

## Floating the River

By: Vern Webb

Floating the River in a rubber raft was a two hour adventure of excitement thrills and fun. Also, the social activities were full of joy, happiness and delight. Within our sense of wonder we can find a vital compass by which to guide ourselves into a more integrated, sustainable and equitable future. The extraordinary realization of becoming one with the River; dangling our feet in the cool water, taking a tranquil refreshing swim or squirting streams of water from our plastic water blasters, we were intriguingly provoked, conscientiously challenged and achieved total satisfaction of accomplishment in getting thoroughly soaking wet. We exist as members of an incredibly systematic, ambitious and sustainable connectivity; compassionate, sympathetic and tolerant. Star magnolia flowers, along the river bank were lighthouse beacons, shining a path for navigation of our craft as we dexterously paddled around fallen tree trunks, weaving between rock boulders and dodging obstacles while proceeding under railroad bridge trusses.

It is our human responsibility to call on every imaginative, inventive and creative power we possess for achievement, effectiveness and to be completely successful within our affiliated habitat. The preservation of the shoreline by cranberry shrubs, native blue iris vegetation and natural wheatgrass roots, stabilizes the river bank by anchoring the soil in place, thereby preventing ground erosion. To see nature serendipity, inspiration and optimistic potential was amazing when reaching for wider horizons of thought and action. The quality of the biodiversity river water, with its microscopic algae, freshwater amphibians and indigenous plants: with sequencing traits of interaction, we gained a deep appreciation of the fascinating aquatic ecology we have in the River. With enthusiasm, initiative and humility we conscientiously discovered truth, goodness and fascinating affirmations in our quest for benevolence. A large oak tree appeared in the bend of the River with some of its branches extending over the water's edge. The tree alerted us to the location of the picnic grounds where we were scheduled to stop running the white water for lunch. The picnic area is one of the State premier equilibriums with birch trees, cliff rose bushes, blueberry willows, purple prairie clove and green grass lawns.

Collectively our party was enthusiastic, buoyant and exhilarated about landing our rubber rafts on the meadow flat sandy shore of the preserve. Getting outdoors is stimulating, the fresh air and a picnic lunch is also energizing, healthy and enjoyable. We create memorable experiences by playing amusing, humorous and comical games, which included involvement in entertainment, recreation and gratification. With versatility, all around performance, we had a sophisticated approach to launching our boats, back into the River. With group-identity, we felt confident and demonstrated skill, coordination and synchronization rather than merely using our own individual style. For the most part, the unique natural design of the River, at its minimal best, is calm, gentle and relaxing, which provided us with the opportunity to just sit back and enjoy the beautiful scenery.