



WINTER 2012

# TAMARAC TRACKS

NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF TAMARAC NWR



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# OUT WITH THE OLD, IN WITH THE NEW

By Don Blanding, President of the Board

The Friends' fiscal year ended on September 30. And what a year we had! For fear of forgetting any names who contributed to this success, I won't mention any. I do, however, want to recognize not only all the volunteer hours but also the creativity, dedication, and generosity of all involved.

For example, our education committee hosted some 1335 students from Detroit Lakes (Rossman, Roosevelt, and Middle School), Ogema, Circle of Life, Frazee, Perham, Moorhead, Lake park-Audubon, and Dilworth-Glyndon-Felton. Because students often visit us multiple times and benefit from multiple educational activities on each of these days, we also record student contacts as students X participation in each major educational activity. This measure: almost 12,000 such contacts. We have many, many gifted educators that make this happen. WOW!

Our Fall Festival was attended by 615 guests. As always, there is no admission to this all day event. We did add 45 new Friends. Our lunch, silent auction, and sale of jams and jellies netted the friends about \$3,000. This could not happen without the generosity of local businesses and our Friends group. WOW!

The Toast to Tamarac was a new event. The Richwood Winery was an extension of the Friends group in this endeavor. Once again, creativity, dedication, and generosity made all this happen. Live music, wine tasting, generous hors d'oeuvres, silent auction, and games of chance together netted the Friends nearly \$6,000. WOW!

We could write similar successes about our Gift Shop, this newsletter, the Bird Festival, the photo contest, and our website and technical group (think beaver cam). If there's a point to be made here, it is this: Because of The Friends of Tamarac, the Tamarac Refuge staff, local businesses, private donations, our local media (newspaper, television and radio), and the dedication, creativity and generosity of all these people, our larger community will continue to enjoy all that Tamarac has to offer.

As we launch a new year, we are proud to welcome four new and very gifted board members:

Sue Braun is the Senior Living Counselor at Essentia Health St Mary's. Husband Gerald is a skilled blacksmith. I'm sure there's a spot for Gerald at our fall festival. The Brauns live north of Detroit Lakes on County Road 25.



Jamie Klien is the Agriculture / Commercial Loan Officer at Midwest Bank. Jamie and Darcy have three children, and they all enjoy the outdoors at Tamarac.

Jim Legler is an Associate Professor of Business Ethics at Concordia College, Moorhead. Jim and Cindy live on South Shore Drive on Big Detroit Lake. Jim is a lifelong resident of Detroit Lakes. He's another outdoor advocate, and we look forward to this leadership on the Board.

Bill Wickum recently retired (early) after a successful career in human prosthetics. Deb taught at the DL middle school. They are in the process of dividing their time between Minnesota and Florida. Their son Tyler is in the Marine Corps' Special Forces in Afghanistan. We thank you Tyler for your service.

We look forward to the new year with the contributions and expertise of these new Friends.

## Become a Friend

Individual/Family: \$20

Patron: \$100

Life Member: \$250

Student: \$10

As a member, you will receive our quarterly newsletter mailed to your home and a 10% discount on purchases from *Tamarac Wildlife Gifts & Bookstore*. Download a membership from our website. ([www.tamaracfriends.org](http://www.tamaracfriends.org))



The Friends of Tamarac NWR is a 501(c)3 organization whose mission is to facilitate activities and programs that interpret, protect and restore the natural and cultural resources of the Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge.

