Borers & Bugs

August 26: Maintaining Your Perennials

September 2: Special Garden Highlight Tour (*to be announced*)

September 9: Fall Lawn Care

****September 16:** Gifts from the Garden

September 23: From "Vine to Wine" Special Presentation

September 30: Harvesting and Storing the Harvest

All of these *free* family learning opportunities take place at the Scott County Fairgrounds Teaching Garden, rain or shine! Please register by calling (952) 492-5410 or e-mailing smith515@umn.edu.

Editorial Policy

The purpose of this publication is to provide the public with information about Scott County government and the opportunities it offers its citizens. We encourage you to contact Lisa Kohner, Scott County Public Affairs Coordinator, at 952-496-8780 or lkohner@co.scott.mn.us if you have questions or a suggestion for a future topic.

Healthy SCENE

By Jennifer Deschaine
Community Health Director



County ranks 2nd in health survey Where you live matters to your health

On February 19, the first **County Health Rankings** were released in Minnesota. Until now, there has not been a good standard for measuring how healthy a county is and what needs to be done to improve health. The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute presented the *2010 County Health Rankings* that reflect the overall health of counties across the United States. The report compares counties within a state. For the first time, counties can get a snapshot of how healthy they are and what influences their health.

According to the University of Wisconsin's *County Health Rankings* report, where we live does matter to our health and the health of an overall community. Influencing factors include *quality of health care, individual behavior, education and jobs, and the environment*, which all have an impact on chronic disease and health outcomes. People who live in communities with access to parks and recreational opportunities tend to exercise more, decreasing the risk of heart disease and obesity. People who live in smoke-free communities have less exposure to tobacco and second-hand smoke, and less incidence of lung cancer.

Health factors, such as health-related behaviors (tobacco use, diet and exercise, alcohol use, and unsafe sex); clinical care (access to health care and quality of care); social and economic factors (education, employment, income, family and social support, and community safety); and physical environment (environmental quality and built environments), have a strong influence on health outcomes – mortality and morbidity rates.

Scott County ranked second in Minnesota in **Health Outcomes**, which is an overall measurement of *morbidity* (ranked third), the percentage of individuals over 18 years reporting the average number of days/month they felt physically unhealthy (2.6), the average number of days/month with mental unhealthy days (1.9), the average percentage of time they had poor/fair health (7 percent), and the percentage of births with a low birth weight. Health Outcomes also measures *mortality* rates (ranked fifth), which measures the number of deaths under 75 years from 2004-2006 (4,211) with a "Minnesota Value" of 5,031.

Scott County ranked overall seventh in **Health Factors**. Scott County did very well in the Social and Economic Factors (ranking second), which include:

◆ **High school graduation rates:** The number of ninth graders that graduate from high school in four years. In 2005-2006, the graduation rate was 85 percent in Scott County. Many studies have been conducted that show a correlation between education and improved health outcomes.

◆ **College degree rates:** This measures the number of individuals 25 years and older with a four-year college degree (35 percent) in Scott County. Again, this is important since there is a strong correlation between formal education and improved work and economic opportunities, reduced psychosocial stress, and healthier lifestyles.

◆ **Unemployment:** Measured as the percent of the civilian labor force, age 16 and older, that is unemployed but seeking work – measured at 5 percent in Scott County. According to the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, unemployment may lead to physical health responses, ranging from self-reported physical illness to mortality, especially suicide. It has also been shown to lead to an increase in unhealthy behaviors related to alcohol and tobacco consumption, diet, exercise, and other health-related behaviors, which in turn can lead to increased risk for disease or mortality. Because employee-sponsored health insurance is the most common source of health insurance coverage, unemployment can also limit access to health care. Scott County provides services to the unemployed through the Workforce Center in Shakopee to assist individuals with employment needs.

◆ **Children in poverty** in Scott County (5 percent) are among the lowest in the state. These rates are measured by the percentage of children less than 18 years living below the Federal Poverty Line. Poverty has a direct negative impact on health outcomes, especially in children. Children in poverty are at higher risk for increased morbidity and mortality due to accidental injury and lack of health care access.

◆ **Income inequality** in Scott County was ranked far lower than that of Minnesota as a whole.

◆ **Social and emotional support:** This measured the response to the question, "How often do you get the social and emotional support you need?" In Scott County, of the 301 surveyed, 9 percent felt they were not getting social/emotional support. The Minnesota Value was 14 percent. Poor family support, minimal contact with others, and limited involvement in community life are associated with increased morbidity and early mortality.

◆ **Single-parent households:** This indicates the number of male or female households without a spouse present with one or more children less than 18 years living at home. Scott County (7 percent) is average with most of Minnesota.

◆ **Homicide rates** were represented by the crude death rate due to murder or non-negligent manslaughter per 100,000 population. From 2000 to 2006, Scott County had an age-adjusted homicide rate of 1 per 100,000 individuals.

How Can Scott County Improve?

Even though Scott County ranked well in overall Health Outcomes and Social and Economic Factors, there are several areas where improvement is needed. Our **Overall Health Factors** ranking was seventh in the state; the **Health Behavior** ranking was 24th, Clinical Care ranked 38th, and the Physical Environment ranking was 55th.

Health Behaviors represent individuals over 18 years reporting rates of obesity (28 percent), the smoking rate (15 percent), binge drinking rate (20 percent), the average of motor vehicle mortality rate (13 per 100,000 individuals), chlamy-

HEALTHY SCENE Continued at right



Moving forward

SmartLink Transit keeps pushing ahead and making every effort to do as much as possible to keep riders moving! As of February 1, 2010, SmartLink Transit is the provider for Medical Assistance transportation for Scott and Carver County. If you are currently on Medical Assistance and have been calling MNET for medically-related transportation, you will now call SmartLink Transit. The customer service phone number is (952) 496-8341. Customer Service hours are 7 a.m. to 4 a.m. If you need transportation to a medically-related appointment, please call and SmartLink Transit will make the transportation arrangements for you. Go to the website at www.smartlinktransit.com for further information about Medical Assistance transportation and to download reimbursement forms.

Highway meeting set for May 5

The Metropolitan Council is hosting a meeting in Scott County related to the Metropolitan Highway System Investment Study (MSHIS) on **Wednesday, May 5 from 4-6 p.m. in the Scott County Law Enforcement Center.**

The goal of the meeting is to provide preliminary findings from the MSHIS study, particularly those related to the types of transportation projects that would be recommended

under the new approach to congestion management. These meetings are the first step in developing proposed revisions to the Transportation Policy Plan, which the Council is scheduled to act on this year.

For more information on this meeting, contact Michelle Fure at the Metropolitan Council (651-602-1545) or Lisa Freese at Scott County Public Works (952-496-8363). This is your opportunity to provide input!

dia cases in 2006 (150 per 100,000 individuals – and this rate continues to increase steadily each year), and teen pregnancy rates for 15 to 19 year olds (20 per 1,000 teens).

Scott County Public Health and Carver County Public Health are currently collaborating on the Statewide Health Improvement Project that targets interventions at schools, communities, worksites, and health care provider settings to address the rapidly growing obesity rates and smoking rates in our counties.

Binge drinking is not only a problem among some adults, but also the adolescents in Scott County. For this reason, the Scott County Meth Task Force has incorporated strategies to address "gateway drugs" such as alcohol and tobacco. Binge drinking is a risk factor for a number of adverse health outcomes such as alcohol poisoning, hypertension, acute myocardial infarction, sexually transmitted infections, unintended pregnancy, fetal alcohol syndrome, sudden infant death syndrome, suicide, interpersonal violence, and motor vehicle crashes.

The Scott County Safe Communities Coalition has continued to address motor vehicle crashes related to alcohol and distracted driving. The Coalition did not receive continued state funding for 2010, but continues to provide education and health promotion to reduce the counties high motor vehicle mortality rates.

Chlamydia, a sexually transmitted disease (STD), has been steadily increasing in Scott County at astounding rates since 2004. Chlamydia is the most common bacterial STD in North America and is one of the major causes of tubal infertility, ectopic pregnancy, pelvic inflammatory disease, and chronic pelvic pain. However, the *County Health Rankings Report* states that increases in reported chlamydia infections may reflect the expansion of chlamydia screening, use of increasingly sensitive diagnostic tests, an increased emphasis on case reporting from providers and laboratories, improvements in the information systems for reporting, as well as true increases in disease. In Scott County, the Community Health Board has identified these rates of chlamydia and teen pregnancy as Public Health priorities to improve the health of our adolescent and young adult populations.

The health rankings also ranked Scott County 38th in Clinical Care and 55th in Physical Health. The uninsured rate for those under 65 years has increased from 7 percent in 2007 to 9 percent in 2008. The primary care providers are ranked at 110 providers per 100,000 individuals — the Minnesota Value is 189 providers per 100,000. This category also addresses preventable hospital stays, diabetic screening, and hospice use for Medicare enrollees. A lack of insurance coverage is a significant barrier to accessing health care. In 2009, the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community collaborated with Scott County Public Health to provide Mobile Health Clinic services to the uninsured and underinsured populations in Scott County. The need for health care access is increasing with the increase in job loss.

Lastly, the Physical Environment ranking (55th in the state) is measured by the air pollution quality measurements, air pollution ozone measurements, and the number of liquor stores (1.8) per 10,000 individuals. These ranking were consistently lower in the metro counties. Also included in this data was access to healthy foods measured as the percent of zip codes in a county with a healthy food outlet, defined as a grocery store or produce stand/farmers' market. Scott County's ranking was 75 percent. Access to healthy foods has a direct impact on health outcomes.

The County Health Rankings 2010 are provided by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation and the University of Wisconsin Population Health Institute. More information on the rankings, data sources, and background information can be accessed at www.countyhealthrankings.org.

Mobile Health Clinic services offered

Through an exciting, unique partnership with the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community, Scott County Public Health is providing adult and child health screening, preventative health care, health information and assistance to the uninsured, underinsured, and underserved communities in the County. Services are provided with the use of the mobile health clinic owned by the Shakopee Mdewakanton Sioux Community, and this partnership enables services to be brought directly to those in need by having the clinic go to various locations within Scott County.

Thursday, April 15 from 2 p.m. - 6:00 p.m. in Jordan at the University of Minnesota Extension/Scott County office (7151 190th St West, Jordan)

Thursday, April 29 from 2 p.m. - 6 p.m. in Savage at the Scott County Library/Savage Branch (13090 Alabama Ave South, Savage)

Thursday, May 6 from 20 p.m. - 6 p.m. in Shakopee at the Russian Evangelical Baptist Church (1205 10th Avenue, Shakopee)

Thursday, May 20 from 2 p.m. - 6 p.m. in Jordan at the University of Minnesota Extension/Scott County office (7151 190th St West, Jordan)

Information on specific dates, times, and locations will continue to be updated as it becomes available on the Scott County website (co.scott.mn.us).

The mission of this Mobile Health



The Mobile Health Clinic, which serves the uninsured, underinsured and underserved, will be located at various locations throughout Scott County.

Clinic partnership is to provide access to health and dental care, health education, and outreach for services to residents of Scott County of all ages, cultures, ethnic groups, and spoken lan-

guages. For more information on the mobile health clinics, please contact Scott County Public Health at (952) 496-8555 or visit the Scott County website at www.co.scott.mn.us

GIS provides wealth of information

The Geographic Information System (GIS) lets you look at information such as land features (rivers, forests, and hills), population, elevation, locations (home, schools, banks, and stores), or areas such as school districts, zoning districts, climate zones, and even energy consumption zones. This information is presented in a totally different way than has traditionally been done with paper maps and databases.

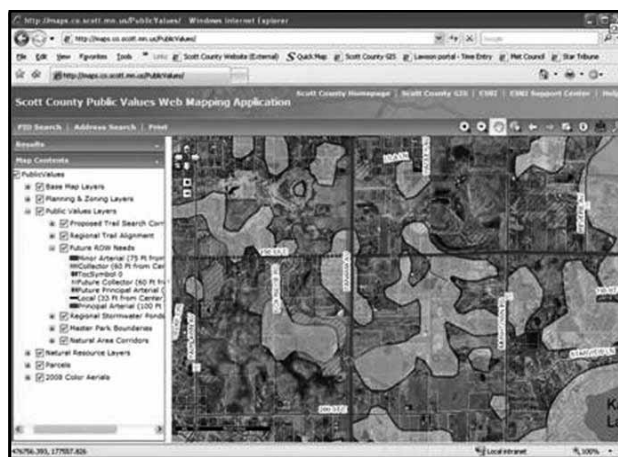
Trends, patterns, and relationships between features that have not been analyzed together in the past are easily seen using GIS. For example, if you wanted to find the best place to build a new landfill, you could create a computer map using GIS showing sensitive natural resources such as streams, wetlands, and plant communities you'd want to avoid. On the same map, you could show residential areas, schools, and other establishments that would not be desirable next to a landfill. On this same map, you could show possible garbage truck haul routes to the site, making sure that the site is in an area that is economical for waste haulers.

Many institutions such as businesses, colleges, tourism, utility companies, and most government agencies use GIS to collect, store, analyze, and share information.

Scott County uses GIS regularly to study data and provide information to the public; for example, the County uses GIS to analyze population growth and future infrastructure needs. As a property owner you can use GIS on-line mapping (at www.co.scott.mn.us), to locate your home and view your property tax information. You can also find information on your septic system, well, zoning district, commission district, polling precinct, nearby land features, and look at aerial photography.

