

Biggest Change in WIC Food Package in 30 years!

In August, 2009, the food packages for WIC will change dramatically to offer a greater variety of healthy foods and better support for healthy eating. Fresh, frozen and canned fruits and vegetables, baby foods, whole-wheat bread, and brown rice will now be part of the food package. Food packages will continue to provide the traditional eggs, beans, peanut butter, and cereal. To reduce intake of saturated fats and sugar, the package will have less juice, cheese, and whole milk.



WIC is a nutrition program that helps eligible pregnant women, new mothers, babies and young children eat well, learn about nutrition, and stay healthy. WIC provides nutrition education and counseling, nutritious foods, and referrals to health and other social services. Nurses and dietitians determine nutritional needs and provide food prescriptions unique to each family. **"The new food package is great!"** says Jill Bruns, Public Health Director. "It

promotes breastfeeding as the standard for infant feeding, lowers intake of saturated fats, increases the intake of whole grains and fiber, and adds fruits and vegetables." Local grocers have been trained and are stocking the new foods in preparation for the changes. WIC is funded by the United States Department of Agriculture and provided by local public health agencies. Call Renville County Public Health at 320-523-3762 for more information.

The WIC Food Package was revised because of the changes in health and nutrition risks:

- American diets low in whole grains, fruits and vegetables
- Less than optimal breastfeeding initiation and duration
- Increased incidence of overweight and obesity...even among children

~ Speakers Available ~

If your organization is looking for a guest speaker, Renville County Human Services has a presentation available on the MN Health Care Programs. Beth Leindecker and Vicky Flores cover the Health Care Program guidelines in a 1/2 hour long PowerPoint format (available

in English or Spanish). The information is suitable for community groups or consumer organizations and is relevant for today's economic environment. If you would like more information about scheduling this presentation, please contact:

Beth Leindecker, SW
 Renville County Human Services
 105 S 5th St Suite 203H
 Olivia MN 56277
RCHS Ph: 320-523-2202
Direct Ph: 320-523-3567
Fax: 320-523-3559
E-mail: beth_1@co.renville.mn.us

Renville County

500 E. DePue Ave.
 Olivia, MN 56277

Phone: 320-523-3710
 Email: admin@co.renville.mn.us
 Web site: www.co.renville.mn.us

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Renville COUNTY MESSENGER

Connecting you with your County Government

Volume 8

Summer 2009

Issue 2

Reduce Your Carbon Footprint

This year National County Government Week was held the week of May 4th. Renville County celebrated the week with a series of **Lunch and Learn** presentations. Attendees were presented with a variety of techniques to reduce their carbon footprint.

Monday's Lunch: Renville County Energy Challenge Kick Off. The session was designed to help attendees learn about home and business energy audits, energy efficiency improvements, rebates and tax credits, and community involvement. The guest speakers included Cecilia Alvarez, an enterprise facilitator with Entrepreneur's Assistance Network; Bruce Bremseth of Dirks Furniture; Sara Folsted, Renville County Administrator and Ed Stone, Community Earth Council Advocate.

One of the many **energy saving ideas** presented on Monday was the 2009 Tax Incentives for Home Energy Efficiency. Beginning in 2009, income tax credits can be earned for installing new energy efficient windows, insulation, doors, roofs, and heating and cooling equipment in homes. Check with your tax preparer for details on the federal tax credits and/or check out the Touch Stone Energy's website at: www.touchstoneenergysavers.com/stimulus.html.

Tuesday's Lunch: Greening Your Home by guest speaker, Diane Mitchell, Renville County Household and Hazardous Waste Coordinator. Diane taught a session on the three Rs Reduce, Reuse, Recycle, How to dispose of Hazardous Products in Your Home and Non-toxic Cleaning Kits and Recipes.

One way to **reduce your carbon footprint is to be selective about the products you buy.** Whenever possible, buy products that are free of toxic chemicals. Alternatives **are** available. The market for non-toxic household products is growing in response to customer demand.

INSIDE THIS NEWSLETTER ...

- **HRA/EDA News**
- **RAPAD Annual Report**



Polly Ahrens (left) & Jill Bruns Present "No Child Left Inside."

Ingredient lists don't always tell you everything that is in a product but they can offer clues to the toxicity.

