The Tri-County Tourism Alliance is making progress albeit not as quickly as members would like. Their goal is to promote tourism, especially bus tours, in the Tri-County (Emmons, Logan, McIntosh) area. The group met at Reuben’s Restaurant in Napoleon on November 8. Alliance Member Claudia Berg, who is also Expansion and New Initiatives Coordinator at the North Dakota State Historical Society, reported on a meeting held with several BSC students and instructors who have been asked to develop a logo that will be used to market Alliance. The students have visited the Heritage Center to learn more about the Germans from Russia immigration story in order to get a feel for what might be incorporated into the logo. Berg said the students are excited about working with the Alliance. They have chosen the tagline ‘German Russian Country: Prairie Legacy’. Students hope to have a draft of the logo ready to present to Alliance members at their next meeting which will be held December 2 in Bismarck at 11 a.m. at the Tourism Department on Century Ave. Those attending the meeting can also attend an awards presentation at 1 p.m. when two of the Alliance members, Director of the NDSU Heritage Collection Library Michael Miller and Special Collections Associate Acacia Stuckle will each be presented with a national award.

Economic developers and Historical Society members in Tri-County will be invited to collaborate with the Alliance in planning exhibits such as interpretive panels to encourage and enhance tour stops in the area. They will be contacted shortly.

Alliance president Carmen Rath-Wald showed a handmade silver pine cone, along with a Christmas card with the Legend of the Silver Pinecone which will be the Tri-County Tourism Alliance’s ornament contribution for the 2011 North Dakota Christmas tree which will decorate the Great Hall of the state capitol each year.

**Yule (Germany): Legend of the Silver Pinecones**

There once lived a poor family without enough food to eat or enough wood for their fire. The mother decided to go into the forest to search for pine cones. She was planning to use the pine cones to build a fire for her family, and she was also hoping she could sell some of them to get money to buy food.

After walking for hours, the mother finally reached the forest and started gathering pine cones into her basket. Suddenly, she heard a voice say, “Why are you stealing my pinecones?” With that, an elf appeared beside her. She explained her sad story to the elf. With a crooked smile, the elf said, “Go into the next forest. The pine cones there are much better.”

Hesitantly, the mother set off to the next forest, which was even farther away. When she reached it, she was very tired. She leaned against a tree and sat her basket on the ground.

No sooner had she set down her basket, and dozens of pine cones started falling to the ground. Filled with renewed energy, she gathered all the pine cones into her basket and returned home. Tired again, once she returned home, she set down the basket for a moment on her doorstep. When she looked down at the basket of pine cones, they had all turned to silver. The family would never be poor again.

Because of this legend, many people believe that a silver pine cone is lucky. It is customary to keep one on your dresser or hearth to make sure good fortune comes your way. They can also be used to decorate your Yule tree!