

Dyken Pond-erings

Newsletter of the Friends of Dyken Pond
and the
Dyken Pond Environmental Education Center

Winter 2015

Friends Launch Land Appeal to Purchase 56 Acres

The Friends of Dyken Pond have committed to protecting Newcomb Pond, a 9-acre pond located north of the Center's property. We completed purchase of a 40-acre parcel on the northern end of Newcomb Pond in the spring of 2014 for \$22,000. A new trail is in place connecting the Center's existing trails to this first Newcomb Pond parcel and trail markers will go up in 2015. See map [here](#).



Hiking past the beaver lodge on New Year's Day

The Friends of Dyken Pond are proud to announce that we are now in contract to purchase an additional 56-acre parcel that will in effect, protect 95% of Newcomb Pond for the future. The 56-acre parcel will connect the existing 40-acre parcel to the red blazed Spring Trail . With our purchase of the Newcomb Pond parcels, the Friends of the Dyken Pond Environmental Center will protect part of a globally significant spruce-northern hardwood forest and state significant hemlock-northern hardwood forest. The 9-acre Newcomb Pond is also part of a regionally important aquatic network of the Rensselaer Plateau. 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.

Read more about this exciting opportunity at www.dykenpond.org

Please make a donation today to help protect this important piece of land for the future. [**DONATE HERE**](#)

A Few Highlights from 2014



Forest Conservation Corp teens hard at work



Volunteers building new raised garden beds on Earth Day



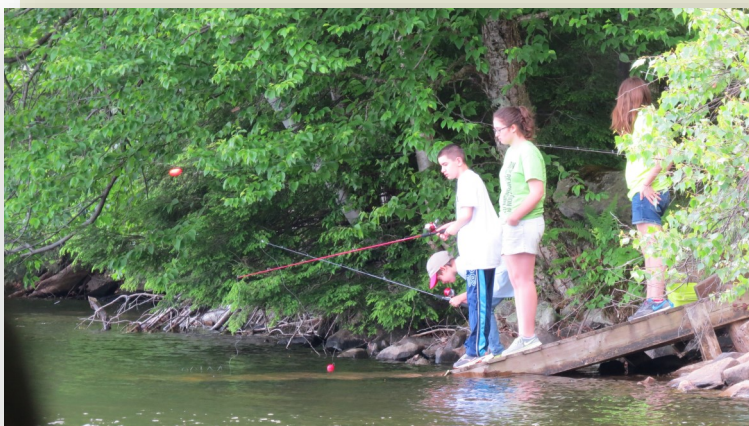
Storyteller Gil Payette at the Yule Log campfire



Hill Hollow Band entertaining us with "Music Under the Trees"



Finding the Yule Log



Fishing at Summer Camp



Board members working on the Strategic Plan

Hello:

This year, there is much excitement and many challenges facing our supporters. As you read in the article on page one, we are in the process of purchasing 56 acres of land that abuts land owned by the Friends and other protected land.

Board feels it is worth the price and challenge considering the location of the property. I know we have asked for your help before but I am asking again. If you can make a contribution, please do so and help us acquire this vital piece of property.

The Friends of Dyken Pond have a vision of the Dyken Pond Center being a leader in environmental education in the Capital District. I am pleased to inform you that we have almost completed a strategic plan for the Friends of Dyken Pond that will address improving the physical property of the Center and enhancing educational programs. This has been a very long process. The Board of Directors works hard to assist the county in maintaining the beauty and integrity of Dyken Pond and the surrounding area. I hope that the details of the strategic plan will be ready when we send out our next newsletter. I want to thank all members of the Board for their diligent work in creating this document together. I also want to thank Jim Prazak for all the work that he has done in helping us put the plan together. Jim even enlisted the assistance of his wife, Jennie, to put the strategic plan in a Powerpoint presentation.

I want to thank all the Friends of Dyken Pond members for their support. We would not be able to function without you.

Leonard E. Tremblay

President of the Board of the Friends of Dyken Pond



President's Message

Friends of Dyken Pond

The cost is considerable but the entire



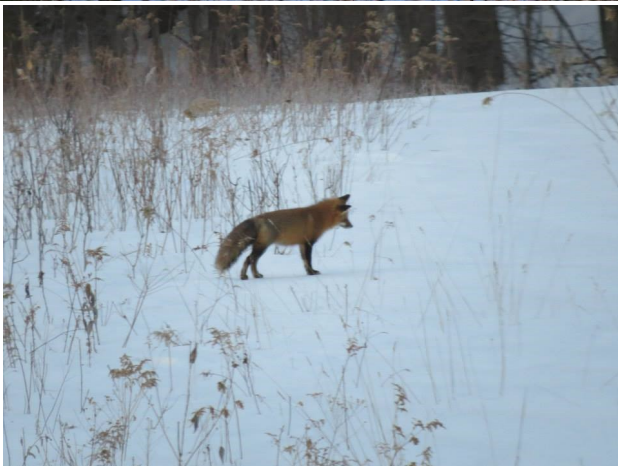
Book Your School Field Trip Today

The Friends began a Field Trip Scholarship pilot program in 2014. Last year, 350 middle school students from Troy High and 75 kindergartners from Poestenkill Elementary were able to enjoy a day at the Center funded in part by this fund.

The Friends of Dyken Pond are pleased to once again offer Field Trip Scholarships to Rensselaer County schools in 2015. Funds are available to help with the cost of transportation and/or trip fees.

Dyken Pond staff will work with you to make your day in the outdoors relevant to your classroom time and an enjoyable and rewarding experience for your students. Contact Lisa Hoyt at dykenpond@fairpoint.net to book a trip today.

Scholarship Guidelines and Applications are available [here](#):



CAN YOU HELP US?