GIS is commonly used for environmental management by many agencies that protect natural resources, such as the Department of Natural Resources (to manage wildlife and habitat data); Natural Resources Conservation Service (to manage soil and water data); Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (to manage information on water quality, air quality, and contaminated site data); and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (to manage data on Superfund sites, water quality, air quality, and climate change).

GIS is becoming a common tool for assessing climate change. During a press conference in October 2009, the Department of Interior (DOI) staff used GIS technology to demonstrate the current and future impacts of global climate change. GIS was used to show



GIS can show everything on a computer screen from sensitive environmental areas to roads, public buildings, and residential areas. It is now becoming common to use it to assess climate change.

where on the globe climate change is taking place and what that change looks like. The DOI used the GIS software application ArcGIS Explorer, an Environmental System Research Institute (ESRI) product, to show a 3-D earth globe indicating increases in surface temperatures around the world and where warming negatively impacts the United States. The software also showed locations of anticipated extreme weather, such as large hail and strong tornados, and paths of intense hurricanes were identified.

DOI also explained that as greenhouse gases continue to warm the environment and cause glaciers and permafrost to melt, scientists anticipate the sea-level will rise up to one meter by the end of the Century. The ArcGIS Explorer globe showed potential impacts to coastal communities. For more information on the DOI climate change presentation, visit http://www.esri.com/news/releases/09_4qtr/climate-hail.html.

GIS is now being used to study rising sea levels, air emission sources, arctic vegetation, and forest dynamics; manage carbon sequestration projects; examine supplies of future bioenergy and biofuel, wind farm sites, and solar power projects; design carbon-neutral/zero-waste buildings and cities; and provide on-line maps for "green practices," such as location of recycling centers for cities and counties. For more information on GIS products and projects, go to www.gis.com.

June 1 deadline set for candidates to file for office

Individuals interested in filing for elected positions at the County, State, and Congressional level must file between **Tuesday, May 18, and Tuesday, June 1**. The earlier filing period is necessary because legislation was recently passed to move the state primary from September to the second Tuesday of August, which this year will be August 10. The general election will be held November 2.

Numerous positions will be up for election this year. In Scott County, positions up for election include the sheriff, county attorney, three County Board members (Districts 1, 3, and 5), and two Scott Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) supervisors. All legislative and U.S. Congressional District seats are also up for election, as well as the Governor's seat. Filings for county positions take place at the Scott County Government Center in Shakopee during regular business hours.

SWCD commissioners help guide soil and water resource management issues in their community. Candidates are elected county-wide, but must reside in one of the nomination districts up for election. This year, the districts up for election include District IV, which includes the City of Savage as well as parts of the Cities of Prior Lake and Shakopee, and District V, which includes part of the Cities of Shakopee and Jordan as well as Jackson, Louisville, Sand Creek, and St. Lawrence Townships.

Elected to four-year terms, supervisors meet monthly to discuss and direct the business of the SWCD, including developing plans, policies, and priorities for the district; setting budgets; approving projects and grants; and establishing working partnerships with other local, state, and federal agencies and watershed and community organizations. They do not receive a salary, although they do receive compensation for attending meetings and are reimbursed for expenses.

Additional information about the SWCD may be obtained by visiting the Scott SWCD website at www.scottswcd.org or by calling the office in Jordan at (952) 492-5425.

New check overdraft rules will provide options

Is it a help or a curse? Allowing you to automatically extend your bank resources by permitting purchases and adding overdraft charges has become standard practice these days. This may help you "save face" by not having a payment rejected as you stand at the store counter, but for many this practice begins a spiral into rapidly increasing charges if money doesn't come into your account often.

The Federal Reserve is drafting new

rules on overdraft charges and fees that may change existing ways of doing business with your bank. The major change is having you choose whether to allow the financial institution to allow overdrafts on ATM and debit purchases, understanding that will mean a charge for the service. You can opt out, which means that you won't be allowed to spend more than you have in your account. This will require individuals to watch their bank balances more care-

fully. (You will be allowed to change your decision if it doesn't work for you.)

Automatic bill payments and checks may still be covered in an automatic overdraft program by the financial institution without your express permission.

Watch for information from your financial institution in the months ahead. It will be important that you return the form indicating your choice of allowing for overdrafts or not. For more in-

formation, go to http://www.federalreserve.gov/consumerinfo/wyntk_overdraft.htm.

If you have trouble staying within your bank balance, call Susan Hooper at (952) 492-5383 for tools to plan for living within your limits. We can meet or talk on the phone about ways to cut expenses or keep better track of spending needs and income availability.

Environmental SCENE

By Allen Frechette
Environmental Health Manager



The true cost of stuff

Recently, I read an article about determining the life-cycle costs for products. This is a relatively new concept that identifies the *full cost* to society for consumer items, products, and energy. An example that has been used a lot is the true cost for relying on fossil fuels, like coal and gasoline. Their true cost isn't just what we pay at the pump or on our electric bill; there are also hidden costs. Some obvious costs to society for oil and gas include diplomatic and military costs to obtain and safeguard these strategic energy resources; there are also hidden costs associated with the distribution and use of these fuels.

Another major hidden cost is from the emissions resulting from the use of fossil fuels. A recent study by the U.S. Geological Survey found that *every fish they sampled in every stream they tested* in the United States was contaminated with mercury. Mercury is a potent neurotoxin that increases in concentration through the food chain at ever higher concentrations in predators such as large fish and humans. Mercury is especially damaging to the developing nervous systems of fetuses and children, but can have severe effects on adults as well. Mercury enters the environment primarily as atmospheric emissions from the burning of coal for electricity.

Use of fossil fuels also results in greenhouse gas emissions contributing to climate change. If the true cost to society for fossil fuels were added to the cost for coal and oil, competing forms of cleaner renewable energy would rapidly advance and improve.

When factories dumped their hazardous waste into rivers 50 years ago, towns downstream — who relied on the river for consumable water — paid the price through higher costs for water treatment and increased health risks. Fishermen paid the price through fish kills. Almost always, the costs to address improper management of waste results are greater (through clean up costs or environmental and health impacts) than the costs to simply manage the waste properly in the first place.

The concept of requiring producers to be responsible for problems associated with the manufacture and use of their products is not a new one. Environmental regulations over the past 50 years compelled factories to properly manage their waste, and thus attached some of the hidden costs of manufacturing to the product cost. Unfortunately, some of those factories opted to move to countries that had not yet established such regulations, shirking their environmental responsibility in exchange for short-term profits.



Life-cycle costs aren't limited to the cost for managing the resulting waste. They also include hidden costs associated with procuring the raw materials and manufacturing and transporting the item to market. Mining of raw materials is often very environmentally damaging. The removal of crude oil from the Alberta tar sands is an example of the tremendous cost to the environment associated with the production of gasoline.

By attaching these hidden costs to the purchase price up front, we can encourage people who consider cost when buying a product to make wiser choices. Unfortunately, the cost to properly manage waste from a consumable product or a broken item may be more than the average person would pay to get rid of something of no value to them. Household hazardous waste is a good example. It costs almost half as much to get rid of a half-full can of paint as the paint costs new. Sometimes the cost for disposal can be *even more* than the initial purchase price of the item.

Minnesota counties were required to provide convenient and inexpensive options for management of household hazardous waste. However, the funding for these programs continues to shrink; increasingly, counties have had to turn to local taxes and surcharges to pay for proper management. The product stewardship concept appears to offer some relief as a means to collect money through manufacturers to address the ultimate waste management costs associated with their products. Theoretically, product stewardship could also provide incentives for manufacturers to revise their products to reduce environmental problems associated with waste disposal. In practice, however, product stewardship has been difficult to legislate. Several states have passed product stewardship laws with varying success.

The number of wastes requiring special management has also grown. Currently, the following wastes **cannot be mixed with garbage**: agricultural chemicals, antifreeze, appliances, automotive oil and filters, automotive batteries, ballasts containing PCBs, CRTs (televisions, computer monitors), explosives, fluorescent and HID bulbs, household hazardous waste, lawn and yard waste, lead, medical waste, mercury, mercury oxide and silver oxide batteries, Ni-cad batteries, paint (both latex and oil-based) in liquid form, pesticides, radioactive waste, rechargeable and button batteries, septic tank pumping, sludge of any type, solvents and all other flammable liquids, telephone books, and tires and vehicles of any type.

Recently, a group of 60 manufacturers including Airbus, Levi Strauss & Co., 3M, DuPont, and Kraft Foods joined forces to develop a full life-cycle greenhouse gas analysis on a wide range of products from blue jeans to manufactured steel. Why is this important? In order for society to come to terms with reducing greenhouse gas emissions, we will need to evaluate the advantages and disadvantages of our actions and purchases more carefully. Everything we do and buy has implications. Hidden costs won't go away; they are just put off for someone else or some future generation to deal with.



New sewage treatment system ordinance adopted by County Board

On February 4, 2007, the state of Minnesota adopted new rules governing sewage treatment systems in Minnesota. The intent of these rule changes is to better protect public health and our environment. In order to comply with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency (MPCA) rules and Minnesota Statutes (which require local governments to adopt the new rules within two years), the Scott County Board of Commissioners officially adopted the required amendments to the Scott County Sub-surface Sewage Treatment System (SSTS) Ordinance No. 4 on January 26, 2010.

The amendments to the Scott County Ordinance included changes to definitions, terms, and language required by state rules and statutes. **Standard trench, mound, and at-grade systems** will now be called **Type I systems**; **performance, warranted, and "other" systems** will be called **Type II, III, IV, and V systems**. Type II through V systems will continue to be allowed in Scott County for existing homes where an existing hardship precludes the reasonable construction of a Type I system.

Please be aware, however, that the state of Minnesota now requires that all Type IV and V systems be licensed by the County, since these systems must include additional technologies that will require significantly more maintenance and monitoring.

An additional change allows owners of systems that fail due to a lack of separation from groundwater and are located in areas of the County where surface contaminants present a high risk of contaminating the aquifer up to three years to replace the system instead of ten months (as previously required). Another change eliminates the double permitting of large SSTSs (greater than 10,000 gallons per day) by eliminating County permitting of the larger systems and deferring them to the MPCA.

The new SSTS Ordinance was published in the *Belle Plaine Herald*, and thus made effective in all townships and municipalities in Scott County on February 3, 2010. Copies of the Ordinance are available at the Community Development office, Government Center 114, and on the Scott County website at www.co.scott.mn.us.

Census Continued from Page 1

entities. All Census Bureau employees take an oath of nondisclosure and are sworn for life to protect the confidentiality of the data. The penalty for unlawful disclosure is a fine of up to \$250,000, imprisonment of up to five years, or both.

Finally, the most efficient way to respond to the 2010 Census is to com-

plete the form and return it in the postage-paid return envelope. Census workers will visit households that do not return forms to take the count in person.

Please complete and mail back your Census forms by April 15, 2010. **For more information about the 2010 Census and the "Take 10" initiative, visit 2010census.gov.**

494/169 Interchange

Continued from Page 1

which was primarily responsible for Scott County's incredible growth rate throughout the last fifteen years. But given the success of that link, the increased traffic volumes have exceeded the interchanges capacity — and the very path into and out of Scott County on the north side is now becoming choked off," Ulrich stated. Moreover, he added, the 494/169 project is of principal significance to the entire region — as demonstrated by the dogged commitment of elected officials, transportation professionals, and business owners that make up the 169 Corridor Coalition.

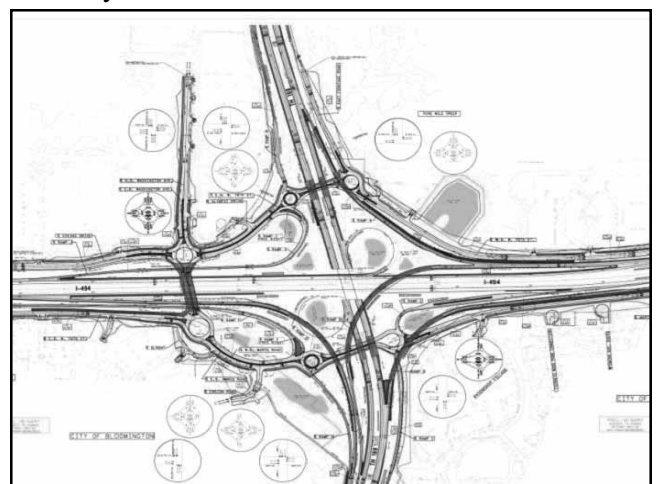
In fact, Scott County officials and staff — in partnership with officials from the city of Savage, Shakopee, Prior Lake, SMSC, Eden Prairie, Edina, Bloomington, and Blue Earth County — actively lobbied members of Congress, state transportation officials, and other local government colleagues for several years

on behalf of this long-awaited project. "The 494/169 project is the number one priority of the recently formed US 169 Corridor Coalition and has helped metro area folks understand the statewide importance of fixing this bottleneck," said Lisa Freese, Scott County Transportation Manager.

Ultimately, the 169/494 design solution is based on *performance*.

This performance-based approach is a new approach being used by the Department of Transportation to extend their limited dollars to meet the highest needs throughout the state. It will rebuild the interchange with six exchange movements (instead of eight) as a phased approach (instead of constructing all eight at once). It removes stoplights, reduces congestion, and improves safety. In addition, the project meets more than 90 percent of the needs while saving approximately \$30 to \$40 million in construction costs.

Currently, the Minnesota Department of Transportation (MnDOT) is developing a design-build proposal and expects to select a design build team by this fall. Construction is expected to begin during the spring of 2011, in the same type of process that was successfully used to rebuild the I-35W bridge.



