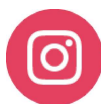


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## 2020 3Q Newsletter

### July-September

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## A Big Thanks!!

...to those of you wearing masks in public, washing hands regularly, and observing physical distancing. Wearing a mask is sustainability at its finest -- it shows you care and are doing your best to be a good example to others. Decent and caring human beings will get us through this crisis. It will also get us through the next one - the climate crisis.

A majority of people now recognize climate change is real but don't know what they personally can do about it. Check out the [suggestions here on our website](#). Also, be a Climate Voter! Vote Earth! Choose candidates who trust scientists and don't traffic in wishful thinking or conspiracy theories. Climate change is real and we have a small window of time to save ourselves. Also, support SSMN! Our 2020-2021 projects aim at reducing our local carbon footprint, and include: encouraging businesses to qualify for a coming Stillwater area Green Business Directory; working to become a Bike-Friendly Community; continuing to engage our city in green measures; and preserving our natural areas. Every single act of stewardship throws

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...and support us and keep taking sustainable choices and making sustainable choices yourself. Be safe! Thank you!

## Support Us



## Public Comment on Stonebridge Trail Renovation Ends in 3 Days

**Let The County Know You Endorse Our Statement!**

Your input is needed urgently on Washington County's imminent Stonebridge Trail/Highway 5 project in Stillwater to guarantee that bicyclists and pedestrians are included. The deadline is Wednesday, July 15, so don't wait -- this takes just a few minutes. The plan is good but our input will make it great, not just for cars, but for walking and biking. Please take the survey and at the end, where there is an open text question, please paste the following statement into the county's survey:

***"I endorse the position of Sustainable Stillwater MN and request the following improvements to the County Highway 5 (Stonebridge Trail) Phase 3 plan: 1. Include trails on both sides of the road! While the plan says the trail on the west side of the road may be included, it is not***

*side. This is the historic stone bridge that is the namesake of the school, which most people don't know is there because no one can see it.*

*3. Connection to the Browns Creek Trail: the plan presents a couple of options. Both may need further study, but the need for the trail connection is clear. 4. SPEED. The County gives a brief explanation of how the speed limits are set, which has the effect of keeping speeds high. We think design elements such as street trees (boulevard trees planted close to the road) and narrow lanes (10' desired, 11' max) will slow traffic and increase safety for all."*

Please include the above comment [in the survey](#) before the Wednesday, July 15 deadline. Thank you!

### Stonebridge Trail Renovation Survey





## Working for a Bike-Friendlier Community

### We're Gearing Up

Try to imagine the kind of economic boom Downtown Stillwater would experience if even a tenth of all the bicylists now enjoying the Loop Trail actually stopped, parked their bikes safely, and came into town to spend money. Sustainable Stillwater MN has formed a new group called Bicycle Friendly Community to help that happen. And to make it easier to use bikes for transportation, commuting, and recreation. We've met with some city officers and business leaders and are encouraged -- the business community is especially enthusiastic about making our city bike-friendly. Our three-year plan for Stillwater includes more amenities like bike racks and better signage to help bicyclists navigate their way through downtown, find a place to refill water bottle, find restrooms, and locate repair stations. Ultimately we want safe on-street routes for bikes and to connect the bike trails around Stillwater.

Our plan will be submitted to the city in August. Thanks to Christie Rosckes of Discover Stillwater for lending her support! Can you help? Contact Rick Heidick at [rick@sustainablestillwatermn.org](mailto:rick@sustainablestillwatermn.org)

**Contact Rick Heidick**

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## The Coming New Center Square of Stillwater

You've probably heard about the Chestnut Street Plaza renovation -- the city is wrapping up the final plans for what the 2-block promenade will look like, the area leading from the new Lift Bridge to Main Street. Money for the project is coming from MNDOT, with matching funds expected to be provided by the city. Sustainable Stillwater MN had a few comments. We want separated bike and pedestrian areas, bike parking, and trees for shade, among other suggestions. You too can still comment -- but don't delay. The plan will be finalized soon and construction starts next year.

[Make Comments Here](#)



## Bird City Celebration Back On for October 10

Provided we can keep visitors safe from COVID-19, the Bird City celebration is back on the calendar for October 10, 2020 from 10am - 1pm at Pioneer Park. Sponsored by Sustainable Stillwater MN, Bird City celebrates Stillwater's decision to become an Audubon Bird City earlier this year, a commitment that entails preserving habitat and educational outreach. The reward for Stillwater will be an abundance of species flocking to Stillwater, as well as bird tourism. **Bird watchers spend nearly \$41 billion annually** on trips and equipment. Local economies benefit from the \$14.9 billion that bird watchers spend on food, lodging, and transportation. In 2011, 666,000 jobs were created as a result of bird watching expenditures.

