



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: July 19, 2010

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Volunteers Needed Aug. 21 for Beaver Lake Monitoring

Once upon a time, towns and communities in Northwest Arkansas depended on springs, streams, and wells for drinking water. Then, along came Beaver Dam, Beaver Lake and Beaver Water District. Today, there's lots of water for everything we need, from growing our gardens to living healthy lives.

If you want to know more about Beaver Lake and you want to have fun while learning, then come out to Secchi Day. The 5th annual Secchi Day on Beaver Lake will be held on Saturday, Aug. 21, at the East and West Shelters near the boat ramp at Prairie Creek on Beaver Lake. Volunteers are being recruited now to help with Beaver Lake monitoring. In addition to the sampling activity, there are other opportunities to have fun. Visit www.bwdh2o.org to download a flyer. Prairie Creek is easy to find. Just take state Hwy. 12 east of Rogers for about 4 miles. Turn left on North Park Road and go about 1 mile. The physical address is 9300 North Park Road, Rogers, Ark., 72756. The event schedule follows:

- 8:30-11 a.m.: Teams take Secchi measurements & water samples. (Must have boat; must pre-register. To volunteer, e-mail your name and a daytime phone number to Drew Dickey at ddickey@bwdh2o.org.)
- 9:30 & 10:30 a.m.: Pontoon boat rides. (Free, but sign up on site. First come, first-served.)
- 9 & 10:30 a.m.: Rain barrel building. (Must pre-register; must pre-pay. Take your rain barrel home that day. These workshops always fill up! Call 479- 271-1060.)
- 10 a.m.-noon: Water Education Festival. (All ages. Prizes too. Free!)
- 11:30 a.m.: Lunch (No charge; hotdogs w/veggie option, until they're gone!)
- Noon to 12:30 p.m.: Marshall Mitchell Performs Water Songs (Free! Good family fun for all ages. Sing-along!)

For more information about Secchi Day, visit www.bwdh2o.org. Or contact Amy Wilson, Director of Public Affairs for Beaver Water District, at 479-717-3807 or awilson@bwdh2o.org.

Secchi Day is named for the Secchi disk, a black and white device lowered into the water to measure clarity. Volunteers are trained at lakeside about 10 minutes before they launch from four different sites that morning. While on the lake, they travel to a specific location to measure clarity with the Secchi disk while also gathering water samples to be analyzed for chlorophyll *a*, nitrate, and total phosphorous. **Volunteer "citizen" scientists are needed from 8:30 a.m.-11**

a.m. Pre-registration and a boat is required. For information, e-mail your name and a daytime cell or landline number to Drew Dickey at ddickey@bwdh2o.org.

That's not all, though! A free Water Education Festival will be held from 10 a.m. to Noon. Prizes will be awarded and activities are family friendly for all ages. A hot dog lunch will be served at 11:30 a.m. From noon to 12:30 p.m., there's a free sing-along with Marshall Mitchell performing songs related to water quality in Northwest Arkansas.



Marshall Mitchell will sing songs about taking care of water in Northwest Arkansas at noon on Saturday, Aug. 21, during Secchi Day at Prairie Creek on Beaver Lake. The performance, sponsored by Beaver Water District and the Illinois River Watershed Partnership, is free.

Other activities include Build-A-Rain Barrel (\$45 per person and must pre-pay and pre-register, call 479-271-1060) and pontoon boat tours at 9:30 a.m. and 10:30 a.m. (first-come, first-serve but no charge). There's also a Beaver Lake photo contest being held in conjunction with the Benton County Fair!

“We want to get our citizens involved in learning more about Beaver Lake,” Wilson said. “If you live and work in Northwest Arkansas, then you likely drink Beaver Lake water every day. You use it for hydration, as well as for washing clothes, cooking, industry, recreation. The list just goes on and on.”

Without the lake, the quality of life and the economic wellbeing of our area would be greatly diminished, she added. The water quality in the lake is greatly dependent on what happens in the watershed. That's why it's important to keep streams that flow to Beaver Lake vegetated, to be careful about what flows from your property and into storm drains and into the land, to clean up after pets, to be careful when applying fertilizer and herbicides on your property. Living gently and mindfully in the watershed is a one of the ethics on which watershed education rests.

“We rely on Beaver Lake for so much,” she added. “Secchi Day on Beaver Lake is a great activity because the Secchi dip measurement gives us a clarity reading. The clarity of the water is a good indication of water quality. How are we doing when it comes to taking care of our lake, our drinking water source?”

Families, scouts and explorers, science clubs, church youth groups, school children, home schoolers, civic and business organizations, chamber members and others are urged to attend and participate in activities, Wilson said.

Audubon Arkansas, Beaver Water District, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers-Beaver Lake, the U.S. Geological Survey, the University of Arkansas Cooperative Extension Service, Hobbs State Park, Arkansas Master Naturalists, and the Association for Beaver Lake Environment are co-sponsors of Secchi Day on Beaver Lake.

Beaver Water District supplies drinking water to more than 250,000 people and industries in Fayetteville, Springdale, Rogers, Bentonville and surrounding areas. The District's mission is to serve our customers in the Benton and Washington County area by providing high quality drinking water that meets or exceeds all federal and state regulatory requirements in such quantities as meets their demands and is economically priced consistent with our quality standards.