

*River Country Resource Conservation & Development Council's mission is to initiate, facilitate and build connections for the wise use of natural, human and economic resources.*

July 2010  
Volume 5, Issue 1

## Inside this Issue

- 1** Farewell & Good Luck  
A Fond Farewell
- 2** Greetings from Kirsten  
Bugle Lake Restoration
- 3** Upcoming Events  
Summer Internship  
Chippewa Grazier Education
- 4** Chippewa Grazier Technical  
New Addition
- 4** Coulee Grazier Education
- 5** Coulee Grazier Technical  
St. Croix Grazier
- 6** Please Help!  
Thank You WMMB!
- 6** Midwest Value Added  
Conference

**River Country RC&D Council**  
1304 N. Hillcrest Pkwy, Suite B  
Altoona, WI 54720  
715-834-9672  
[www.rivercountryrcd.org](http://www.rivercountryrcd.org)

**Whitehall Office**  
19225 Dewey St.  
Whitehall, WI 54773  
715-538-4396 Ext. 118  
Email: [rivercountry@rivercountryrcd.org](mailto:rivercountry@rivercountryrcd.org)

## Farewell and Good Luck!

*Pam Herdrich*

For everything there is a time and season; and my time with River Country has come to a close. My husband and I have taken advantage of an opportunity to move back to our "heart" home in southeast Idaho. I'll be the Coordinator for High Country RC&D Council, located in Rexburg, ID for the next few years.

As I look back on the last 11 years, I marvel on how much River Country has grown and changed. It's a far cry from the empty office I walked into in 1999 with one contractor – Mary C. Anderson – and two projects. We learned a lot along the way. There have been great successes, and some failures which provided invaluable learning opportunities and lessons.

I have had the pleasure of working with so many wonderful people and partners within the River Country Area. The staff and Council members have been exceptional! Keep working and learning together, and growing River Country to its full potential.

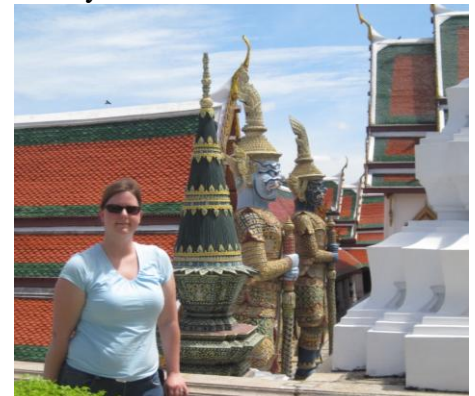
Best wishes!

## A Fond Farewell

*Melanie Baumgart*

After five wonderful years of working at River Country RC&D, the time has come for me to say "Farewell." In August, I will be moving with my husband to live in Bangkok, Thailand. My husband Eric will be helping his company open a new manufacturing plant and I will be attending graduate school to get my master's degree in non-profit management.

During my time with River Country I have had many great experiences working on a variety of different projects. I would like to thank my co-workers and other partners I've worked with for all of their support and hard work. I will miss working with all of you.



*Melanie in Thailand during one of her trips.*

## Greetings from Kirsten Cahow-Scholtes

*Kirsten Cahow-Scholtes*

Hello everyone, my name is Kirsten Cahow-Scholtes and I am the new Conservation Project Specialists. I will be working in the Elk Creek and Red Cedar watersheds in Trempealeau and Dunn counties. My work will continue the efforts of Mary, Melanie and others under a Driftless Area Initiative grant and a Wisconsin DNR.

I am from Eau Claire originally where I went to the University of Wisconsin – Eau Claire and earned a BS in Hydrogeology and Water Chemistry, with an emphasis in water resources. I moved to the Big Lake (i.e. Lake Superior) to work on a master's degree in Water Resources Management at the University of Minnesota – Duluth and ended up staying for ten years. I ended up in Bayfield, WI where I lived on an organic berry farm that was run totally on wind and solar power, and was involved in a local CSA (Community Shared Agriculture) as well as farmers market, etc. My professional experience included working for the Bad River Tribe as their Water Resources Program Manager for seven years and Eau Claire County as the County Conservationist for two years.

I am really excited about using my skills to work with River Country RC&D to promote and provide resources to farmers and others that will ensure the protection of the incredible

resources in Dunn and Trempealeau Counties, as well as, assuring that farmers and others can maintain sustainable futures on the land.

