



Dyken Pond-erings

Newsletter of the Friends of the Dyken Pond Center

Issue 114

Promoting environmental awareness in people of all ages

Winter 2012

Dyken Pond Environmental
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The Fine Arts Come To Dyken Pond

In the past the Friends of Dyken Pond have sought to broaden the types of activities available at the Center by securing grants to fund musical performances and workshops. This past year we decided to bring the visual arts to Dyken Pond. Tamara Shoebridge, a local artist with over 25 years of mosaic art experience was contacted and after consulting with Lisa Hoyt, a proposal for a Community Art\$Grant was made. In January 2011 a grant was awarded to the Friends and a "Community Mosaic Art" program was developed. Starting in June a series of workshops were held throughout the summer. Children of all ages and cultural backgrounds, young adults, parents and grandparents worked to create mosaics of various images found in nature using tiles of many shapes and sizes. These served as "backdrops to one of five major images- a fish,

porcupine, turtle, luna moth, and a wood duck. These mosaics were each then placed in a 3' by 2' wooden frame, grouted and then "weatherized". They are to be placed on wooden staked platforms this spring and become permanent fixtures at various locations following 5 themes (forest, pond, lake, butterfly garden, and Dusten Swamp) at the Center. So, be sure to come out to the Center this spring to find the works of arts created by all the talents that participated in the "Community Mosaic Art" Program. Special thanks to Tamara Shoebridge, Lisa and her staff, all those who worked on creating a mosaic, Best Tile Distributors for donating supplies, the Arts Center of the Capital Region, and the Community Art\$ Grant program for making this project possible..

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Coyote Call

by Lee Wilson

In last weeks Coyote Call I mentioned hand feeding birds, so this time I have decided to issue a challenge....

Hand feed a chickadee!

This may be a big one to start off with but I have decided to put it out there now because this is the ideal time of year to do it. First we'll talk about why it's such a good time and then how you might go about doing this. I am going to focus on chickadees because in my experience they are the bird you are most likely to succeed with. You can also find them nearly everywhere.

As you might imagine, winter is a very difficult time to be a small bird. They must consume enormous amounts of food to sustain their rapid metabolism. Chickadees need to eat about 20 times more food in cold weather than during summer, and food is not so easy to come by right now. When temperatures drop to zero degrees chickadees need the energy equivalent of about 250 sunflower seeds per day, that's about 60% of their body weight. What wild foods might the chickadees in your area be eating at the moment? Where I live, the asters that have remained unbroken by snowfall (and tend to remain that way well into the winter) provide an important wild food source. If you've seen an aster seed (they're very small) compare that to a sunflower seed and how many of those must they have to gather? Chickadees have two tactics that help them survive the winter months, one is that they enter controlled hypothermia nightly. They lower their body temperature by about 20 degrees below their daytime temperature of 108. An important note if you're crashing around in the woods at night when it's very cold, small birds are running on a very lean budget of energy, scaring one off of the roost on a sub zero night and causing it to lose the little bit of heat it has trapped in it's feathers could cause it to die before morning. Their other tactic is that they've been storing food throughout the fall and will continue to do so through the winter whenever they find more quality food (like sunflower seeds) than they can eat at one time. Researchers have found that chickadees do in fact remember the locations of thousands of cached seeds. As you begin to really observe them coming and going from a rich food source like a bird feeder or your hand you'll see this behavior in action, as they stuff seeds into any sort of rough bark, into cavities,

sumac tops, anywhere they can find.

On several occasions I've had them hide seeds in my sleeve, my mouth, and twice I've had a chickadee jam a seed right into my nose and hammer it home!

So how do you get started? There are two ways you might try and each have their advantages. If you have a bird feeder, assuming there are chickadees coming to it, go out and put yourself near it. Spend some time just doing that, let the birds get comfortable with you being nearby, it shouldn't take long with chickadees and for the moment you're not really worried about the others. When they don't seem to mind you being say 6 feet from the feeder move a little closer. Keep this up until you're standing right next to it. Now try resting your hand on it. If they'll still come and feed you're pretty much there.