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Vonnice Jacobson, Fran Mattson, Linda Brockmann, Justine Boots, Kelly Blackledge  
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Ogema, MN	2012
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Detroit lakes, MN	2012
Ogema, MN	2013
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# A GLIMPSE TOWARD THE **FUTURE**

By Neil Powers, Tamarac Refuge Manager



As I reflect upon the past year and begin to pull the new year into focus, I am frequently reminded of the many things that Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge has to be thankful for and the incredible accomplishments of our Friends, volunteers and staff. This has been a successful year and we have done a fine job of growing our programs and building support for the refuge. This has also been a year of transition with the addition of new staff members (Maintenance Worker Larry Krosko and myself) as well as the expansion of our Friends Board. As a staff, we worked hard this past year to position ourselves for

difficult times to come in terms of budget and focused on those items that will help sustain Tamarac NWR through lean times but help us grow. Our relationships and partnerships are important and they will become even more important in the future. Yes indeed, we have much to appreciate and be thankful for.

Turning our attention to 2012, we will face new challenges in the year to come and along with those challenges will be great opportunities for success. We will have some similarities to 2011 with much focus on national priorities and how that will impact programs locally. On a national scale, The Refuge System has taken an unprecedented step forward with the implementation of the Conserving the Future, Wildlife Refuges and the Next Generation vision document. This strategic document has set the stage for refuges to meet the habitat conservation challenges of the 21st century and will guide our approach to managing refuges for the next decade.

Closer to home, Tamarac NWR is embarking on a new chapter with the implementation of the Comprehensive Conservation Plan

(CCP). Just as the Conserving the Future document guides all refuges with its broad national focus, the CCP provides refuge specific goals for the management and development of programs at Tamarac. Refuge staff recently developed a list of step-down priorities that will assist us over the next year in focusing our efforts to implement aspects of this plan.

Also, as many of you are aware, we have been engaged in planning efforts to renovate the headquarters building. This project is designed to upgrade accessibility throughout the building and improve our energy efficiency by replacing less efficient windows and doors, add additional insulation to the walls and roof, and convert the present heating and cooling system to a geothermal based system. Also planned is an addition that will add some much needed office and storage space. We should know by early spring if funding is available and when construction might begin.

The year to come will certainly be exciting and filled with challenging moments. Fortunately for us, we have Friends like you with whom to share the excitement.

## NEW & RETURNING MEMBERS

### LIFE MEMBERS:

Cyndi & Melissa	Anderson
David & Ingeborg	Anderson
Howard & Linda	Anderson
Don & Carolyn	Blanding
Bob & Linda	Brockmann
Kent & Connie	Carlson
Greg	Hoch
Joann	Knapp
Fran	Mattson
Roger	Minch
Nancy	Moulden
Michael & Ginger	O'Keefe
John and Lance	Pitzl
George & Shirley	Read

### PATRON MEMBERS:

DelRaie & Jack	Chivers
Sandra L	Gordon
Bill & Nancy	Henke
Tom	Hunt
George & Sally	Oja
George	Wallman

### NEW & RENEWING MEMBERS:

Penny	Acquire
Dick & Renee	Alsop
Dennis & Monica	Arens
Peter & Jacqueline	Aschbacher
Bob & Lori	Bachmann
Kaden	Bartnes
Steve & Elaine	Beitelspacher
Jane & Bruce	Besse
Kelly & Scott	Blackledge

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Dennies
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Howard
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Anna
Rikki & John
Sandra L
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Betty and Dave
Verna
Rick
Cheryl
Harry
Jim & Theresa
Chris & Sunny
Deb
John & Yvonne
Jim & Mary Ann
Roland
Mike
Frank & Peggy

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Christen
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Thompson
Turcotte
Van Buskirk
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Weatherston
Weatherston
Wickum
Williams

# A TERRIFIC TOAST!

By Vonnie Jacobson



Over 200 people came to listen to Mike and the Monsters at the Richwood Winery.

**The First Annual Toast to Tamarac** was held on a beautiful October evening at The Richwood Winery. People came from near and far to enjoy the various fine wines produced by the Winery

that were paired with local delicacies and enjoyed by everyone as they listened to music from Mike and the Monsters. Games and a silent auction added to the fun. The winery was decorated with photos from Tamarac's environmental education program which benefited from the fund raiser. Appetizers were served with most of them generously donated by committee members and businesses, using local growers and suppliers. Approximately 200 people joined in the magical evening and helped us raise over \$5,000 to support connecting children and nature on the refuge. A great many positive comments were received from our guests and we plan to repeat the event next year.