## Bugle Lake Restoration Project

*Nancy Bergman*

Even though Bugle Lake is currently in less than pristine condition, the Elk Rod and Gun Club continue their long tradition of sponsoring community fundraisers with outdoor activities on and around the Lake. The first Saturday in February is the Elk Rod and Gun Ice Fishing Contest. The ice is always crowded with hardy fishermen and women who are keen to try their luck at catching trout that are released prior to the start of the contest.

The big canvas tent offers refreshments, a live band, displays, games, and drawings. The Independence High School Ecology Club sells bait and the FFA members man the food stand. Even though the lake is exceedingly shallow at present, the ice fishing contest always draws a huge, energetic crowd.

Rain or shine, hot or cold, the Annual Kids' Fishing Contest never lacks for enthusiastic anglers either. On the second Saturday in May the banks of Bugle Lake are alive with youngsters all trying their luck at reeling in fish. The Elk Rod and Gun also sponsors this great promotion of the noble sport of fishing.



*Annual Kids Fishing Contest*

In an effort to keep events such as these viable, the Rainbow Community Club of Independence has rallied to the cause. On June 24<sup>th</sup> a fund raiser for the Bugle Lake Project was held at the Opera House. Brats grilled by the Elk Rod and Gun Club members were sold by the Rainbow group. Upstairs in the Opera House the incredibly gifted Sam Backman played the piano while patrons ate ice cream sundaes. It was a special summer's evening filled with good food and wonderful music, all for the cause of bringing Bugle Lake back to its former glory.



*Sam Backman performs June 24, 2010.*

## **Upcoming Events**

### **Coulee Graziers' Pasture Walks:**

09/07/10 – Jim Gilligan  
09/23/10 – Cal-West Seeds Tour  
10/05/10 – Nate and Karen Kling

*For more information contact*

*Mary C. Anderson at  
715-538-4396, ext. 118*

### **Chippewa Valley Graziers' Pasture Walks:**

08/21/10 – Duane Klindworth  
09/09/10 – Jason Yoder  
09/23/10 – Dale Daggett Farm

*For more information contact*

*Kevin Mahalko at 715-225-9879*

### **St. Croix Graziers' Pasture Walks:**

08/18/10 – RDJ's Farm  
09/15/10 – UW-River Falls Mann Valley Farm  
10/16/10 – Cheyenne and Katy Christianson

*For more information contact*

*Brian J. Brezinski at  
715-579-2342*

**09/02/2010**

**Board of Directors Meeting  
Altoona Office  
1:00 PM**

**Monthly board meeting is open  
to anyone interested in  
attending.**

*For more information call  
715-834-9672*

**12/31/2009**

*Native Prairie Seed Orders Due  
For more information call Kirsten  
at 715-834-9672*

**1/27 – 28/2011**

**Value Added Conference  
Sheraton Hotel  
Madison, WI**

*For more information call  
Lindsay at 715-579-5229 or  
Erica at 715-579-5098*

## **Summer Internship**

*Beth Teutschmann*

Beth is the summer intern at River Country RC&D. She just graduated in May of this year from UW-Eau Claire with a bachelor's degree in Geology and Anthropology with hopes to go into the environmental field. Her main focus at River Country has been the Elk Creek Watershed project and helping to promote awareness and better conservation practices throughout the watershed. She has also gotten a chance to work with the NRCS, DNR, and learn how all of these organizations operate and interact.

## **Chippewa Valley Graziers Education Project**

*Kevin Mahalko*

The Chippewa Valley Graziers Network had several great events in late 2009 and in 2010. The Network Coordinator and Grazing Educator, Kevin Mahalko, attended the ACRES USA and National GLCI grazing conferences, along with several Network Members. Our 2010 West Central Wisconsin Grazing Conference was a great success with Greg Judy leading the way at the conference, followed by Andy Hager and finishing with Cheyenne Christianson and Peter Arnold joining Greg Judy on a farmer panel.

