



2000 Annual Report

"Promoting a renewed vision for the Red River of the North."

HISTORY OF RIVER KEEPERS

1989

- Regional/Urban Design Assistance Team studies Red River in Fargo-Moorhead.

1990

- River Keepers formed.
- Steve Zaiser hired as Executive Director.
- MB Johnson Boat Ramp constructed.
- Floating bike/pedestrian bridge installed.

1991

- First annual "Race the Red" canoe race held.
- First annual photo contest produced.

1992

- "Red River Explorers Guides" published.

1993

- Christine Holland joins River Keepers' staff.

1994

- First River Caring Workshop held

1995

- "Adopt-the-Red" clean-up program started.
- Interpretive markers installed.
- "The Red River: A Use and Protection Guide" published.

1996

- First "Fun For All Fishing Clinic" organized.
- River access sites in Lindenwood Park established.
- River Keepers begins coordinating Paint the Drain.
- Archeological Dig for "Fargo in the Timber".

1997

- *Common Waters: A Story of Life Along the Red River of the North* published.

1998

- Executive Director, Bob Backman hired.
- Red River of the North Trail Group formed.

1999

- Midtown Dam retrofit completed!
- "Cavity Replacement" program implemented.
- First kayak demonstration on the Red organized.
- First Youth Water Festival coordinated.
- Lions Conservancy Park development begins.
- Outdoor learning classroom at MB Johnson Park built.
- Convent landing constructed.

A NOTE FROM THE PRESIDENT

What a great year to be President of River Keepers!

As we leap into the new millennium, the works of dozens of people over the last decade are coming together with the public realization that the Red River is a vital resource for our community and region. With the cooperation of Fargo and Moorhead; our two watershed districts - Buffalo-Red and Southeast Cass; and the states of North Dakota and Minnesota, dreams are becoming reality.

The Red River has been canoed from its headwaters in Breckenridge/Wahpeton to its mouth near Selkirk, Manitoba and it is truly a major regional recreational resource.

Moorhead has made a major financial commitment to the downtown river corridor with walking/biking paths, river overlooks, concession pads and a riverboat landing site. Fargo is making the River an integral part of its downtown redevelopment plan. The Red has become the link rather than the division between Fargo and Moorhead.

2001 will see the launching of River Keepers riverboat (pontoon). As the funding is in place and the factory has our "pride and joy" under construction, it will be a great opportunity to bring people to and let them enjoy the beauty of the Red River.

Timing is everything. Thanks for your support of River Keepers!

2000 ACCOMPLISHMENTS

New Initiatives:

- * As a result of a grant written to the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, there are three lighted buoys and numerous signs providing warning of dam locations in Fargo-Moorhead.
- * River Keepers is the coordinating partner for the Red River Canoe Trail. The group has identified the following as their vision statement: **The Red River Trail will provide safe recreational access to the Red River of the North with emphasis on interpretive, historical, and environmental information.**
- * **The Fargo-Moorhead Canoeing Guide was printed with assistance from Houston Engineering & Valley Printing.**
- River Keepers has been active in promoting the need for retrofitting the North and South dams.
- River Watch, a citizen water quality monitoring program, was

*"There is no telling what the power of the people and the river can do."
Pete Seeger*

New Initiatives Continued.....

started in metro Fargo-Moorhead, coordinated by volunteer Tom Williams.

- Taste of the Valley was held August 11 and 12. River Keepers provided pontoon rides, canoeing activities, hands-on water education for youth, and a cedar canoe demonstration.
- Two "Fish the Red" classes were held. Dennis Flom, Catfish Unlimited, and Lynn Schlueter, North Dakota Game and Fish, taught the spring clinic at Dike East with about 70 participants. The fall class, held in cooperation with Moorhead Community Education was held at MB Johnson Park with 25 participants.

• *Canoeing, Kayaking, and Sailing on the*



Rick St. Germain, River Keepers Board member, catches a "small" 11 pound channel catfish on the Red River.

Red was held in cooperation with Moorhead Community Education on May 23 in Gooseberry Park with 100 participants.

- An outdoor classroom at Lions Conservancy Park was designed and construction started by an NDSU Landscape Architecture class under the direction of Dennis Colliton. Funding was obtained from a Fargo-Moorhead Area Foundation grant.
- * **Two new boat ramps were constructed on both the north and south sides of the Midtown Dam at Fargo's Dike East. There are now four ramps in the metro area completing our goal of a ramp for each reach.**

- A commercial pontoon boat was ordered with plans to start regularly scheduled tours in 2001.
- * **The Millennium Tour, a 34 day, 550 mile, international canoe trip from the Headwaters of the Red River at Breckenridge, Minnesota to the Mouth at Selkirk, Manitoba, Canada was successfully completed in June. The Tour celebrated the potential for a canoe trail and brought attention to the historical and natural features of the River. The Tour received extensive media attention in both countries.**

Ongoing Commitments

- The Lions Conservancy Park Dedication was May 12.
- * **In a meeting instigated and coordinated by River Keepers, elected officials and staff from the Fargo Park District, City of Fargo and Moorhead met to discuss a master plan for the Red River.**
- The Fun For All Fishing Clinic was held June 3 at MB Johnson Park in Moorhead with 80 participants.
- Fargo and Moorhead Parks and Recreation Departments, with assistance from River Keepers, are starting Adopt-A-Park programs which includes assuming responsibility for the five-year-old Adopt-the-Red program.
- Paint the Drain, a storm drain pollution awareness program, continues with volunteers involvement.
- A Youth Water Festival was held on November 13 for 4th grade students in the Southeast Cass Water Resource District and the Buffalo-Red Watershed District. Students rotated from station to station to learn about different aspects of water through hands-on presentations and exhibits.
- Service learning sample projects: Mr. Brandt's 2nd grade class from Moorhead's George Washington Elementary made a display of animals along the River and created a clean



Paddling during the Millennium Tour. Back to front: Chuck Kimmerle, Brad Dokken, Ed Janzen, Warren Niesche. Photo by David Lipp.

water campaign.

