

American Water Resources Association
Montana Section
c/o The Water Center
Huffman Bldg.
Montana State University
Bozeman, Montana 59717
406-457-5923



Newsletter August 2000
<http://www.awra.org/state/montana>

Messages from the Year 2000 Officers...

17th Annual Montana Water Conference in West Yellowstone Conference Center

-Year 2000 conference highlights -

On October 5 and 6, the 17th annual conference of Montana's Section of AWRA, cosponsored with the University System Water Center, will be at the West Yellowstone Conference Hotel. The conference will commence with a hydrogeologic bus tour of Yellowstone National Park.

Registration begins at noon on October 5 and the conference starts at 1:00 pm. More than 40 presenters will share their knowledge on a variety of Montana water issues through oral and poster sessions. Then chat with poster presenters who will be attending their displays Thursday evening during a relaxed happy hour. Learn more about Montana's 5th water legend during our Thursday evening banquet.

I greatly appreciate the dedication by each of this year's Montana AWRA officers—they are superb.

If you want to know about Montana's water issues, this conference is an excellent opportunity to do so. See you there!

President: Joanna Thamke,
U.S. Geological Survey (jothamke@usgs.gov)

1999 Conference a Success

Thanks to our 1999 president, Ginette Abdo, we had a record turnout at our 16th Annual Montana Section AWRA conference. The conference was held at the Lewis and Clark Interpretive Center in Great Falls. Evaluation comments reflected the members' appreciation for her ingenuity in developing a truly unique conference atmosphere. Our AWRA checking account, which was somewhat emaciated prior to her leadership, once again has a healthy balance.
Thank you Ginette!



Thursday Evening Conference Events

Thursday evening events will kick-off at 5:30 with a poster display and social hour. This will be the time to meet with your friends and associates, and to discuss the posters one-on-one with the presenters. Free soft drinks and snacks will be available, and a cash bar will serve drinks for \$1.00 off the regular price. Dinner will follow at 7:00 with the following choice of entrees: *London broil, sautéed trout, teriyaki chicken, or buffalo meat loaf.* **Dinner bookings are available only through pre-registration.** The entertainment during dinner will be the presentation of the 2000 Water Legend Award.

Sec. / Treasurer: Larry Dolan,
MT Dept. Natural Resources & Conservation
(ldolan@state.mt.us)

5th Annual Montana Water Legend Announced

'...ordinary people doing extraordinary things'

The Water Legend Award honors a dedicated individual who, through time, dedication and hard work, has significantly contributed to water resource activities in Montana. **Dr. Stephan Custer, Professor of Geology at Montana State University is the year 2000 awardee.** His dedication and enthusiasm for educating his students and preparing them for work in hydrology, his field and research work on significant Montana water issues and his commitment to AWRA are just a few of the reasons Steve was nominated and voted the 2000 Water Legend.

Join us at the banquet to honor this dynamic AWRA member.

Since Water Legends aren't born or made every day, it has been recommended that this award be bestowed once every five years. Based on membership recommendation, our next Montana Water Legend will be honored in 2005.

To learn more about all the Montana Water Legends, - please visit the AWRA-MT Website at
<http://www.awra.org/state/montana>.

AWRA 2000 Field Trip to Yellowstone National Park

There will be a pre-meeting hydrogeologic field trip to Yellowstone Park on Oct. 5, 2000. We will leave from the front of the Holiday Inn (Convention Headquarters) at 8:00 a.m. and will return by noon. The trip will examine the interaction between volcanism and glaciation on the road between West Yellowstone and Madison Junction. Near Madison Junction participants will

see the caldera margin and Quaternary rhyolite lava flows. Wetland concepts will be examined between Madison Junction and Lower Geyser Basin. The thermal features of the Lower Geyser Basin will be examined and the legal and scientific issues surrounding the thermophilic microbiologic communities will be discussed. There will be a brief discussion of the Yellowstone Controlled Ground Water Area along the way. The trip will be led by Steve Custer. One or more Yellowstone National Park Scientists may be joining us.