Now try holding out a handful of food for them. Food choice is important. If your feeder is full of sunflower seeds in the hull, why should they risk taking them from your hand? To sweeten the deal try some hulled sunflowers seeds instead. It saves them the work of removing the hulls. Use unsalted and preferably raw. To really tempt them break up some walnut pieces and offer these, walnuts are an even richer fat source and they need all the fat they can get. It may take them a little bit to notice that what you have is better than what's in the feeder but once they do you're all set.

The other method is to choose a spot where you can begin leaving little piles of sunflower seeds or walnuts while the chickadees are around and watching. You want them to notice before the squirrels do. The idea here is that they get used to finding food at that spot and also begin to associate you with it's arrival. From here it's the same, keep getting closer, until they trust you, then begin offering the food in your hand instead of on whatever rock or stump you've been using.

Once they've begun to feed from your hand you won't have to stay at the bird feeder or just one spot in the woods, they will begin to fly right to you. Once they're used to you you'll be able to share the experience with others as well.

Give it a try, be patient it may take a few weeks, let us know how you make out.

Lee Wilson and Tamakoce Wilderness Program,



Newcomb Pond update By Jim Bonesteel

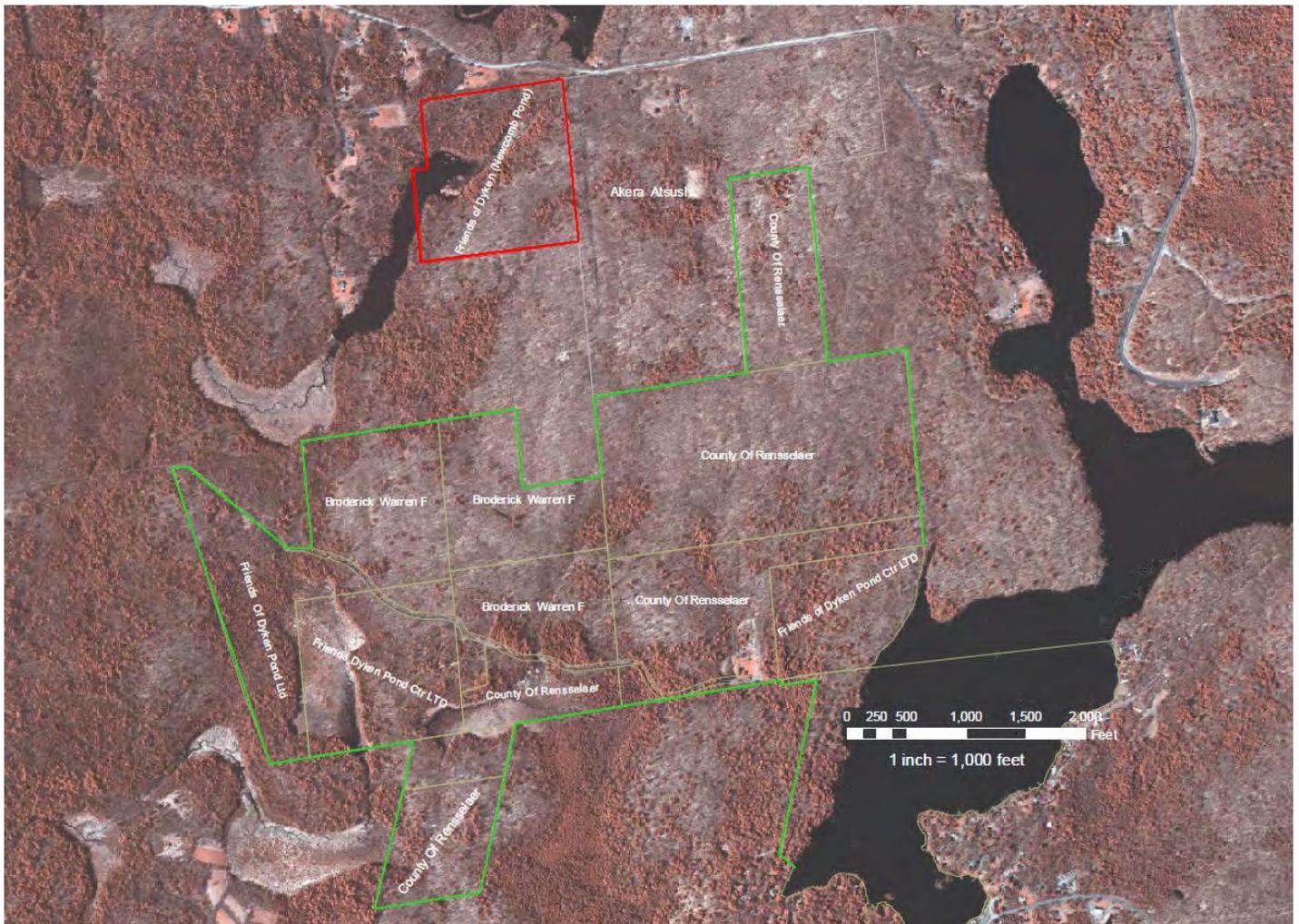
Thank you to all who supported us this fall in the second year of our four year effort to pay for the acquisition of the beautiful Newcomb Pond parcel. Boy, have we come a long way from where we started years ago with our first land acquisition project. We now have a tremendous base of supporters and were able to reach our goal with a single fundraising appeal. We raised just a bit more than we needed and will put those extra funds aside to be used specifically for the Newcomb Pond parcel. We still have two more annual payments of \$5,500 to go.

