Living in the Avon Hills
A conference for the whole family

Saturday, February 25, 2012 • Saint John’s University
8:00 a.m.—4:15 p.m.

Natural History • Gardening • Arts • Land Use • Alternative Energy

Audience
The Living in the Avon Hills conference is designed for anybody interested in learning about a variety of topics, including arts, land use, natural history, wildlife, alternative energy and more. Kids can attend sessions designed for ages 5 & up while you attend the sessions you’re interested, bring the whole family!

Cost (includes lunch)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adults</th>
<th>Children, ages 5-15</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>$30</td>
<td>$10</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

$40—Walk-in Adults  No Walk-in Children

$60—Project WILD Workshop includes Keynote, and access to exhibits (pre-registration required!)

Conference registration fee includes: keynote, entrance to four sessions, access to exhibitors, lunch, refreshments at registration & breaks, materials & handouts.

Early Registration Deadlines
Must be postmarked by February 17
OR received electronically by February 20

Project WILD Workshop preregistration required by February 17!

Agenda

8:00—9:00  Registration/Check-in and Exhibits

9:00—10:30 Initiative Awards Presentation Keynote Address: WCCO Meteorologist, Michael Lynch

10:30—11:00 BREAK/EXHIBITS

11:00—11:45 Session I

11:45—1:00 LUNCH/EXHIBITS

1:00—1:45 Session II

1:45—2:15 BREAK/EXHIBITS

2:15—3:00 Session III

3:00—3:30 BREAK/EXHIBITS

3:30—4:15 Session IV

Financial Support provided by:
### Session Descriptions

#### I. 11:00—11:45 (choose 1 session)

**A. KIDS: Animal Stories, Saint John’s Arboretum**  
Discover adaptations wild animals have to help them live in their habitats through telling stories, creating Mad Libs, and playing games.

**B. Tree & Shrub Management, Steve Ruprecht, Thomsens Greenhouse Nursery Manager**  
Learn to look at plant maintenance in a way that will eliminate the frustration of pruning and help you to think like a plant and be happy.

**C. Saw-whet Owls of the Avon Hills, Marco Rostani, Dept. of Biological Scvences, St. Cloud State University**  
Learn some natural history about saw-whet owls, how many pass through the area, where they come from, and where they go.

**D. Ticks & Tick Borne Disease, Melissa Kemperman & David Neitzel, MN Dept. of Health**  
Learn about the biology of MN ticks, the disease agents they can transmit to people, and how to prevent tick-transmitted diseases.

**E. Climate Change in Minn., J. Drake Hamilton, Fresh Energy**  
Learn about the scientific projections for climate change in Minnesota, and what we can do to move towards a clean energy economy that will support a healthy economy for people and the environment.

**F. Conservation, Renewable Energy, and the Smart Grid Dave Grunes, Stearns Electric Association**  
A guide to home energy conservation, a basic consideration in deciding to install renewable energy, and a discussion on our energy future.

**G. Introduction to Rigid Heddle Loom Weaving, Deborah Bellman, Whimsy Works**  
Discover the possibilities of what you can do using a Rigid Heddle loom; scarecrows, wall hangings, table runners and more!

**H. Geothermal 101, Bjorn Peterson, Terra-Therm**  
Discover how Geothermal Heat Pumps can significantly reduce the use of fossil fuels. Learn about Federal Tax Credit available for your geothermal heat pumps system installation.

**I. Woodland Invasive Species Susan Burks, MN DNR Forestry**  
Plagued by buckthorn, exotic honeysuckle or garlic mustard? Learn about the invasive species capable of damaging woodlands, how to spot them, control them, and tips to minimize their impact.

**J. Fish Tales, Ray Tuholsky, Avon Hill’s Resident**  
Interested in learning how to catch more fish? Join Ray in a discussion of how some lures were invented and how world history affected sport fishing.

**K. Heirloom Tomatoes For the Home Gardener, David Kroska, ACME Tomatoes**  
Growing heirloom tomatoes in your garden is practical and "so worth it!" Come and learn about the world of heirloom varieties, including the many winners we've grown. We will also discuss seed saving, propagation and growing tips.

**Available Sessions:**  
- Come learn about the invasive species capable of damaging woodlands, how to spot them, control them, and tips to minimize their impact.
- Discover how Geothermal Heat Pumps can significantly reduce the use of fossil fuels. Learn about Federal Tax Credit available for your geothermal heat pumps system installation.
- Learn about the invasive species capable of damaging woodlands, how to spot them, control them, and tips to minimize their impact.
- Learn about the invasive species capable of damaging woodlands, how to spot them, control them, and tips to minimize their impact.
- Learn about the invasive species capable of damaging woodlands, how to spot them, control them, and tips to minimize their impact.

