It’s that time of year! Remember to get your canning gauge tested. This is a free service at the Extension Office.
MANHATTAN, Kan. -- A new $13 million U.S. Department of Agriculture program designed to improve Kansas’ water quality, support wildlife habitat and enhance the environment was announced recently for Kansas State University and the Kansas Forest Service.

The program is part of $370 million in federal funding for the new USDA Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). In addition, these projects will leverage an estimated $400 million more in partner contributions—for a total of nearly $800 million—to improve the nation’s water quality, support wildlife habitat and enhance the environment.

The Kansas project will implement forestry best management practices on more acres and create a protection framework for remaining riparian forests in high-priority watersheds. The project will help sustain reservoir storage and wildlife habitat, improve the drinking water supply, and increase recreation opportunities.

In a USDA press release, agriculture secretary Tom Vilsack said these partnerships empower communities to set priorities and lead the way on conservation efforts important for their region.

“They also encourage private sector investment so we can make an impact that’s well beyond what the federal government could accomplish on its own. We’re giving private companies, local communities, and other non-government partners a way to invest in a new era in conservation that ultimately benefits us all. These efforts keep our land resilient and water clean, and promote economic growth in agriculture, construction, tourism, outdoor recreation, and other industries,” said Vilsack.

A total of 115 projects were awarded in all 50 states.

Putting Forestry on the Ground

Mitch Lundeen, water quality forester with the Kansas Forest Service, said RCPP will include a significant tree planting component to help stabilize river banks, keep debris off the fields, and ultimately improve water quality by reducing sediment entry into streams.

“Over two-thirds of the Kansas water supplies are located in federal reservoirs. Unfortunately, loss of water capacity in these reservoirs due to sedimentation, will most certainly cause water shortages as demand continues to grow. It is a big deal to help reduce sediment from getting into our water supply,” Lundeen said.

Kansas State Forester Larry Biles said the program is designed to restore the riparian forest systems on the exposed stream banks in Kansas and to improve the riparian forests that currently exist.

“By improvement we will improve general species mix of the timber that is there and the quality of that through corrective pruning,” he said.

The second part of the program is the assessment of watersheds across the state.

“The assessments tell us first, where we have exposed stream banks; second, where existing timber is either too narrow to stabilize stream banks or the timber is of poor quality or species mix; and three, where we have a sufficient amount of high quality timber worthy of saving,” Biles said. “We either need to go in and establish timber because of exposed banks, have timber that needs improvement because of tree quality or species mix, or we need to sustain high quality timber.”

“Through that assessment, we will focus our efforts where the greatest water quality benefits can be obtained by either establishing stream-side forests or improving the health of existing woodlands,” he added.
The assessment will use aerial photography and GIS technology. “We will overlay that information with landowner information and through education, inform and contact these landowners about suggested improvements. We will write a plan for those interested,” Biles said.

The Kansas project will focus on the river systems that feed the high priority reservoirs, most of them are federal reservoirs, he said.

Expected outcomes of the project will be to slow sedimentation into Kansas reservoir systems and to improve timber quality along the stream systems.

“We have the opportunity to grow high quality hardwoods, but we need to get them established,” Biles said.

For more information, contact your local county extension offices, Natural Resource Conservation Service, Farm Service Agency or conservation district offices. More information is online at the Kansas Forest Service website.

**Growing Grafted Tomatoes**

*from University of Massachusetts Extension*

What are grafted tomatoes?

Grafting is a technique that involves splicing the top part of one variety onto the bottom part of a different variety. There are two parts to a grafted plant; the rootstock, which contains the root of the plant; and the scion which is the fruiting part of the plant on top.

Why use grafted plants?
The rootstock is chosen for its disease-resistance, vigorous growth, and high fruit yield. The scion is selected for the taste of the fruit. Many heirloom varieties that have large, tasty fruits, but may lack disease-resistance are now being grown on grafted rootstock.

Choose plants with straight, sturdy stems about the thickness of a pencil. Look for the grafting scar located on the stem above the soil in the pot.

Sun and Soil

Choose a sunny, warm location and plant after the last spring frost in your area when temperatures average at least 55 - 60°F.

Tomatoes thrive in any well-drained soil with moderate fertility, and a pH of 6-7.

Prepare the soil.

For an excellent start, test your soil and amend as necessary. Use a general-purpose fertilizer or choose organic amendments such as blood, bone, fish or feather meal.

Add organic matter, such as compost, aged manure, leaf mold or coffee grounds.

