



THE SPIGOT

from the NORTH DAKOTA RURAL WATER SYSTEMS ASSOCIATION

Patrick Denne Memorial Scholarship Live Auction

The North Dakota Rural Water Systems Association (NDRWSA) held its third annual live auction in February at the Bismarck Ramkota Hotel during the 25th Rural Water Expo. “This year’s auction raised more than \$6,000 through the generosity of individuals, associate members, and rural water systems that donated cash and items for the auction,” says Eric Volk, NDRWSA executive director. Gift baskets, a Terry Redlin print, a beautiful sunflower afghan, Red River Valley red potatoes, a Medora weekend getaway package, shop tools, a Nook Color e-reader, and the infamous hand carved wooden bowl were among the many items donated for auction. In addition to the money raised from the auction, nearly \$1,800 was received in cash donations.

The Patrick Denne Memorial Scholarship is in memory of a dedicated water circuit rider that traveled some 750,000 miles to provide rural water assistance anywhere and any time it was needed. In order to keep Denne’s memory alive, the NDRWSA board of directors decided to award scholarships to deserving students each year. Students may use these scholarships to defray tuition, room and board, and books at an accredited institution of higher learning that is approved by NDRWSA. A selection committee appointed by the NDRWSA executive board reviews applications and selects the recipient based on academic performance, career goals, extracurricular activities, leadership, financial need, and a brief essay on a predetermined topic.

“I would like to extend a special thank you to John Bearman and the NDRWSA executive board and staff for all their hard work. With the continued support from our members, this will remain an annual event,” Volk says.

For more information or additional information, call 800-349-6951 or e-mail ericvolk@ndrw.org. Tax deductible contributions may be sent to NDRWSA, 2718 Gateway Avenue, Suite 201, Bismarck, ND 58503. All donations are greatly appreciated!



NDRWSA board member John Bearman served as the auctioneer at the Patrick Denne Memorial Scholarship Auction. Assisting him is NDRWSA staff member Chuck Mischel.

Patrick Denne Memorial Scholarship Awarded

By Lisa Schatz, NDRWSA

Nearly 100 applications were received from students throughout North Dakota applying for the 2011 Patrick Denne Memorial Scholarship, a \$500 award to be used towards tuition, books, and other college-related expenses. Applications were reviewed by the scholarship committee based on career goals, extracurricular activities, academic record, financial need, and the applicant's essay. This year's essay topic was: how rural water has improved your quality of life and/or what your life would be like without it.

"When reviewing the applications, it was evident that the young leaders of North Dakota are dedicated, hard working individuals with a common goal, continuing their education," says Volk.

NDRWSA is pleased to announce that Alex Koppy has been selected as the recipient of the 2011 Patrick Denne Memorial Scholarship. Alex is the son of Steve and Francie Koppy, who live in the Mandan area, and are served rural water by the Missouri West Water System. Alex will graduate from Mandan High School and plans

to attend North Dakota State University, where he will be seeking a bachelor's degree in electrical engineering. In addition to an exceptional GPA, Alex participates in track, wrestling, football, National Honor Society, Spanish Club, and is a Trust N' Teens Mentor.

He is also a summer track coach, part-time coach for Dakota Star Gymnastics, and an employee of McDonalds. Alex says, "I want to thank you for the honor of being selected as the 2011 recipient of this scholarship. The Association's support of North Dakota high school graduates shows its dedication to the future of our youth."

The NDRWSA staff and board of directors would like to extend their congratulations and sincere wishes for a prosperous future. Alex's winning essay is printed below.



Alex Koppy

How Rural Water has Impacted My Life

By Alex Koppy

Rural water has made a tremendous impact on my life. If it wasn't for our rural water system, I wouldn't be enjoying the country living that I am experiencing today. Thinking back to my younger days, I can recall my grandma from the farm, coming to our home in town to wash her white clothes because their well water would turn them dingy gray. I also reminisce about how I would go out to my grandparents' farm and fear drinking the well water at their house because of the grotesque yellow tint, bitter after taste, terrible odor, and its curious fizzle. My siblings and I gave it the nickname of "devil water" because of these unpleasant characteristics. Even at such a young age, I was still able to make the correlation that living in the country would only mean drinking "devil water." The cause of their water problems was that both of their wells were going bad. One of the wells produced the gross, yellow water and the other well was plagued with sand particles.

In the fall of 1998, my parents were contemplating on building in the country. My grandparents had decided to sell some of their farmland for our family to build a home. When I heard this news, I did nothing but complain on how I could never live out in the country if it meant I had to drink well water for the remainder of my years living with my parents. My parents did not want to drill for a well. It would have been very expensive and they did not want to worry if the well water would be good or not or how long the well would last. With perfect timing, Missouri West Water System had recently erected a water tower south of Mandan that provided rural water to my grandparents' home. My dad contacted MWWS and with great relief, we found out that we, too, could hook up to the system. My parents decided to immediately sign up, and we started building in the spring of 1999.

I now can enjoy the daily benefits of rural water. My white shirts are a crisp white. I can take a long drink of refreshing water. I can shower with no unpleasant color or odor. I truly believe that if it hadn't been for our rural water system, my parents would have passed up the opportunity to build our home in the country.