We plan to have a new trail to the parcel sometime this year and will let you know when it is in place. This trail will cross the land of the Akera family who has graciously granted a permanent right of way easement for the trail to connect the Newcomb Pond parcel to the existing trails of the Dyken Pond Center. We will let you know when the new trail is in place.

The Newcomb Pond parcel has high-quality beech, maple, and hemlock forestland, a 9 acre pond, emergent wetland and forested shrub wetland. The Dyken Pond Center now includes 433 acres of private and public conservation lands. Acquisition of the new parcel also ensures that it remains a component of the open space of the Rensselaer Plateau, home of one of the largest forest blocks in New York State. These large forest tracts provide habitat for wildlife found at the Center that require large areas of unbroken forest, such as fisher, bear, moose, and porcupine.

Thank you again to all who have supported us in our land acquisition and conservation efforts. We couldn't have done it without you. With the experience and support we know we have we will be ready when the next opportunity presents itself.

All the best for 2012. Jim Bonesteel.



Summer Camp Scholarships Available

The Friends of Dyken Pond will sponsor two campers to the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation's summer camps. DEC runs four camps located across New York State. The camps are for boys and girls ages 11 to 17. At DEC environmental education camps, campers experience a balance of environmental education, sportsman education and outdoor fun. Games, lessons and hands-on activities teach kids about forests, water quality and other aspects of nature. Swimming, hiking and canoeing are on the agenda, too, as campers learn new outdoor skills. Campers come away with a life-long passion for nature and a dedication to stewardship of our natural resources. Kids who have an organization sponsor can apply early to the camps ensuring a definite spot in the camp. Cost to attend a DEC camp is \$350. To apply, please send a letter requesting a scholarship. Please tell us why you love the outdoors and why you would like to attend camp. Deadline: February 28, 2012

Scholarships will also be available to the Dyken Pond camp this summer. Applications for this camp can be found on our website.



Upcoming Programs:

Please check our website frequently as we will add guided snowshoe and Nordic ski programs as weather permits.

February 20: School Vacation Family Tracking with Dan Yacobellis. Dan is our resident local tracker. Dan has started researching and monitoring movements of our local native animals and is very knowledgeable on our local ecosystems. Dan brings not only the science of tracking, but also a Native American skill set to the art of tracking. This day is open to adults as well as kids ages 8 and older. A day with Dan will teach you to use your own observations and intuition to understand how to identify tracks and understand the movements of animals. This program is for beginners and more experienced trackers. Space is limited and fills quickly. 9:30 – 12 noon. Pre-registration required by contacting Lisa Hoyt at dykenpond@fairpoint.net. Fee: \$15 per person; second child in a family; \$10. or \$12 members