#### II. 1:00—1:45 (choose 1 session)

**A. KIDS: Frog Symphony, Saint John’s Arboretum**  
Did you know that no frogs in Minnesota say "ribbit"? Explore the sounds frogs really make by creating instruments for a frog symphony.

**B. Winter Gardening, Chuck Walbel, Garden Goddess Enterprises**  
Learn to use specific design & growing principles, to implement various innovative local food efforts to grow food in the winter.

**C. Ecology of North American Fox Species, Marsha Sova-da, USGS Northern Prairie Wildlife**  
Come learn about the five species of fox in North America, with a focus on the red and grey foxes found in Minnesota.

**D. Eagles & Osprey, Pam Perry, MN DNR Ecological & Water Resources**  
Eagles and osprey are expanding in Minn. Learn about their natural history in Minnesota.

**E. Geothermal 101, Bjorn Peterson, Terra-Therm**  
Discover how Geothermal Heat Pumps can significantly reduce the use of fossil fuels. Learn about Federal Tax Credit available for your geothermal heat pumps system installation.

**F. Beyond the Conservation Overlay, Angie Berg, Stearns County**  
Learn what Stearns County Environmental Services has to offer, and about the partnerships offered by the County.

**G. Black Powder, Mike Leedahl, Black Powder Beagles**  
Black powder is fun and easier to use than you may imagine! Learn about black powder events in MN; from trap & target shooting to re-enactments for history buffs or the whole family.

**H. Tree House of Horrors, Don Mueller, DNR Forestry**  
Examine tree “cadavers” and “crime scene” photos to discover how the best intentions can go wrong when planting trees. Along the way learn tips to keep the trees in your backyard healthy.

**I. Herb Gardening, Terri Emmerich, Emmerich’s Produce**  
Learn the basics about preserving your herbs. Start a home herb garden and get some tips on drying herbs during a discussion of yard and container herb gardening.

**J. Emerald Ash Borer (EAB)-A MN Update, Mark Abrahamson, MN Dept. of Agriculture**  
Get an update on where EAB is known to occur in MN and what actions can be taken to limit its impact and spread.

**K. Tree & Shrub Management, Steve Ruprecht, Thomsens Greenhouse Nursery Manager**  
Learn to look at plant maintenance in a way that will eliminate the frustration of pruning and help you to think like a plant and be happy.

---

### Project WILD and WILD Aquatic: K-12 Teacher Workshop

Project WILD and Aquatic WILD are interdisciplinary conservation and environmental education programs emphasizing wildlife. Designed for educators of kindergarten through twelfth grade, Wild capitalizes on the natural interest that children and adults have in wildlife by providing hands-on activities. This workshop will introduce you to the curriculum and highlight activities adaptable for any grade!

### Workshop participants receive:

- Access to keynote & exhibit hall
- Project WILD K-12 Activity Guide
- Project WILD Aquatic K-12 Activity Guide
- Minnesota WILD Supplement Guide
- 5.0 Continuing Ed Units Posters and other supplemental resources
- Lunch, morning and afternoon refreshments
III. 2:15—3:00  (choose 1 session)

A. KIDS: Nature Games, *Saint John’s Arboretum*
Get some exercise while learning about animals and their habitats.
Come explore the world of wolves, bears and muskox through fun and games.

B. Lillies You Will Love, *Diane Hangen, Thomson’s Greenhouse*
Learn the key to success for planting and choosing the right lily for continuous color from spring to fall, including some lilies for shady woodland gardens.

C. Wild Turkey Ecology & Management, *Rick Horton, National Wild Turkey Federation*
Discover the wild turkey history in Minnesota; its distribution, life history habitat requirements, and management practices to benefit wild turkey populations.

D. Swallow Tales, *Carol Jansky, SCSU graduate Student*
Learn about the natural history of the plucky tree swallow through the trials and tribulations of one researcher.

E. The Role of Bio-Fertilizers in a Sustainable Community, *Jim McNelly, Renewable Carbon Management LLC*
Begin your journey to supporting local food production by learning to create your own compost and conserving resources.

F. Hazardous Waste, *Ross Detert, Stearns County*
Learn about the Stearns County household hazardous waste program, and what happens to the waste it collects through the recycling program. Also discover what the new county facility does for its residents!