The redesigned interchange will remove stoplights.

Spring maintenance provides a worry-free summer

What, you worry? Well, we all do... but here's a small checklist that you should perform to help you achieve a "worry-free" summer!

Clean your gutters and inspect for damage caused by ice damming.

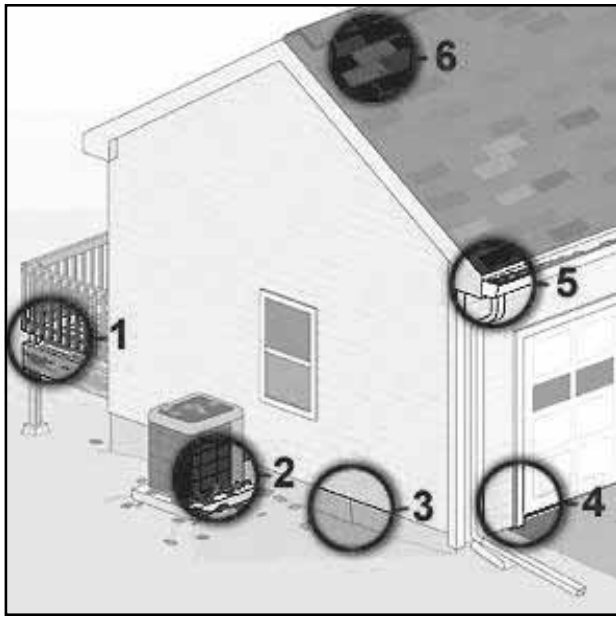
To prevent any damage to your home, a yearly cleaning of your gutters is highly recommended. Most gutters are notorious for collecting twigs, leaves, pine needles, and other debris. When water backs up, they also provide prime locations for mosquito breeding. Make sure you wear heavy gloves when cleaning the gutters and *especially* when digging into the opening for the downspouts. Sharp screws can cause nasty cuts, and germs thrive in the gutter's muck. In addition, clogged gutters and downspouts can lead to water intrusion into the structure and cause damage to your home.

If you noticed ice dams on the edge of your roof this past winter, now is the time to take action. Ice dams form because attics are improperly insulated and vented – and they can result in water intrusion into the ceiling and walls and cause mold and rot.

Inspect the roof.

After the snow is off the roof, take some time to inspect your roof. This can be done most safely from the ladder when you clean your gutters. *Don't risk climbing onto your roof.* Walking on your shingles often causes damage. Binoculars used from the ground will generally provide you with a close enough view of obvious shingle damage (and this might also be a good excuse to buy that higher quality pair of binoculars you've always wanted!). Look for missing shingle sections; finding pieces of shingles on the ground is also a good indication of problems. If you spot trouble, call a roofer for a closer inspection.

Inspect siding, paint, and caulking around doors and windows; check for cracks in stucco, bricks,



Maintaining these six areas of a home will help avoid larger problems in the future.

and mortar.

At the end of winter, walk around the house and look for nails that have pushed out from the siding due to the expansion and contraction. This commonly happens on southern and west-facing walls. Look around the windows and door for caulk that has cracked or pulled apart. Scrape out loose caulk and replace it with a new bead of caulk, and use a 25 to 30 year caulk. Siliconized latex caulk is a great improvement over the old oil-based white caulk common on older houses, and you can clean your hands with soap and water when done. Cracks in mortar can also be easily replaced with some of the new products available.

Make sure all windows and doors open and close smoothly.

Sticky windows and doors can result in the need for excessive force to open them as well as breakage

and personal injury. To insure the smooth operation of your windows and doors, clean the window and door tracks and use silicone spray on the mechanical parts. Make sure the lubricant you choose is appropriate: **Do not use WD 40 or oil**; these lubricants collect dirt that will cause problems.

Hazardous deck?

There are a couple of things to watch for on your deck, such as screws and nails that have popped out and wood rot that may have occurred. Keep your deck free of snow and leaves to prevent lingering moisture that can accelerate rot. Power spray and re-seal your deck when needed. You might want to check out the RE-USE Room at Scott County's Household Hazardous Waste (HHW) Facility for free deck stain, as they tend to have a good supply throughout the year.

Remove any debris around the A/C unit.

In the winter months, leaves and other debris can attach themselves around the air conditioner. Clean away leaves and other debris that have collected around the unit. If you still have the product service manual, follow the manufacturer's instructions for cleaning the unit. Replacement manuals can usually be obtained from the manufacturer's website.

Change your furnace and/or air conditioner filters.

If you have forced air heat with central air conditioning, make sure you clean or replace your furnace filter routinely. Again, check the service manual for recommended service frequency. If you have house pets or live in a dusty area, you may need to service these systems more frequently. Changing or cleaning heating/air conditioning system filters saves energy by helping your system to operate more efficiently.

Some "must ask" questions for contractors

Finding a good contractor isn't easy. To find one that you are comfortable with and can communicate with takes some hard work. Always talk to more than one contractor – in fact, three should be the minimum number from which to seek bids. Here is a list of questions to ask as you shop for a contractor. They might not be happy to answer all of them, but you need to do whatever it takes to protect yourself.

1. Are you a **licensed building/remodeling contractor** and what is your **license number**? (If you hire an unlicensed contractor, you will not have access to the Contractor Recovery Fund, which is available to compensate consumers who have suffered losses due to contractor fraudulent, deceptive, or dishonest practices.)

2. Do you carry **Builders Liability Insurance**? (*Please note:* this is not just a framing, drywall, or other policy. Builders Liability Insurance will cover *anything* during construction. Other insurance may only cover what is associated with a specific trade or element of the overall construction. The reason why many contractors have only framing or carpentry insurance is because these policies are a lot less expensive than Builders Liability Insurance.)

3. Do your **sub-contractors** carry the same amount of insurance?

4. Do you hire **licensed sub-contractors** for electrical, HVAC, and plumbing? (Note: Only licensed sub-contractors can perform this type of this work.)

5. Do you obtain all **required permits**? (If a contractor does not obtain a permit, then you — as the homeowner — must apply for the permit. This means that you will not only have to pay the permit fees, but *you will also be responsible for the work* rather than the



contractor.) If you are comparing contractors, and one pays for the permit while the other does not, please keep this in mind.

6. What **percentage of the work will your sub-contractors** do on my project?

7. What is the **limit on your and your sub-contractor's insurance policy**?

8. What **warranty** do you offer and what does it cover?

9. **How long has your company been registered** with the state? (You can check this yourself by visiting www.da.sos.state.mn.us and entering the business name.)

10. Are you a member of the **Better Business Bureau (BBB), Angie's List, Builders Club, or any other professional association** in good standing?

11. **How long** will a project like this take to finish?

12. What is your **payment schedule**? (Do not make any payments up front.)

13. Do you **charge for change orders**?

14. **How much exactly** will my

project cost to finish?

15. Can you provide me with **references** for at least two years?

16. **How many projects** like this have you done?

17. **How booked** are you?

18. **How many projects** do you finish per month?

19. **Ask for a Minnesota business address** other than a post office box.

20. **Ask for a local phone number** where the contractor can be reached during normal business hours.

21. **Discuss bids** with each contractor, making certain you understand the reasons for any variations in the prices.

Do not automatically choose the lowest price. One contractor's bid may be higher because the materials to be used are of better quality or the work will be especially thorough and therefore require more time and labor.

22. Be sure that your contractor will schedule the **required inspections** throughout the project, and the project has passed the final inspection before you make the final payment. (You can assure this occurs by requesting to see the inspection reports from your contractor.)

23. Ask who will be your **primary contact** for questions and resolution of problems for the entire project.

24. Ask if there will be **someone on site** with whom you can communicate; inquire as to how well the crews will be supervised.

Following these suggestions will not guarantee a perfect contractor, but can help in your choice of who you will hire. If they are not willing to answer your questions, you may want to look elsewhere. You may also find the following website helpful: <http://www.doli.state.mn.us/rbs-hiring-a-contractor.html>.



Tips for purchasing bedding plants

As the weather warms, we eagerly anticipate announcements from greenhouse and nursery companies informing us that they are open for the season.

Don't be tempted, however, to purchase plants before you are ready to plant them outdoors. Unless you have a greenhouse or a place where you can give them optimum care, they will often become stressed or stunted and will never perform to their genetic capacity.

Before you shop for plants, do some planning and think about the character of your garden. If your garden is new, consider the garden conditions: sun, shade, and water. Give some thought to the colors and types of foliage you want in your garden. Make a list of the plants you'd like, and stick to it!

When purchasing annuals, select buds over blooms, and look for healthy growth above *and* below the soil. If you can't withstand temptation and do buy plants that are in bloom, be sure to pinch off the blossoms when you plant them. Look for sturdy, green, compact plants with roots still within the plastic packs, or just beginning to poke through.

If the plant is leggy, look for new growth at the base of the plant. When you plant such a plant, prune out the overgrown parts and the new growth will develop into an attractive plant.



Good nutrition makes a difference

By Gloria Wolf, Nutrition Education Assistant

Years of research say that good nutrition does make a difference; in fact, children who eat breakfast are better learners. Adults who eat well are more productive employees. With good nutrition, seniors stay in their homes longer and have lower medical bills. In short, the better we eat, the better we feel — and the longer we live.

University of Minnesota Extension in Scott County offers the *Simply Good Eating* program to teach families the information and skills needed to maintain healthy diets. The program is funded by one percent of USDA Food Support dollars to reach low income eligible audiences.

Nutrition education outreach is offered at any site accessible to people who want and need the information. Scott County community settings include the Workforce Center, CAP Agency WIC Clinic/Foodshelf, Fare for All Express, Carver-Scott Educational Co-op, Central Family Center, Mobile Health Clinic sites, and Scott County libraries. *Simply Good Eating* offers one-on-one, hands-on coaching in homes or in a class setting on the topics of diet quality, food safety, food security, and food resource management.

The goal for each participant attending five or more hours of nutrition education is to make one or more positive behavior changes. A Workforce Center attendee wrote: "The workshop has made me more aware of what [I] and my family are eating. I have decided to stop buying pop and junk food for [myself] and my kids and start cooking more meals at home."

For more information on the *Simply Good Eating* program in Scott County, contact Gloria Wolf, Nutrition Education Assistant, University of Minnesota Extension, at (952) 492-5389.

USDA says, "Eat More!" ... of the good stuff, that is

The key to staying healthy and maintaining weight while "eating more" is to choose *super foods* that are nutrient-rich and packed with nutritional value. That's where dairy foods, whole grains, and fresh fruits and vegetables come in. Try these tips to fill up on the good stuff!

- **"Soup-up" your soup** – Prepare instant or canned soup with fat free milk instead of water, and fill it with fresh, frozen, or canned vegetables.
- **Load up on flavor** – Try spicy pepper jack cheese on broccoli for extra zest.
- **Wake up your senses** – Start your day the "Three-A-Day" way by mixing granola with a high-fiber whole-grain cereal and top with low-fat milk.
- **For a healthy snack attack** – Pop a plastic spoon into an individual serving of yogurt.
- **Make it a mocha** -- Fill an ice cube

tray with chocolate milk, and freeze. When the mocha mood hits, fill a tall glass with the frozen chocolate milk cubes and pour cold leftover coffee over the cubes.

- **Don't forget dessert** – But make it a healthy one by dipping fresh fruit in vanilla yogurt.
- **Sandwiched for time?** – Increase nutrition by substituting plain yogurt for mayonnaise in tuna or egg salad.
- **For the chocolate lover in you** — Substitute ½ cup plain fat free yogurt for oil and eggs when preparing boxed brownie mix.

*For more tips on "Ways to Increase Consumption of Milk and Milk Products," see Table E-11 in the Dietary Guidelines" at <http://www.health.gov/dietaryguidelines>, or call Gloria Wolf, University of Minnesota Nutrition Education Assistant, at (952) 492-5389.

4-H offers youth camps

Camping opportunities are available to all Scott County youth! Join other 4-H members (and also non 4-Hers) from Blue Earth, Faribault, Le Sueur, Waseca, Freeborn, Mower, Rice, Steele, Carver, Scott, Nicollet, McLeod and Sibley Counties at 4-H Camp located at Camp Patterson in Mankato, Minnesota.

♦ **Youth Camp:** Youth camp for kids in 3rd to 6th grade will be held **June 14-16**. The cost of camp is \$75 per 4-H member and \$85 for non 4-H members. At youth camp, kids will have the opportunity to explore several sessions on technology, nature, creative arts, science, canoeing, swimming, and much more!

♦ **Teen Camp:** Teen camp will be held for 6th to 8th graders on **June 16-18**. The cost for camp is \$80 per 4-H member and \$90 for non 4-H members. At teen camp, youth will have the opportunity to attend activities on technology, teambuilding, service projects, natural resources, creative arts, canoeing, swimming, and much more!

The registration deadline for camp is May 21 — space is limited, so don't wait to get signed up! These camps are open for all youth and *you do not need to be in 4-H to attend*. Call the Scott County Extension Office at (952) 492-5410 or e-mail Abby Wagner at torg0016@umn.edu for more information.

Food for Fitness and Fun Avoid portion control mistakes

With all the concern about obesity in the United States, we need to focus upon *how much* we eat as well as *what* we eat. Here are some tips.

1. Beverages – Most people need two to four or more quarts of water per day... soda and other beverages with sugar and/or fat provide a lot of unnecessary calories. Water is the best choice!

2. Crackers and chips – These are very easy to grab and eat on the go, but they are calorie dense. A serving size of just an ounce (about one handful) is very small. Make sure you have fruits and vegetables for grab and go snacks, too.