Ms. Graning's 4th graders from Moorhead's George Washington Elementary made a video commercial promoting the new amenities in Viking Ship Park.

Ms. Wirth's 4th grade class from Moorhead's George Washington Elementary made a quilt about activities to do by the River. They also wrote and performed a song about River Keepers and building a community.

Ms. Colson's 8th grade class from Moorhead Junior High put up chickadee houses in Viking Ship Park.

- River Keepers and Scheels All Sports coordinated a Kayak Demonstration at the Midtown Dam on June 8.
- * **Over 800 people provided over 7,800 volunteer hours to River Keepers' projects, special events, and committees.**
- Staff made presentations to over 50 groups reaching over 3,850 people.

Recognition

- Tashia Weisenburger, a Concordia College Environmental Studies student, wrote and published the spring newsletter.
- Adam Strainer, a Concordia College Environmental Studies student, used the GPS unit to locate all the wood duck boxes and maintained them as a part of the Cavity Replacement Program.

- Jennifer Hoaglund, a paralegal student at Minnesota State University - Moorhead, researched water laws.
- Lorilynn Allekson, an Environmental Studies student from Concordia College, coordinated the Youth Water Festival.
- Jim Dale Huot-Vickery, a wilderness author from Ely, Minnesota canoed the entire 550 miles of the Red River during the Millennium Tour. He has written articles on the Red for *MN Volunteer* and *Canoe & Kayak*.
- Vic Pellerano has written a song about the Red River called *Red River Nights*.
- The National Park Service (NPS) developed a promotional brochure for the Red River Canoe Trail. NPS has committed .25 F.T.E. to the River Trail.
- **Annual Meeting Awards were presented to: Distinguished Service Award - Jim McLaughlin; Development Award - Moorhead Parks and Recreation; Education Award - Tom Williams; Environmental Award - Dennis Colliton and the NDSU Landscape Architecture Department; Good Neighbor Award - Fargo Lions Club.**
- Doug Leier, Outreach Biologist for North Dakota Game and Fish, works closely with River Keepers on river-related projects and promotion.
- Moorhead Parks and Recreation widened the bike path, added lights, picnic tables, electricity, river overlooks, and a pontoon



A bright sunny day greeted the first Taste of the Valley pontoon ride enjoyed by community and civic leaders. Photo by Bob Fogel.

dock in their downtown riverfront parks.

- Andrea Travnicek, was awarded River Keepers 2000 Natural Resources

Management Club scholarship.

- The George Duis estate donated riverfront property south of the Conservancy Park to River Keepers. The City of Fargo accepted the lot from River Keepers with the hope that one day the Lions Conservancy Park will be expanded.
- Robert Washnieski created a limited edition print of the Red River in commemoration of the Fargo-Moorhead 125 year celebration. A percentage of the proceeds is being donated to River Keepers.
- Trees were planted at the Lions Conservancy Park by Fargo Lions Club volunteers. The trees were obtained from a grant received from the North Dakota Forest Service.

PLANS FOR

- Operate a pontoon tour service.
- Develop a master plan for the river in the downtown area.
- Work with Parks departments to conduct festivals including:

River Splash, a way to discover the Red on and off the water through games and races, art and entertainment to be held in Viking Ship Park on June 9, 2001.

A winter festival to be held February 10 in Viking Ship Park.

- Expand River Watch with assistance from an EPA grant.
- Continue encouraging development of recreational facilities on the Red.
- And much more!

Board of Directors

Don Kilander - President
Arlette Preston - Vice Pres.
Allan Ashworth - Sec/Treas.

Greg Danz

Jack Duis

Mary Ekstrom

James Ferragut

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Paul Gruchow

Jay Leitch

Cliff McLain

Cindy Palmer

Rich Pemble

Rick St. Germain

Kathi Schwan

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Keith Tandy

Tom Tolman

M. Daniel Vogel

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FINANCES

Restricted Income: \$20,874 **
Unrestricted Income: \$89,825
Anticipated Expenses: \$109,885

** Includes sponsorship and five funded grants. Eleven grants submitted, but not yet funded for \$492,330.

Sustaining Sponsors: Buffalo-Red Watershed District, Southeast Cass Water Resource District.

Government Members: City of Fargo, City of Moorhead, Clay County, Fargo Park District, Moorhead Public Service.

Community members = 130

2001 Membership - It's time to renew your support of River Keepers!

Name _____ Address _____
City _____ State _____ ZIP _____
E-mail _____
Payment (check one): ___ kayak - \$15 ___ Scull \$25 ___ Canoe \$50
 ___ Skiff \$100 ___ Steamboat \$500+

SEND TO:

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