G. Wood-Fired Bread & Pizza Oven, *JD Jorgenson, Jorgenson pottery*
Learn the basic steps of building your own wood-fired bread and pizza oven; from design and construction to baking your own bread!

Learn about installation, incentives, economics, and environmental considerations of solar technologies for homes and small businesses.

I. Tree House of Horrors, *Don Mueller, DNK Forestry*
Examine tree “cadavers” and “crime scene” photos to discover how the best intentions can go wrong when planting trees. Along the way learn tips to keep the trees in your backyard healthy.

J. Bluebird Trails of Saint John’s, *Jean Scoon & Jeania Koenig, Citizen Scientists*
Learn how the bluebird trails of SJU are managed by investigating the strings of nest boxes that help counter increased competition for a dwindling number of natural hollows.

K. Join the Hunt for Dragonflies & Damselflies, *Kurt Mead, Minnesota Odonata Survey Project*
Join award-winning author of the field guide, “Dragonflies of the North Woods” and by using photos, props, specimens and humor, he will introduce you to recent species discovered in Minnesota.

Presenting Sponsor

Gold Sponsor

IV. 3:30—4:15  (choose 1 session)

A. KIDS: Animal Tracks & Signs, *Saint John’s Arboretum*
Every track tells a mystery! Learn how to unravel the mystery by solving puzzles, making field guides, and creating your own mysteries.

B. Gardening in Small Spaces, *Janelle Daberkow, University of Minnesota Extension-Stearns County*
Learn how to grow vegetables successfully, and maximize almost any space you have available, whether it is a pot or raised bed.

C. Minnesota:3.6 Billion years of Geologic History, *Dr. Larry Davis, CSB/SJU Dept. of Geology*
Rocks exposed in Minn. span 3.6 billion years and record many geological events. Together we will take a photographic tour through the Earth History As Exposed in Minnesota.

D. Join the Hunt for Dragonflies & Damselflies, *Kurt Mead, Minnesota Odonata Survey Project*
Join award-winning author of the field guide, “Dragonflies of the North Woods” and by using photos, props, specimens and humor, he will introduce you to recent species discovered in Minnesota.

E. The Reality of Living Green, *Peter Dwyer, Avon Hills home owner*
Avon Hills homeowners discuss their experiences with green energy conservation in their homes and offer advice on choosing technology and construction to accomplish your environmental objectives.

F. Phenology, *John Latimer, KAXE Radio*
Learn how you can keep track of phenology at your home and be a citizen scientist while observing and learning more about the natural world outside your window.

G. Wood-Fired Bread & Pizza Oven, *JD Jorgenson, Jorgenson pottery*
Learn the basic steps of building your own wood-fired bread and pizza oven from design and construction to baking your own bread!

H. Purple Martins, *Jim & Jeana Koenig, Citizen Scientists*
Jim and Jeana Koenig will share their experiences managing five Purple Martin colonies and share new techniques to rebuild the Martin population.

I. Bee Basics, *Mike Schmidt, Schmidt’s Honey*
Learn the fundamentals of caring for honey bees including bee biology, equipment, identification and seasonal requirements. Intended for those considering beekeeping as a hobby.

J. Ecology of North American Fox Species, *Marsha Sovada, USGS Northern Prairie Wildlife*
Come learn about the five species of fox in North America, with a focus on the red and grey foxes found in Minnesota.

K. Heirloom Tomatoes For the Home Gardener, *David Kroska, ACME Tomatoes*
Growing heirloom tomatoes in your garden is practical and "so worth it!" Come and learn about the world of heirloom varieties, including the many winners we've grown. We will also discuss seed saving, propagation and growing tips.

Thank you to all of our sponsors, donors, volunteers, and Arboretum staff for making this conference possible!
Keynote Presentation • 9:30 a.m.

**Michael Lynch** is a native Minnesotan, and has been a broadcast meteorologist at WCCO Radio in Minneapolis for over 30 years. Mike’s other passion has been astronomy, he built his first telescope when he was just 15 years old!

He has also written Astronomy/Stargazing books through Voyageur Press, wrote *WCCO Minnesota Weather Watch* in 2007 and was a finalist in the recent Minnesota Book Awards. He also writes a weekly Star-watch column for the St. Paul Pioneer Press, and more than two dozen other newspapers across the United States.

For over 40 years Mike has been teaching classes and putting on star parties through community education, nature centers, and other entities throughout Minnesota and Western Wisconsin. He will make the stars your old friends!

Join us for his keynote presentation: Exploring the Sky of the Avon Hills!

**Space is Limited—Register Now!**