Stake, cage or mulch?

Decide whether you will stake, cage or allow plants to run on mulch. Staked tomatoes produce cleaner fruit that ripens earlier, but must be pruned, and tied to the stake. Caged or mulched plants don’t need pruning.

Set wooden stakes 4’ – 5’ tall, before you plant to avoid injuring the young seedlings.

Install cages right after planting – most tomatoes require large, 24” diameter cages, 4’ – 5’ high; center carefully over the plants.

Plant transplants in rows 3’ apart with 18” between plants in the row if you stake or cage. If you will mulch, space rows 4’ – 5’ apart, with 3’ between plants.

**How to Plant Grafted Tomatoes**

1. Water the plants thoroughly, preferably with a solution of soluble fertilizer and water, about 1/2 hour before you plant.

2. Mark where you will plant and dig a hole a few inches bigger than the root ball of the plant. Tear the rim off peat pots so that it won’t wick moisture away from the roots. 3. IMPORTANT! Plant the root ball level with the planting hole so that the grafting scar is well above the soil line. If the scion comes in contact with the soil, it will root, taking away the benefits of the rootstock.

4. Cover the root ball with soil. Press down gently to eliminate air pockets.

5. Water the new transplants immediately with 2 quarts water. Allow the water to soak down to the roots.

6. Snip off any new growth (suckers) that grows on the stem of the rootstock.
Iris Leaf Spot

Iris Leaf Spot is active and has been favored by the cool, wet weather conditions we have been experiencing across much of Kansas. The spots are typically found on the leaves but can occur on the stalk and buds of the developing flower. The spots are dark with a reddish border and will appear water soaked followed by yellowing of the surrounding tissue. As the disease progresses, the tips of the infected leaves will appear scorched. The disease will not kill the plant however it can reduce the plant vigor over time.

How can you protect your irises? The first step is to practice good sanitation by removing all the dead leaves prior to spring green up. The fungus that causes iris leaf spot overwinters on the dead leaves from the previous year, and removing those leaves will break the life cycle.

If you have a history of severe iris leaf spot and yearly sanitation alone is not effective, fungicides are available. Fungicides can be sprayed every 10 days for 4 to 6 weeks starting when new leaves emerge in spring. For more information on fungicide products and application for iris leaf spot go to http://www.hfrr.ksu.edu/doc1645.ashx. Be sure to follow the instructions on the fungicide label.

Common Garden Misconceptions and the Real Truth

from Louisiana State Extension Horticulture Hints

There are a variety of misconceptions when it comes to gardening. Here are just a few of the common mistaken ideas and what you really need to know about those topics:

**When transplanting trees or shrubs (digging them out of the ground and planting them in a new location), you should prune back the tops up to 50 percent. This balances the top of the plant with the reduced number of roots since roots are lost when the plant is dug up.**

Although common sense seems to support this, research does not. When a plant is transplanted, the most critical thing it needs to do when replanted is to grow new roots to replace those that are lost. Cutting the plant back, however, tells the plant to grow new shoots instead. So the newly transplanted tree or shrub puts effort into growing shoots when that effort should be directed at growing roots. This actually works against establishment and survival.

Top pruning also removes leaves. Leaves are the food factories of the plant, and food is needed to grow new roots. Reducing the plant’s ability to produce food also reduces root growth. The most important thing to ensuring the survival of a transplanted tree or shrub (or any plant) is digging up enough of the root system and proper watering after it is replanted.

*The moon has a profound influence on the way plants grow, so you have to plant vegetable seeds and transplants based on the proper phase of the moon to be successful.*

This idea has been around for a long time, but research does not substantiate it. The moon has an undeniable effect on the tides and living organisms, but planting in the wrong phase of the moon will not prevent a vegetable plant from growing and producing a crop. We all eat very well thanks to our abundant food supply, and I promise you farmers who grow all of that food do not plant by the phase of the moon or a sign of the zodiac. They plant according to weather conditions and the proper season, and you should too.

*Adding gypsum to heavy clay soils loosens up the soil, reduces compaction and makes it easier to work with.*

According to soils specialist J Stevens with the LSU AgCenter, adding gypsum as a soil amendment to soils generally is not beneficial and will not loosen the soil. Gypsum is only beneficial in areas where sodium levels in the compacted soil are high.

If soil sodium levels overall are relatively low,
it is pointless to add gypsum. It will not make the soil easier to work or less compacted.