The Friends of Dyken Pond are developing a Strategic Plan for the next three years. We have big plans! Not only are we fundraising for the Newcomb Pond parcel, but we would like to strengthen our programs and capabilities to do more in the future. We are also exploring concepts to build a new interpretive center and enhance indoor space for programs.

We would like you to think of Dyken Pond as YOUR nature center. We welcome your ideas and suggestions. Most importantly, we value your help!

We need volunteers to help with:

- * Fundraising: help with land appeal and future fundraising activities
- * Accounting: assist the treasurer with data entry We could use a person knowledgeable with Quickbooks to help generate reports and information
- * Membership: Help us build our membership! Mailings, data entry, computer work, etc.

Outreach: Work on the newsletter (edit, write articles) Take a traveling display to community events

Trail Work

Share your skills with us! What are your ideas?

Tuesdays with Volunteers

Beginning March 3, Come out to the Center every Tuesday morning for Tuesdays with Volunteers from 9am – 12pm. Meet other volunteers, share a coffee and help out for a few hours.

During the winter, please contact Lisa Hoyt at dykenpond@fairpoint.net to confirm and for snow and road conditions.

Quote

“ It is the life of the crystal, the architect of the flake, the fire of the frost, the soul of the sunbeam. This crisp winter air is full of it.” ~John Burroughs, "Winter Sunshine"



Message from the Director Dyken Pond Environmental Education Center

I would like to express a heartfelt thank you to our Friends of Dyken Pond Board of Directors for taking on the campaign to acquire the new property at Newcomb Pond. We are lucky to have such a great group of volunteers dedicated to this place that so many of us cherish. Land is important. It only comes along once in a while and once it's gone, it may be gone forever. To me, the land is important because it supports what we do at the Center: provide natural lands for people to become immersed in wildness. At the end of a seemingly endless entrance road, visitors emerge with a feeling that they have left the proverbial beaten path. Here it is easy to connect to the sights, sounds and beauty of nature all around. Environmental education is our mission. We strive to prepare students for the future, encourage environmental stewardship, build community and make lasting connections. We served almost 6,000 students in 223 scheduled programs last year. Our programs include school field trips, classroom activities, after school programs, summer nature camps, Forest Conservation Corps teen program, home school programs, healthy lifestyle programs, and working with 4-H and scout groups, libraries, and lake associations. There is a lot of focus today on how environmental educators can incorporate technology into our nature programs. I agree this is important for students, but I will tell you that the most important thing we can offer in all of our programs is that spark when someone feels a sense of wonder and awe at being surrounded by nature. That spark sometimes puts people on a life-long path of learning. The land provides endless opportunities for these participants to feel that connection.

I hope to see you at the Center and remember to always spend time in the outdoors!

Lisa Hoyt, Director

Dyken Pond Environmental Education Center

Staff and Board members are reading:

Braiding Sweetgrass by Robin Wall Kimmerer
Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the
Teachings of Plants.

Tracking and the Art of Seeing How to Read Animal
Tracks and Sign by Paul Rezendes



FOREST BATHING

SCIENCE CONFIRMS WHAT WE ALWAYS KNEW

Shinrin-yoku is a Japanese word that means "taking in the forest atmosphere" or "forest bathing." Shinrin-yoku was developed in Japan during the 1980s and has become a cornerstone of preventive health care and healing in Japanese medicine. Scientific researchers have established a strong body of scientific literature on the health benefits of spending time in a forest. Much of these benefits derive from the fact that trees and other plants release phytoncides, antimicrobial organic compounds that support our own immune system.

The scientifically-proven benefits of Shinrin-yoku include:

- ♦ Boosted immune system functioning
- ♦ Reduced blood pressure
- ♦ Reduced stress
- ♦ Improved mood
- ♦ Increased ability to focus, even in children with ADHD
- ♦ Accelerated recovery from surgery or illness
- ♦ Increased energy level
- ♦ Improved sleep

The idea is to spend relaxed time in the forest using all of your senses to become aware of your surroundings. The time you spend can be relatively short. It is more important to unplug from electronics and concentrate on your five senses and being in the present moment.

Here's a few ideas for your next forest bathing walk:

On a short walk, listen to bird calls. How many birds do you hear? What direction are they in?

Look for interesting textures, forms, colors and shapes

Feel the texture of tree bark, the moss on a rock.

Breathe deeply and slowly for a few minutes. Does the forest smell differently than your home surroundings?

For more information, visit this website: <http://www.shinrin-yoku.org>

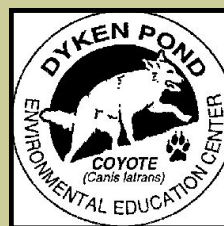
This is a shared newsletter of the:
Dyken Pond Environmental Education Center
475 Dyken Pond Road
Cropseyville, New York 12052
www.dykenpond.org



Contact: Lisa Hoyt
dykenpond@fairpoint.net
518 658-2055

Dyken Pond Environmental Education Center is a Rensselaer County owned and operated public park.

Friends of the Dyken Pond Center
475 Dyken Pond Road
Cropseyville, New York 12052



Contact: Leonard Tremblay
bones0655@aol.com
429-0393

The Friends of Dyken Pond is a 501 (c) (3) not-for-profit organization formed in 1991 to support the Dyken Pond Center.

2015 Summer Camp

Registration is Now Open

Youth ages 6 – 13 can enjoy one or two weeks at a nature day camp.

Give your child the gift of a week in the outdoors.

Explore! Discover! Fun!



Click [here](#) for information

Join Us!

Become a Member

[Click here](#) to become a member today!

As a friend of Dyken Pond you will receive a discount on all programs and special promotions, invitations to special Dyken Pond events, notice of workshops, and our heartfelt thanks!