



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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CRWD awards kayak to conclude photo contest

Local paddler wins top prize as part of district's 10th anniversary

AUSTIN, Minn. – Friday, Oct. 13, 2017 – After receiving more than 300 images over 16 weeks, the Cedar River Watershed District's inaugural photo contest concluded this week with a local paddler receiving a free kayak.

April Murphy, of Austin, received on Wednesday a kayak sponsored by the Austin Runnings store as the grand prize of the Cedar Scenes contest. Murphy was one of 59 people who submitted photos showcasing scenes within the CRWD's boundaries to have a chance at being selected by staff for a weekly prize and have up to two entries per week for the kayak drawing. Murphy submitted numerous photos mostly of fishing and kayaking on the Cedar River State Water Trail in Austin.

On Wednesday, Austin Runnings manager Everett Hackensmith joined CRWD administrator Justin Hanson and outreach coordinator Tim Ruzek at the new canoe-kayak access behind Marcusen Park stadium to present Murphy with the kayak. Last week, Hackensmith drew Murphy's name during a CRWD Facebook live video of the kayak drawing at Runnings.

CRWD plans to bring the contest back in 2018 as it proved popular with the public and went well beyond expectations, Ruzek said, adding that it connected staff with many river enthusiasts.

"It was a lot of fun and very educational for CRWD staff and board members to see how people are enjoying the local waterways as well as what they're catching for fish and seeing out there," Ruzek said.

As part of its 10th anniversary, CRWD launched the weekly photo contest in June to encourage the public to take photos or send in older images that showcase the Cedar River and other local waterways within the district.

Although the Cedar River was the biggest focal point, photos featured other waterways, including Dobbins Creek; Wolf Creek; Orchard Creek; Murphy Creek; and Mud Creek. The most-popular areas were Ramsey Mill Pond; Austin Mill Pond; East Side Lake; the stretch of the Cedar upstream from Interstate 90; and the Lafayette Park area.

CRWD offered weekly prizes for the best submitted photo as chosen by CRWD staff, mostly involving \$10 in Chamber Bucks to use at most area businesses along with a goodie bag provided by Discover Austin. Some businesses donated weekly gift card prizes, including Cedar River Canoe & Kayak Rental Service; B&J Bar & Grill; and Brookside Campground.

Each submitted photo – a weekly limit of two photos per person – counted as an entry into the drawing for the kayak sponsored by Runnings.

To view Cedar Scenes photos and more, visit the CRWD's Facebook page at: www.facebook.com/cedarriverwd

Cedar River Watershed District

In 2007, state and local officials formed the Cedar River Watershed District in response to the Cedar River Watershed's worst-known floods occurring in 2000 and 2004. CRWD's top priorities are aimed at reducing flooding and improving water quality within the Cedar River Watershed.



Standing at the new Marcusen Park canoe-kayak access, April Murphy, of Austin, receives a kayak sponsored by the Austin Runnings store that she won this month from CRWD's "Cedar Scenes" photo contest. Also pictured (left to right) are CRWD administrator Justin Hanson; Runnings manager Everett Hackensmith; and CRWD outreach coordinator Tim Ruzek.

Cedar Scenes photo contest

Who: Cedar River Watershed District.

What: Concluded its first "Cedar Scenes" photo contest that drew more than 300 photos overall from nearly 60 people.

Where: Submitted photos needed to include water scenes from within the Cedar River Watershed District.

When: Entries were accepted weekly from June 12 to Oct. 1.

Why: Part of CRWD's 10th anniversary, the project aimed to get the public outdoors and help showcase the beauty and recreational opportunities within the watershed district.

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