

APRIL 2018

# MAKING TRACKS

NEWSLETTER OF THE FRIENDS OF THE TUALATIN RIVER NWR

JOYFULLY CONNECTING OUR COMMUNITY WITH THE WONDER OF THE REFUGE



## PRESIDENT'S PERCH

By Don Nelson, President of the Board



What's Up this month?

Congratulations to Sarah! Sarah was our Friends Employee focusing on Habitat Restoration, working under the supervision of Kurt Mykut. She applied for a new position with the Service and was accepted. We congratulate Sarah for fledging to a full-time position with the Service and thank her for all she has done for the Friends while a Friends Employee and previously as a Friends-Refuge Volunteer. Sarah joins other former Friends

Employees that we congratulate as having "fledged" from Friends employment into a full-time career – Trevor, Jen, and all of the others before.

The Bird Festival is coming up quickly – please reserve the date on May 19. Bring your family and friends to see what the Friends and the Service is doing. Free bus transportation from the usual parking lot will be provided (more details later).

Junior Duck Stamp competition was held at the zoo. Photo Society members photographed the event. Thanks to George, Virginia, and others for putting up the display in the Riparian Room. As in years past, we have many talented children and youth that have an artistic flair. Stop in and take a look. If the Riparian Room is closed and not in use, ask at the front desk of the visitor center to have the room opened. Our Visitor Center is a great place to stop in while visiting the refuge. Take a moment to thank the volunteers manning the front counter and thank them for their volunteerism – it's what keeps the center open.

The Friends Strategic Plan is now out of date. The Board is taking steps to scope what needs to be in an updated Strategic Plan. We held a SWOT with Board Members, key volunteers, Friends Employees, and key Service members.

What's a SWOT?

A SWOT is a process-oriented meeting to identify the Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities, and Threats for an organization. Strengths and weaknesses are things that the Friends directly can

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## IN THIS ISSUE

[President's Perch](#)

[Nature's Overlook Store](#)

[Photo Society](#)

## APRIL EVENTS

### Puddle Stompers

Apr 11, 1 - 2:30pm

### Bio-swale work party

Apr.13, noon - 2pm

### 2nd Saturday work party

Apr.14, 8:45am - noon

### Puddle Stompers

Apr. 17, 10-11:30am

### Earth Day at the Refuge

Apr 21, 9am - 3pm

### Native Plant Sale

Apr 21, 9am - 3pm

### Friends Board Meeting

Apr 24, 6:30 pm

control. Weaknesses and opportunities are outside the control but require monitoring and looking for opportunities. A SWOT is used by organizations to inform the Strategic Plan of long-term, strategic directions as well as uncovering shorter term issues that we need to address (tactical, outside the strategic plan). Both Willem and I had experienced SWOTs at our employers before retiring so we were well prepared to use this informative method. It's a really good means of finding out what needs to be addressed in an organization.

Our SWOT meeting was hosted off site by a gracious couple that permitted us to use their rebuilt barn (Thank you Barry and Sue Post!). When I went to view the property with Willem and Ed back in December I admit that I had apprehensions and didn't expect it to work out. A barn meant smelly, dark, musty, damp conditions to me. I've been in many – I dated a Dairy Science M.S. major while working on my MSEE, and yes, I did shovel manure out of stalls on occasion but that's another story. So, I wasn't expecting the completely weatherized rebuilt beautiful barn that the Post's were offering – complete with elevator to second story addressing special needs access, outstanding meeting space with tables and chairs, and a complete kitchen, bar and wine cooler. Wow, what a place! Barry is an accomplished woodworker and has industrial sized woodworking equipment he uses for his commercial enterprise. On the main level he displays a small beautifully crafted sailboat he hand built as well as a museum-worthy hand painted wooden canoe showing scenes from Lewis and Clark's expedition. Upstairs is where we held our SWOT for an entire Saturday in the beginning of March.

Our SWOT accomplished all the goals the Executive Committee of the Friends had set. I thank Cheryl, Tom, Willem, and Eva for their professionalism in managing each of the breakout areas, and all the attendees for the attentiveness to listening to others ideas even if they did not agree to them.