When purchasing products, take a minute to carefully read the label. Look for products that appear to disclose all their ingredients. The words **caution**, **warning** and **danger** indicate that the product's ingredients are harmful. Choose the least hazardous product to do the job.

Before you use a product, carefully read the directions and follow the instructions. Be sure to use the correct amount of a product. Remember, you won't get twice the results by using twice as much.

Select products (cleaners, shampoos, etc.) made from plant-based materials, such as oils made from citrus, seed, vegetable or pine. By doing so, you are selecting products that are biodegradable and generally less toxic. These products also provide the additional benefit of being made from renewable resources. Ask for plant-based products at your local grocery or retail store.

Choose pump spray containers instead of aerosols. Pressurized aerosol products often produce a finer mist that is more easily inhaled. Aerosols also put unnecessary volatile organic chemicals into your indoor air when you use them.

Ask for unbleached paper products or products bleached with hydrogen peroxide or oxygen, which produce less pollution during papermaking.

For more information on Reducing, Reusing and Recycling visit the Renville County Website at: www.co.renville.mn.us.

Wednesday's Lunch: No Child Left Inside by guest speakers Jill Bruns and Polly Ahrens of the Renville County Public Health Services. Their presentation suggested ways to help the entire family enjoy outdoor experiences and backyard adventures.

One of their suggestions was turn off the TV and computer and take your kids outside and watch the clouds go by. Do you remember playing this game as a child? What creatures did you and your kids find in the sky? No backyard? No problem. You can play the cloud game anywhere – parks, playgrounds, etc. For more information about No Child Left Inside see the back page of this newsletter and/or the green hour website at: www.greenhour.org and enjoy the great outdoors.

Thursday's Lunch: Renville County Outdoor Recreational Opportunities presented by Loran Kaardal of Tatanka Bluffs/Green Corridor and Chris Hettig Renville County HRA/EDA Director. Loran and Chris shared the upcoming planning projects for the Tantanka Bluffs Green Corridor and information about our seven Renville county parks.

Looking to spend time in the great outdoors close to home? Come and visit our best-kept secret. Check out one of the seven Renville County Parks located along the Minnesota River on the southern edge of Renville County. Enjoy the steep-wooded bluffs and observe first-hand the many historic sites along the Minnesota River Valley Scenic Byway as you make your way through Renville County along the Minnesota River. Experience the natural beauty of Renville County by



Charlie Archambault Print

NO CHILD LEFT INSIDE

Submitted by: Jill Bruns, Renville County Public Health Director; Adapted from the National Wildlife Federation

“Go Outside and Play” is a familiar phrase to many of us, but the simple truth is that kids today aren’t heeding this call. Research shows that children today spend half as much time outside as kids did 20 years ago. In fact, they are spending an average of 6 ½ hours a day “plugged into” electronic media, like TV, computer and video games. Some have described this trend as “nature deficit.”

What is at Stake?

Nature deficit has a profound impact on our children’s mental and physical health. In the last 20 years, while time spent playing outdoors has been cut in half, childhood obesity has more than doubled and teen obesity has tripled. Research has linked this obesity epidemic to a lack of playtime outdoors.

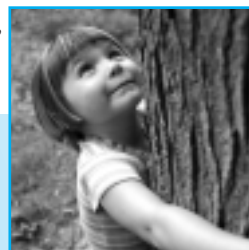
While physical activity through organized sports can help address the issue, free unstructured time outdoors has a unique health benefit to children. Time in nature improves a child’s academic performance,

concentration, balance, coordination and self esteem. It stimulates imagination and the immune system. Time with Mother Nature improves physical fitness and reduces anxiety. Best of all, its fun!

What Can We Do?

Solving this problem can start right outside your backdoor. Spend time with kids outside on a regular basis, go fishing, take a hike or just go for a walk and look at the clouds. The National Wildlife Federation recommends that parents give their children a Green Hour every day, time for unstructured play and exploration with the natural world. If you need outdoor tips and ideas to help the entire family enjoy outdoor experiences and backyard adventures, go to the National Wildlife Federation’s Green Hour program at www.greenhour.org.

