

# Camera work

COMMENTS? CONTACT KEN KLOTZBACH: KKLOTZBACH@POSTBULLETIN.COM



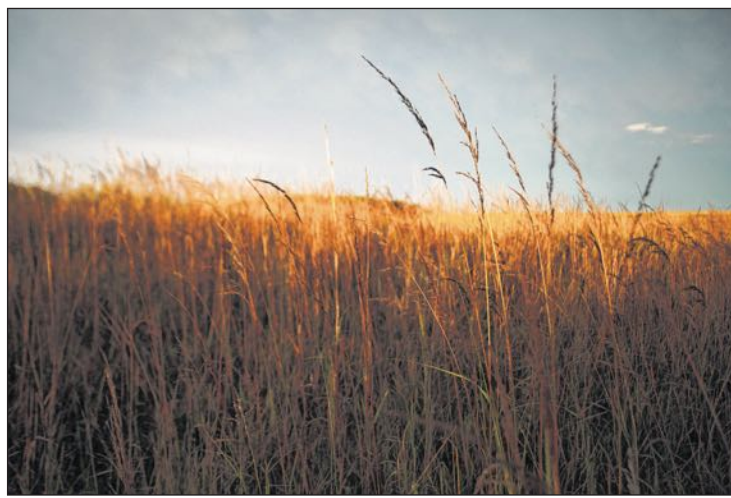
The Circle Trail at the national monument leads through quarries of pipestone. Quarrying is still done on these sacred grounds by American Indians and generally takes place in late summer and fall.

## The history is alive

### Journey to Pipestone National Monument in western Minnesota



A bumblebee feeds on a sunflower.



The golden prairie grasses are treasured in the western part of the state.



Autumn foliage saturates the landscape in September.



The Circle Trail at Pipestone National Monument in western Minnesota leads to Winnewissa Falls. The paved trail is just under a mile and quite flat. It is accessible to visitors in wheelchairs.

PHOTOS AND TEXT BY ELIZABETH NIDA OBERT  
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I have lived in Minnesota over 40 years and, sadly, had yet to explore Pipestone National Monument in western Minnesota. The recent 7-year anniversary of my marriage seemed reason enough to change that. And so we did.

The history lesson at the sacred grounds began in the visitor center, where we learned stone pipes — thus the name of the monument — were an essential part of culture and trade among American Indians. Pipestone, also called catlinite, was quarried on the grounds and

the relatively soft stone carved into a wide variety of pipes, as well as other products that can today be purchased in the gift store. Quarrying is still allowed by American Indians and generally takes place in late summer and fall. It is a tedious process.

We walked the peaceful 3/4-mile Circle Trail, which lead us through the pipestone quarries and to Winnewissa Falls. Tall prairie grasses and pretty wildflowers surrounded. Enchanting. Spiritual. Never forgotten.

For more information go to [www.nps.gov/pipe/index.htm](http://www.nps.gov/pipe/index.htm).



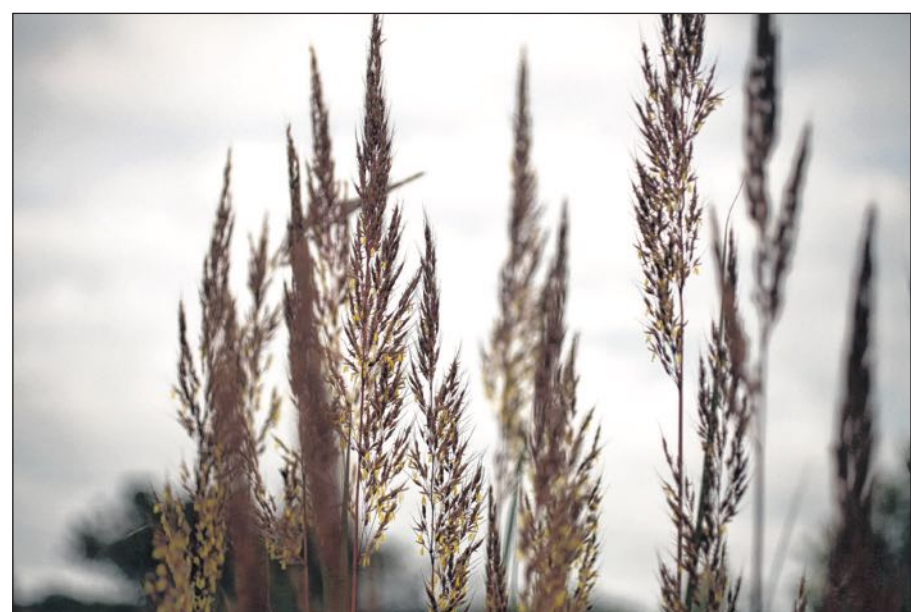
**About Elizabeth Nida Obert** | enida@postbulletin.com

Western Minnesota is gloriously beautiful — I have a love affair with the wide open spaces and the blowing and wispy prairie grasses. And it is so accessible. Minnesota Highway

30 is a colorful route and will lead you through a variety of small towns with unique bakeries, cafes and meat markets. Lake Shetek State Park — a short drive from

Pipestone — is a must for those who enjoy camping, hiking and history. If you land there on an autumn weekday, it will feel as though you have the park to yourself.

**Photo tip:** I don't typically do a lot of macro photography, which involves using macro lenses specifically designed to take extreme close-ups of subjects. But I did on my visit to Pipestone and enjoyed it immensely, as it opens up a world of photographic possibilities. Mother nature is the perfect environment in which to experiment.



The seeds of the grasses ripen on the sacred grounds.