Here's the plan: A special guest will be a red tail hawk from Carpenter Nature Center. A bird walk takes place at 7am that day. There will also be educational activities and information on how to plant a garden for birds by a Washington County Master Gardener. The Minnesota Audubon Society, Washington Conservation District, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service will also be represented. Copies of the book "Wild Ones: Attracting Birds to Your Garden with Native Plants" will sell for \$1 or less and there will be a native plant seed giveaway. Family-friendly crafts will be available for the kids.

The next meeting of the Bird City Committee is scheduled for Wednesday, August 12. Love birds? They'd love more volunteers! Contact Sheila

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**Webinar Register**

[pollinatorfriendly.org/events](https://pollinatorfriendly.org/events)

**JULY 20TH 12:30 PM CST**  
**JULY 27TH 6:30 PM CST**

COVID-19 is a reminder that human health is linked to the planet's health. Addressing climate change and conserving biodiversity go hand-in-hand. What's happening for change?

Co-hosted by: Pollinator Friendly Alliance, Pesticide Action Network, St. Croix Oak Savanna Wild Ones

**Laurie Schneider, Executive Director Pollinator Friendly Alliance**

**Angela Laws, Endangered Species Conservation Biologist, Xerces Society**

**Ann Mozey, Attorney, DFL Environmental Caucus, Candidate for Minnesota House of Representatives 39A**

**HOW TO CHANGE THE NEW WORLD**  
**BIODIVERSITY, CLIMATE CHANGE AND HUMAN HEALTH**

## Why Are Biodiversity, Climate Change and Human Health Interdependent?

Join us online for two sessions on July 20 and July 27 for a local webinar hosted by Pollinator Friendly Alliance and Sustainable Stillwater MN. COVID-19 is a reminder that human health is linked to the planet's health. Addressing climate change and conserving biodiversity go hand-in-hand. So what are we learning and what can we do?

Speakers are Laurie Schneider, executive director of Pollinator Friendly Alliance; Ann Mozey, attorney and DFL Environmental Caucus member, and candidate for Minnesota House District 39A; and Endangered Species Conservation Biologist Angela Laws from the Xerces Society. For more information, contact Laurie Schneider, [laurie@pollinatorfriendly.org](mailto:laurie@pollinatorfriendly.org)

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## He Speaks for the Trees

Welcome to the City's new staff member, Natural Resources Technician Taylor Stockert. Questions about the health of your tree or shrub? Tree-trimming, tree-cutting, buckthorn, boulevard plantings, brush drop-off, or other tree-related questions? Call the man who speaks for the trees (apologies Dr.Suess), Taylor Stockert.

Board member and Natural Resources Workgroup Chair Louise Watson was one of the first to meet with Taylor; they spent two hours talking about projects that involve the participation of Louise's team. More details soon. Sneak peek: We'll soon see goats brought in to reduce buckthorn in city forests.

[More on Taylor's Department](#)





## Cigarette Butt Superhero

Thanks to Bob Barratt, who has taken on the unenviable job of regularly emptying downtown cigarette disposal boxes that have not yet been adopted by businesses. Sustainable Stillwater MN obtained a grant last year to put dozens of these around town mounted on lamp posts. Some businesses agreed to adopt their nearby boxes by emptying them regularly. For the orphans that were not adopted, there's Bob. He checks and empties them every week to 10 days. Bob keeps the butts out of the storm drains that empty into the river. Littered cigarette butts leach toxic chemicals into the environment, including arsenic (used to kill rats) and lead, to name a few. This toxic exposure can poison fish and kill animals that eat the butts by mistake. Thank you Bob for taking on this super important job. It's very much appreciated! For more info on the program, contact [louise@sustainablestillwatermn.org](mailto:louise@sustainablestillwatermn.org)



## What Was That Plant?

If you see a plant you don't recognize on the Brown's Creek Trail, well, you should have been a part of "What's That Plant?" Our Natural Resources Workgroup, headed by Louise Watson, says the "What's That Plant?" scavenger hunt event, July 1-7, was designed to help people identify the native plants along the Brown's Creek Trail. Louise reports many participants enjoyed the challenge, despite the hot weather. Thanks to Kelsey Depew for creating the event promos and the ActionBound online game that's still online at the link below. Thanks to plant ID assistant Nancy Doherty and the Gateway Brown's Creek Trail Association via coordination



## What's That Plant Game



### Rain Garden Volunteers

Many Stillwater neighborhoods have rain gardens -- planted areas along a curb that are designed to sequester rainwater runoff -- that were constructed years ago by Washington Conservation District. Neighbors volunteered to maintain them with spring and fall clean-outs, as well as summer weeding. This year, Sustainable Stillwater MN has stepped up to help with rain gardens that need maintenance as original adopters have moved on with their lives. Much to our surprise, some generous neighbors had already stepped up to fill the shoes of retiring rain garden volunteers. Volunteer rain gardeners can now communicate via a Facebook page, thanks to Washington Conservation District's Angie Hong. The site will help people identify plants, share solutions to rain garden problems, and

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## Thanks Matt!