Spend time with kids outside on a regular basis, go fishing, take a hike or just go for a walk and look at the clouds.



visiting our more than 1,300 acres of parkland featuring primitive stands of trees, wildflowers and native prairies, wildlife, and the uniqueness of bedrock outcroppings located along the banks of the Minnesota River. Admission for general park use is free. Fees are charged for camping and shelter reservations. For more information about Renville County parks visit our website at: www.co.renville.mn.us.

Friday's Lunch: Urban Conservation by guest speaker, Tara Latozke of Renville County Soil and Water Conservation Department. Tara shared ideas on improving our landscapes and water quality through Rain Gardens, Rain Barrels and native Vegetation.

Why Use Rain Barrels?

Rain barrels conserve water and help lower costs (a rain barrel can save approximately 1,300 gallons of water during peak summer months).

Rain barrels reduce water pollution by reducing storm water runoff, which can contain pollutants like sediment, oil, grease, bacteria and nutrients.

Rain barrels are inexpensive and easy to build and install.

A rain barrel can be used to save water for plants during dry periods. Rain barrels can also be arranged to slowly release the collected rain fall to areas that can soak up the water, reducing storm water runoff and increasing groundwater recharge. For more information on rain barrels check out a U of MN website: www.extension.umn.edu/environment/00023.pdf.



Ed Stone harvesting lettuce from one of his prolific garden beds on his farm in Renville County



Ed Stone explaining the details of the bird feeder he has perfected.

possibly partnering with other individuals or organizations. After a period of planning, they move to implementation, working shoulder to shoulder. As they collaborate in service, elders and youth develop a strong appreciation for the gifts each one brings to the council. They engage in mutual mentoring, fostering individual growth and weaving a strong social fabric. Over time, a CEC may take on many projects for the common good, helping to improve the social and environmental wellbeing of their communities. But the benefits to members are no less significant. Along with the deep sense of purpose and fulfillment that comes from helping others, both young and elders experience the warmth, energy and joy of the community they’ve created. The following website, www.communityearthcouncils.org, provides assistance in forming a CEC—including a workbook/guidebook—for starting and running a council and for connecting with other councils. Check out this website for more information about community earth councils.

How would we start a Community Earth Council in Renville County?

If you are interested in learning more about and possibly becoming a member of the Renville County Community Earth Council you are invited to attend the first meeting to be held on **July 29, 2009 at 1:00 pm in Room 117 in the Renville County Government Services Center in Olivia**. If you need more information or you are interested and cannot attend this first meeting, you should contact Ed Stone at phone 320-329-8164. Local EDA Director Chris Hettig on Community Earth Councils, “Community Earth Councils offer an excellent opportunity to harness the rich local talents of our residents by utilizing the energy and excitement of young people connected to the experience and connections of older residents...together they find new ways to address local needs. One project that may be worthy of consideration by a local Earth Council could be strengthening our local food system and putting more locally grown food into our restaurants, grocery stores and convenience stores, nursing homes, hospital and schools. It appears to me that many projects that could be undertaken by the efforts of a local Earth Council would result in sustainable community development. The Renville County Housing and Redevelopment Authority and Economic Development Authority (HRA/EDA) stands ready to assist the efforts of an Earth Council. We support the formation of one or more local Earth Councils and we look forward to assisting with the identification of potential funding sources as the projects are developed.”

According to Utne, the fundamental premise or theory of change, is that engaging young people and elders in thoughtful, heartfelt conversation, about their interests and concerns will enable and encourage them to take meaningful and productive action together. Come and check out the Renville County Community Earth Council!

Join a Local Community Earth Council

Ed Stone, a rural Renville County resident, was a recent presenter at the Renville County sponsored “Greening Our Future Week.” Mr. Stone is exploring the possibility of starting a Community Earth Council in Renville County. Ed explained that on November 12, 2008, a symposium was held at the University of Minnesota to launch the formation of 20 Earth Councils in the Twin Cities area. Eric Utne, publisher and founder of the council concept, shared his goal to have 100 Earth Councils formed across the United States in the coming year, and 500 councils formed around the world in three years. After reading about Eric Utne Community Earth Council concept, Ed Stone thought, why not start a Community Earth Council in Renville County? Ed explained he had been thinking for some time about ways to join with local people to keep watch on our challenged planet and to seek local initiatives. He has been collecting ideas that a council could pursue and noted that many other ideas will be forthcoming.