3. Baked goods – Most baked goods look normal, when they are actually huge sizes. Cookies or cake for sale in most bakeries are upwards of 500 calories. By contrast, an apple is just 80 calories.

4. Fried foods — Frying food doubles the calories of just about any food versus eating it plain. Choose foods that are grilled, poached, baked, or roasted.

5. Pizza – Eating pizza until full can lead to two to three times the amount you should eat. Remember to go light on the cheese and start out with a large salad first.



6. Salad – Many people get into trouble with salad in two ways. First, they load up on high-fat ingredients like mayonnaise-laden dressings, cheese, croutons, or bacon. Second, they tend to eat too little of the salad

itself. Eat more salad, but make it low in fat.

7. Meat – Cuts of meat from a store or restaurant are often bigger than a three-ounce serving. Make sure your portion of meat, chicken, or fish fills just one-fourth of the plate.



Quick Portion Guide

- 1. Beverages** – a "fist" is about a cup
- 2. Crackers and chips** – a handful is about one ounce
- 3. Baked goods** – two fingers are about 150 calories; size of a palm is 500 calories
- 4. Fried food** – Limit or omit
- 5. Pizza** – take one slice, and fill up on salad that is low in fat
- 6. Salad** – make it big and low in fat
- 7. Meat** – the size of a deck of cards.

Source – *Communicating Food for Health*

Five Easy Ways to Trim 100 Calories

1. Swap an eight-ounce regular soft drink for a diet soft drink.
 2. Drink two cups of fat-free milk instead of two cups of whole.
 3. Use one tablespoon of mustard or ketchup or one tablespoon of fat-free mayo instead of one tablespoon of regular mayo.
 4. Split a small bag of french fries with a friend.
 5. Cut apple pie pieces 30 percent smaller (e.g., into eight slices, not six).
- Source: Barb Anderson, ISU Extension Nutrition Program Specialist

For more information on nutritional eating contact Gloria Wolf, University of Minnesota Nutrition Education Assistant.

Right foods help prevent vision loss, diseases

Age-related macular degeneration (AMD) is the *number one cause of blindness* for people age 55 or older in the United States. By 2020, it is estimated that perhaps *three million Americans* will have late-stage AMD in which there is a significant loss of their central vision.

In effect, AMD sufferers have a blind spot in the middle of their visual field making reading, driving, and face recognition difficult — if not impossible. About 90 percent have what doctors call the "dry" form of the disease, for which there are no effective drug or surgical treatments. The less common "wet" form of AMD can be slowed with surgery, including laser treatments, but there is no lasting cure.

Current research in the area of AMD is showing an association between fat and eye health. A little of the right fat is good: This includes fat from extra virgin olive oil, nuts, and omega-3 rich fish (salmon, trout, tuna, mackerel). It just takes one to two servings of each per week, according to recent studies. By including these fats in your diet in small amounts — while largely avoiding fats from meat and dairy products and refined oils — you are assured of an adequate intake of essential fatty acids without getting so much total fat that



accelerates weight gain, diabetes, some cancers, as well as AMD.

Choose a heart-healthy diet that is high in fiber and low in fat, sugar and refined carbohydrates to lower your risk for diseases which increase risk of AMD: Diabetes, dyslipidemia, and high blood pressure. You should get plenty of physical activity to control your weight, but limit your eyes' exposure to sunlight.

Avoid eating foods that are rich in trans-fatty acids. These include cookies, crackers, desserts, chips, and fried foods made with trans-fat rich oils.

Eating a diet that has plenty of antioxidant-rich fruits and vegetables is also a good idea. Green, leafy vegetables and some yellow fruits and vegetables are excellent sources of *lutein* and *zeaxanthin* — both plant chemicals that help protect the macular from sun damage.

Call Gloria Wolf, University of Minnesota Extension Nutrition Education Assistant, at (952) 492-5389 for additional nutrition information.

Source: *Communicating Food for Health*, July 2008



Participants in the 4-H Metro Art Force program will choose from a variety of classes including tissue paper painting, watercolor painting, plaster cloth sculpture, fabric collage, twig sculpture, oil pastels on tiles, broken pottery, and more.

4-H Metro Art Force includes programs for youth, adult artists

Do you like art? Come to the 4-H Metro Art Force on Saturday April 24 at the Farmington Regional Center (from 8:30 a.m. to 12:45 p.m.)!

Metro Art Force is a special art program for youth artists and their families. If you can't get enough of creating things, want to learn new techniques, and have the patience to practice those skills, then you need to register for the Art Force Workshop. The classes are open to all youth and adults; you do not need

to be a 4-H member to attend.

The cost of the workshop is \$20 for 4-H Members and \$30 for non-members. At Metro Art Force, you get to pick from a variety of classes including tissue paper painting, watercolor painting, plaster cloth sculpture, fabric collage, twig sculptures, oil pastels on tiles, broken pottery, and much more.

For more information or to register for this workshop, call (651) 480-7754 by April 15.

Scott County 4-H Junior Leaders In the Spotlight

Kellie Bohlke

School: New Prague High School
Grade: 11th grade
4-H Club: Youth Teaching Youth
Years in 4-H: One
Years as Junior Leader: One
Parents: Steve and Carmen Bohlke
Projects of Interest: Youth Teaching Youth



Kellie Bohlke

Kellie Bohlke is a Scott County 4-H Outstanding Youth Leader this month for Youth Teaching Youth. This is Kellie's first year as a teen teacher, and she has been visiting the 6th graders at St. Wenceslaus Catholic School in New Prague. She — along with Andrea Wick and Patrick O'Dell — have been teaching the 6th graders about making wise decisions, peer pressure, refusal skills, alcohol and tobacco, avoiding cliques and bullies, and how to have healthy relationships with friends.

Kellie will be serving "Mock Cocktails" at the Scott County Pork Producers Banquet in March on behalf of the Youth Teaching Youth Program. Kellie is a great role model to her peers and community.

Cassie Fennern

School: Shakopee High School
Grade: 11th grader
4-H Club: Youth Teaching Youth
Parents: Ramona and Brian Fennern
Years in 4-H: Three years
Projects of Interest: Youth Teaching Youth



Cassie Fennern

Some teens are natural teachers and public speakers, and Cassie is definitely one of them. Cassie has been a teen teacher since she was in 9th grade. In the past three years, she has visited many of the elementary classrooms in Scott County teaching the students about alcohol and tobacco and conflict resolution. Cassie brings enthusiasm and energy to the classrooms, getting the students involved in the lessons.

Cassie is a great role model to her peers and often helps new teen teachers feel comfortable in the classroom. Cassie takes the time to connect with the many elementary students that she teaches so they know that she really cares that they are safe and having fun!

101 teens serve as role models in Youth Teaching Youth Program

Have you been looking for a positive teen role model in your community? Here are 101 outstanding teenagers that have been visiting elementary students in Scott County and teaching them about saying *no* to peer pressure; the truth about alcohol, tobacco, and advertisements; learning ways to solve conflict without fighting; and developing positive characters. If you are a 9th-12th grader in a Shakopee, New Prague, Belle Plaine, Jordan, or Prior Lake/Savage high schools and are interested in teaching elementary-age students, contact Sara Wagner at the Scott County Extension Office at (952) 492-5410.

Jordan Teen Teachers

Jeffery Stocker
Cora Schmitz

Prior Lake/Savage Teachers

Kaitlin Bembek
Raymond Elder
Neha Sinha
Jessie Tremmel
Erin Randall
Jessica Bravo
Brianna Leibnitz
Leigh Braun
Shannon Tell
Sara Tell
Ellie Ferdwsi
Bailey Hoffman
Sarah Condon
Rachel Funke

New Prague Teachers

Kami Kangas
Marenda Kouch
Rachel VonBank
Gabby Ryan
Kellie Bohlke
Joe Klehr
Tate Murchison
Patrick O'Dell
Rena Weis
Andrea Wick

Shakopee Teachers

Shannon Bowerman
Jessica Algoo
Sarah McAllister

Lina Libra
Sarah Martel
Taylor Fritchley
Tracy Bruels
Amanda Abu-Salen
Courtney Cramblit
Robyn Anderson
Sam Perea
Nate Merkes
Kayla Perea
Brooke Vierling
Jasmine Mercado
Isis Rodriguez
Brittany Bonsante
Jenna Algoo
Amelia Hames
Elizabeth Olsen
Milinis Johnson
Shelby Kessler
Ashley Miller
Jean Theis
Rachel Roemer
Kelly Clemens
Marissa Klein
Cayla Simon
Vonnick Boyogueno
Madeline Laux
Bluthie Dickens
Nicole Mohrbacher
Mikayla Peterson
Jessie Duvall
Kelly Theis
Jennifer Kim
Natalie Prak
Himal Purani
Jenna Lee
Lucinda Akomeah

Shahkala Sandridge
Bruce Douglas
Jenny Phat
Meagan Spot
Madison DeJarlais
Ashley Bohr
Allie Johnson
Sara Chmlelewski
Tori Monnens
Kristen Adams
Alexandra Poland
Sierra Lobby
Kendra Koesters
Christina Swanson
Victoria Iverson
Rebecca Kickert
Christina Bangar
Emily Potter
Sam North
Hannah Tammen
Mike Rimnac
Sydney Walsh
Rachel Theis
Chelsea VanLoon
Alex Fernholz
Jane Keohen
Samantha Horner
Corbin Walters
Cassie Fennern
Mollie Geske
Kara Kranz
Janet Tabakov
Emerald Pias-Peterson
Courtney Drill
Darian Buel

Scott /Carver County 4-H Project Night set for May 7

Have you ever wanted to explore the possibilities that 4-H has to offer in a one-day session? Then don't miss out on the opportunity to explore 4-H on Friday, May 7, from 6 to 8 p.m. at the Carver County Extension Office in Cologne. At the project night, we will be exploring a variety of project areas; you will have the opportunity to sign up for three different classes to get a feel for what 4-H is all about. The classes include:

- **Gardening** — We all know plants need... water, soil, and air to grow. But what else is there? We'll be adventuring to the next level in gardening in this workshop!
- **Felting with Wool** — Learn how to master the art of wool felting. Felting wool has endless possibilities for projects: you can felt shapes (such as purses) that are seamless and don't require sewing. In this class we will start with the basics and make a bracelet.
- **Decorative Tiles** — Learn how to make beautiful tile coasters out of travertine tiles and decorative napkins.

This is a simple and fun craft that you will be able to take home to use or to give as a gift.

- **Pets** — Have you ever thought about an exotic pet? How do you know if a pet is right for you? Are you meeting all of their needs? Some pets may be joining us to explore the different birds out there. (Please do not bring your pet with you this evening.)
- **Model Rockets** — Come and build a simple model rocket. No painting required. We will talk about the *dos* and *don'ts* of model rockets.
- **Model Airplanes** — *Up, up, and away* with your very own balsam wood model airplane! We will build our own model airplanes and examine how to fly them. If there is enough interest, we will continue this project in future days this 4-H year.

The cost for the project night is only \$5, so don't wait to get registered... the classes will fill up fast. To register, call (952) 466-5300 or e-mail torg0016@umn.edu.

EmergenSCENE

By Chris Weldon
Scott County Emergency Manager



EMS Week acknowledges providers

Throughout the year, we have many different types of celebrations and remembrances. They range from very personal and private anniversaries to highly public observances. One week per year is set aside to honor a group of hard working and dedicated people, our Emergency Medical Services (EMS) personnel.

Known as **National Emergency Medical Services (EMS) Week**, this recognition is set aside for EMS staff in acknowledgement of their hard work and for their caring response. EMS Week is meant to honor the people nationwide who deliver this lifesaving care in our time of need.

This year, the week of May 16 through May 22 has been set aside to recognize these highly trained and committed individuals in our communities. This year's theme, "Anytime. Anywhere. We'll Be There" emphasizes that commitment.

The citizens of Scott County are fortunate to be served by a number of excellent EMS services. These providers include the New Prague, Northfield, Mdewakanton, Allina, and Ridgeview Ambulance Services. The members of these services are dedicated, professional, and caring EMS providers. They work and train hard in order to provide the best pre-hospital care to residents of the County.

Scott County Emergency Management would like to take this opportunity to thank these folks for their service to our County. We know that we can call 911 in a medical emergency and someone will show up to help take care of us... and because of their professionalism and reliability, we also sometimes take for granted how hard it is for these responders to reach and maintain the level of competence necessary before we see them.

The skills needed for this job are not something that can be learned in a short time. Hours of attendance in the classroom, study at home, and testing are necessary before they can go in the field for additional practical training. Only after completing *all* these requirements are they ready for service in an ambulance.

These providers spend time working in our communities helping to improve our quality of life. They also work together in order to form partnerships that may be needed for responses to large incidents. These partnerships are necessary during mutual aid calls that may involve a large number of patients and also include hospitals, emergency physicians, and public health providers.

Improving and maintaining skills through ongoing training, meetings, and sharing experiences is fundamental in reaching their goal of providing top notch, "pre-hospital" care. Resolving common problems and gaining input from the people they serve is also a part of their commitment to service in their communities.

Remember, regardless of the day, time, weather, or other events, if there is a call to help someone with an injury or medical condition, EMS responders are there to provide immediate lifesaving care and transportation. Please support them whenever possible, and sometimes a simple thank you can make a big difference.

Severe Weather Awareness Week

Another yearly observance that Emergency Management would like you to be aware of is **Severe Weather Awareness Week**. This runs from April 19 through the 23, and is sponsored by Minnesota Homeland Security Emergency Management (HSEM). Emergency Management uses this week to help teach Minnesotans about weather hazards and to provide resources to help minimize the risks associated with severe weather.