## FABULOUS FALL FESTIVAL

By Vonnie Jacobson

The festival was a rousing success with the theme of "Become a Nature Detective". Adults and children alike were excited to receive a magnifying glass to help them on their detective trail. 615 guests, a record number, enjoyed the Sherlock Shuttle guided tours of places you do not normally get to see on Tamarac, and the Nature Trail activities for families and friends. Many youngsters cited their favorites as the GPS activity and finding the camouflaged animals. Bill Paulson's wild rice demonstration fascinated many people. In the theater guests viewed the annual photo contest entries and voted for their favorite with a spectacular blue heron picture capturing everyone's attention. Several folks went for a 2 mile hike around Pine Lake. The lunch of the famous pork loin sandwiches and fixings were greatly enjoyed by all. The silent auction and children's silent auction were very busy and very successful at helping to fund school children's buses to bring them out to Tamarac for environmental education. We were happy to welcome The Isaac Walton league and the Laurentian Chapter of the North Country National Scenic Trail to join us under the tent to inform and entertain our guests.



Bill Paulson demonstrated traditional wild rice parching.



Visitors solved 'critter scene incidents' along the hiking trail.



**PLEASE MAKE USE OF THE BUSINESSES THAT SUPPORT US!**

### TOAST TO TAMARAC

Lakes Processing  
Pam's Salsa  
Richwood Store  
Disse's Bison and Apple Ranch  
Richwood Winery

### TAMARAC FALL FESTIVAL

Anderson Pumping  
Wall Mart

### FOR BOTH EVENTS

D L Newspapers  
TV 3  
KDLM  
D L Chamber of Commerce

# TOAST TO TAMARAC AND FALL FESTIVAL 2011

## SILENT AUCTION DONORS



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 Tamarac Gift Shop  
 The Lodge on Lake Detroit  
 Thrifty White Drug  
 Tires Plus  
 Trader Joe's, Maple Grove  
 Warner, Joyce  
 Wells Fargo Bank

# THE JOYS OF DISCOVERY AT TAMARAC

Article by Cathie Ferguson

The sights and sounds of discovery are alive and well at the Tamarac NWR Visitor Center when the school children arrive. After the Tamarac NWR staff members, Friends of Tamarac volunteers, birds, squirrels and chipmunks welcome the children, the children begin communicating to the adults and the animals in their own school-children special ways. They are listening, collecting, hiking, running, snowshoeing, dancing, singing, laughing, smiling, questioning, sharing, reporting, observing, writing, drawing, creating, building, sorting, grouping, exploring, searching, investigating, recording, locating, and comparing in the incredible Tamarac NWR natural environment classroom! It is a blessing to witness the children's discovery experiences as Friends of Tamarac volunteers.

What would be examples of the discovery experiences? The kindergartners go on a Forest Treasure Hike in the fall and look for forest treasures to put in the small cloth bag that each one was given to use. They are so excited as they find treasures and, of course, they have to tell you all about each one. After they have collected their treasures, they meet as a class and sort and group the treasures. The kindergartners also go on a Photo Hike to take pictures of the forest that they think are very special. They continue their discoveries by viewing the Beaver movie, participating in learning about forest animals at the Wildlife Puppets and Songs session, learning and playing the Squirrel Game, and going on a Meeting Trees Hike. They are eager to walk with us and, so importantly, smile a lot! We will see each other again as the students return in February



Cathie Ferguson captivates 3rd graders at Chippewa Lake.

and again in May. We look forward to seeing them return!