Kevin worked on several outreach programs to spread the word about Managed Grazing, including volunteering to host sessions at the Grassworks State

Grazing Conference, a visit to a grazing farm with the UW – Eau Claire Biology / Ornithology students, a grazing education meeting at Holm Girls Dairy between the UWEC Young Republicans and the UWEC Foodlums, a pasture-focused farm visit with Gilman High School Ecology students, an Earth Day grazing demonstration for 500 students, a Panelist presentation for the showing of "Dirt: The Movie" at UWEC, and finally a pasture-focused farm tour for an outreach group of UW Madison Nursing students followed with a meeting at Sacred Heart Hospital to learn about the local food connection between Network Farmers, Sacred Heart Hospital, the Producers and Buyers Co-op, and River Country RC&D.



*Chippewa Network pasture walk*

We have had several pasture walk farm visits so far this year. Mike, Dave, and Marilyn Mayenschein hosted an overwintering Pasture Walk, Arland Eberly and family hosted a no-till drill demonstration and Pasture Walk, Harry Jascor had a fencing demo and pasture walk, and Phil and Nicky Crick had a pasture walk focused on pasture planting and interseeding. Peter

Arnold was awarded the WI Conservation Farmer of the Year and hosted a statewide audience and our Network to showcase conservation in Wisconsin.

Call Kevin Mahalko at (715) 225-9879 or visit [www.rivercountyrfd.org](http://www.rivercountyrfd.org) for the Chippewa Valley Graziers' schedule.



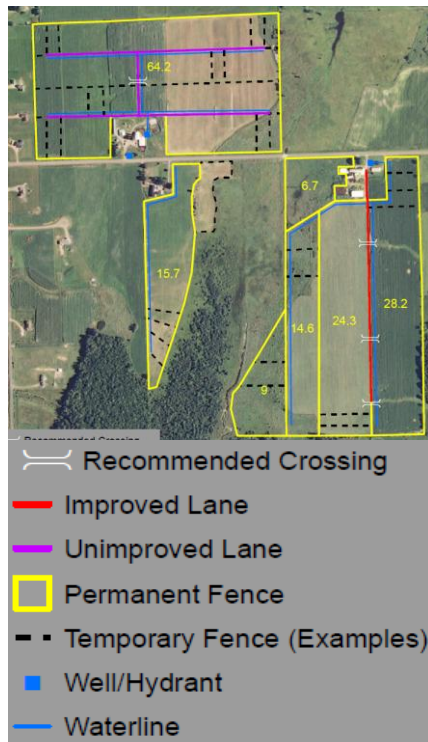
Pasture walk attendees learn about many aspects of grazing, from grass mixtures to fencing information.

## Chippewa Valley Grazier Technical Assistance Project

Haly Schultz

River Country's project, "Managed Grazing Technical Assistance in the Chippewa River Valley" aims to provide landowners with one-on-one assistance with land management decisions related to the establishment and management of pasture as well as livestock management on these pastures. This project covers the counties of Clark, Chippewa, Eau Claire, and Dunn. Assistance typically comes in the form of visits to the farm/land parcel and the development of a Managed Grazing Plan with the landowner. Converting cropland

to well-managed pasture and incorporating managed pasture into a farming operation has been shown to have great environmental and economical benefits.



The 2008/2009 project assisted over 46 individuals with land management decisions related to Management Intensive Grazing, resulting in 11 new managed grazing plans and 20 reviews of existing grazing plans--positively affecting hundreds and sometimes thousands of acres of land and bodies of water in West Central Wisconsin. The 2009/2010 project is projected to result in 12 new grazing plans and 20 reviews of existing plans.

Call Haly Schultz at (715) 225-9882 for additional information on grazing technical assistance.

## New Addition to the River Country Family

Haly Schultz

Congratulations to first time parents, Haly and Joe Schultz, who welcomed a baby boy, Zeb Marth Schultz on Sunday, March 7, 2010. Zeb was born at 7:30 pm at the Morning Star Birth Center in Menomonie, Wisconsin. He weighed 9 lbs 6 oz and was 22 inches long.



Zeb (upper left) and his parents (lower right).

Since his birth, Zeb has enjoyed his first tractor ride (while the farm crew picked rock), has joined his mom during the daily movement of polywire fence for grazing the Schultz family dairy farm cows, and has attended a few farm visits and pasture walks

## Coulee Grazier Education Project

Mary C. Anderson

The Coulee Graziers MIG Education Program is proceeding according to plan in 2010. The group held its winter

discussion group planning session in January, hosted six winter discussion group meetings and held one regional grazing conference in cooperation with the Chippewa Valley Graziers and the St Croix Valley Graziers.