The HSEM website covers different topics each day. There is information on the site about the types of summer weather we experience here in Minnesota, such as thunderstorms, hail, straight-line winds, heat waves, severe weather warnings, and flooding. This information can be found at <http://www.severeweather.state.mn.us/index.asp>.

One of the events being held during this week includes **annual tornado drills**.



There are two drills being conducted on Thursday, April 22, one in the afternoon starting at 1:45 p.m. and one in the evening at 6:55 p.m. *You will hear the outdoor warning sirens going off at these times.*

You might ask why the sirens are set off twice. If they go off the first time, we know everything is working... right? Well, you would be right about sirens working, but there is more to the drill than testing

sirens. The drill that occurs on Thursday afternoon allows for and encourages schools, businesses, and other facilities to conduct a tornado drill at this time in order to practice their tornado sheltering plans.

The reason for a 6:55 p.m. drill is that severe weather, including tornadoes, occurs most often between 3 and 8 p.m. The 1:45 p.m. drill gives institutions, first-shift and day workers a time to practice, but it does not allow second-shift workers the same opportunity. The 6:55 p.m. tornado drill gives these workers and businesses the same opportunity to practice their plans and also allows families time to discuss and exercise their sheltering plans.

Summer weather can be a great time for family fun and time with friends. But it's also the season when you should be alert to the weather situations that can develop during this time of the year. Be aware of watches and warnings in your area by watching the sky, listening to the radio, watching television, or by purchasing a NOAA weather alert radio.

Use Severe Weather Awareness Week to brush up on summer weather skills and to practice your preparedness plans. Identify the shelter areas at your work, school, and home. Develop a communication plan if severe weather occurs and your family is not together. Put a kit together so you can help yourself if the power goes out or damage occurs in your neighborhood.

A little personal preparedness now may go a long way towards helping with your safety and comfort if or when severe summer weather takes place.

Agencies partner to hire County Water Resource Education Coordinator

The Scott Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) in Jordan welcomed a new employee this month. **Dan Miller** of Minneapolis has been hired as the Water Resource Education Coordinator to provide educational services throughout Scott County regarding stormwater pollution prevention strategies.

Miller's position was made possible through a collaborative partnership between the SWCD and seven other units of government, for the purpose of providing a coordinated, cost-effective approach to meeting common water education goals and mandates. Partners include Scott Watershed Management Organization, Prior Lake Spring Lake Watershed District, Vermillion River Watershed Joint Powers Organization, City of Prior Lake, Spring Lake Township, Credit River Township, and Jackson Township.

Miller began his duties on February 3. His first charge will be collaborating with partner representatives on establishing specific goals, objectives, and action steps for the joint program. Through education, citizens, community groups, elected officials, and government staff alike will learn more about actions they can take to improve the County's lakes, rivers and wetlands.

Prior to his work at the District, Miller worked with the Ramsey-Washington Metro Watershed District in the permit program, assisting landowners



Dan Miller

with maintaining stormwater best management practices. He also worked at the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency in the Prevention and Assistance Division, focusing on pollution prevention projects.

Miller grew up in Hastings and received his bachelor's degree in mass communications from St. Cloud State University and a bachelor of science degree in conservation and resource management from the University of Minnesota, Twin Cities. He and his wife **Alyssa** live in south Minneapolis. In his spare time, he enjoys fishing, hunting, camping and cross-country skiing.

"I am enjoying meeting and working with the citizens of Scott County to help prevent pollution of our local lakes rivers and wetlands," Miller noted. "There are many improvements we can make on our lawns and landscapes such as rain gardens, native gardens, and proper maintenance that can add up to great improvements to our water resources." For more information, he can be reached at the Scott SWCD office in Jordan at (952) 492-5424 or by e-mail dmiller@co.scott.mn.us.

Scott SWCD to sell rain barrels to County residents

The Scott Soil and Water Conservation District in Jordan has had great response from Scott County residents who are interested in purchasing rain barrels for water conservation on their properties. In response to the interest, the Scott SWCD is selling 55-gallon rain barrels for homes and businesses at a cost of \$65.

The environmental benefits of rain barrels are many:

- Rain barrel-gathered water is not subject to community watering restrictions.
- Rain barrels provide naturally soft water with no additives to irritate your plants.
- You can save money on your water bill.
- This conservation effort reduces water pollution in our rivers and lakes by reducing stormwater run-off.
- You can save money on your sewage treatment bill by decreasing the amount of water going into the sewer system.
- This water-saving effort decreases energy consumption used to treat wastewater and delay building/expanding wastewater treatment plants.

Instructions on placement and use will be provided at the pick-up site. **Pre-paid orders for rain barrels must be placed by Friday, April 23.** The barrels will come assembled and ready to install and use, with pickup scheduled from **9 to 11 a.m. Saturday, May 1.**



Pre-paid orders for the 55-gallon rain barrels must be placed with Scott SWCD before April 23. They will be available for pickup on Saturday, May 1 between 9 and 11 a.m.

All orders will include instructions for placement and usage as well as benefits and suggestions for rain-barrel care. Cash or checks will be accepted.

For more information or order forms, contact Diane Hrabe, Communications Specialist, Scott SWCD, 7151 West 190th Street, Suite 125, Jordan, Minnesota, 55352, or (952) 492-5416. You may also get a copy of the rain barrel order form by visiting the District website at www.scottswcd.org.

Help protect lakes when caring for lawns

It's a common urge in Minnesota... As soon as the weather warms up, we all want to get out into the yard and start working on *something*. After all, the season is short, and we all want to make the most of it! As you head out with shovel and rake in hand, remember that how we care for our yard affects the health of our rivers, lakes, and wetlands.

According to Dan Miller, Coordinator of the Scott County Joint Stormwater Education Program, rainwater running off our property into the streets and into storm drains – the metal grates in street curbs – can carry soil, nutrients, bacteria, and other harmful materials into the waters we love. “We can all become storm-drain savvy by following some basic yard-care tips for cleaner water,” he noted.

◆ **Dump no waste!** *Never* use storm drains for disposing materials such as engine oil, antifreeze, or cleaners. When you wash your car, wash it on your lawn so dirt and soap doesn't run into the storm drain. The same goes for cleaning lawn equipment and tools.

◆ **Keep soil in place!** Soil eroding from your yard fills in wetlands and clogs rivers and lake bottoms. In addition to destroying wildlife habitat, soil carries phosphorus — the plant nutrient that turns lakes green with algae. Cover bare areas of soil immediately with mulch, and plant to a suitable cover. Soil piles from landscaping and construction projects may be covered with tarps to keep them from washing away. Be especially careful when planting boulevard gardens so soil does not enter the street.

◆ **Rake up and sweep up!** Grass clippings and tree seeds and leaves are also sources of phosphorus, which is released into water when they decompose. Mow so grass clippings are directed back into the lawn and *not* into the street. When done mowing, sweep



How we care for our yards affects the health of our water. Sweeping up lawn clippings prevents phosphorus from entering lakes and reduces pea soup-green algae blooms.

sidewalks, driveways, and streets clean of grass clippings. When fall comes, rake the street clean of leaves along with your yard. Sweep up leftover sand and salt from winter applications and save it to reuse next winter.

◆ **Pick up after pets!** In addition to containing phosphorus, pet waste contains bacteria that can lead to beach closings. Collect pet waste in plastic bags and

place in the trash or flush down the toilet. *Never* use storm drains for disposing pet waste.

◆ **Soak up the rain!** Natural landscapes soak up rain like a sponge. As we create hard surfaces like roofs, roads, and parking lots, the amount of rainwater soaking in decreases and the amount of rainwater running off increases. The result is more flooding and more polluted runoff. When possible, direct your downspouts onto vegetated areas where water can soak in. If you're adventurous, you can create a rain garden — a shallow depression designed to capture and soak up rainwater.

◆ **Follow the law!** *Minnesota law prohibits the use of lawn fertilizer containing phosphorus, except when seeding a new lawn or a soil test shows need for phosphorus fertilization.* Visit the Minnesota Department of Agriculture website on the no-phosphorus fertilizer law: www.mda.state.mn.us/phoslaw. The law also requires that you follow label directions when using pesticides. Doing so will protect you, others, and our waters, and makes sure the plants you are trying to protect are not damaged.

These tips can be summarized in the phrase, “Only rain down the drain.” When rainwater runs off your property, make sure it enters the storm drain clean and not carrying pollutants it has picked up along the way. You can learn more about these tips by visiting the *Minnesota Water – Let's Keep it Clean* website at www.cleanwatermn.org.

“Water is important to life in Minnesota – the land of 10,000 lakes. Let's do our part to protect the water that makes spring – and all the other seasons – so special,” Miller summed up.

Tips for keeping your car – and our water – clean

Please remember... Don't dirty our water while washing your car! Wash water that reaches storm sewers ends up untreated in nearby lakes, rivers, and wetlands.

- Use a commercial car wash; wash water in a commercial car wash goes to the sanitary sewer and is treated.
- Use a biodegradable and phosphorus-free soap; take time to read the labels.
- Wash your car on gravel, grass, or other surface that will soak up wash water. Take care to avoid compacting soil or damaging tree roots.
- Pour your bucket of wash water onto the lawn or landscape, not in the driveway or street.



Cost-share rates up to 90 percent available for conservation practices

Due to our heavy snow cover, runoff in agricultural fields will likely cause significant erosion damage throughout Scott County this spring. Conservation practices — such as water and sediment control basins, grassed waterways, terraces and grade-stabilization structures — may be installed to address these erosion concerns.

Water and sediment control basins used to control cropland erosion have proven to be very popular with farmers in Minnesota. These are short, earthen dams constructed across seasonal gullies. They help landowners by reducing

runoff, erosion, sediment migration, and runoff to adjacent water bodies.

The maximum cost-share funding for these basins has been raised to up to 90 percent. Cost-share assistance rates for grade-stabilization structures are currently at 90 percent, with grassed waterway and terrace funding assistance at a maximum of 75 percent.

The Scott Soil and Water Conservation District staff is available to address any erosion concerns with landowners. Call (952) 492-5425 or visit the SWCD office, which is located at the Scott County Fairgrounds in Jordan.

Spring yard problems?

Call the Master Gardeners Yard and Garden Hotline at (952) 466-5308.

Water quality, sediment problems discussed with landowners along waters

The health of many waterways in the Prior Lake and Spring Lake Watersheds, the Vermillion River Watershed, and the Sand Creek Watershed in Scott County is compromised. (Watersheds are areas within which all precipitation and snowmelt drain to a particular waterbody.) Presently, water quality in these areas often does not meet state standards, and sediment from urban and farm runoff is impairing fish and other aquatic species habitat. Changes in land use have also caused many sections of the rivers and tributaries to become eroded and very unstable.

From January through March, landowners within these watersheds were invited to attend one-on-one meetings with Scott Soil and Water Conservation District (SWCD) and Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) staff. So far, more than 50 landowners have at-

tended these informational meetings held throughout the County. They specifically reviewed maps of their properties, identified potential trouble spots, and discussed opportunities to make conservation improvements. Conservation staff also shared information on potential funding sources available to help landowners achieve their stewardship goals. Projects to receive funding through Scott WMO, Scott SWCD, and NRCS will be those that will encourage the waters to heal naturally.

The meetings allowed landowners to discuss their land stewardship goals and find out how to meet their goals, while protecting natural resources. If you are interested in discussing potential conservation needs and funding opportunities for your land, contact the Scott SWCD office in Jordan at (952) 492-5425.

Free erosion and sediment control workshops slated

This spring, the Scott Soil and Water Conservation District in Jordan will host informational workshops on erosion and sediment control requirements at the Scott County Government Center. Open to the public, these workshops have been ongoing since 2005. During the workshops, the following information will be presented: An overview of ESC regulations and compliances, examples of effective erosion control practices, and discussions on common construction site situations. The workshops are *free* and offered to anyone involved with land-disturbance activities.

No registration is required. The workshops will be held in Room 112 at

the Scott County Government Center, located at 200 Fourth Avenue West in Shakopee. The meeting, beginning at 1 p.m. will be held on two dates – **Wednesday, May 5**, and **Wednesday, July 7**. For further information, call Doug Schoenecker or Ryan Holzer at the Scott SWCD office at (952) 492-5425.

The Scott SWCD staff wants to thank the attendees from the 2009 workshops: Department of Natural Resources Trails and Waterways Division; residents of Shakopee, City of New Prague, and Cedar Lake Township; and the Scott County Community Development Division.

Safety SCENE

From the Office of
Sheriff Kevin Studnicka



Don't drive when sleepy

The majority of drivers are aware of the dangers associated with drinking and driving. But many don't know or fail to realize that driving while *asleep or drowsy* can be just as dangerous as driving while drug and/or alcohol impaired. Just like alcohol and drugs, sleepiness slows reaction time, decreases awareness, impairs judgment, and increases the risk of a crash.

A study by researchers in Australia showed that being awake for 18 hours produced an impairment equal to a blood alcohol concentration (BAC) of .05. After 24 hours of sleeplessness, impairment was equal to a .10 BAC. Note: Having a blood alcohol concentration of .08 is considered legally drunk!

Drowsy driving can mean literally falling asleep at the wheel, or simply not paying close enough attention to one's driving and roadway conditions due to fatigue or sleep deprivation. Much of the research into sleepiness focuses on the human "biological clock" which tells you when it's lunchtime, give you pep at certain times of the day, zaps your energy at other times, and affects your body temperature. Most people's clocks run on a daily "circadian" rhythm of approximately 24 hours, but individual "body time" varies from person to person.