Fall, winter, and spring also bring the very excited third graders! The school children that previously experienced the Tamarac NWR school trips are especially energized and eager to begin. The third graders learn handheld GPS skills to find "caches." The world of the forest expands and they learn about habitat, adaptations, and weather. The sessions are called Bulking Up, Preparing for Winter, and the Photo/Weather Activity. They expand the distance they travel at the refuge by hiking in the fall and spring and in the winter by snowshoes. A gift from Cabela's, a grant, gifts from our family members and our friends enabled the donation of a classroom set of snowshoes for the children and adults. Ron Jenson (Friends volunteer, too) built a very nice snowshoe rack to store them. Thank you, Ron! The picture of the snowshoeing children being led by the snowshoeing Fran and Ken Mattson (Friends volunteers, too) as they journeyed down the hill at the Visitor Center will not be forgotten. We especially remember seeing a student taking a short side trip away from the class to dance in the snow and really "kick up her heels." She beamed as she turned around to investigate her own tracks for a minute. She then joined the class as the class discovered the many wildlife tracks.

As the children get ready to board the buses, we say our goodbyes and our gratitude for their visit. We invite them to return again and again and to bring their parents, brothers, sisters, grandmas and grandpas! A third grade boy summed it up as he waited to get on the school bus. We asked him if he liked his day at the refuge, he said, "No," quietly. Before we could respond, he turned to look with a huge smile and said, "I loooooooved it!" Ditto for us, too!



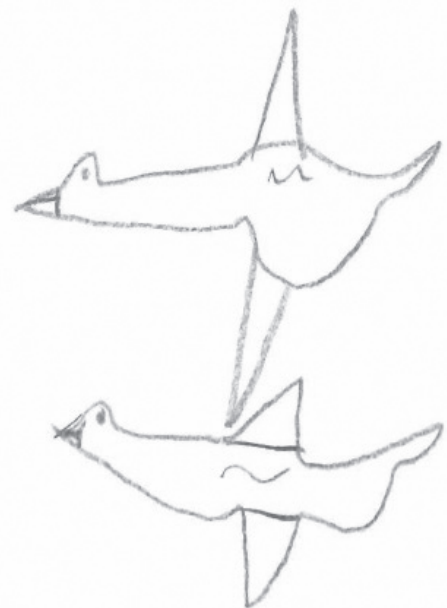
Special thanks to Cathy Ferguson for spearheading the recruitment of a classroom set of snow shoes for the refuge. And thanks to the skills of Ron Jenson for building the perfect rack to hold them all!

# Circle of Life Academy

students reflect on their trip to Tamarac.

Dear Staff,  
I enjoyed taking a hike with Ron. It was interesting to listen to the birds and lessons about scat. I liked watching the beaver movie, because they built a dam and had fun swimming.  
Thank you,  
Monte

Dear Tamarac Volunteers,  
Thank you for sharing your knowledge with us. Thank you Ranger Rick and Dennis for teaching us about weather. And about the cameras. Also, about the mapping of what you see and about clouds and temperature. I like the cameras the most, they were fun.  
Thank you Kelly for teaching us to use the gps, that was so much fun. I got lost, but it was so much fun. I wish we could have stayed longer. Thank you, Kelly, so much.  
Thank you Janice for teaching us about the animal fur. I like the wolf fur the best. And I also liked the math a little bit.  
Thank you, Ron and Denise for taking us on the hike. I like learning about the bulking up. I liked the scat a little bit and the cache.  
Thanks  
Sincerely,  
Laura



Circle of Life students demonstrate how animal move to make hopping or walking tracks.

# GREAT BLUE HERON

## Photo Takes the Grand Prize

Rodney Ludwig of Fargo took the top honors in Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge's 10th Annual Photography Contest. His photo, Great Blue Heron, Mating at Tamarac Rookery, was chosen out of a record number of 163 entries. In addition to 1st, 2nd and 3rd place awards in each category, three special awards were presented. Manager's Choice, selected by refuge manager Neil Powers, went to Justin Lehman for his photo of a golden-winged warbler called Showing off His Bling. The Friends of Tamarac selected Ludwig's grand prize winning photo as their favorite. The public was invited to vote for their favorite at Tamarac's Fall Festival at the Washington Square Mall during

National Wildlife Refuge Week. That People's Choice Award went to Diane Turcotte for her photo called Pelican Reflection.