Overall attendance has been higher than in previous years and discussions often turn to creating greater efficiencies and preparation for spring green up. The group has also experienced a spurt of new growth that is continuing with more beginning farmers requesting on-farm services to implement MIG. A final wintering walk was held in April to showcase the results of a producer that preset bales for optimum winter manure applications. It was an exciting wintering season that launched into a great spring and summer.



*Coulee Network pasture walk*

Although lack of rain was an issue in early spring, May and June rains have kept the Coulee Group in grass and coordinated pasture walks! Three walks have been held this summer and an additional four are scheduled for August through November. This group is driven by assisting new grazing based farmers by sharing their knowledge of cattle

on grass, farm profitability and how to be innovative with limited resources.



*Coulee Network pasture walk*

## **Coulee Grazer Technical Assistance Project**

*Mary C. Anderson*

The Coulee Grazer Technical Assistance Program is growing in demand as more and more new livestock producers look for profitable ways to grow livestock within the Buffalo, Trempealeau and Jackson County Area. This year assistance has been provided to over 50 individuals on the farm, resulting in the development of 15 new grazing plans and over 35 reviews of existing plans.

## **St. Croix Grazer's Network Education and Technical Assistance Update**

*Brian J. Brezinski*

It's been a busy year for the St. Croix Valley Graziers Network. In January we planned a wide variety of events for producers, the general public, students and agency professionals.

There were numerous events coordinated and facilitated by

the Grazing Network, including the West Central WI Spring Grazing Conference, presentation on "What is A Grazing Network" for Land Stewardship Farm Beginnings Program, spring pasture walk on the Ken & Kevin Mahalko Dairy Farm for the UWEC Biology Department, presentations for the UW River Falls WI Grazing School, and a farmer panel given by 3 producers from the St. Croix Valley Grazing Network Area. In addition to the above activities myself and two producers representing the Coulee, Chippewa & St. Croix Grazing Networks also worked closely with Mark Denk through Chippewa Valley Technical College to aid in hosting the Wisconsin School For Beginning Dairy & Livestock Farmers and host two extra-curricular pasture walks for students that participated in this course at Out To Pasture Beef & RDJ's Farm.



*St. Croix Network pasture walk.*

Technical assistance one-on-one for grass-based producers in the St. Croix Valley Area is in full swing, with nine Grazing Plans

written to date and follow-up farm calls on existing grazing plans taking place. In the coming weeks I plan to get out to as many farms as possible until the ground is frozen.

What a year it is has been, from the Grazing Conference bringing in 120 producers from West Central WI and seeing the results of how a powerful a speaker like Greg Judy can really get one's "Wheels Turning," per se, and then seeing those results on the farm. Powerful stuff!

I can't help but sit back, laugh and smile after having found the two pictures I included in this write up; nothing better than seeing myself on my hands & knees with 30+ 3<sup>rd</sup> Graders acting like a bunch of 1200 pound dairy cows grazing a paddock. Someday, maybe I'll grow up, but then again...I can't lie, that was a ton of fun, "Mooooo" – or – experiencing Ken and Kevin Mahalko mesmerize a group of college students on the farm, can't beat it!!!!



Brian and 3<sup>rd</sup> graders acting like dairy cows

## PLEASE HELP!

Mary C. Anderson

The Wisconsin Department of Ag., Trade and Consumer

Protection is again proposing cuts to the Wisconsin Grazing Initiative. This program provides grants to us and our partners around the state to assist farmers with network coordination and technical assistance. This proposed cut will decrease the programming abilities and hence decrease the availability of producers getting the assistance they need to implement MIG on their farms. ***Please call or write your local legislator and share your concern for this proposed funding cut.***

## Thank You Wisconsin Milk Marketing Board!

Mary C. Anderson

The River Country RC&D Board, staff and Network farmers want to thank the WMMB for sponsoring the purchase of educational materials used in all of our Management Intensive Grazing programming. These materials help to keep our valuable farmers on the land with profitable dairy and livestock businesses!

