

WHAT CAN I DO?

Time to Plan a Fall Clean-up!

Fall is right around the corner and this is the perfect time to plan a *Community Clean-Up for Water Quality*. Learn how a little work can have great impacts on our water!

Did you know that leaves and organic debris from streets and sidewalks can flow through storm sewers and into lakes, rivers and streams? The leaves and other material contain phosphorus, nitrogen and soil that are significant pollutants. These nutrients, especially the phosphorus, contribute to the growth of excessive algae that rob the waters of needed oxygen.

Because of this, the Freshwater Society is partnering with the Friends of the Minnesota Valley and local organizations to initiate *Community Clean-Ups for Water Quality* to reduce the phosphorus levels in our lakes and rivers with a community toolkit that includes a DVD providing “how to” instructions for organizing and

implementing a clean-up. Clean-up participants will be able to track the amount of phosphorus being removed on our website.

Community Clean-Ups for Water Quality: A pollution-fighting project you can organize
Community Clean-Ups for Water Quality are hands-on water quality improvement projects that can significantly reduce nutrients and soil flowing into lakes and rivers by removing leaves and yard debris from city streets in your area. A community group such as a scout group, a school class, a church committee, a service organization or a group of neighbors can participate. Volunteers rake, sweep and bag leaves, dirt and debris blocking storm drain grates on city streets. The organic material can then be composted. All it takes are volunteers, bags and some tools!

Please email freshwater@freshwater.org to receive a free Community Toolkit and DVD with materials and instructions for implementing a



Members of a confirmation class from Christ Lutheran Church in Blaine taking part in a Community Clean-Up for Water Quality.

Clean-Up. **View the seven minute video** on why *Community Clean-Ups for Water Quality* are important and view a fact sheet about the program.

Public agencies and other organizations are helping the Freshwater Society and the Friends of the Minnesota Valley offer information on Clean-Ups. **Find one in your area.**

The Minnehaha Creek Watershed District and the Capitol Region Watershed District are partners in the clean-ups.



Join the Society – Get the Weatherguide!

Become a new member of the Freshwater Society and you'll receive the new, *2014 Minnesota Weatherguide Environment Calendar*. It's a win-win!

Help us protect freshwater resources and you'll enjoy a plethora of amazing regional photography, Nature Notes, weather history and meteorological information, gardening tips and much more.

Become a member!



FACETS of Freshwater

Swallowtail on Milkweed
By Kevin Collison

AUGUST 2013
Weather Facts and Photo from *MN Weatherguide Environment Calendar*
Monthly Normals: Temp. Max: 80.5 F Min: 61.8 F Precip: 4.3 inches

FRESHWATER SOCIETY

UPCOMING EVENTS

August 22 - September 2
Minnesota State Fair

October 8
The Biology and Management of Asian Carp: Lessons for Minnesota

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From the desk of Joan Nephew

Freshwater Society Executive Director

As you will read in this newsletter, our president, Gene Merriam, and I have decided it is time for us to move out of the positions of leadership of the Freshwater Society that we have been privileged to share for the last six years.

Those have been wonderful years, and Gene and I both feel that Freshwater has accomplished great things. We both are proud of the work Freshwater has done, is doing and will continue to do.

We informed the Freshwater Board of our decisions in May. Gene will retire by the end of this year. I will stay on a bit longer in a phased retirement. There comes a time in all careers to begin leaving the work to others, and we're happy to be leaving Freshwater in a position of real strength.

The board and a search firm are well on their way to recruiting new leadership. You can find the job description on our [web site](http://www.freshwater.org).

Next month, Gene or I will offer some reflections on our years helping Freshwater strive – as we always say – to “educate and inspire people to value, conserve and protect water resources.”

Sincerely,

The Freshwater Society is a non-profit organization dedicated to educating and inspiring people to value, conserve and protect water resources.

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Visit the Freshwater Society web site at www.freshwater.org.

Freshwater Society Seeks New Leader

The Freshwater Society is seeking a new leader to replace Gene Merriam, who will retire by the end of this year, and Joan Nephew, who will begin a phased retirement then.

The Society is committed to hiring a chief executive who will maintain and accelerate the activism, influence and credibility the organization has achieved under their leadership.

Merriam, Freshwater's president, and Nephew, the Society's executive director, have led Freshwater through six years of rapidly growing influence as one of Minnesota's major environmental organizations.

"Both Gene and Joan have helped us build a strong and financially secure organization with excellent staff and innovative programs," said Freshwater Board Chair Tom Skramstad. "I can not overstate the Board's gratitude for their diligent and imaginative leadership."