This year's judges were Brian Basham, photographer for the Detroit Lakes newspapers, Gale Kaas, publisher of the Frazee Forum, and Joe Allen, Native American professional photographer. The contest consists of five categories including Plant Life, Scenic, Nature's Abstract, Recreation, and Wildlife. There were two youth categories as well. There were 54 participants.

The annual photo contest provides Tamarac the opportunity to increase its photo collection used to

promote the refuge and its mission. Photography is a great way for people to connect with nature. All photos may be used in public presentations at the refuge and for community organization presentations. Photos may also be utilized in brochures, exhibits and newspaper. Visitors may view all entries at the visitor center located 9 miles north of Hwy 34 at the junction of County Hwys 26 and 29. Visitor Center Hours are 8:00 am 4:00 pm Monday through Friday. Photos may also be viewed on the Friends of Tamarac website at [www.tamaracfriends.org](http://www.tamaracfriends.org). The annual photo contest is sponsored by the Friends, a nonprofit organization whose mission is to facilitate activities and programs





that interpret, protect and restore the natural and cultural resources of the refuge.

That winning shot: Rodney Ludwig's interest in photography began in 2004 when he purchased a tract of wooded land adjacent to the refuge. The land, which was riddled with bogs, streams and forests, offered a great variety of photographic opportunities. From there he wandered into Tamarac. Because dragonflies were everywhere, they became his first subject. He learned patience and proper technique photographing these tiny jewels.

It was his neighbor who told him of a heron rookery on Tamarac which is less than a mile from their cabin. The mating photos were taken over two weekends. He spent full days completely hidden under a bush next to a beaver dam. The best photos were all taken late one afternoon. Ludwig said it was fascinating to spend the many hours observing mating. He witnessed one heron stealing twigs from surrounding nests. Occasionally, a great "ruckus" would break out as one or two herons would swoop in to interrupt a mating pair. When this loud tussle occurred it sounded like he was visiting Jurassic Park!

Ludwig and his wife visit Tamarac each time they go to their cabin in the woods. He now particularly enjoys winter scenic photography. According to Ludwig, "Although I went on a winter photography trip to Yellowstone and some trips to the north shore, I need to go no further than Tamarac to find great photo opportunities."

# LIST OF WINNERS:

## Wildlife:

1st: Great Blue Heron Mating at Tamarac Rookery by Rodney Ludwig of Fargo

2nd: Great Blue Heron Mating Plumage at Tamarac Rookery by Rodney Ludwig

3rd: March of the Geese by Chelsea Henderson of Fargo

## Plant Life:

1st: Silken Butterfly Dreams by Ria Young of Lake Park

2nd: Copper Colored Leaves by Denise Morris of Fargo

3rd: Susan's Eye by Alyssa Olson of Bejou

## Scenic:

1st: Twisted Sunset by John Dermody of Frazee

2nd: Color Trail by Doug Bellefeuille of Detroit Lakes

3rd: Ablaze with Color by Carolyn Wenger of Detroit Lakes

## Nature's Abstracts:

1st: Spider's Web on Wild Grass by Denise Morris of Fargo

2nd: Tangled by Claudine Grove of Alexandria

3rd: Water in Motion by Dannon Yliniemi of Detroit Lakes

## Recreation:

1st: Time Remembered by Jessica Bolland of Brownnton

2nd: Carol by Diane Turcotte of Detroit Lakes

3rd: Reflections of Tamarac by Gail Marshall of Detroit Lakes

## Youth 12 years old and younger:

1st: Clear Water and a Leaf by Meya Rojas of White Earth

2nd: Things are Looking Up by Tessa Zima of Waubun

3rd: Pearly Everlasting Fuzz by Anna Donner of Ogema

## Youth 13-17 years old:

1st: Compare and Contrast by Bailey Yliniemi of Detroit Lakes

2nd: Susan's Eye by Alyssa Olson of Bejou

3rd: Just Hanging Out by Justine Haugo of Mahnommen

Be sure to view these amazing photos at [www.tamaracfriends.org](http://www.tamaracfriends.org) or the Tamarac NWR facebook page.