What is a Community Earth Council?

Community Earth Councils (CECs) are groups of local citizens including elders (50+) and youth (16-28) working together to address global environment and social challenges at the local level. CECs build community, helping young people find meaning and purpose while providing elders with a way to give back, inspire and impact the future. Participants in a CEC explore how, together they can bring vision into action.

How many people make up an Earth Council?

Community Earth Councils are groups of 8 to 20 people who meet regularly to share their stories, look at what’s working in their communities and what needs some help, and then devise and implement projects that contribute to society and/or the environment. Each CEC is created by its members and designed to help young and old find community, inspiration, meaning and purpose.

What could we foresee happening at council meetings?

First, the members spend time getting to know each other, sharing their stories, hopes and aspirations. They then explore possible projects for addressing community needs,

COUNTY PHONE NUMBERS

Administrator	320-523-3710
Assessor	320-523-3645
Attorney	320-523-2661
Auditor/Treasurer	320-523-2071
Court Services/Probation	320-523-3663
Court Administration	320-523-3680
Environment & Community Development	320-523-3768
Extension	320-523-3713
Hawk Creek	320-523-3666
Heartland Express	320-523-3589
	or 800-450-7964
Heartland Community	320-523-1842
Action Agency Inc.	or 877-523-1842
Hospital	320-523-1261
HRA/EDA	320-523-3656
Human Services	320-523-2202
Jail	320-523-3600
Landfill/Solid Waste	320-523-1505
License	320-523-3612
Olivia Police Department	320-523-2700
Public Health Nursing	320-523-2570
Public Works	320-523-3759
Recorder/Abstractor	320-523-3669
Sheriff	320-523-1161
Veterans Service	320-523-3763
Water Planning & HHW	320-523-3706

County Commissioners:

Ralph Novotny, District #1	320-848-6392
Bob Fox, District #2	507-557-8265
Paul Setzepfandt, District #3	320-365-3270
John Stahl, District #4	320-523-1283
LaMont Jacobson, District #5	320-765-2578

Renville County Trail Plan A Coordinated Effort to Connect Our Communities

We are fortunate to have great county parks and will soon commence working with the University of Minnesota Landscape Architecture Department to develop a trail plan for the county. A similar process is taking place in Redwood County. Once complete, the two trail plans will connect making up the Tatanka Bluffs Regional Trail Plan. As most of you already know, the Fair Ridge Trail connects the community of Fairfax with Fort Ridgely State Park on the county's southeast border near the beautiful Minnesota River. In addition, meetings were held in the past to discuss the development of the Prairie View Recreation Trail initially connecting Bird Island and Olivia, then expanding west to connect to Danube, Renville and Sacred Heart, tying into the Minnesota River Valley State Trail south of Sacred Heart. From Bird Island the trail would head east to connect to Hector and Buffalo Lake, where it would head north, connecting to the Luce Line near Hutchinson. The Minnesota River Valley State Trail is designated in legislation, but presently not constructed in our area. Individual communities within the county have ideas about



where they would like to see trails developed in and around their community. The ultimate goal is to plan how we can connect our communities in healthy recreational ways and have fun at the same time. Last year Minnesota voters passed the "Clean Water Land and Legacy" act which created additional tax revenue to be used for parks and trail development, among other things. It is anticipated that perhaps \$42,000,000 a year for the next 25 years could be available for the development of parks and trails, so this is great timing for Renville County to develop a comprehensive trail plan. Do you have an interest in being part of the trail planning process? If so, please contact our office 320-523-3656 so we can invite you to the meetings that will be held throughout the county. Funding in Renville County for this project was provided by the Legislative Citizen Commission on Minnesota Resources (LCCMR), Renville County, West Central Sustainable Development Partnership, and Renville County Housing and Economic Development Authority.

ENTREPRENEURS ASSISTANCE NETWORK WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

DATE	TIME	LOCATION	WORKSHOP
July 22	4-8 p.m.	Watson Hunting Camp	Local Economy & Your Role
Aug. 11	1-5 p.m.	Memorial Park Shelter Granite Falls	Women's Skies the Limit
Aug. 19	4-8 p.m.	Montevideo Business Development Center	Project Management
Sept. 14	1-5 p.m.	Hector Comm. Center	Goal Setting
Sept. 26	1-5 p.m.	Milan School	Women's Business Goal Setting

For more information contact Cecelia Alvarez at 320-269-9724 or visit their web site at www.myeannetwork.org.

