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**Media contact**: Katelyn Larsen

**Organization**: Ney Nature Center

**Phone number**: 507-248-3474

**Email**: [communications@neycenter.org](mailto:communications@neycenter.org)

**NEY NATURE CENTER HOLDS 9TH ANNUAL SPRING FLING BENEFIT DINNER & FUNDRAISER**

**Henderson, MN, April 19, 2016:** 160 people turned out at the Ney Nature Center’s 9th Annual Spring Fling Benefit Dinner & Fundraiser the evening of April 16, 2016. The event raised over $10,000 through silent and live auctions, raffle tickets, sponsorships, cash donations, and ticket sales, which will support the continued success of the NNC through program offerings, learning experiences, and staff.

The evening included silent and live auctions, raffle drawings, door prizes, a meal catered by the Henderson RoadHaus, award presentations, and keynote presentation. Warren Wolf received the Outstanding Volunteer Award in recognition of his financial expertise and assistance with fundraising, and Greg Murphy received the President’s Award for his contribution to the bluebird house program and snowshoe lacing classes at the NNC.

“All successful organizations have many dedicated individuals with behind the scenes workers that give a lot of their time and talents to the organization. Warren and Greg are two examples of this type of person, and the Ney Nature Center was please to reward them for their dedication to the center,” commented NNC Board President Earl Gransee.

Honored guest speaker Katie-Lyn Bunney of the University of Minnesota Monarch Lab presented “The Monarch Butterfly: Conservation of Minnesota’s Favorite Insect.” She indicated that current concerns for the species includes habitat loss, neonicotinoid pesticides, disease and predation, parasitoids, parasites, and winter storms in the over wintering grounds.

People can support monarchs by planting milkweed and nectar plants, getting involved in citizen science like the Monarch Larva Monitoring Project through the Monarch Lab, and donate to monarch conservation sites like Monarch Joint Venture. Additionally, those interested in monarch conservation are welcome to attend the Monarch Kickoff on August 6, assist with tagging monarchs, and witness one of the monarch roosting sites in Minnesota at the NNC.

**About the Ney Nature Center**: Conveniently located halfway between the Twin Cities and Mankato, the Ney Nature Center (NNC), which sits on the bluffs of the Minnesota River near Henderson, MN, is home to 446 acres of native prairie and woodlands.  This unique blend of biomes allows staff to educate youth and adults alike about the native plants and wildlife important to Southern Minnesota.  Visit [www.facebook.com/neynaturecenter](http://www.facebook.com/neynaturecenter) for more information and view a schedule of upcoming programs to attend.

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Image captions

4318: The 10th Annual Ney Nature Center Spring Fling and Benefit Dinner will be held at American Legion Post 108 in Le Center, MN on April 1, 2017.

4371: NNC Board Secretary Carol Jackson presented Warren Wolf with the Outstanding Volunteer Award in recognition of his financial expertise and assistance with fundraising for the Ney Nature Center.

4373: NNC Board President Earl Gransee presented Greg Murphy with the President’s Award for his contribution to the bluebird house program and snowshoe lacing classes at the Ney Nature Center.

4377: Guest speaker Katie-Lyn Bunney of the University of Minnesota Monarch Lab presented “The Monarch Butterfly: Conservation of Minnesota’s Favorite Insect.”

4387: 78 businesses and individuals donated items for the raffle, silent, and live auctions at the 9th Annual Ney Nature Center Spring Fling Benefit Dinner and Fundraiser on April 16, 2016.

4395: Kevin Dahle, assisted by NNC Board Vice President Mick McGuire, conducted the live auction at the 9th Annual Ney Nature Center Spring Fling Benefit Dinner and Fundraiser on April 16, 2016.

4396: 160 people turned out at the Ney Nature Center’s 9th Annual Spring Fling Benefit Dinner & Fundraiser the evening of April 16, 2016, which raised over $15,000.