**Watering plants when the sun is shining on the leaves will cause the leaves to burn.**

The idea behind this is that the droplets of water sitting on the leaves will act as lenses and will focus the sunlight on the leaf like a magnifying glass and burn it. But that simply does not happen. All of us have either watered our gardens, container plants or lawns during the day and in doing so have wet the foliage. Yet I guarantee that you have never seen plants burn when this is done.

**If you plant sweet peppers next to hot peppers, the sweet pepper plants will produce hot peppers.**

The idea here is that cross-pollination of the hot pepper with the sweet pepper will cause the sweet pepper plant to produce hot peppers. This is not true. All of the male genes in the pollen from the hot pepper go into the embryos inside the seeds. The genes from the plant that provides the pollen play no role in the formation of the fruit (the pepper). The fruit characteristics are strictly due to the genetics of the mother plant. So if the mother plant is a sweet pepper, it will produce sweet peppers even if pollinated by a hot pepper (and vice versa). This also applies to other vegetables, like squash and zucchini, and fruit trees. An exception is corn. Some types of corn must be isolated from each other because cross-pollination can affect the quality of the corn produced.

**Maintaining Container Gardens**

*By Richard Jauron, Greg Wallace, Iowa State University Extension*

**How often should I water plants in containers?**

Watering frequency may vary considerably from container to container. It depends on the size and type of container, composition of the potting mix, plant species, and weather conditions.

Plants growing in containers should be checked daily (especially in summer) to determine if they need to be watered. If uncertain about the need to water, poke your finger into the potting mix. Water the container when the potting mix is dry at the 1 to 2 inch depth. Watering frequency may vary from once or twice a day (small container, hot windy weather) to once or twice a week (large container, cool weather).

When watering plants in containers, continue to apply water until water begins to flow out the drainage holes in the bottom of the container.

Do not allow the potting mix to dry out completely. Potting mixes shrink and pull away from the sides of the containers when completely dry. Dry potting mixes are difficult to moisten as water tends to flow between the potting mix and container and then out the bottom of the container (while the potting mix remains dry). Containers that have been allowed to dry out completely should be placed in a tub of water for 20 to 30 minutes to remoisten the potting mix.

**Do plants in containers need to be fertilized?**

Plants in containers need to be fertilized on a regular basis as nutrient levels in potting mixes quickly fall due to absorption by plants and leaching during watering.

Many commercial potting mixes contain a slow-release fertilizer. However, slow-release fertilizers seldom last the entire growing season. When using a potting mix containing a slow-release fertilizer, begin to fertilize plants when plant growth slows or the color of the foliage fades. A granular fertilizer can be applied to the soil surface or plants may be fertilized with a water soluble fertilizer. Check the product label for application rates and frequency.

**What other types of maintenance do plants in containers need?**

Promptly remove dead leaves, spent flowers and other plant debris. Removal of plant debris improves the appearance of plants and lessens the likelihood of insect and disease problems.

Inspect plants on a regular basis for insects and diseases. Control insects by either handpicking or by spraying/dusting with the appropriate insecticide. Control diseases by removing infected leaves or entire plants.

Harvest vegetables at the proper stage of maturity for best quality and to encourage additional production.

Remove spent flowers on annuals to improve plant appearance and encourage continuous bloom. Pinch back plants that get tall and leggy.

If possible, move containers into the garage or other indoor location when severe weather approaches or when a frost or freeze is forecast.
FoodKeeper App to Reduce Food Waste

The FoodKeeper app is available for Android and Apple devices.

How many times have you gone into your pantry or refrigerator, only to find that what you were going to use in your meal was spoiled? The USDA, Cornell University and the Food Marketing Institute would like to help avoid that problem in the future with the new application, the FoodKeeper.

Every year, billions of pounds of good food go to waste in the U.S. because home cooks are not sure of the quality or safety of items. USDA estimates that 21% of the available food in the U.S. goes uneaten at the consumer level. In total, 36 pounds of food per person is wasted each month at the retail and consumer levels!

The FoodKeeper app features include:

- Find specific storage timelines for the refrigerator, freezer, and pantry;
- Get cooking tips for cooking methods of meat, poultry and seafood products;
- Note in your devices’ calendar when products were purchased and receive notifications when they are nearing the end of their recommended storage date.

Learn more about this app at http://1.usa.gov/1y2T9ub.