RENVILLE COUNTY CHEMICAL HEALTH COALITION PREVENTING UNDERAGE ALCOHOL USE AND ACCESS

ESTABLISHMENT ~

The RAPAD Coalition was established in August of 2006 through a grant from the Minnesota Department of Human Services Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division and PACT 4 Families Collaborative. The overall goal of the coalition is to reduce youth alcohol, tobacco and other drug use and access within Renville County. The grant has been approved for five years extending through June 2011.

MEMBERSHIP ~

The first goal of the grant was to create a coalition of community members to guide prevention activities. The coalition is an organization open to all interested residents of Renville County including but not limited to: parents, youth, business community, media, schools, youth serving organizations, law enforcement agencies, spiritual and fraternal organizations, civic and volunteer groups, healthcare professionals and state and local or tribal government. These individuals come together to address issues surrounding alcohol and drug use by teens that are too large for one entity alone.

VISION STATEMENT ~

It is the vision of the RAPAD Coalition to positively influence attitudes, beliefs and knowledge in Renville County about alcohol, tobacco and other drug prevention and to create a high quality of life free from the impact of substance abuse.

MISSION STATEMENT ~

The mission of the RAPAD Coalition is to transform Renville County into responsible communities concerning underage alcohol, tobacco and other drug prevention.

PREVENTING UNDERAGE DRINKING AND DRUG USE IS OUR COALITION GOAL... ~

So how do we prevent drug and alcohol abuse, specifically among young people? We start by trying to address the environment in which they live — by changing the so-called social norms (those beliefs which are held by community members about the frequency and amount of drug and alcohol use that takes place), addressing policy issues (the laws that govern underage drinking and drug use and its repercussions) and the accessibility of drugs and alcohol (where and how young people either buy or get drugs and alcohol). The coalition is developing a marketing campaign and media materials that will raise awareness among parents and youth in order to influence them to make healthy decisions.

Renville County West Jaguars

Most RCW students don't drink and drive and don't ride with someone who has been drinking alcohol.



Teens Against Drugs & Alcohol

Funded by MN Department of Human Services, Alcohol and Drug Abuse Division and PACT 4 Families Collaborative

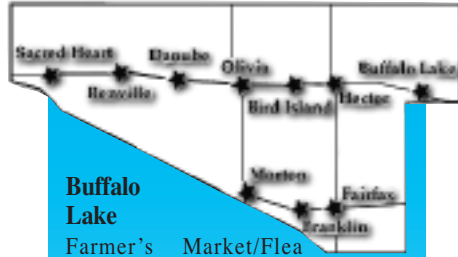
209 RCW students in grades 7-12 took the MOST of Us[®] Survey (2009)

Most of Us[®] is a registered servicemark of Montana State University

DRINKING WATER 20 fl oz (600 mL)
From a municipal source



Around the county...



Buffalo Lake

Farmer's Market/Flea Market begins on Saturday, July 25th in Buffalo Lake at the city park. Vendors set up every Saturday from 8:30 - 11:30 a.m. through the growing season. There is no fee to display your wares and everyone is welcome. The market is sponsored by Buffalo Lake Community Club. Donations accepted.

Fairfax

Fairfax is looking into getting a new library. Fairfax Farmers Market is open to all buyers and vendors on Tuesdays from 4-6 p.m. just off State Hwy 19 on 1st St SE.

Franklin

The Franklin ballpark has been under construction thanks to the Friends of Brent Koch Veterans Memorial Park Committee. Cement and steps have been added around the shelter/concession area and there are plans for additional improvements and a monument honoring veterans. Catfish Days will be July 24-26 with the traditional activities plus, new this year, there will be a street dance both Friday and Saturday evenings.

