



# Friends of Wild River State Park

# Newsletter



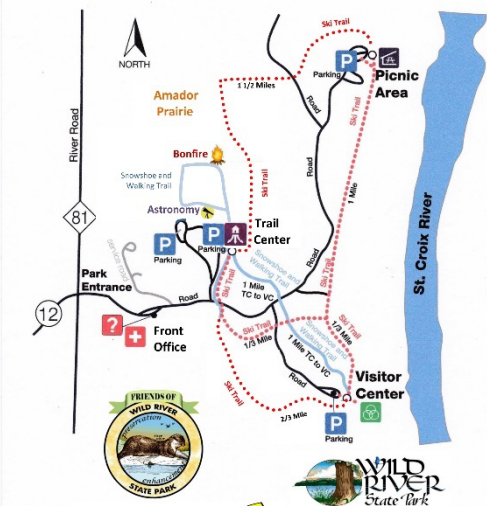
## Candlelight Night Is Back!

After two years of a pandemic pause, the best night of winter is back: Candlelight Night! Walk/snowshoe/ski by candlelight at Wild River State Park on Saturday, February 11, 2023. Drop by any time between 6 and 9 p.m. for skiing, snowshoeing, or hiking as stars twinkle overhead and candles flicker in the snow.

“Candlelight events are a wonderful way to experience state parks in winter,” said Ann Pierce, DNR Parks and Trails director. “On a cold winter’s night, there’s something beautiful about the flicker of candles reflected in the snow – it creates a magical feeling. Being active outside in winter is a great way to beat cabin fever, get some exercise and boost your mood.”

The five miles of trails start at the Trail Center and are suitable for beginner-level skiers, snowshoers, or hikers of all ages. Snowshoes and skis can be rented or checked out

### Wild River State Park Candlelight Night -- MAP



at the park. Call 651-387-4692 in advance to confirm the availability of equipment. An enormous crackling bonfire near the Trail Center will take away the chill. For weather-related event updates, call 651-583-2125 or check visitor



*The bonfire and a nearly full moon from the last Candlelight Night in February 2020.*

alerts at [mndnr.gov/wildriver](http://mndnr.gov/wildriver).

Save time: Get vehicle permits and ski passes online before you go. A vehicle permit is required to enter Minnesota state parks. Although permits are available at the park, visitors can save time by getting one in advance. Visit [mndnr.gov/reservations](http://mndnr.gov/reservations), log in or create an account, then click on “vehicle permit.” Next, select a duration of one-day (\$7) or annual (\$35) and continue as directed. An email will be sent with a permit that can be printed and displayed during park visits.

Those age 16 and older will also need the Great Minnesota Ski Pass if they plan to cross-country ski. The Great Minnesota Ski Pass (\$10 for a day, \$25 for one season or \$70 for three seasons) allows cross-country skiers to access all ski trails in state parks or forests and all grant-in-aid trails. Daily ski passes can be purchased at the park. Ski passes can also be purchased in advance by phone at 888-665-4236 or online at [mndnr.gov/SkiPass](http://mndnr.gov/SkiPass).

## A FWRSP Founder Passes Away



Bill Carlson, one of the three founding members of Friends of Wild River State Park, recently passed away. Gary Noren had this to say about his friend Bill: “Bill was a constant presence at WRSP during our early days in the 1980s and '90s. He was our money man, although we rarely had more than \$300 in our checking account. The photo of Bill at the registration table of our annual meeting/pancake breakfast shows him in a typical pose. Whether we needed someone to staff a booth or set bags and candles for the candlelight ski or assist with event planning, Bill would always volunteer. I enjoyed many hikes, skis, and paddles with Bill. One of my fondest memories of Bill is about his wonderful rice pudding that he would bring to our potlucks, always with an almond hidden somewhere in the pudding. Whoever found the almond would have good luck in the coming year!”



Bill will be greatly missed by his Wild River State Park community and friends. A full obituary can be found at [www.startribune.com/obituaries/detail/0000442475](http://www.startribune.com/obituaries/detail/0000442475).