"Morning people" feel most alert in the early part of the day, while "night people" feel at their peak much later in the day. Many teenagers and young adults have clocks that make it easy for them to stay up late and sleep late. As people get older, they tend to go to bed earlier and wake up earlier.

Certain times of the day are danger zones for fatigue. For example, almost everyone's biological clock is programmed to make them feel sleepy in the middle of the afternoon. Many fatigue-related collisions occur between 1 and 4 p.m. during this afternoon lull. Nighttime is especially risky for drivers. Most people are programmed to sleep when it's dark, and sleep becomes irresistible late at night.

According to recent research by the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA), of the drivers surveyed:

- ◆ *Thirty seven percent* have fallen asleep at the wheel;
- ◆ *Eight percent* have done so in the past six months; and
- ◆ *Sixty percent* have done so while driving on a highway with posted speeds of 55 mph or higher.

Who is most at risk for drowsy driving?

Young Adults: People 16 – 24 years of age typically require an average of 9.2 hours of sleep per night. However, due to a variety of factors, young adults often get less sleep than they need.

Commercial Motor Vehicle Drivers (truck drivers): In addition to the high number of miles spent driving, truckers often drive at night when the body is exceptionally tired.

Shift workers: Shift work is not natural to the body's circadian rhythm. A person's biological clock is naturally programmed to sleep during the night. It is normal to experience a dip in alertness in mid-afternoon, and a much stronger dip in alertness between 2 and 6 a.m. when sleep is most irresistible. Shift workers may also be required to sleep in noisy daytime environments. At times, they may be obligated to attend family or social events during the day, further depriving them of sleep.

Driving Sleepy Quiz

1. Do you get drowsy after meals?

- a. Rarely; b. Often after breakfast or dinner; c. Often after lunch

If you picked: a) give yourself 0 points; b) 10 points; c) 20 points. Why so many points if you get drowsy after lunch? If you're getting enough sleep, you shouldn't get sleepy after any meal, especially lunch.

2. How long does it take you to fall asleep?

- a. Ten to fifteen minutes; b. Twenty minutes or more; c. Five minutes or less, as soon as your head hits the pillow

If you picked: a) give yourself 0 points; b) 10 points; c) 20 points. Falling asleep as soon as your head hits the pillow is actually a bad sign. It should take you 10 to 15 minutes. If it's less, you are seriously sleep deprived and at very high risk for falling asleep at the wheel.

3. On weekends, do you:

- a. Sleep the same number of hours as during the week; b. Sleep longer

If you picked: a) give yourself 0 points; b) 10 points. If you have to sleep longer on the weekends, you have what is called a "sleep debt" and your body is trying to catch up on the sleep you've cheated yourself out of all week.

4. How many nights a week do you feel you don't get enough sleep?

- a. 0 – 2 nights; b. 3 – 4 nights; c. 5 – 7 nights

If you picked: a) add 5 points; b) 10 points; c) 20 points. As the nights add up, so does your sleep debt and the more hazardous you become on the road.

5. In the morning, do you:

- a. Get up without an alarm clock; b. Need an alarm clock to wake up
c. Have to keep hitting the snooze button

If you picked: a) give yourself 0 points; b) 5 points; c) 10 points. If you're getting enough sleep, you should be able to wake up without the help of an alarm clock. If you have to keep hitting the snooze button, you're not getting enough shuteye.

6. This time, you can pick more than one answer. Pick all that apply.

Do you get sleepy:

- a. Only at bedtime; b. On airplanes or as a passenger in a vehicle;
c. Reading or watching TV; d. In meetings or at the movies; e. Stopped in traffic

If you picked: a) give yourself 0 points; b) 5 points; c) 10 points; d) 20 points; e) 20 points. So why all the points for feeling drowsy at the movies? Well, believe it or not, most adults do need eight hours of sleep. If you feel drowsy during the day, you're not getting enough sleep. If you feel drowsy at the movies or someplace with a lot of activity, then take it as a warning sign: You're definitely not getting enough sleep!

7. Do you snore?

- a. Never; b. Sometimes; c. Often and loudly

If you picked: a) give yourself 0 points; b) 5 points; c) 20 points. If you snore a lot, there's a good possibility you actually have a sleep disorder. An astounding 30 million Americans have sleep disorders they don't even know about.

8. What is your age?

- a. 16 – 29: add 20 points; b. 30 – 60: add 10 points; c. 61 or older: add 0 points.

The younger you are, the more sleep you need.

9. You've just finished work, you're beat, and you've got a long drive home ahead of you. What would you do?

- a. Hit the road right away; b. Try to relax a little by stopping for one quick nightcap; c. Stop for a meal that might include a couple of drinks

If you picked: a) give yourself 5 points; b) or c) 20 points. If your strategy is to use a little alcohol for an extra burst of energy, you've got the wrong idea. In fact, sleepiness and alcohol make a deadly combination. When you're tired, having *one* drink is dangerous. It can make you feel and act as though you've had three or four drinks!

10. Is your drive home:

- a. Very short, or you don't drive to work; b. Mostly country roads;
c. Mostly city roads; d. Mostly suburban roads; e. Mostly freeways

If you picked: a) give yourself 0 points; b), c), or d) add 10 points; e) add 20 points. When you're tired, boring drives — especially long stretches of freeway — make you particularly vulnerable to dozing off behind the wheel.

11. It's late on Friday night and you've got a six-hour drive to get to your vacation spot by Saturday morning. What would you do?

- a. Get a good night sleep and wait until morning to leave; b. Take a nap, then get up at 3 a.m. to make the drive; c. Drive through the night.

If you picked: a) give yourself 0 points; b) or c) 20 points. Driving all night is *never* a good idea. Your body thinks it should be asleep, and your reaction ability is likely to be off. Even getting up at 3 a.m. isn't smart. Most people's body clocks don't wind up again until after about 6 a.m.

12. You're on the road, making that long trip and you feel a little sleepy — so you pull over to grab some food. What do you get?

- a. A cup or two of coffee; b. Fast food, like hamburgers and fries
c. Sugar-loaded snacks; d. A full meal

If you picked: a) give yourself 5 points; b) – d) add 20 points. Surprise, it makes no difference what kind of food you choose. *None* of it will help keep you awake. And caffeine junkies — whether you get it from espresso, soda, or pills — it won't work either. Two cups might jolt you awake for about 30 minutes, but because caffeine content varies so much, and everyone reacts differently to it, relying on it is a huge problem.

13. You're back on the road and still feel tired so you try turning up the radio. What do you listen to?

- a. Something mellow; b. Something loud and energetic; c. A talk show or sports game; d. You leave the radio off

Whichever answer you picked, give yourself 20 points. Like food, the radio will do absolutely *nothing* to keep you awake, no matter what you listen to. You may be jolted awake temporarily, but as soon as your body adjusts to the noise level, your sleepiness will take over again.

14. You can pick more than one answer for this question. Pick all that apply. When you feel tired on the road, what do you usually do to stay awake?

- a. Pull over to take a short walk or do some roadside exercise; b. Slap your face; c. Talk or sing; d. Blast the air conditioning; e. Open the window

If you picked: a) give yourself 10 points; if you picked b), c), d), or e), add 20 points. *None* of these commonly used tricks will work. Although pulling over for some exercise will at least get you off the road, as soon as you get back in the car, you'll start feeling sleepy again.

15. It's two hours into your drive and you still have four hours to go. You're feeling very tired, your eyes are getting heavy, and you even feel your head bob. What would you do?

- a. Pull over and nap for 30 – 45 minutes; b. Pull over for a quick catnap;
c. Get off the road for a few minutes

If you picked: a) give yourself 5 points; b) 10 points; c) 20 points. The truth is, if you've waited this long to get off the road, it's too late. As soon as you start feeling tired, you need to pull over and take a good long nap. When you're this tired, you should never be behind the wheel.

FINAL SCORE: Add up your point total:

- ◆ 0 – 75 points: You are at minimal risk for falling asleep at the wheel,
- ◆ 80 – 150 points: you are at moderate risk for falling asleep at the wheel,
- ◆ 155 – 375 points: You are at **severe** risk for falling asleep at the wheel.

If your score puts you in either the moderate or severe category, you should immediately re-evaluate your sleep habits. **Sleeping is the only way to reduce sleepiness.** Sleepiness causes auto crashes because it impairs performance and can ultimately lead to the inability to resist falling asleep at the wheel.

Library News

Legacy Amendment funds provide unique library programs

In November 2008, Minnesota voters approved a constitutional amendment to dedicate funds for Minnesota's Outdoor Heritage, Clean Water, Parks and Trails, and Arts and Cultural Heritage. Under the Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund (ACHF), Minnesota's 300-plus public libraries receive funding to provide programs and services in four areas: arts (visual, performing and media), culture, literary history, and Minnesota history. The law states that these funds are intended "...for regional programs and working with arts and cultural partners."

So far, the Scott County branch libraries hosted award-winning movies during *Roll Out the Red Carpet*: Celebrating Oscar Movies and Books Together*. From March 19-28, *Needle and Thread: A Celebration of Creative Needlework and Fiber Arts* combined the biennial quilt show offered by local quilting groups with demonstrations of various needle crafts. *Spring Break Workshops for Kids and Teens* presented students in each of the branch libraries with the opportunity to work on art projects.

The next set of programs is called *Ink Slingers: Writers in the Libraries*. Join us this spring for some exciting evenings with local authors at all the Scott County libraries. Come to your local library (and travel to other Scott County libraries!) to hear these fascinating writers talk about their work:

Elko New Market

Monday, April 12 at 7 p.m.

Stanley Gordon West, *Until they Bring the Streetcars Back*

Prior Lake

Tuesday, April 13 at 7 p.m.

David Housewright, author of the "Mac McKenzie" mysteries

Jordan

Monday, April 19 at 7 p.m.

Tom Melchior, former teacher and local author

Belle Plaine

Thursday, April 29 at 6:30 p.m.

John Toren, *The Seven States of Minnesota*

Prior Lake

Tuesday, May 11 at 7 p.m.

Trish Herbert, *Journeywell: A Guide to Quality Aging*

For more details, visit the Library web site (www.scott.lib.mn.us), open the *Ink Slingers brochure* (a PDF file) or go to "Activities and Programs" and search by the keywords "ink slingers" for a listing of author visits. Future events will include writing workshops as well as author visits. All events are free and open to the public!

The Minnesota Legacy Amendment Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund will permit the Scott County libraries to offer arts, cultural, historical, and literary family programs to city and community events in a series called *Libraries Out of the Box*. Additional programming will also be offered throughout the year, so visit your library, visit the Library website, check the events calendar often, and read your local newspaper — or you might miss something exciting at your library!

If you have any questions about Minnesota Legacy Amendment Arts and Cultural Heritage Fund or about anything else, please call or visit a Scott County library or visit our website at www.scott.lib.mn.us.

Scott County Library System (all 952 area code)

Administration, 707-1760
Belle Plaine Library, 873-6767
Elko New Market Library, 461-3460
Jordan Library, 492-2500
New Prague Library, 758-2391
Prior Lake Library, 447-3375
Savage Library, 707-1770
Scott County Law Library, 496-8713
Shakopee Library, 233-9590
Renewal Line, 890-9184

Webpage allows public to assist with crime prevention

Law enforcement agencies always encourage members of the community to assist them in the fight against crime. However, we must overcome the two key elements that inhibit community involvement: *Fear and apathy*.

The Scott County Sheriff's Office has implemented a Crime Alert webpage on the Scott County website. These alerts will often include brief summaries of an investigation for public viewing and a request for information that may be used to develop leads or further an investigation. The Crime Alert webpage may also include public safety and crime prevention information.

Although the webpage provides the ability for the public to respond to crime

alerts posted by the Sheriff's Office, it also allows the public to give information on crimes and criminal activity that law enforcement might not even be aware of. The public can choose to provide law enforcement with contact information or remain anonymous.

To visit the Scott County Sheriff's Crime Alert webpage, visit www.co.scott.mn.us. Click on "Sheriff" in the "Public Safety and Justice" tab drop-down menu. From there, scroll along the column on the left side for "Crime Alerts."

Let's work together to make Scott County a safer place to live, work, and play!



Visitors to The Landing will be able to see two encampments, one exclusively featuring the Civil War on May 1, and another which will include Civil War soldiers along with traders May 29-31.

Three Rivers Park District

Visit Civil War encampments at The Landing during May

Saturday, May 1

Civil War Saturday

10 a.m.-5 p.m., The Landing. Spend a Saturday in the American Civil War. Visit the encampments, see how Minnesota soldiers lived, and hear the roar of musketry and cannon. Special visit by President Abraham Lincoln. Ride a trolley pulled by Percheron horses. Gift shop open and food available for purchase. Cost — \$5 for 18 to 64; \$3 for ages 2 to 17 and seniors. Children under 2 free.

Saturday, May 29 — 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

Sunday, May 30 — Noon-5 p.m.

Monday, May 31 — 10 a.m.-5 p.m.

The Landing Encampment

The Landing. Experience life along the Minnesota River. Meet traders and Civil War soldiers, and observe demonstrations in the encampments. Enjoy an imaginary ride upriver via the moving panorama show. Play base ball (Monday only) or ride in canoes (Monday only). Ride the Percheron horse-drawn trolley and play games. Visit Mr. Robert's lunch counter at the depot. Special ceremony commemorating Memorial Day (Monday only — 1 p.m.). Cost — \$5 for ages 18 to 64; \$3 for ages 2 to 17 and seniors. Children under 2 free.