Coffee Storage Tips

Cool, dry, and dark. Three important factors for storing coffee to maintain freshness and flavor. Coffee beans can become stale and lose flavor if stored in fancy containers for decoration. Choose air-tight glass or ceramic containers. Keep coffee out of cabinets near the stove or outside kitchen walls because of summer heat.

Buy enough coffee so that it is used in a short amount of time. Freshly roasted coffee becomes stale quickly, so purchase in small quantities to last one to two weeks. If buying large amounts of coffee, freeze it for later use. Divide coffee into smaller portions and place in airtight bags. Freeze up to one month. Once out of the freezer, store in a cool, dry place.

For more tips on coffee, see the National Coffee Association website at www.ncausa.org/ and select “Knowledge Bank.”

Drink Your Milk!

Aging puts stress on many parts of the body, including the brain. To help reduce the onset of Alzheimer’s, dementia, Parkinson’s disease, and other conditions, the antioxidant glutathione may help.

Glutathione is in milk and can help reduce oxidative stress in the brain. Research showed that the more milk participants consumed, the higher the glutathione concentration in the brain. More research is needed to determine more specific benefits of milk consumption.

Most consumers get one serving of dairy foods a day, well below the recommended three servings.

Source: http://ajcn.nutrition.org/

Juicing vs. Blending

Which is better? Juicing or blending fruit? The process of juicing is a trend touted for its “detoxification” powers. Juicing machines separate the water, vitamins, antioxidants, and fructose from the fruit. Unfortunately, the pulp and skin are removed which includes beneficial fiber and more antioxidants.

Diabetics may see a spike in blood sugar counts because of the high fructose content and lack of fiber.

Blending is where the whole fruit is blended to retain all components of the fruit including the beneficial fiber. When consumed, there is a higher feeling of fullness and higher nutritional benefit.

While juicing provides a healthy beverage, more nutritional value is gained from blending the whole fruit.

A Salad a Day!

With spring in full swing and summer almost here, lightening up meals with a salad can brighten the day. Need some new ideas? Check out www.fruitsandveggiesmorematters.org/30-days-of-salad for some cool combinations.

- Chickpeas, kidney beans, and steamed cut green beans in Italian vinaigrette.
- Chopped spinach, quinoa, parsley, cucumber, tomatoes, and hummus.
- Kale, orange segments, roasted turkey breast, and walnuts.

It’s Strawberry Season!

Strawberries are the first fruit to ripen in the spring! Fresh strawberries are tasty by themselves or in any meal or beverage. Here are some fun facts!
Eight strawberries contain more vitamin C than one orange.

A serving (1 cup) of strawberries has twice as much fiber as a serving of grapes.

Strawberry flavor is influenced by weather, the variety, and stage of ripeness when harvested.

On average, there are 200 seeds in a strawberry.


Kids and Bicycle Safety
Bicycle riding is fun, healthy, and a great way to be independent. But it is important to remember that a bicycle is not a toy; it’s a vehicle!

Be cool – follow some basic safety tips when you ride.

Safe Riding Tips
Before using your bicycle, make sure it is ready to ride. You should always inspect your bike to make sure all parts are secure and working properly.

Remember to:

Wear a Properly Fitted Bicycle Helmet. Protect your brain, save your life. For more information see the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration publication “Easy Steps to Properly Fit a Bicycle Helmet.”

Adjust Your Bicycle to Fit. Stand over your bicycle. There should be 1 to 2 inches between you and the top tube (bar) if using a road bike and 3 to 4 inches if a mountain bicycle. The seat should be level front to back. The seat height should be adjusted to allow a slight bend at the knee when the leg is fully extended. The handlebar height should be at the same level with the seat.

Check Your Equipment. Before riding, inflate tires properly and check that your brakes work.

See and Be Seen. Whether daytime, dawn, dusk, foul weather, or at night, you need to be seen by others. Wearing white has not been shown to make you more visible. Rather, always wear neon, fluorescent, or other bright colors when riding day or night. Also wear something that reflects light, such as reflective tape or markings, or flashing lights. Remember, just because you can see a driver doesn’t mean the driver can see you.

Control Your Bicycle. Always ride with at least one hand on the handlebars. Carry books and other items in a bicycle carrier or backpack.

Watch for and Avoid Road Hazards. Be on the lookout for hazards such as potholes, broken glass, gravel, puddles, leaves, and dogs. All these hazards can cause a crash. If you are riding with friends and you are in the lead, yell out and point to the hazard to alert the riders behind you.

