

MAY 2014

CONNECTED

NEWS FOR MISSISSIPPI RIVER-WINONA WATERSHED CITIZENS

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FAVORITE PLACES:

Whitewater State Park



Jesse Polson relaxes near the Whitewater River.

Sunlight filters through the trees in autumn, maple trees ablaze with golden fire. The beauty of the forest washed in colors and back-lit by late afternoon sun is refreshing, making Whitewater State Park a perfect place to rest and recuperate on a Sunday afternoon. The exquisite beauty of this park can be enjoyed in all seasons; wildflowers in summer, painted leaves in autumn, snow-frosted branches in winter, exuberant life bursting forth in spring. Whitewater has been a favorite place since my early childhood years. Precious memories were made with my family as we picnicked near the beach, built sand castles, splashed into the delightfully cold river for a swim, hiked along the many trails. Also, I enjoyed many school field trips here. As an adult the memories continue. My boyfriend and I love hiking the trails and finding places of solitude to enjoy together.

– *Bethany Benike*
Prairie Hollow Farm; Elgin, Minnesota



ABOVE TOP: A bench awaits visitors on Eagle Point Trail, overlooking Whitewater State Park.

BELOW: The Whitewater River glistens in the late afternoon sun.

Where do you go to rejuvenate and enjoy the beauty of our watershed? Send your photo of a favorite place and description of not more than 150 words to whitewaterwatershed@gmail.com.

LEARN SOMETHING!

Integrated Pest Management For the Home Gardener
May 24, 2014 | 10:00-Noon
Stone Point Park, Winona
Master Gardeners teach how to fight pests and improve yields the least toxic way.

Agronomy Field Tour
June 24, 2014 | 8:30-Noon
U of M Southern Research & Outreach Center, Waseca, MN
Current info on production and nutrient management

Crop Management Field Tour
July 8, 2014 | 8:30 a.m.
Meet @ field plots east of Rochester University Center; Hwy 14 & Co. 22
Focus will be on weed management; application & timing best practices

SE Minnesota Crops Connection
Get up-to-date weather, pest management, production and event info from U of M Extension. Subscribe: mstearns@umn.edu.

GET OUTDOORS!

Lake Lodge Recreation Center | Winona

Like to play in the water? A \$5 annual membership to Winona's Lake Lodge includes access to canoes, kayaks, liberty boats, stand-up paddle boards and *log rolling!* The Lodge also has bikes, croquet, bocce, ping pong, group kayaking and biking activities.



Lake Lodge Recreation Center is located at 113 Lake Park Dr. at the foot of Main St. and the East Lake. Call 507-453-1955.

IN THE WATERSHED

Emerald Ash Borer & Water Impacts

Winona city officials confirmed in April that the emerald ash borer has been found within City limits. The insect kills ash trees by destroying tissues under the bark.

The City and DNR are working to prevent an infestation, but the situation points to an important fact: **Planting many kinds of trees reduces the chance that a pest can wipe out large chunks of the urban forest.**

Trees improve water quality. They capture and release water into the atmosphere, soak it up in roots, and hold soil that absorbs water and reduces runoff.

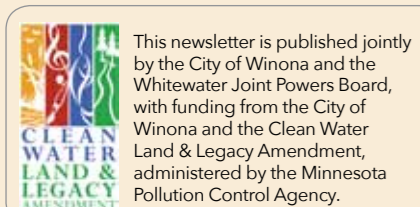


Plant a tree that's different. **Do not move firewood out of this area!** And if you have ash trees, watch for heavy woodpecker activity, dying top branches, sprouts at tree base and cracks or tunnels in bark. Report forest invaders at arrest.the.pest@state.mn.us or 888-545-6684.

ABOVE: Planting a ruby red horse chestnut tree at Winona State (Photo courtesy Tom Grier/Winona State University)

MISSISSIPPI RIVER - WINONA WATERSHED PROJECT

400 Wilson St., P.O. Box 39
Lewiston, MN 55952
507-523-2171, Ext. 110
whitewaterwatershed.org



WATERSHED NEIGHBORS

IN WABASHA, MINNESOTA...

3 Impacts of Collaboration

- **Seeing is believing** | People now value low-impact design
- **Momentum** | One action leads to another
- **Tourism** | Stormwater infrastructure helps create great places & things to do



Connected To the River

In Wabasha an Old Alley & Abandoned Commercial Land Now Attract People & Protect the Mississippi



ABOVE: Snow melts into pavers on the plaza at the foot of Pembroke Ave. in Wabasha. The overlook honors beloved people and cultures, connects visitors to the water and keeps polluted runoff out of the Mississippi River. BELOW LEFT: 1) Visitors stand above the National Eagle Center's rain garden; 2) A family explores Big Jo Alley.