May at Murphy-Hanrehan Park Reserve

Monday, May 10

Spring Birding

7-9 a.m., Murphy-Hanrehan Park Reserve, Savage. Join a Park District biologist to look for migratory birds during the peak of the warbler migra-

tion. Bring binoculars or borrow ours. Meet at the trailhead parking lot on Hwy. 75, south of 154th St. Cost — \$5 for ages 18 and up. Reservations required; call (763) 559-6700 and use Activity #211314-00.

April-May Signups At

Clearly Lake Regional Park

New this year! Clearly Lake Regional Park in Prior Lake is offering a variety of day camps for ages 7 and 8 or 9 to 12. See our website, threeriversparks.org, or call (763) 559-6700 for details and to register. Camps fill quickly, so register soon.

About Three Rivers Park District

Three Rivers Park District is a natural resources-based park system that manages park reserves, regional parks, regional trails and special-use facilities in the Twin Cities metropolitan area. The Park District offers facilities for every season, including picnicking, swimming, creative play, boating, fishing, downhill skiing, snowboarding, golf, camping and sledding; extensive trails for hiking, biking, in-line skating, horseback riding, cross-country skiing and snowshoeing, as well as program sites for nature, recreation, historic and farm education.

Three Rivers Park District's mission is to promote environmental stewardship through recreation and education in a natural resources-based park system. The Park District owns and operates more than 27,000 acres and serves more than 7 million visitors a year.



Clearly Lake Regional Park in Prior Lake is offering a variety of day camps for ages 7 and 8 or 9 to 12. Youngsters will participate in numerous outdoor activities, including archery. Pre-registration is required. Camps fill quickly, so register soon.



SAVE THE DATE

The Master Gardener Garden Tour is scheduled for Saturday, July 24, 2010

Veterans' SCENE

By Todd Kubinski
Director of Veterans Service



Post Deployment Mobilization Respite Absence Program (PDMRA)

In January 2007, the Department of Defense released the **Post Deployment Mobilization Respite Absence Program (PDMRA)** policy, a category of leave similar to administrative leave. It is a program intended to compensate soldiers when they're required to mobilize or deploy with a frequency beyond established rotation policy goals.

Implementation guidelines were not issued until August 2007, a six-month gap in which soldiers were accumulating PDMRA but were unable to receive the entitlement. This "gap" includes Minnesota National Guard Soldiers of the 1/34th BCT extended in the 2007 troop surge engaging in the longest deployment by any U.S. military unit in the entire Iraq War – service that entitled them to this benefit.

In the last three years, PDMRA has been dispersed unequally between active duty soldiers and guard soldiers who are released from active duty to lead their civilian lives. On February 17, 2010, a Minnesota National Guard PDMRA team was assembled in order to certify our list of past and present Minnesota National Guard Soldiers who are owed PDMRA payments.

Legislation was introduced to resolve the issue in 2008, but not in time to be included in the FY 2009 National Defense Authorization Act. In October 2009, legislation was passed and the Department of Defense was given a full year to implement guidelines for dispersing this benefit by October 2010. On February 17, 2010, the Minnesota National Guard received Army policy guidance on PDMRA.

The Minnesota National Guard is currently working with the Department of the Army and National Guard Bureau to promptly process PDMRA payments our soldiers deserve. For more information on the on the Minnesota National Guard's PDMRA Payment Plan, visit www.MinnesotaNationalGuard.org and click on the "PDMRA Special Feature." Minnesota National Guard Soldiers who have questions or wish to verify eligibility should contact our PDMRA team at PDMRA@mn.ngb.army.mil.

President Obama Signs Veterans' Emergency Care Fairness Act

Recently, Senate Veterans' Affairs Committee Chairman **Daniel K. Akaka** praised President Barack Obama's signing of the **Veterans' Emergency Care Fairness Act of 2009**. "For veterans with limited insurance, a trip to the emergency room should not result in financial ruin," said Chairman Akaka, who introduced the bill in the Senate last year.

"With this new law, VA will be positioned to help veterans who are enrolled in VA care whose insurance does not cover the full cost of emergency treatment." The Veterans' Emergency Care Fairness Act will enable the Department of Veterans Affairs to reimburse veterans enrolled in VA health care for the remaining cost of emergency treatment if the veteran has outside insurance that only covers part of the cost. Previously, VA could reimburse veterans or pay outside hospitals directly only if a veteran has no outside health insurance.

In addition to reimbursing veterans for emergency care in the future, the Act allows the Secretary of Veterans Affairs to provide retroactive reimbursements for care received *prior* to the passage of this bill. The Congressional Budget Office estimates that this legislation will cover approximately 700 future claims per year and as many as 2,000 veterans retroactively. *Note – How this program is to be implemented is still to be determined. It is strongly recommended that you delay making any changes in your current healthcare coverage until more information is received.*

For questions about these or any other veterans' benefits and programs, please call our office at (952) 496-8176.

Mountain Man Rendezvous/ Indian Artifact Show planned

The Belle Plaine Historical Society will present the *Second Annual Robert Creek Mountain Man Rendezvous and Indian Artifact Show* on May 1 and 2 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. The show will be held at the North Park in Court Square (410 North Cedar Street, Belle Plaine).

The event will allow participants an opportunity to explore the history of the Stone Age human, the founding of America, and the fur trading era of the "mountain men."

Featured exhibits will include a "mountain man" wedding, a Revolutionary War camp, a fur trade-era camp cook/baker,

children's games, primitive archery, tomahawk and knife throwing, boot making, leather working, furniture crafting, flint knapping, ancient Stone Age artifacts, and more!

All exhibits and displays are *free*, and there will be raffles to award a .50 caliber flint lock rifle, a "possible" bag, and other fur trade-era prizes. In addition, the public is invited to bring any artifacts for identification and dating. Refreshments will be available for purchase on the grounds.

Call Mike at (952) 217-9062 or Norb at (952) 239-8998 for more details.

St. John's Bible exhibit to be featured at museum

Coffee Conversations: Take part in informal conversations the first Wednesday of each month beginning on a variety of topics from noon—1:00 p.m. *Free* for SCHS members, \$4 adults, \$2 students. For details call (952) 445-0378.



• May 5 – Local Queen pageants

SCHS Members Only Preview: *Saint John's Bible* exhibit, April 17 from 7:00 - 9:00 p.m. Refreshments served; SCHS members please RSVP to (952) 445-0378 or info@scottcountyhistory.org.

Exhibit of St. John's Illuminated Bible Prints: Opening April 20, 2010, this exhibit consists of twenty-five prints from *The Saint John's Bible*, commissioned by Saint John's Abbey and University in Collegeville. *The Saint John's Bible* incorporates medieval processes by the use of vellum, quills, natural handmade inks, hand ground pigments, and gild. Schedule a guided tour for your group by calling (952) 445-0378. Exhibit runs from April 20 to May 22, 2010.

Kids' Kraft – April 24 "Slipping into Spring": Grab the kids and head to the Stans Museum for some Saturday morning family fun, including a kids' craft and rousing good story. Saturday, April 24, 10:30 – 11:15 a.m. *Free*, but registration is required.

• Story: *Planting a Rainbow* by Lois Ehlert, Craft: Make May Day cones. **Kids Kraft takes the summer off and returns on September 25, 2010.**

Home Made Wine from the Garden Workshop: Thursday, April 29 at 7:00 p.m. Wine maker

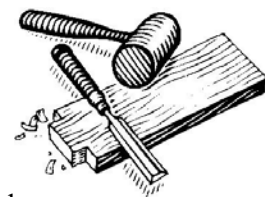


Clarence Johnson demonstrates that wine can be made from

virtually every fruit and vegetable you might grow! Come learn the tricks and tips on how you can make wine at home from your garden's bounty.

Traditional Woodworking Workshop: Saturday, May 22 at 1:00 p.m., presented by **Mark Johnston** of Historic Design Consulting, LLC.

Mark will demonstrate traditional woodworking methods and make available historic tools and supplies at the Stans House. A Q&A session is part of the presentation, giving you an opportunity to pick Mark's brain about choosing appropriate millwork, deciding interior and exterior paint colors, and researching your property's history. Register through your local Spring/Summer Community Education guide



or call (952) 445-0378.

"GREAT SCOTT! Mysteries of Scott County" Exhibit: Opening Thursday, June 17. **Michael Norman**, author of *The Nearly Departed: Minnesota Ghost Stories & Legends*, will present a talk and book signing beginning at 6:30 p.m. One chapter of his book discusses a mystery of "flying dirt" in Lydia during the 1940s. Copies of *The Nearly Departed* will also be available for purchase that evening.

The "Great Scott! Mysteries of Scott County" exhibit runs from June 17 through December 24, 2010. Through stories, photographs, artifacts, and hands-on interactivities, we will delve into the questions of where Dan Patch is buried, why holes were being dug on farms in Belle Plaine during the 1950s, whether an earthquake struck New Prague in 1860, and just how many ghosts, goblins, and other spooky folks are roaming around the county!



ONGOING...

Read All About It!: 1950 Scott County Headlines Exhibit: Immerse yourself in the Fabulous Fifties through Scott County newspapers – from Queen Candidates to the Cold War. This exhibit has loads of information, and several hands-on activities. Tour guides offer a wealth of information and an in-depth look into exhibit topics, and can be tailored fit for your needs. Call (952) 445-0378.

All Things Minnesota Book Club: Meets at 6:30 p.m., the third Thursday of each month at SCHS.

Scott County Crazy Quilters – Crochet/Knitters Welcome Too! Meets the fourth Thursday of each month at 6:30 p.m. All handcrafters, beginners through masters are welcome!

Unless otherwise noted, events take place at the Scott County Historical Society. Fees may be charged for some events. Call (952) 445-0378 or e-mail info@scottcountyhistory.org for more information.

Become a Member! **Membership Benefits Include:** *Free* admission to the museum, research library, and select programs; your donation is 100 percent tax deductible. You also receive the quarterly *Connections* newsletter; 10 percent discount on copies, and museum store purchases; invitations to special events, exhibit openings and lectures; and you can be part of the preservation of Scott County history!



Cost of water test kits to increase

As a service to Scott County residents, the Environmental Health Department provides water test kits at an affordable rate. However, the County has been notified by the lab which performs its testing that new prices will take effect **May 1, 2010**. A coliform and nitrate test kit will sell for \$33 (\$34.50 of you would like to have the test kit mailed to your home). For more information, visit the Scott County website at www.co.scott.mn.us.

Historical SCENE

Letters sent home tell of airman's life during WWII

For members of the armed forces during World War II, letters from family and friends back home served as a link between themselves and those on the home front. Today those letters offer modern readers a first-hand look at the war, along with the opportunity to learn about the feelings, desires, and fears of soldiers serving far from home.

In 1999, the Scott County Historical Society was honored to receive a donation of letters and other memorabilia from the **Elmer and Catherine Dahl** family of Shakopee. Their son **Raymond ("Jim") Dahl** served with the United States Army Air Corps from June 1943 through March 1945. Jim was a gunner on a B-17 Flying Fortress when his airplane was shot down over Berlin. He was listed as Missing in Action until March 1946, when the Army declared him Killed in Action. A grave marker at the American Cemetery and Memorial in Belgium commemorates Jim's sacrifice, and volunteer caretakers still decorate his grave today.



Jim Dahl's class at St. Mark's School, Shakopee, 1936.

Jim was born in Shakopee in 1925. He attended St. Mark's School, and graduated from Shakopee High School in 1943. Jim lived at home with his parents and two younger brothers, **Eugene** and **Robert**, at 304 East Fourth Street. He played football in high school and dated a lovely young woman named Thelma. Shortly after graduation, Jim enlisted in the Army Air Forces. He qualified as a Private for pre-aviation cadet basic training and was ordered to active duty beginning August 3, 1943. On that day, Jim reported to the Federal Office Building in Minneapolis and shipped out immediately to the Army Air Forces Basic Training Center in Florida. Along with hundreds of other enlistees, Jim rode a troop train from Minneapolis to the base at Miami Beach; the trip was about two and a half days long. On his second day on the train, Jim sent the following letter to his parents:

August 4, 1943

Dear Mom and Dad,

Well, how is everybody at home? As for myself, I'm feeling swell. We sure have had good meals on board train. We left Minneapolis yesterday (Tues.) at 10:00. We have Pullmans, but it is hotter than the dickens. We are only as far as St. Louis, Missouri yet, but the train is just ready to pull out. You'll have to excuse the writing from now on because the train is pretty bumpy and we haven't any table or anything to write on so it is pretty tough writing.

This sure is a heck of a long ride. It's fun though. The fellas sure are swell. A guy could laugh all day at the cracks and jokes they say. I hang around with about 6 other swell guys. Three of them are Catholic.

The sun is shining pretty bright down here. It's hot too! Well Mom and Dad, it's awfully hard to write on this train, and there isn't much else I can say for now - so I had better close.

As ever with love, Jim

Jim remained at the Army Air Forces Basic Training Center in Miami Beach for a little over two months. Work consisted of physical training, marching, drills, guard duty, kitchen patrol, and weapons training. Jim passed all of the required tests and his skill in shooting earned him a "marksmanship" grade at the end of boot camp. Less than two weeks after his arrival in Miami Beach, Jim wrote the following to his parents:

August 17, 1943

Hi Mom and Dad,

I'll make this a quick letter before I go downtown and mail my civilian clothes home. This is one of my

few chances I'll get. I have to get a haircut too.