The results of that SWOT were comprehensive and eye-opening. There were a number of strategic level directions, as well as, a few that need to be addressed more quickly than in a 3-5-year strategic plan. Our next steps are known – I will be summarizing and meeting with the writing group (4 board members and one other outside the Friends) to begin the process of writing our new Friends Strategic Plan. We have a small number of immediate reviewers we will use to tune the strategic plan to allow them to suggest updates/rewording, then on to a broad number of reviewers before taking it to the Board for ratification. This process may take quite a number of months so we cannot be certain that we would be ready for the Friends annual meeting in October. We'll have to keep you updated on progress.

But I will say that a couple of other issues at the Board level are taking time away from the Strategic plan. While there are several, one that is important to all of us is increasing communication between Board, Friends, Friends Employees, and Service employees. We are taking beginning steps starting with putting a rotating Friends employee on the Board meeting each month to tell us what is happening. We already had Larry/Eva giving a refuge update. We've added a Sherwood representative as well. We are identifying additional opportunities as well.

So that's it for this month. Keep up the good work volunteering for the Refuge/Friends. And remember that there are many good giving

## SOCIAL MEDIA



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FRIENDS WHILE  
YOU SHOP**



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opportunities as well for badly needed funds (including a reminder that you can give through [smile.amazon.com](https://smile.amazon.com) through a portion of your purchase returned to the Friends. No additional cost to you).

## NATURE'S OVERLOOK STORE

### Duck Stamps

Time is running out to get your 2017-18 Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation Stamps, more commonly referred to as Duck Stamps. Nature's Overlook sells both Duck Stamps (\$25) and Junior Duck Stamps (\$5). If you haven't been collecting Duck Stamps in the past, this is a great time to start. That's because 98% of the proceeds are used to acquire and protect wetland habitat for the National Wildlife Refuge system. You will be doing your part to make sure that Refuges like this one continue to thrive!

### Books

Hello, book lovers – thank you for supporting your Refuge by purchasing books at Nature's Overlook! We've rearranged some of the book categories a little, so things may catch your eye in a fresh way, and we have some new titles in, and many more are in the pipeline -- we can hardly wait to get them out for all of you to see and consider! Happy reading.

Here are a few of the newer things we have for you or your loved ones...

"What's That Bird?" is a beautiful book that one reviewer suggested would be great for adults and children to read together. Check it out.

"Teaming With Microbes" is for organic gardeners and others who are interested in the amazing world of soil organisms and how their presence and interaction are essential to the health of the earth in our garden patch. We got one copy in and it sold right away, so we have a few more available now... gardening season is upon us!

And here's something charming for the little children in your life... "Crinkle, Crinkle, Little Star". It's a book about the constellations, in rhymes that you can sing to the "Twinkle, Twinkle" song, and each page is a different, beautiful color, plus there is an audibly crinkly sound coming from the silvery material in the book's cover... very exciting!

### Wear in the World

*Frank Nusser*

## PHOTO SOCIETY

Our April 5 Photo Society meeting will be held at 7:00 pm in the Riparian Room on the Refuge. There will be a brief talk about why

### NWRA Alerts

[Sign up to receive alerts](#) from the National Wildlife Refuge Association on legislation that impacts the National Wildlife Refuge System.

microalignment of the focus is needed for today's autofocus DSLR cameras to make sharp pictures. This will be followed by hands on microalignment of a lens of 300mm or longer that you bring with you. Note that you should read your camera manual carefully to see if it is capable of microalignment – the manual will cover this.

You will need to bring:

1. Your DSLR that is capable of being microaligned
2. A fully charged battery for your camera
3. Your camera manual
4. A CF, SD, Cfast or XQD1card to use in your camera (it will be reformatted several times. Don't bring one with images you wish to keep)
5. A thumb drive to keep the report and any alignment images you wish to keep
6. A cable release

You should remove any tripod plate from your lens if it isn't Arca Compatible (A Wimberley plate is compatible). You should have knowledge of how to access Live View on your camera.

We have a limited time to perform camera microalignment so we will try to get through as many as possible.

### **May Meeting**

Our May meeting will be the last until September. The Photo Society does not normally meet during June, July and August. We may have some meetups which we will use the email list to notify people.

The May Meeting topic will be the ever-popular photographing the night sky. Some of you were with us in the past two years at meetups to take milky way photographs in Eastern Oregon (at the Solar Eclipse), at Stonehenge, and at Mt. St. Helens. The talk in May will tell you everything you need to know about how to make great pictures of the night sky with just your camera, tripod, and a wide angle lens. We plan on at least one meetup during the summer to photograph the milky way during optimal times.

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