Thank you to new rain garden volunteer Matt Valek. Matt has been warmly welcomed by corner lot owners Beher and Andrea McCready, neighbors who needed some help. Although Matt has a huge garden of his own to maintain on Olive Street, he volunteered to help them maintain a "double dose" of rain gardens -- they have two on their property. The giant plants in this photo are cup plants, a sunflower species that has many wonderful wildlife-friendly features. Thank you Matt! You rock!

## Volunteer Appreciation Corner

Thank you **Nancy Lyner** for joining the board as our new Treasurer! Nancy comes from a background in nonprofit development and education. We are



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Welcome to our newest Natural Resources Workgroup member: **Caitlin Bergh**. She recently moved here from Oakdale where she served on their Environmental Management Commission. Thanks Caitlin!

Thank you **Matt Dynan** for joining the SSMN Board of Directors! Matt has a background in environmental conservation.

Thank you **Mia Vaughan**, a high school student with an interest in fighting climate change, as a new volunteer on the Green Business Directory team; thanks also to **Leslie Frick** for volunteering to be our waste reduction enthusiast, and **Don Schuld**, to be our clean energy enthusiast for the Green Business Team! Thanks to **Hillery Frank**, an expert on plastics recycling, for also joining the team.

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## Vote Earth!

Green up your world with our eco-conscious apparel -- now with kids' sizes! Kelsey Depew, our amazing artist responsible for all our artwork and branding, designed this newest "Vote Earth!" t-shirt. The model is board member Wendy Gorski. The fabric is luxurious, strong, and soft, made of organic cotton and recycled polyester. All the swag (i.e. goods that are "cool") in our store is purchased from businesses that adopt principles, policies, and practices that improve the quality of life for their customers, employees, and communities. Printing is on-demand by Big Frog of Woodbury, which uses water-based (not oil-based) inks. Everything we sell is guaranteed to be environmentally friendly. Be a cool kid and buy one! Only \$20 +shipping at the Sustainable Swag store.

**Sustainable Swag Store**



## Coming Soon!

Although slowed down by the COVID-19 epidemic, work on the Green Business Directory for the Greater Stillwater Area has not stopped. The online directory platform is nearly complete -- so is an application for dozens of categories of businesses. Public outreach to businesses is slated for January 2021 (subject to economic and health conditions). The Green Business Directory partnership includes Washington County [BizRecycling program](#), [EnergySmart](#), and [GreenAmerica.org](#). Additional financial support is from Lakeview Hospital and the Stillwater Sunrise Rotary Club.

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## Zoom Meeting Calendar

>>> Our Board of Directors virtual online Zoom meetings take place every first Thursday of the month from 6.30-8.00 pm and are open to the public. For updated details or to get on the agenda contact Roger Tomten, chair, at [sustainablestillwatermn@gmail.com](mailto:sustainablestillwatermn@gmail.com).

>>> The GreenStep team meets in virtual online Zoom meetings on the third Wednesday of the month 6:30pm – 8:00pm. For updated details contact [sustainablestillwatermn@gmail.com](mailto:sustainablestillwatermn@gmail.com).

The Bike-Friendly Communiity team meets on Zoom every two weeks on Thursday mornings at 8am. To get in on the action, contact [rick@sustainablestillwatermn.org](mailto:rick@sustainablestillwatermn.org)

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## Read Our Editorials in The Gazette

Once a month we are now contributing editorials to the [Stillwater Gazette](#). Support The Stillwater Gazette -- local journalism is essential for a sustainable community. If you miss an issue of The Stillwater Gazette, you can also find our editorials in the [archive online](#).

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## Donations Welcome!

Sustainable Stillwater MN depends on people who share our interest in living a green, healthy, and sustainable lifestyle. Tax-deductible contributions help us serve as a catalyst for green recovery in the city and surrounding areas. Ongoing funding is needed for special projects in the environment and education, and for administrative expenses.

[Click Here to Sustain Us With a Tax-Deductible Donation](#)



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