In 2001, demolition of the towering Big Jo Flour Mill left a gaping, rough space between Wabasha's downtown and the Mississippi River. For the first time in more than 100 years the river was visible from the commercial district, and developers and others who enjoy Wabasha saw possibilities.

A condominium/hotel/visitor center complex was proposed by private developers. In collaboration with the City, condominiums were built by 2004. The hotel and visitor center didn't materialize, but conversations continued and a plan emerged to transform a storefront learning center operated by EagleWatch, Inc. into a larger facility. EagleWatch, the City of Wabasha and Wabasha Port Authority proceeded to design and build Wabasha's 15,000 square-foot National Eagle Center, which opened in 2007 and quickly drew more than 100,000 visitors each year.

During construction of the Eagle Center, the City engaged project architect LHB to lead design sessions with Wabasha residents and investors. Those conversations clarified a community vision for connecting downtown to the riverfront. Big Jo Alley was redeveloped as a result, linking the Eagle Center and downtown with brick-paved walkways, retail access and outdoor terraces. Inspired by the action, John and Marcia Bouquet came forward to honor their parents with a riverfront plaza, fountain and sculpture of Chief Wapahasha II. A riverfront interpretive trail was added and later became part of the 3000-mile Mississippi River Trail.

In real-life fashion, Wabasha's riverfront developed "piecemeal, over time," says city planner Molly Patterson-Lundgren of WSB & Associates. "I'm so proud of it! This small town pulled off innovative stormwater management and cultural development concepts. They took initiative, developed public/private partnerships, and ended up with more than they envisioned."

Water used to pour off downtown roofs directly to the Mississippi River. Now it's absorbed through landscaped basins, an underground catchment filter, and brick-paved sidewalks, stairs, plaza and alley.

Family Reshapes Farm

Good Water & Home-Grown Barley, Hops, Herbs & Other Local Ingredients Are Making Imperial Farm's Olvalde Farmhouse Ales Popular Statewide



ABOVE: Carlus Dingfelder and Joe Pond harvest hops. TOP RIGHT: Three generations of the Dingfelder family. MIDDLE RIGHT: The old homestead and Olvalde Brewing Company. BOTTOM RIGHT: Joe Pond labeling a batch of Auroch's Horn Ale.

The "two-story" farm near Rollingstone owned by Carlus and Carolyn Dingfelder sprawls above and below steep bluffs with breathtaking views. Carlus's parents bought the land in 1945 to establish a dairy herd and raise registered holsteins. Carlus and brother, Otto, grew that business to include global sales of genetic stock and embryos. Now, driven by the skills and interests of the Dingfelder's adult children Steven, Carlus, Dinel and son-in-law Joe Pond, the family has refocused to meet new business and conservation goals.

Central to the shift is Olvalde Farmhouse Brewery, established at the farm's home place in 2009. The red building surrounded by rhubarb, hops, hyssop and other brewing herbs sources brewmaster Joe Pond's popular Ode to a Russian Shipwright, Auroch's Horn, and Brynhildr's Gift Ales. Barley produced in the family fields is used in the Ales; a proposed malt house will further utilize the crop next year.

The Dingfelders put 17 acres of marginal crop land into the federal Conservation Reserve Program in 2003. Now deep-rooted native plants, earthen berms and grass waterways minimize erosion from fields and hillsides. Those areas provide habitat for birds, pollinators, deer and other wildlife. And, according to Carlus, they haven't reduced farm income but instead, improved quality of life. "Trout season opened this year," he says, "and the stream coming off that land was high, but not as muddy as it used to be. It's encouraging to see we can impact the land."

Carolyn and Carlus know sons Steven and Carlus will continue these practices and are working toward joint family management of the farm. Joe and Dinel are developing community aspects of the ale business. And all are enjoying the beers. Says Carlus, "People don't expect the flavors—the delight! It's fun and different."

This family is reducing erosion and nutrient leaching with berms, grassed waterways and no-till farming, putting perennials on marginal land, and creating ways for four families to earn a living on 134 acres.



GROWN ON THIS FARM...