## Midwest Value Added Agriculture Conference featuring Joel Salatin

Lindsey Raab

"Cultivating Farm Profitability" is the theme of the 2011 Midwest Value Added Agriculture Conference, to be held January 27<sup>th</sup> and January 28<sup>th</sup> at the Sheraton Hotel in Madison, WI. Our keynote speaker, Joel Salatin of Polyface

Farm, will be involved in activities throughout the day on Thursday. Presentations will focus on urban agriculture, adding value through organics, marketing, business management and more. Chef Graham Smith has happily agreed to work with us on sourcing and serving at least 80% local food for conference meals and snacks.

The conference is aimed at bringing farmers together to network and learn about local projects and resources available to help ensure their profitability and sustainability. In addition to farmers, the conference will bring together students, agribusiness representatives, university research and extension personnel, and government and non-governmental organizations from across the country to explore current issues in value added agriculture. New this year, the planning committee distributed a "Call for Presenters" in an effort to incorporate new ideas and people into this educational event.

Sponsorship opportunities are available at multiple levels, and may include advertising your business or organization in conference materials, exhibiting in the trade show, and complimentary registrations. For more information please visit the conference website: <http://www.rivercountryrcd.org/valad.html>

The registration brochures will be available in October!

**Please investment in our community by making a tax deductible donation to River Country RC&D!**

\_\_\_\_\_ River and Country Society (\$5000 or more)

\_\_\_\_\_ Silver Circle (\$500-\$999)

\_\_\_\_\_ Diamond Circle (\$2500 - \$4999)

\_\_\_\_\_ Bronze Circle (\$150-\$499)

\_\_\_\_\_ Platinum Circle (\$1500-\$2499)

\_\_\_\_\_ Associate Circle (\$35-\$149)

\_\_\_\_\_ Gold Circle (\$1000-\$1499)

\_\_\_\_\_ For three years, I pledge the above amount.

Total Gift: \_\_\_\_\_

**My gift will be paid by:**

\_\_\_\_\_ Payment Enclosed

\_\_\_\_\_ Direct Billing (once or quarterly)

\_\_\_\_\_ Credit Card via PayPal (email address required) \_\_\_\_\_

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Alt. Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ I/We wish to remain anonymous.



**Council**

**President**

Rich Purdy – River Falls

**Vice President**

Jerry Mc-Roberts – Rice Lake

**Secretary**

Gene Ruetz – New Richmond

**Treasurer**

Marlin Baillargeon – Amery

**Director**

Marilyn Mayenschein – Thorp

**Director**

Rodney Rommel – River Falls

**Director**

Dan Weiss - Durand

**Director**

Darrel Kittleson – Amery

**Director**

Dave Galewski – Independence

**Director**

Scott Robinson – Chippewa Falls

**Staff**

**Mary C. Anderson**

Grazing Specialist

[mary.anderson@rcdnet.net](mailto:mary.anderson@rcdnet.net)

**Nancy Bergman**

Project Assistant

[Nanc.bergman@wi.usda.gov](mailto:Nanc.bergman@wi.usda.gov)

**Brian Brezinski**

Grazing Lands Specialist

[Brian.brezinski@rcdnet.net](mailto:Brian.brezinski@rcdnet.net)

**Kirsten Cahow-Scholtes**

Conservation Project Specialist

[Kirsten.Cahow-Scholtes@rcdnet.net](mailto:Kirsten.Cahow-Scholtes@rcdnet.net)

**Linda Luberda**

Accountant

Project Assistant

[lluberda@rivercountryrcd.org](mailto:lluberda@rivercountryrcd.org)

**Kevin Mahalko**

Grazing Educator

[kmahalko@rivercountryrcd.org](mailto:kmahalko@rivercountryrcd.org)

**Lindsay Raab**

Conference Coordinator

[raablk@gmail.com](mailto:raablk@gmail.com)

**Haly Schultz**

Grazing Lands Specialist

[Haly.schultz@rcdnet.net](mailto:Haly.schultz@rcdnet.net)

**Erica Zerr**

Conference Coordinator

Project Assistant

[emzerr@rivercountryrcd.org](mailto:emzerr@rivercountryrcd.org)

**Beth Teutschmann**

Summer Intern

[Beth.Teutschmann@rcdnet.net](mailto:Beth.Teutschmann@rcdnet.net)

*If you would like to be removed from this mailing list, please contact us*