Avoid Riding at Night. It is far more dangerous to ride at night than during the day because you are harder for others to see. If you have to ride at night, wear something that makes you more easily seen by others. Make sure you have reflectors on the front and rear of your bicycle (white lights on the front and red rear reflectors are required by law in many States), in addition to reflectors on your tires, so others can see you. Many bicycle-related crashes resulting in injury or death are associated with the bicyclist’s behavior, including such things as not wearing a bicycle helmet, riding into a street without stopping, turning left or swerving into traffic that is coming from behind, running a stop sign, and riding the wrong way in traffic. To maximize your safety, always wear a helmet AND follow the rules of the road.

Rules of the Road – Bicycling on the Road Bicycles in many States are considered vehicles, and cyclists have the same rights and the same responsibilities to follow the rules of the road as motorists. When riding, always:

Go With the Traffic Flow. Ride on the right in the same direction as other vehicles. Go with the flow—not against it.

Obey All Traffic Laws. A bicycle is a vehicle and you’re a driver. When you ride in the street, obey all traffic signs, signals, and lane markings.

Yield to Traffic When Appropriate. Almost always, drivers on a smaller road must yield (wait) for traffic on a major or larger road. If there is no stop sign or traffic signal and you are coming from a smaller roadway (out of a driveway, from a sidewalk, a bike path, etc.), you must slow down and look to see if the way is clear before proceeding. This also means yielding to pedestrians who have already entered a crosswalk.

Be Predictable. Ride in a straight line, not in and out of cars. Signal your moves to others.

Stay Alert at All Times. Use your eyes AND ears. Watch out for potholes, cracks, wet leaves, storm grates, railroad tracks, or anything that could make you lose control of your bike. You need your ears to hear traffic and avoid dangerous situations; don’t wear a headset when you ride.

Look Before Turning. When turning left or right, always look behind you for a break in traffic, then signal before making the turn. Watch for left- or right-turning traffic.

Watch for Parked Cars. Ride far enough out from the curb to avoid the unexpected from parked cars (like doors opening, or cars pulling out).
Sidewalk versus Street Riding
The safest place for bicycle riding is on the street, where bicycles are expected to follow the same rules of the road as motorists and ride in the same direction.
Children less than 10 years old, however, are not mature enough to make the decisions necessary to safely ride in the street.

Children less than 10 years old are better off riding on the sidewalk.

For anyone riding on a sidewalk:
Check the law in your State or jurisdiction to make sure sidewalk riding is allowed. Watch for vehicles coming out of or turning into driveways.

Stop at corners of sidewalks and streets to look for cars and to make sure the drivers see you before crossing.

Enter a street at a corner and not between parked cars. Alert pedestrians that you are near by saying, “Excuse me,” or, “Passing on your left,” or use a bell or horn.

For more information on bicycle safety, visit the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) Web site at: www.nhtsa.dot.gov

Fight The Bite: Tips To Avoid Tick Bites and Tick-borne Diseases
TOPEKA (WIBW) – Spring and summer are hunting, fishing, camping, and hiking seasons. It is also the time of year when ticks are out. The Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) and the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWPT) remind those spending time outdoors to take precautions to avoid tick bites.

In 2014, 212 cases of tick-borne diseases including ehrlichiosis, anaplasmosis, spotted fever rickettsiosis, also known as Rocky Mountain spotted fever, tularemia, and Lyme disease were reported in Kansas; 75 of those patients were hospitalized. Kansans are encouraged to follow these steps to prevent tick bites: Dress, DEET, Avoid and Check.

DRESS: Wear protective clothing when practical (long sleeves and pants). Clothing should be light-colored to make ticks more visible. When hiking, wear a long-sleeved shirt tucked into pants, long pants tucked into high socks and over-the-ankle shoes to keep ticks out. Products containing permethrin can be applied to clothing and equipment but not directly to skin.

Garments must be allowed to dry thoroughly before wearing. Clothing and tents pre-treated with permethrin are available, and the protection can remain active through several washings. These products kill ticks rather than merely repelling them. Be sure to follow label directions.

DEET: Insect repellents also reduce the risk of being bitten. When outdoors, use insect repellent containing 20 to 30 percent DEET on exposed skin and clothing for protection that lasts up to several hours. Follow the directions on the label. Other repellents registered by the Environmental Protection Agency can be found at http://cfpub.epa.gov/oppref/insect/.

AVOID: Ticks are usually found on vegetation close to the ground. In addition to regular mowing, avoid wooded or bushy areas with tall grass and leaf litter and walk in the center of trails.