8 Local Ale Ingredients

- Spruce tips
- Juniper berries
- Barley
- Rhubarb
- Hops
- Hyssop
- Rosehips
- Mugwort



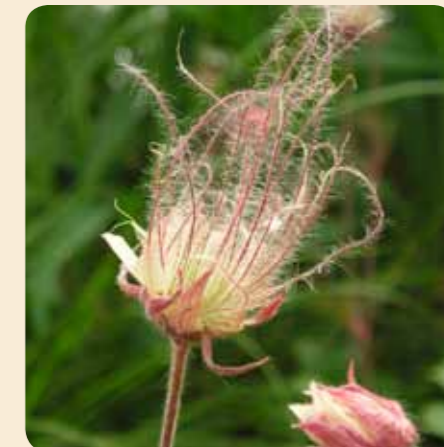
ONE THING YOU CAN DO

Grow Native Plants On Your Land

When lawns and farm fields include native plants we have better soil, less runoff and cleaner streams. We also get beautiful views and color.

Lawns and farm fields typically include about five plant species and most have shallow roots. This makes them susceptible to drought, pests, and disease.

Native plants are relatively unaffected by extreme weather because their long roots reach deep to absorb water even in dry seasons.



TOP: Geum triflorum, known as Prairie Smoke; BOTTOM: Rudbeckia hirta (Black-eyed Susan) and Liatris

Mississippi River Winona Watershed's

OURWATERSHED.INFO



STORIES • FACTS • DATA • WAYS TO GET INVOLVED

What Is a Watershed District?

Our Stockton-Rollingstone-Minnesota City Watershed District was established in 1958. Floods ravaged the area in summer 1957, and local residents wanted to take action.

The District is a local, special-purpose unit of government with the power to tax and the responsibility to use those funds to solve and prevent water-related problems within its boundaries.

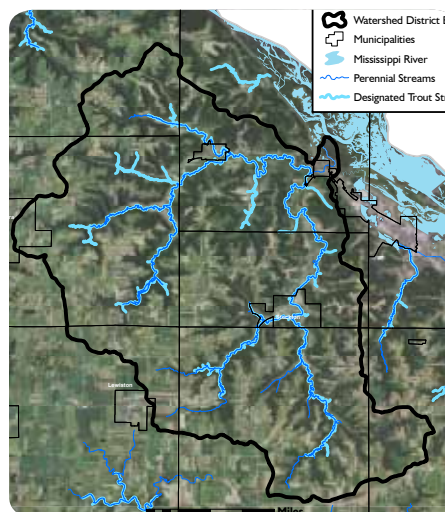
Since its inception this local watershed district has focused on flood protection and sediment control with projects like pond clean-out, stream bank stabilization, cover crops and culvert replacement. Dramatic elevation drops and intensive ridge top farming cause water to move fast and soil to erode, so the work is much needed.

Because people who lived here before us acted on their convictions, folks who now own land drained by Speltz Creek, Straight Creek, Bear Creek, Rollingstone Creek, Peterson Creek, Stockton Creek and Garvin Brook have a special opportunity to take care of drainage and erosion issues on their own land. They can also serve on a board of watershed district managers that sets local priorities and approves funding requests.



ABOVE: At the Barkheim Farm near Stockton, Minnesota, this catchment basin was cleaned out and repaired with Stockton-Rollingstone-Minnesota City Watershed District funds. It captures moving water and soil where a field meets a ravine, to prevent flooding and erosion.

At a recent Watershed District meeting the current board and an interested citizen reviewed three pending projects and the annual audit. The agenda also touched on a planning survey conducted in 2008. Should this small entity with only \$8,000 in annual tax revenue continue to exist? Do residents need to work together this way?



Citizens weighed in with a resounding, "Yes!"

To accomplish its goals, the Stockton-Rollingstone-Minnesota City Watershed District works with Winona County planning staff, the local Soil and Water Conservation District, towns in the District and the State of Minnesota.

But while District managers value these ties, they also believe landowners' knowledge and initiative are needed to get water work done.

HAVE A VOICE!

Do you live in the area bounded by the black line on the map at left and shown in the circle below? If so, step up to take care of a water issue on your own land or serve as a Stockton-Rollingstone-Minnesota City Watershed District Manager. Application is simple. To learn more call Lew Overhaug at 507-457-6335.

"There is no ideal farming," says District manager Duane Wirt. "We all need to improve."

MISSISSIPPI RIVER-WINONA WATERSHED

It's home to all of us.

EVERYTHING WE DO IN THIS WATERSHED IMPACTS OUR IMMEDIATE NEIGHBORS AND ALL LIVING THINGS DOWNSTREAM.

- > Reduce Nitrogen
- > Reduce Bacteria
- > Keep Soil In Place

" I'm not here just because I'm a Stocktonite. This area is highly prone to flooding and we need to help ourselves. But this work is about the whole picture, too—the Mississippi River and what flows into it. — Jack Roberts "



Stockton-Rollingstone-Minnesota City Watershed District Managers Jack Roberts and Duane Wirt, with former manager and meeting participant Keith Beach