An executive recruitment firm, Schall Executive Search, is managing the search for the new leader. The job description seeks a "mission-focused, seasoned and strategic Executive Director to continue the organization's impact on the protection, conservation and restoration of water resources."

Go to our [web site](#) to download a job description.



Gene Merriam



Joan Nephew

Freshwater at the Fair

Are you going to the State Fair?

If you're a real Minnesotan, if you like malts from the dairy building and fried things on sticks, you will be there.

And, while you're there, you will have two opportunities to learn more about water, the environment and Freshwater Society's role in protecting them:



- Purchase a *Minnesota Weatherguide Environment Calendar* for a reduced price, and maybe get an autograph on it from the naturalist, astronomer or one of the meteorologists who helped produce it, at the KARE 11 Barn.



Items of Interest

Links to original reports on water availability, water pollution and water policy are archived on the [Reports and Research](#) page of the Freshwater web site.

There is some intriguing research there by agencies and organizations as diverse as the U.S. Geological Survey, the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and the Pew Environment Group. You can look up a report that puts Minnesota water use into a national perspective, and you can read about Chesapeake Bay pollution caused by giant chicken farms.

Browse through the web page. You will find something that interests you.

Lecture Series Presents Asian Carp Expert

Duane Chapman, a research biologist who is a national leader in efforts to study, control and prevent the spread of Asian carp, will deliver a free, public lecture in St. Paul on Oct. 8.

Chapman edited two books, published by the American Fisheries Society, on invasive Asian carp and the threats they pose to native fish and other aquatic life, and he has given more than 100 presentations on Asian carp and other invasive species.

His lecture, titled "The Biology and Management of Asian Carp: Lessons for Minnesota," will be at 7 p.m. Tuesday, Oct. 8, in the [Student Center](#) theater of the University of Minnesota's St. Paul campus. The Student Center is at 2017 Buford Ave., St. Paul. [Register to attend.](#)

The lecture is sponsored by the Freshwater Society, the University of Minnesota College of Biological Sciences, the Minnesota Aquatic Invasive Species Research Center at the university, and the University's College of Food, Agricultural and Natural Resource Sciences.



Duane Chapman, Research Biologist

Share Your Water Connections

In last month's newsletter, Freshwater Executive Director Joan Nephew wrote a bit about her early connections to water. She remembered the idyllic days of small-town summers in which she and her brothers played in the shallows of the Sand Hill River near Fertile, MN. Joan invited readers to share their memories of water by [emailing](#) them to us.

Almost immediately, **Melba Hensel**, who works in Hennepin County's Environmental Services Department, responded with this story:

The Freshwater Society asked for personal water stories. Well – I tell people that I have been an environmental professional "since the dawn of the first Earth Day."

I grew up in Otter Tail County on the Continental Divide. The southwest corner of our farm drained to the Otter Tail and Red Rivers, and then obviously to Hudson Bay. The east side of the farm drained to the east – a wetland Bluff Creek to Leaf River to the Crow Wing and eventually to the Mississippi and the Gulf of Mexico. I understood the concepts of basins and drainage areas from a young age. My dad also didn't till the fields immediately next to the wetland, providing a buffer strip between the cultivated area and the drainage to the creek.



In 1970, I was a graduate assistant in the Biology Department at Moorhead State (now Minnesota State University Moorhead). On the first Earth Day celebration at the Fargo Civic Center, we collected some samples of the Red River, which as usually is the case during the third week of April, the river was very turbid and laden with sediment in its regular spring high flows. It was impressive when one recognized that the solid material was the fertile soil of the Otter Tail, Red, and James and Sheyenne River basins.

And after all that, I am still working as an environmental professional in Minnesota after 42 years with about 34 years spent in water monitoring and analysis and wastewater treatment with state and regional government. And there has been improvement since 1971 when I first entered the profession!

So, let's keep this going! Melba's story is posted on our web site and on [Freshwater's Facebook](#) page. You can add your water story there. Better still, post it on your own page and "tag" Freshwater Society.



Interview with an Intern

Mariel Kieval recently joined the Freshwater Society as an intern research assistant. She is working in the development and fundraising departments at the Society.

We asked Mariel to tell us a bit about herself. Read the short Q and A.

Explain how water is important to your life – share a story, experience, etc.:

Water was an issue I had never really worried about, until I traveled to Israel and learned about how many of the seas and rivers there are slowly losing water. That experience made me more aware of the need to keep our water clean and conserve it.

How do envision working for water in the future?

I am considering a major in sustainability, which includes water protection.

Tell us more about yourself.

I will be a senior at Wayzata High School this fall. I am also a part of my school's Eco Club, and am president of our Amnesty International Chapter. In my free time I enjoy figure skating, playing cello, reading and baking.