## Annual Meeting and Pancake Breakfast: March 11

Join us for our annual meeting and pancake breakfast on Saturday, March 11 at Immanuel Lutheran Church in Almelund (37515 Park Trail, enter the church from its Maple Lane entrance). Pancakes, sausage, coffee, and juice will be available starting at 9 a.m., with the meeting to follow at 10 a.m. This year our guest speaker will be St. Croix National Scenic Riverway Superintendent Craig Hansen. We will also share updates on our past year of programming and reports from the Board of Directors. If you're interested in serving on the board, the annual meeting is the time to join! Our annual meeting is also the time to renew your membership. You can do so in person at the meeting, online at [friendsofwildriver.org](http://friendsofwildriver.org), or by mailing the form found at the end of this newsletter. The annual meeting is free and open to all, including nonmembers! Thank you for your support!



*St. Croix National Scenic Riverway  
Superintendent Craig Hansen*

# A Tree in the Forest: Greetings from the New Park Naturalist

Civilization is concerned with nation building. It is proud of its accomplishments. And perhaps it can be. Temples, skyscrapers, fireworks, computers: these are all achievements.

Trees are occupied with soil building. Slower, less glamorous, leaf by leaf, decade by decade. Carbon captured, sequestered, piled a millimeter higher during the life of the tree. Perhaps they are concerned with their saplings' futures, leaving the world the tiniest bit roomier, more nutritious, fuller of beneficial beings than the world they sprouted into. Their parents did the work before them, and their grandparents before that, back to the time of lichens on naked rocks.



It is my time to sprout here at the park, full of soils my ancestors carefully built. I cherish this role, to do my best to add to what has been done before. When I am an old tree, I hope I can look to the ground and notice a subtle difference in what I leave behind. Memories of others who benefitted from my growth, from what I had to offer. The insects eat the leaves, squirrels the acorns, children make connections, smile, leave with wonder, curiosity, and a sense of place. I am here to learn, to grow, and to serve my community. I'm glad you're a part of it.

*Sean Hoppes began his naturalist role at the park in October. He spent much of his life in California, caring for animals at the San Francisco Zoo and being a naturalist at an outdoor school. Six years ago, he moved to Minnesota and learned how important warm clothing can be. He is grateful to be a part of the Wild River ecosystem and learn from its living and non-living beings. When he's not at the park, he's on adventures with his two kids, Orion and Forest, and his wife, Kristen.*

## Otter Trotter 2022

Another fun Otter Trotter 5K was had this past October. More than 50 participants, of all ages, joined us for a fantastic fall day at Wild River State Park. The Otter Trotter 5K is held the second Saturday of October.



*The Otter Trotter is fun for all ages.*

*And they're off!*



*The top finishers of all the age groups.*

Thank you for your  
Membership

### FWRSP Membership Options

- Junior **Friend, 12 and under** – \$5 / year  
*Includes an "Action Guide" and other benefits*
- Individual **Friend** – \$20 / year
- Family **Friend** – \$35 / year
- Silver **Friend** – \$50 / year
- Gold **Friend** – \$100 / year
- Platinum **Friend** – \$250+ / year



Name:			
Address:			
City:			
State:		Zip:	
Email:			

*(We will never sell or trade your email address.)*

**Option 1:** Mail above with check to:  
 Jan Kozlovsky, FWRSP Treasurer  
 (make check out to "Friends of Wild River State Park")  
 17190 410<sup>th</sup> St.  
 North Branch, MN 55056

**Option 2:** Sign-up Online and use your credit card:

[www.FriendsOfWildRiver.org](http://www.FriendsOfWildRiver.org)

*We will never sell or trade your email address*



## Get these dates on your calendar!

Seegwan "Celebration of Spring": Second Saturday of June

St. Croix River Cleanup: Second Saturday of July



Friends of Wild River State Park  
 Marjorie Otto  
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