Olivia

Plan to be at Olivia's Corn Capital Days July 22 to 26! There is always something for everyone ranging from food to recreation to spectator activities. Check out the ice cream socials, pork chops, root beer floats, hot turkey sandwiches, Sunday breakfast at the airport and the famous Sweet Corn and Bean Feed on Saturday. After you're full, take in the library's used book sale, crazy days sales, kids' fair and pedal pull, collector car show, tractor pull, arts in the park, volleyball/softball tournaments and the Kiddie and Grand parades. If you want exercise, sign up for the family triathlon, health run, World Championship Corn Toss, Cornlympics, or Sunday's Remillard Memorial Golf Tournament. For more info, pick up a brochure or call Nancy at 320-523-1350.

SMALL CITIES & FEDERAL STIMULUS FUNDS BOOST HOUSING ACTIVITY

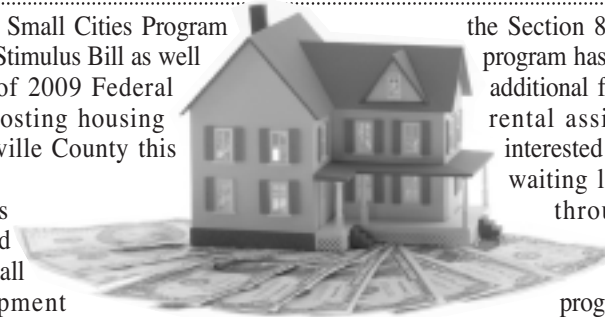
Grants from the Small Cities Program and the Federal Stimulus Bill as well as the release of 2009 Federal funding are boosting housing activity in Renville County this summer.

The county has been awarded \$349,550 in Small Cities Development Program funds for housing rehabilitation. This process began last fall when property owners in participating communities were invited to submit pre-applications to demonstrate the demand for funding. Those who submitted pre-applications can expect to be contacted by Heartland Community Action sometime this summer to begin the process of determining eligibility and structuring their financing package. The funding should allow improvements to 15 owner-occupied homes and 5 rental properties. Southwest Minnesota Housing Partnership is also involved in program administration.

This spring the HRA/EDA was granted \$42,105 through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act for improvements to Public Housing properties. These funds will be used for the replacement of the roofs on eight single-family homes in Franklin, Morton and Sacred Heart which are part of the Public Housing program, with the remainder being used to replace appliances in those houses and at Centennial Apartments in Franklin. The roofing contractor is Lidbeck Construction of Bird Island.

Finally, the May release of 2009 funding for

the Section 8 rental assistance program has allowed about 12 additional families to receive rental assistance. Anyone interested in getting on the waiting list for assistance through the Public Housing or Section 8 programs may contact the HRA/EDA at 320-523-3656.



THE 2ND ANNUAL RENVILLE COUNTY FARM CITY BREAKFAST

AGRI-ENERGY FOR A BETTER TOMORROW

FRIDAY JULY 24TH, 2009

7:30AM-11AM



RENVILLE COUNTY FAIR GROUNDS
651 S MAIN STREET
BIRD ISLAND, MN 55310

MENU: "CHRIS CAKES PANCAKES",
SAUSAGE, CHEESE, MILK, JUICE &
COFFEE

\$1 PER PERSON
KIDS 12 & UNDER EAT FREE



ENERGY EFFICIENCY EXHIBITS,
FARM MACHINERY,
ANIMAL AG EDUCATION,
CHANCES TO WIN PRIZES
& MUCH MORE!

Sponsored by The Renville County Farm Bureau,
Renville County Corn/Soybean Growers,
Renville County HRA/EDA &
Agriculture/Renewable Energy Committee,
and ProAg of Renville County.



