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Nebraska Earth Systems Education Network Newsletter – Fall 1995

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Nebraska Earth Science Education Network

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Fall 1995 Newsletter

Issue Number 8

Reminder

NESEN will once again be at the annual Nebraska Association of Teachers of Science (NATS) Meeting. See enclosed flyer on NESEN and other selected earth science activities at NATS.

NESEN HomePage New and Improved - The address is
<http://nesen.unl.edu/nesen.html>

A wealth of earth science information awaits you on the NESEN HomePage --with more information being added daily. Currently the homepage contains the following sections given in bold with subheadings in parentheses: NESEN Announcements (such as a new CD from NASA/JPL and new web sites); What is NESEN? (activities, background, benefits, goals and steering committee); NESEN Projects (Ask-a-NESEN-Scientist, earth science activities/lesson plans submitted from NESEN teachers, the 1995 NESEN Directory and Information Guide, NESEN at NATS, past and current NESEN newsletters, the Video Lending Library, STEDII (weather) project, and information on past and upcoming NESEN summer workshops); Links to Earth Science Servers; Links to Nebraska Servers; and Links to Selected Science Servers.

New Part-Time Coordinator and Technical Specialist Join NESEN

Brian Lang, a junior at the University of Nebraska-Lincoln, started work September 25 as the new part-time NESEN Coordinator. He will be taking over most of the routine administrative and logistical functions of NESEN. He is in each afternoon except Thursday. You can contact him 402-472-0773 (voice mail is available) or email blang@unlinfo.unl.edu. Mark Mesarch began on October 1 on a part-time basis (joint appointment with Ag. Met.) to assist with technical aspects of the NESEN electronic communication project. Mark will be working with teachers involved in the STEDII project (see below) and assisting with associated database and homepage development. Duane Mohlman was recently appointed as NESEN Assistant Project Manager. Dave Gosselin continues to serve as Project Manager.

New NASA/JPL CD-ROM Now Available - "Seeing the Earth in a New Way"

The SIR-C Missions of Endeavour - (Only Available In Macintosh Form).

This brand new educational CD-ROM produced by NASA's Jet Propulsion Laboratory, is now available. This CD-ROM is designed for students and teachers at middle schools, high schools, and colleges. It contains radar images of sites around the world as seen before and during the SIR-C missions (which flew onboard the Space Shuttle in 1994). The CD contains hand-held photographs from the Space Shuttle, QuickTime movies from the missions, and photographs from the ground. Using captivating examples like the mountain gorilla habitats of Rwanda, a radar-generated fly-by of the Galapagos Islands, the discovery of the Lost City of Ubar in the Arabian Desert, and many others, the CD puts our Earth at students' fingertips. Teachers may use the CD in many ways, from activities as simple as viewing pictures, or as complicated as performing science experiments with real data taken from Earth orbit. Students can learn about NASA's Mission to Planet Earth and Imaging Radar through the

structured lesson plans included on the CD, or think up their own experiments, and analyze radar image data from the SIR-C missions. This CD-ROM is like having part of the WWW on a disk. It includes the Netscape WWW browser interface. If you have Internet access, there are links provided to a companion "Home Page" to this CD, and other NASA educational resources.

New Publication from Conservation and Survey Division

Guidelines for Decommissioning Water Wells--How to Plug Water Wells

Wells left unsealed can become conduits for contaminants reaching the water table. The main objective of the 1986 Water Well Standards and Contractors Licensing Act was to require landowners to properly seal unused wells as a means of protecting water quality. But in certain cases, animals or humans can fall into old wells. Such wells are most likely to pose a threat to infants. While landowners in Nebraska have been required since 1986 to plug out-of-use wells, the guidelines for doing that have not been consistent throughout the state. Estimates of abandoned wells vary from 150,000 to 500,000, and each poses a potential threat to water quality and human health.

The problem of how to properly seal off these wells should now be solved with the release of Guidelines, just published by CSD. Duane Eversoll, associate director, CSD, DeLynn Hay, Cooperative Extension Service, and Rod Tremblay of the state Department of Health collaborated on the publication. The state health department funded publication of the 22-page booklet. Guidelines (MP-37) can be ordered by returning payment to: Publication Sales, Conservation and Survey Division, 113 Nebraska Hall, Lincoln, Nebraska, 68588-0517. Cost per copy is \$ 3.00. Add \$1.50 per order for postage and handling AND any appropriate city and state.

Resource Notes Available Soon

Due out in October is the Division's annual report entitled Resource Notes. This publication will be mailed free of charge to all NESEN members. Once again, NESEN will have at least one article in this issue. STEDII (Students and Teachers Exchanging Data, Information and Ideas) Project - A cooperative project with the Department of Agricultural Meteorology, UNL.

This new NESEN-sponsored project involves the collection and electronic exchange of weather data between participating locations. The goals of STEDII include: Students recording daily weather observations; Data being exchanged with other schools electronically or by mail; Interpreting data and integrating available Internet resources focussing on those from NASA and NOAA. Students will learn to use the following weather instruments: maximum/minimum thermometer; sling psychrometer, rain gauge, and wind speed and direction indicator. Some support for obtaining equipment is available. In addition, four preservice science teachers (Heidy DeWitt, Patrick Caffey, Matt McLaughlin and Scott Prickett) from Ron Bonnstetter's (UNL Teachers College) Science Methods will be assist STEDII team members with the integration of Internet resources into their current classroom activities.

Currently the following teachers are participating: Liz Snyder (Diller), Bob Feurer (North Bend), Susan Frack (Raymond Central), Harley Hardison (Westside), MaryLou Alfieri (St. Thomas More, Omaha), Al Musson (O'Neill), Mike Sarchett (Scottsbluff), Virgil King (Lexington), Polla Hartley (Albion) and Ed Schafer (Ralston). If you are interested in participating in the STEDII project or would like to have more details, please contact Dave Gosselin at 402-472-8919 or gosselin@unlinfo.unl.edu. See more about STEDII on the NESEN HomePage.

Newsletter was written by Duane Mohlman, Dave Gosselin, and Brian Lang. If you have information that you would like included in the next newsletter (tentatively scheduled for early 1996) please inform any of these individuals.