Vice President: Donna Rise,
MT Dept. of Agriculture (dorise@state.mt.us)

Montana Water Center Welcomes New Director

Gretchen Rupp, a Professional Engineer, has been named Acting Director of the Water Center. This event follows the summer resignation of **Dorothy Bradley**. Ms. Bradley left the Center after seven years to pursue other personal interests. **Don Potts** and **Marvin Miller** remain the Center's Associate Directors, at the University of Montana and Montana Tech respectively. For more on Ms. Rupp, please access the Center's site through MONTANA WATER at <http://water.montana.edu>



Just West of Yellowstone..... (after AWRA?)

Life is funny. For locals, a trip through Yellowstone National Park, although always delightful, begins to get old after awhile — especially if you'd like a little more freedom to explore via bike or kayak and not get bonked by an RV mirror. Consequently, I'm always on the lookout for new family challenges to hold my teenagers' interest. After all, they've '... *been there ... done that.*'

The Island Park area within the Targhee National Forest, has always been a mystery to me. For years, I've always driven through in a hurry -- to catch a plane in Salt Lake or the warm sun during Spring Break in Moab. On several occasions, the plowed snow was so high we drove through iced tunnels, not seeing any of the landscape.

A few years ago, having time to spare in West Yellowstone, I came across a remarkable collection of local stories, detailed maps and places of interest in a publication "**Just West of Yellowstone .. A Guide to Exploring and Camping**" by Rae Ellen Moore, 1987 – Great Blue Graphics.

Having always been drawn to water however, I was curious about the waterways we crossed by Mack's Inn and further south along the Buffalo and Henry's Fork of the Snake. In warmer weather, all kinds of people were boating, fishing, and camping along these incredibly pristine rivers. Finding 'Just West of Yellowstone' was my rosetta stone to the Island Park area. More than just a travel log, it provides biological, geological as well as historical stories surrounding a very special local treasure for those that have the time to explore.

If you are planning to extend your stay over the week-end following the AWRA conference - (the hotel has agreed to extend the conference rates thru Sunday,) here are just a few of the sites I'd recommend you visit ... *just west of Yellowstone*. If this sounds remotely interesting, I urge you to find a copy of this book and review it prior to coming down to the meeting. There really is a lot to see and do.

Note: Hopefully travel restrictions will be lifted by the meeting date. Please check the forest Websites for current information.

BIG SPRINGS & the RECREATION WATER TRAIL - First U.S. national water trail - easy 2-4 hour float. Lots of wildlife. A visit to the Springs is a must - turn east on road by Mack's Inn.

SAWTELLE PEAK - Excellent view of entire area from Red Rocks to the Madison Valley and the entire Island Park caldera area. Go west of Hwy 20 by Island Park Village. Watch for signs. A very well maintained winding gravel road due to the the FAA radar installation at the crest.

BUFFALO and HENRY'S FORK of the SNAKE RIVERS - Stop in and visit some of the old lodges and ranches along the way.

MESA FALLS - Upper and lower falls take the Hwy 3 loop. This area has its own WEB site at <http://www.fs.fed.us/tnfi/mesafalls/welcome.htm>. It's also near the isolated southwest entrance to Yellowstone at Cave Falls.

ASHTON SAND DUNES - Yes, major sand dunes on the edge of the Snake River Plain on mostly BLM land. Enjoy one of the best views of the Tetons.

OLD UNION PACIFIC RAILROAD BED - Bike from W. Yellowstone to Ashton. Railroad tunnels near the southern end.

Communications: Kathy Stephens,
Montana University System Water Center
(stephens@montana.edu)

State Chapter honors Earth Science Anchor

Ann Parker, secretary at MSU Earth Sciences, has graciously served as the AWRA membership/data secretary for quite a few years. Ann retired last December, from Earth Science and AWRA-MT to get on with her next life. A certificate of appreciation with thanks from everyone is being prepared as a plaque for her trophy wall. Thanks Ann!!

May Mace of Bozeman, a retired MSU Civil Engineering secretary, has been subcontracted to continue the work for our state chapter. The AWRA membership/data secretary is the only paid position we support. Fees for this temporary position come directly from the state chapter treasury. May will be at the registration desk during the conference, so stop by and say HI!

Take only Pictures,
Leave only Footprints
The Golden Rule of Preservation