CHECK: Check yourself at least every two hours for ticks when outside for extended periods of time. Pay special attention to areas in and around your hair, ears, armpits, groin, navel and backs of the knees. Promptly remove a tick if one is found. The sooner a tick is removed, the less chance it will transmit a disease to its host. If you find a tick, grasp the tick with tweezers as close to the skin as possible and slowly pull it straight out.

Do not crush or puncture the tick and try to avoid touching the tick with your bare hands. Thoroughly disinfect the bite area and wash your hands immediately after removal. Be sure to also examine pets and gear, as ticks can ride into the home on animals, coats, backpacks and blankets, etc.

Symptoms of tick-borne disease can include any unusual rash and unexplained flu-like symptoms, including fever, severe headaches, body aches and dizziness. Prompt treatment with antibiotics can prevent serious illness or even death. See your doctor immediately if you have been bitten by a tick and experience any of these symptoms.

For more information about tick-borne diseases, visit: cdc.gov/ticks/resources/Hunterfactsheet.pdf and cdc.gov/ticks/diseases/

Thanks to our Extension Sponsors!
Get Outdoors and Explore Your Communities: Geocaching

Looking for a fun, outdoor activity for anyone of school age to adult? Geocaching may be for you, and if you have a smartphone, you have just about everything you need to get started.

What is Geocaching?
Geocaching is a recreational activity that involves hiding and seeking objects, or "caches," usually with the aid of a global positioning system (GPS) receiver. You can think of geocaching as a high-tech treasure hunt. People hide caches and publish their coordinate locations to geocaching Web sites, thereby allowing others to use the coordinates to find the hidden caches. Geocaching is done on the honor system. After discovering a cache, finders sign a log and then return the cache to its hiding place. Information about the new location is then posted on a geocaching Web page. Other caches are exchange caches where you take something and leave something in return. There are currently millions of geocachers across the globe - probably some close to you.

What Do I Need to Get Started in Geocaching?
Getting started is relatively easy. While some geocachers prefer paper maps and traditional orienteering techniques, most geocaching is done using handheld GPS receivers or smartphone and GPS or geocaching app. Geocaching is designed to be simple, so you don't need expensive GPS equipment to participate. Check out this guide to selecting an inexpensive recreational grade GPS receiver: http://bit.ly/1cbxZ2E

What Do Geocaches Look Like?
Most geocaches are simply containers, with all sorts of "treasures" thrown in, that are relatively easy to find. Their size may vary from small, filmlike canisters to metal ammo boxes. They typically contain a log sheet for recording your finds. They may also contain items of "interest" left behind by whomever hid the cache as well as other geocachers.

What to Expect When Looking for Geocaches
Geocaches are typically hidden from view to increase the challenge of finding them and to prevent them from being removed (muggled) by the public. People also hide geocaches to protect them from the elements, curious people, and even animals. Ideally, they should not be hidden where the seeker may be put in a dangerous situation when retrieving them. Most geocaching sites advise that caches should not be hidden where animals, such as snakes or rodents, might take up residence.

Fun Geocaching Things to Do
There are many different types of geocaching that people engage in. Not all caches are containers filled with trinkets. Virtual caches are based on finding specific things, such as historical markers, while Earth caches involve finding unique geologic or natural formations. There are geocaching adventures that focus on locating USGS benchmarks. Once you get started with geocaching, you may want to seek out themed or challenge caches to your liking.

Many geocachers place special trackable objects in geocaches and then use geocaching Web sites to monitor where they travel. Some trackable objects include geocoins and travel bugs.

Geocoins, as the name implies, are custom-designed and manufactured coins that can serve as your personal calling card; travel bugs are like dog-tags and often are attached to a "hitchhiker" that carries the travel bug from cache to cache. Often, a geocoin or travel bug has a specific goal, such as traveling to a specific country or city, which makes monitoring its progress more interesting and fun.

For more information on geocaching, videos on how to geocache, and more, visit www.geocaching.com

Source: Adapted from eXtension.org Geospatial Technology article “Geocaching – Getting Started”

Reno County Bicycle Safety Clinic

Open to Reno County children aged 5 to 12 years. Children can bring their own bikes or are eligible for a free bicycle and helmet if they don’t already have one. Bikes and helmets are limited so come early!

Bicycle Training and Certificate Required for FREE bicycle and helmet

Saturday, June 6th • 8:30 - 10:00 AM

Former ALCO Parking Lot, 401 N Main, South Hutchinson

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