RENVILLE COUNTY HRA/EDA

HELPING PEOPLE PURSUE THEIR BUSINESS AND HOUSING GOALS

<p>Buffalo Lake Farm & Flea Market Saturdays 8:30-11:30am starting July 25th Buffalo Lake City Park Hwy 212</p> <p>Country Garden Located 9 miles North of Hector Canning tomatoes & chemical free vegetables Call Cindy Grams to order 320-894-5103</p> <p>Ron Hanson Chemical free onions & potatoes Late Summer through Winter Cacti (all sizes) and Jade Plants Call 320-765-2379</p> <p>Fairfax Farmers Market Tuesdays July - September 1st Street S.E. off Hwy 19 Fairfax</p>	<p>Hector Farmer's Market Wednesdays 4-8pm June 10 through fall Suttle Parking lot 1001 HWY 212 East Call Sherry Kenney for more information 320-833-6845</p> <p>K & C Gardens Ken & Cathy Balderston 8 miles north of Olivia M-F 3-8; Sat. 1-8pm Call to order 320-523-2162 Canning cucumbers/tomatoes by 1/2 bushel or bushel</p> <p>Le Roy Lothert Natural and chemical free vegetables in season 111 N. Park Drvie, Morton Call 507-697-6478</p>	<p>Lundstrum Vegetables Rural Bird Island Wide variety of vegetables, jams, jellies & Free range chickens. Call 320-365-4174</p> <p>Olivia Farmers Market Thursdays 2-6pm; July 16 - October 22 City parking lot 9th St. & Fairview Call Nancy for more information 320-523-1350</p> <p>Renville Farmers Market Fridays 3-6pm Water Tower Park in Renville</p> <p>Wertish Farm Drug & hormone free chickens and turkeys Call 320-826-2451</p>
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WE SUPPORT LOCAL GROWERS!

In an effort to promote locally grown produce, this ad is provided free of charge to local farmers markets by the Renville County HRA/EDA & Ag/Renewable Energy Committee. Please call 320-523-3837 if you would like us to include your market.



3

Year Accomplishments:

Project Northland Curriculum:

Available to all students in grades 6th-10th at the BOLD, RCW and GFW campuses. The primary focus is on prevention of early alcohol use because it is the drug of choice among teenagers and inflicts the most harm to this age group.

Positive Community Norms Campaign:

All 7-12 grade students at RCW completed their second MOST of Us @ survey in February to gather data related to alcohol and drug use about the behaviors and perceptions of the youth. The campaign focuses on changing social norms in the community and celebrating the positive aspects of the community.

Alcohol Compliance Check Training:

Designed for law enforcement officers to implement compliance check systems for establishments that sell or serve alcohol. Current research shows that effective and regular compliance checks help decrease alcohol sales to minors and reduce underage drinking.

Responsible Beverage Server Training:

Education for owners, managers, servers and sellers of alcohol about strategies to avoid illegally selling alcohol to underage youth or intoxicated patrons.

ZAP (Zero Adult Provider) Training:

All too often, prevention efforts focus solely on youth with the idea that if we can educate kids, we can stop underage drinking. ZAP source investigations reduce access to alcohol by indentifying and charging the illegal providers of alcohol. Stopping the flow of alcohol to youth is a crucial way to stop underage drinking.

Alcohol prevention youth groups. Youth groups have been working to send positive messages to their schoolmates and community that alcohol and teens do not go together. Approximately eighty students belong to these youth groups at RCW (TADA—Teens Against Drugs and Alcohol), BOLD and GFW, each with a SADD youth group (Student's Against Destructive Decisions).

Town Hall Meetings:

These meetings are designed to alert and empower the community to increase understanding of underage drinking and its consequences. The town hall arrangement is a positive arena for communities to discuss how they can best address this issue.

Monthly Coalition meetings:

Anyone interested in the health and safety of their community is welcome to attend the monthly coalition meetings. If you're interested in becoming a coalition member or volunteer please contact the coalition coordinator at 320-523-3845.

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Year Goals:

- Provide an avenue for community discussions around alcohol and drug use
- Youth trained as project leaders promoting environmental and community-wide approaches to prevent underage alcohol, tobacco and other drug use
- Collaborate with local law enforcement, judicial system and local government to prevent underage alcohol use and access
- Get the word out about underage drinking laws - supplying alcohol to anyone under age 21 is illegal - Zero Adult Providers
- Work with sponsors of community events to help them reduce underage alcohol access and, in doing so, reduce alcohol use by minors at these events
- To narrow the gap between the number of Renville County youth who use alcohol and the perception among Renville County youth as to how many of them use alcohol
- Help communities promote alcohol free activities where teens can gather
- Work to enhance Renville County policies to effectively prevent underage alcohol access and use

Annie Tepfer, Coordinator • 500 East DePue Ave • Olivia, MN 56277
E-Mail: annie_t@co.renville.mn.us • PH: 320-523-3845