# OPEN HOUSE



Weaving Our Way through Tamarac... The Holiday Open House Refuge volunteers and talented weavers, Jeanine and Luverne Ehnert were our featured guests. Jeanine demonstrated weaving with natural fibers on a table-top loom while Luverne was busy making birch bark baskets. Their work was

beautiful! Wendy Roy was our guest Ojibwe artist demonstrating beading techniques and showcasing her jewelry and many other crafts. Children made peanut butter pine cone bird feeders and small woven wall hangings incorporating natural materials including birch bark, cattail leaves, pine needles, and natural dyed yarns. A few visitors "weaved" through the woods on a winter ecology walk led by Janice Bengtson. Linda Hunt sold her homemade jams, jellies and pickles with all proceeds going toward Tamarac's environmental education program. The movie Stranger in the Woods was a big hit with families. Guests were treated to hot apple cider and cookies and tasted some wild rice pilaf. The gift shop offered 20% off everything in the store. Thanks to the Gift Shop committee for planning this wonderful event!

## VOLUNTEER VIBES

By Janice Bengtson, Tamarac Volunteer Coordinator

Volunteer Vibes, 2011 Highlights: During the FY 2011, 169 volunteers donated over 7400 hours of their time. This includes groups as well as individuals.

Kudos to our Resident Volunteers Ken and Patsy Teiken and Rocky and Jan Larson. They contributed a combined effort of nearly 1500 hours! Wow, we had ample coverage at the visitor center on weekends, many maintenance projects were completed, and wonderful tours were presented. Word must be getting out – I have fielded many emails and calls from folks wanting to spend the summer on the refuge.

Volunteers donated over 800 hours to the American Woodcock Study led by Graduate Student Kyle Daly.

Fran Mattson was named Tamarac's Volunteer of the Year.

Denis Mudderman received the National Wildlife Refuge Association Volunteer of the Year.

This past fall, volunteers donated nearly 270 hours towards environmental education. We had over 1000 children here! Thanks to Rick Pechmann, Dave Schneider, Denis Mudderman, Ron Jenson, Tom Hunt, Dave Gunderson, Rick Stich, George Wallman, Jim Olson, Susan Olson, Jeanine Ehnert, Luverne Ehnert, Cathie Ferguson, Connie Carlson, Linda Brockman, Denise Warweg, Fran Mattson, Nancy Brennan, Vonnice Jacobson, and Jim DuBay for all their time, creativity, patience and enthusiasm.

Volunteers conducted the second phase of the National Wildlife Refuge System Visitor Surveys. Over 300 contacts were made during a 2 week

period on various sites on the refuge including lake accesses, the wildlife drive, visitor center and others. We should be receiving a summary of those surveys from the USGS soon.

Wanted: Gift Shop Manager - retail and marketing background, computer skills and knowledge of Point of Sale software is desirable. Photo Contest Committee member- the contest keeps growing! Most work occurs during September and October. Must be detailed oriented with computer skills.



