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4-25-2007

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University Relations, "'Echoes of the Cry of the Marsh" premieres locally" (2007). *Campus News Archive*. 999.

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"Echoes of the Cry of the Marsh" premieres locally

Summary: "Echoes of the Cry of the Marsh" is a documentary that takes a deeper look at wetland restoration in Minnesota and chronicles one citizen's dedication to that issue. The program, produced by Media Services at the University of Minnesota, Morris, premiered locally at 8 p.m. Sunday, April 29, on Pioneer Public Television, Appleton.

(April 25, 2007)-"Echoes of the Cry of the Marsh" is a documentary that takes a deeper look at wetland restoration in Minnesota and chronicles one citizen's dedication to that issue. The program, produced by Media Services at the University of Minnesota, Morris, premiered locally April 29 on Pioneer Public Television, Appleton. The program will air again at 9 p.m. May 10 and at noon on May 16.

Roger Boleman, director of Media Services at UMM and producer of "Echoes of the Cry of the Marsh," said the program is significant because "What's more basic than water? It's one of our basic needs. We are really 'the people upstream' – wetlands are an integral part of the hydrology of this area and wildlife has suffered. It's time to take a look at this issue from all perspectives."

The film profiles the commitment of Swift county resident Bob Hartkopf who has spent 40 years documenting the disappearance of wetlands from the Minnesota landscape. "As a young boy, Hartkopf developed a keen ecological eye as he watched marshes drained for farming near his family home in Appleton, Minn.," said an introduction to the program. In the 1960s, Hartkopf produced a short film called "Cry of the Marsh." The film received considerable acclaim, but today, Hartkopf, a retired science teacher, is still waiting to see those wetlands return.

The program was researched and written by Christopher Butler, UMM English faculty member, and includes comment by county commissioners, DNR representatives, the executive director of the Upper Minnesota Watershed district, founder of the Center for Rural and Regional Studies and Professor Emeritus of History and Rural and Regional Studies at Southwest Minnesota State University Joseph A. Amato and others. Mike Cihak, assistant director of marketing for Media Services, was the principal videographer and editor for the documentary.

The film is a collaborative effort among several public and private groups, including the University of Minnesota, Morris, Ducks Unlimited, the Upper Minnesota Watershed district, U.S. Fish & Wildlife and Clean Up the River Environment (CURE).

Photo by Mike Cihak: Bob Hartkopf and the marsh

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