I got your letter, and the two editions of the *Shakopee Argus* today. They sure make swell reading. Thanks for writing so often, mom. I really appreciate it.

I see you are having quite a bit of company back home. I sure wish I'd be around to see some of the relations again. I don't mind this so much though. In fact, I like it!! It's tough getting up at 5:00 a.m., and obeying a lot of orders, having restrictions, etc., but in the long run - we're better off. I sure feel swell. We get calisthenics, the obstacle course, drilling, marching every day. We'll be going on 15, 20, 30 mile marches in a week or two. I'm looking forward to that. We'll live and sleep in the woods, make our own meals, have rifle drill, etc. That will be the real stuff. I think we'll be notified beforehand though. I don't know if I'll be able to tell you about it or not when we do. At any rate, I won't be able to write during those marches. So don't worry, if sometime you don't get some mail for a spell. Oh well, don't think about that until the time comes...

We sure have it nice here. You wouldn't think this was the Army - with all these hotels, the beach, right in the heart of Miami. A guy sure is lucky when he lands down here. It may be luxurious, but we still work plenty hard - and we'll be plenty tough when we get done here. I feel tough already.

I don't suppose you'll see much of Thelma anymore. I suppose by this time she's on her way to Detroit. I hope I get to see her soon again. I doubt if that will even be before I get a furlough, which will be quite awhile.

Well, the rest of the fellas are ready to leave for town now. I'll close now until the next time.

Love, Jim

In early October 1943, Jim was sent to Syracuse University in New York as part of the 65th College Training Detachment. Depending on how one was classified by the military, soldiers at aviation flight schools were trained to be pilots, radiomen, navigators, gunners, and so on. The military school crammed about two years of training into five months. In his letters from that time, Jim described taking classes for eight hours a day and having tests every Friday. He also talked about men being "washed out" after they failed a test or two.

In early March 1944, Jim was shipped to the United States Army Air Base at Santa Ana, California. The following letter was the first one Jim sent to his parents after arriving in California. It was a two part letter spanning March 11 and 12, 1944. The section from March 12 describes life on the base. It reads in part:

Dear Mom and Dad,

Well, here I am again. I just couldn't get the letter finished yesterday, that's how much free time we have to ourselves. Boy, we are on the move every minute of the day... Boy oh boy, Syracuse was never like this. We always thought Syracuse rules were strict and the discipline tough, but it was nothing like this. Here we are quarantined for 14 days, which means we have to stay in our barracks every minute unless we go in mass formation...

We have reveille at 5:30 here. We eat at 6:15 usually and our whole day is completely scheduled for us from then on. Our barracks always have to be in perfect condition...

Tomorrow morning we start taking our tests, etc., which will classify us. In about 18 days we'll know for sure how we came out - one way or another. I'll let you know immediately how I came out. I'm going to try for Bombardier because I think it's a good deal. We've got the low down on everything around here so we've about made our choice. I'll take anything they will give me and be well satisfied. I'm not fussy when it comes to this. I only hope I can make it now. In a few weeks it'll all be over - then.....

My love to all, Jim

Jim passed all of his tests and achieved his goal of becoming a Bombardier, earning the rank of Corporal. After his time at Santa Ana Air Base, he was shipped back to the East Coast for additional training. Because of censorship laws, Jim was never able to tell his parents where he was stationed from then on. We know he spent some time in Florida, because he and Thelma were married there on October 4, 1944. By Christmas of that year, Jim had been shipped to En-



Jim Dahl (top, right) is pictured with other soldiers in 1943.

gland to begin bombing missions over Germany. While he was stationed in England, Jim was a gunner as part of a B-17 Flying Fortress air crew. B-17s are heavy bomber aircrafts made by Boeing. The airplane carried both bombs and machine guns and had a crew of 10: pilot, co-pilot, navigator, nose gunner, top turret gunner, radio operator, two waist gunners, ball turret gunner, and tail gunner. Each crew member had to complete 35 bombing missions to acquire enough "points" to be discharged. It is unknown how many missions Dahl completed before his airplane was shot down over Berlin on March 18, 1945. Below is a section of one of the last letters he mailed home.

Somewhere in England
March 12th, 1945

Dearest Mom and Dad,

Just came back from pass a few hours ago, so I thought I'd write a few lines and tell you about it tonight... Instead of staying on the base as I did on my previous pass I went to London this time. It was my second time in, so I made quite a time of it. Most of our crew went in together, but we split up once we got in to the big city. "Brownie" and I stuck together all the time. It was his first time in so I had to more or less show him the ropes. We were lucky and got a room in one of the best hotels. You'll notice the name of it from the stationary I'm sending along. I just happened to get some accidentally - but any kind of paper is hard as the dickens to get over here. That, as well as everything else, is rationed. Boy, the beds were so darn nice and soft - complete luxury - with sheets and everything. In fact, I was so comfortable I could hardly sleep the first night. Not used to that sort of thing...

I believe we did more eating than anything while we were there. ... I only wish Thelma could have been with me. I miss her so much - and that would make it all much more complete. As it is, we'll have to make up all of it when I get home. Boy, we'll make a time like this look "sick." Ah, those wonderful peacetime days to come!! It's swell to think of!! I'll be closing for now. It's late already and we will be busy tomorrow.

Love to all, Jim

As the Allies continued to encircle Germany that spring, Jim was listed by the Army as Missing in Action (MIA). On May 8, 1945, the Allies accepted Germany's unconditional surrender. Dahl's family anxiously awaited news of his potential recovery but, one year after his airplane was shot down, the Army changed his status from MIA to Killed in Action (KIA). The War Department sent a letter to Jim's wife that included this information:

"The record concerning your husband shows that he was a crew member aboard a Flying Fortress bomber on 18 March 1945 when he failed to return from a combat bombing mission to Berlin, Germany. His plane sustained severe damage from flak before reaching the target, and, after dropping its bombs, headed for Russia. It went out of control shortly after the bombs were dropped and most of the crew bailed out. Your husband is not known to have bailed out. The plane blew up soon after the known survivors left it, at a point above twelve miles east of Berlin..."

The finding does not establish an actual or probable date of death; however, as required by law, it includes a presumptive date of death for the termination of pay and allowances, settlement of accounts and payment of death gratuities. In the case of your husband this date has been set at 19 March 1946, the day following the expiration of twelve months' absence."



CAP Agency Board of Directors
 Outgoing board chair Allison Gontarek presented the gavel to newly-elected board chair Timothy Walsh at the CAP Agency Board of Directors meeting March 9. Gontarek served for six years as a representative from the private sector. Walsh, Scott County Community Services Director, serves as a representative from the public sector. Wilma Ruppert was elected vice chair, and Thomas Hogen was re-elected secretary/treasurer.



News you can use...

You've probably heard of it, and maybe even read about it already, but we're going to try and make the Scott County Association for Leadership and Efficiency (a.k.a., SCALE) a little more relevant to you and your neighbors by bringing you SCALE "news you can use" – updates on road projects, local events, community developments and programs, and other things you might want to know – such as how your tax

dollars are being put to use. After all, SCALE's mission statement is pretty clear: "To forge new and innovative ways in which government entities can collaborate to provide outstanding service while making the most of limited resources." So watch this page for information from our many SCALE partners!

From Prior Lake: Buckthorn removal project needs volunteers June 5

Great River Greening is seeking volunteers for a **Spring Lake Regional Park Buckthorn Removal Event on Saturday, June 5** to help protect the high-quality Maple Basswood Forest plant communities at Spring Lake Park, located in the heart of Scott County, near Prior Lake. The event requires 100 volunteers and will take place from 8:30 a.m. – 12:30 p.m. For information, call Mark Turbak at (651) 665-9500.

The "Big Woods" Forests of elm, sugar maple, basswood, and oak once covered more than 2,000 square miles and were central characters in regional literature and imagery. Today, very few remnants of the forest are larger than 40-80 acres in size, and this is a prime example.

Volunteers are needed to help remove buckthorn at Spring Lake Regional Park. First introduced in the late Nineteenth Century as an ornamental shrub and windbreak, buckthorn today has become one of the most destructive invasive species in the State of Minnesota. This project will greatly contribute to protecting the biodiversity of the park as well as enhancing the water quality of beautiful Spring Lake.

Funding for this project is made possible by Scott County and the Minnesota Environment and Natural Resources Trust Fund as recommended by the Legislative-Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR) through Great River Greening's membership in the Metro Conservation Corridors partnership.

From Savage: Energy grant aids ELC

The City of Savage is among the applicants selected to receive a **2009 Solar Energy Legacy grant** from the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources. The grant, in the amount of \$41,000, will be used to install solar panels this summer at the McColl Pond Environmental Learning Center (ELC).

The grant will cover 75 percent of the \$55,000 needed to install the panels on the south side of the ELC. The remaining expenses will be covered by ELC project funds that went unspent due to overall costs coming in under budget. While solar panels are a sustainable feature that had been considered during the ELC's design, installation was delayed to ensure higher priority items could be included in the building. The panels will reduce the building's electricity usage and, at the same time, provide visitors with another example of how renewable resources can meet daily needs. The Solar Energy Legacy grants resulted from the Clean Water, Land and Legacy Amendment approved by voters in 2008. They are intended to support solar energy projects in parks and on trails of regional or statewide significance. Priority was given to projects that advance the public's awareness and understanding, incorporate energy efficiency improvements, and enhance the quality of outdoor recreation within parks and trails.

About the ELC

The McColl Pond Environmental Learning Center is located at Savage Community Park, 13550 Dakota Ave. in Savage. Constructed from recycled materials, the building is a model for sustainable design. A green roof and rain gardens filter storm water, and geothermal energy heats and cools the building. Features include two classrooms, and a reception hall and outdoor covered patio available for rent by the public. Construction of the McColl Pond Environmental Learning Center, funded through public and private funds, was completed in January 2009.

GENERAL NOTICE TO CONTROL NOXIOUS WEEDS

YOU ARE REQUIRED TO ERADICATE NOXIOUS WEEDS ON YOUR PROPERTY!

Notice is hereby given this 15th day of April 2010, pursuant to Minnesota Statutes, Section 18.83 Subd. 1 (1992), that all persons in Scott County, Minnesota, shall control or eradicate all noxious weeds on land they own, occupy or are required to maintain. Control or eradication may be accomplished by any lawful method, but the methods may need to be repeated in order to prevent the spread of viable noxious weed seeds and other propagating parts to other lands. Failure to comply with the General Notice may mean that an individual notice will be issued. An individual notice may be appealed within two working days of receipt to the appeal committee in the county where the land is located. Failure to comply with the individual notice will mean that the inspector having jurisdiction may either hire the work done or seek a misdemeanor charge against the person(s) who failed to comply. If the work is hired done by the inspector, the cost can be placed as a tax upon the land and collected as other real estate taxes are collected. You may obtain a list of the plants that are noxious and a list of the members of the appeal committee from your County Agricultural Inspector or local weed inspector. The local weed inspectors are township supervisors, and city mayors or their appointed assistants.

BY ORDER OF THE TOWNSHIP AND CITY WEED INSPECTORS

<p>TOWN OF BELLE PLAINE Robert Koenig Douglas Kasper Gary Schmitz</p>	<p>TOWN OF LOUISVILLE John Weckman Robert Pieper Kevin Theis Val Theis, Inspector</p>	<p>CITY OF JORDAN Pete Ewals, Mayor Michelle Guscette, Inspector</p>
<p>TOWN OF BLAKELEY John Busse Brian Schmidt Robert Wagner Kristine Schmidt, Inspector</p>	<p>TOWN OF NEW MARKET George Silverness Kenneth Chlan Joel Helmberger</p>	<p>CITY OF ELKO NEW MARKET Jason Ponsonby, Mayor Mark Nagel, Inspector</p>
<p>TOWN OF CEDAR LAKE Robert Puncocar Norman Sticha Gerald Williams Norman Sticha, Inspector</p>	<p>TOWN OF ST. LAWRENCE Ted Kornder Hubert Jeurissen Les Quatmann</p>	<p>CITY OF NEW PRAGUE Bink Bender, Mayor Chad Lunden, Inspector</p>
<p>TOWN OF CREDIT RIVER Bruce Nilsen Brent Lawrence LeRoy Schomer Tom Kraft, Al Aspengren</p>	<p>TOWN OF SAND CREEK Cy Wolf Leslie Thill Bill Heimkes John Menke, Inspector</p>	<p>CITY OF PRIOR LAKE Mike Myser, Mayor Jesse Corrow, Inspector</p>
<p>TOWN OF HELENA Duane Deutsch Joseph Pexa, Jr. Terry Maas Darryl Perkins, Inspector</p>	<p>TOWN OF SPRING LAKE Chris Olson Michael Borke Glenn Kelley</p>	<p>CITY OF SAVAGE Janet Williams, Mayor Craig Svodoba, Inspector</p>
<p>TOWN OF JACKSON Tom Weckman Paul Westveer Chris Brinkhaus Nick Ferrozzo, Inspector</p>	<p>CITY OF BELLE PLAINE Tim Lies, Mayor Al Fahey, Inspector</p>	<p>CITY OF SHAKOPEE John J. Schmitt, Mayor Crystal Marks, Inspector</p>

The Board of County Commissioners asks your cooperation in this weed control work.

Pete Shutrop, County Agricultural Inspector, in cooperation with the State Department of Agriculture, the Scott County Extension Educators, Deputy County Administrator Lezlie Vermillion, and County Engineer Mitch Rasmussen