# FRIENDS OF TAMARAC

## FISCAL YEAR 2011

### ACCOMPLISHMENTS

*2011 marked another busy year as Friends continued their efforts to promote respect for our environment through educational programs for youth and the community while in partnership with the Tamarac National Wildlife Refuge.*

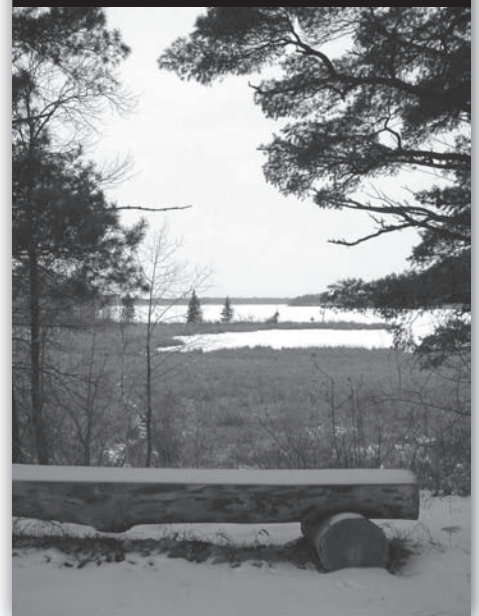
- Sponsored the Fall Festival "Become a Nature Detective" which included a wealth of family activities with attendance of over 600.
- Hosted the first "Toast to Tamarac" fundraising event which included wine tasting, appetizers, a silent auction and games of chance. Over 230 attended.
- Hosted a special "Evening in Tamarac" dinner at the refuge in an effort to build some stronger friendships and educate attendees on plans for the future.
- Once again quarterly newsletters were developed and the mailing list was expanded in an effort to make more connections in the communities touched by Tamarac.
- Sponsored bus transportation for several area kindergarten, third grade and middle school field experiences on the refuge. Friends provided over \$5000 for these bus trips to Tamarac.
- Continued environmental education programs by receiving the second phase of the Connecting Children and Nature grant for an additional \$5,000. Twenty-four video cameras and five GPS units were purchased for the Environmental Education program as part of this grant. IMAC and a mini computer were also purchased.
- WIFI was installed for easier internet access by Friends, volunteers, and summer workers.
- The photo contest had a record number of entries-161. Additional display boards were built. A photo display and award ceremony was located at the Washington Square Mall during National Wildlife Refuge Week..
- Board member, Denis Mudderman, received the national award for volunteer of the year from the National Wildlife Refuge Association for 7,000 hours of volunteer service at Tamarac and an additional 3000 hours at Brazorea Refuge in Texas for a combined total of 10,000 volunteer hours.
- Co-sponsored the 2011 Detroit Lakes Festival of Birds.
- Reached out to the community through a display booth at the Picnic in the Park in Detroit Lakes.
- Continued to help refuge with interpretive programs such as the photo safari, night hike, butterfly workshop, and history tour.
- Friends contributed much of the 7,374 volunteer hours at Tamarac. One thousand seventy four of these were for environmental education.
- Hosted a Christmas Open House.
- Participated in the annual spring clean-up day.

# LETTER TO THE EDITOR

After the Fall Festival we decided to drive the Blackbird Auto Tour before leaving the Refuge and returning to Fargo. The first thing I noticed was the signage along the route.

When we arrived at station nine, the Pine Lake Lookout, I was really surprised! The sign pictured a curious-shaped conifer. The likeness of the same tree I photographed in the summer of 2006. The pine sparked an idea that turned into a story that was published in the 2010 fall issue of Tamarac Highlights, subtitled "Making Sense of a Pine Tree." When we got out of the car, I also noticed the bench dedicated to a deceased Viet Nam veteran needed repairing. I understand that when this veteran came home, he found refuge and peace at this spot from a war that scarred his body and mind.

By George Weatherston,  
Volunteer and Friends Member.



**NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS  
OF TAMARAC NWR**

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*Friends of Tamarac NWR's mission is to  
facilitate activities and programs that  
interpret, protect and restore the natural  
and cultural resources of Tamarac Wildlife  
Refuge.*

Refuge Website:  
[www.fws.gov/midwest/tamarac](http://www.fws.gov/midwest/tamarac)



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Tamarac Photo Contest 2011 People's Choice Winner – Pelican Reflections by Diane Turcotte.