February 26: Family Tracking with Dan Yacobellis: Same description as Feb. 20 program. 9:30 -3pm

March 8: Full Snow Moon Trek: Call ahead for snow conditions. Ski or snowshoe by the light of the moon. For the adult intermediate skier or snowshoer. Snow shoe rentals available with advanced reservation. Free 7 pm



Friends of the Dyken Pond Center
 End of Year Treasurer's Report
 December 31, 2011

	<u>Dec 31, 11</u>
Account Balances	
Petty Cash	12.23
Sefcu Regular Savings	69.41
Sefcu Preferred Savings	21,381.25
Sefcu Checking	4,814.74
CD - 1119	821.32
Sefcu Credit Card	-30.82
Total	<u>27,068.13</u>

	<u>Jan '00 - Dec 11</u>
Allocated Funds	
Cabin 3 Restoration & Pavilion	919.29
Edward's Endowment	500.00
Equipment/Repairs	209.60
Newcomb Pond Fund	5,210.00
Land Protection Fund	4,112.75
Mosaic Art Grant	381.75
Program Donations	896.98
Program Material Fund	12,202.41
Rough Riders Program	3,721.01
RPA Funds	0.00
Scholarship Fund	0.00
SOLA	0.00
Sylvan Way Lot 13	0.00
Total Allocated Funds	<u>28,153.79</u>

	<u>Jan - Dec</u>
Ordinary Income/Expense	
Income	
43400 · Direct Public Support	
43450 · Individ, Business Contributions	10,232.82
43400 · Direct Public Support - Oth-	8,165.00
Total 43400 · Direct Public Support	<u>18,397.82</u>
45000 · Investments	
45040 · Bank Interest	56.07
Total 45000 · Investments	<u>56.07</u>
46400 · Other Types of Income	
46430 · Miscellaneous Revenue	166.41
Total 46400 · Other Types of Income	<u>166.41</u>
47100 · Fundraising Income	4,114.50
47200 · Program Income	
42750 · Tracking Series	-16.00
47230 · Membership Dues	2,000.00
47260 · SOLA	4,020.25
Total 47200 · Program Income	<u>6,004.25</u>
Total Income	<u>28,739.05</u>

Net Ordinary Income	<u>2,513.82</u>
Net Income	<u>2,513.82</u>

	<u>Jan - Dec</u>
Expense	
00011 · Internal Accounting	0.00
2 · Bank Fees	0.15
60900 · Business Expenses	50.00
62100 · Contract Services	
62110 · Accounting Fees	725.00
62140 · Legal Fees	1,027.25
Total 62100 · Contract Services	<u>1,752.25</u>
62800 · Facilities and Equipment	
62830 · Donated Facilities	100.00
62850 · Property Taxes	9,529.38
62860 · Homeowners Association	695.00
62890 · Rent, Parking, Utilities	105.84
62800 · Facilities and Equipment -	7,162.93
Total 62800 · Facilities and Equipment	<u>17,593.15</u>
65000 · Operations	
65010 · Books, Subscriptions, Ref-	35.00
65020 · Postage, Mailing Service	151.76
65030 · Printing and Copying	135.04
65040 · Supplies	82.80
65060 · Fundraising Expenses	2,779.89
65070 · Program Expenses	3,593.85
65000 · Operations - Other	51.34
Total 65000 · Operations	<u>6,829.68</u>
Total Expense	<u>26,225.23</u>



**Friends of the Dyken Pond
Center**

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Cropseyville, NY 12052**

We're on the web!
www.dykenpond.org



Newcomb Pond, our new property. Dan Yacobellis relaxing during a SOLA hike



Is it spring yet? Look for the very first spring wildflower when the ground is still frozen but daytime temperatures are starting to reach 50 degrees (the end of March at Dyken Pond). The skunk cabbage (*Symplocarpus foetidus*) is a unique wildflower that grows near streams and other wet places. This flower produces heat that melts the frozen ground allowing it to grow and flower. The roundish flower can be seen inside the "spathe" or modified leaves of the plant. If you find one, bend down and smell to see why it is called skunk cabbage!