

St. Joseph River Watershed Council 4th Annual Meeting
Hosted by Friends of the St. Joe River Association
Monday - March 14, 2011 - 5:30 – 9:00 p.m.
Sturges-Young Auditorium - Sturgis, Michigan

The Watershed Council held their 4th Annual Meeting on Monday, March 14, 2011 at the Sturges-Young Auditorium in Sturgis, Michigan. 75 people were in attendance. The meeting began with a social hour to visit with exhibitors and look at an excellent array of tabletop displays from various organizations in the watershed.

At 6:00 p.m. Matt Meersman, president of FotSJR, welcomed everyone and introduction the board of directors. He then presented his Annual Report for Friends of the St. Joe River titled “Why I am so excited about the Friends of the St. Joe River”. His presentation included information about all of the unique places he has recently visited in the watershed, the people involved, the partner organizations, the projects the FotSJR is involved in, the progress the organization has made and many of the opportunities for improvement that exist.

A delicious dinner was enjoyed by those in attendance, prepared by staff at the Sturges-Young Auditorium. After dinner the keynote speaker for the evening was introduced.

Dr. Kevin Kincare has worked for the USGS in Virginia for the past 4 years. Before that he worked for the Michigan Geologic Survey focusing a lot of his work in the St. Joe River Basin. He has studied glaciers for over 30 years. He wrote his Master of Geology thesis on the St. Joseph River Watershed. Dr. Kincare holds a Ph.D. in Geology from Michigan State University and is currently mapping the glacial geology of the St. Joseph and Manistee River basins. His presentation “From the Mississippi to Lake Michigan - Pirating and the St. Joseph River” provided fascinating information about how the St. Joseph River was stolen from the Mississippi River and became the third largest tributary of Lake Michigan. Dr. Kincare made the geological history of the St. Joseph River interesting for everyone present with his pictures of working here in the watershed and also of his trip to Iceland and research done on the glaciers there.

A new feature of this year’s annual meeting was a silent auction to raise funds for future programs in the watershed. Items were donated by Corey Shank, Rebecca Shank, Lori G Photography, Rachel Mae Photography, JF New Native Plant Nursery, Michiana Stormwater Partnership, Nottawasepi Huron Band of Potawatomi, Jim Coury and others. \$660.00 was raised from the silent auction.

Organizations that helped to sponsor this year’s annual meeting were AEP, LaGrange Chapter 592 of Pheasants Forever, and Southwest Michigan Land Conservancy.

Another successful annual meeting was enjoyed by those present, thanks to the generous donations of so many people.