

Darren Thompson honored at Friend's Arbor Day celebration  
By Lee De Bevoise

What did you do on Arbor Day? A tree was planted on the south shore of the new Friend Lake to honor Darren Thompson as part of the Annual Arbor Day Program. You see, the Friend Federated Garden Club has held a special program on Arbor Day for 25 years.

Beginning with the Flag Ceremony conducted by Boy Scout Troop #270, Friend Mayor Jim Vossler read the official Arbor Day Proclamation (see sidebar), Bob Mead of the Ford-Banka American Legion Post #183 then spoke about Darren Thompson, and the tree was planted in Thompson's honor.

Darren Thompson joined the Marine Corps on Dec. 13, 1987. He spent five years serving on active duty with the Marine Corps. Thompson served in Desert Storm while in the Marines. He received an Honorable Discharge from the Marines in December 1992. Thompson returned to Friend, and in 1993 joined the Marine Corps Reserve. Later, he chose to transfer from the Marine Reserve to the Nebraska Army National Guard, of which Thompson is still a member. In 2003, he spent time on a peacekeeping mission in Bosnia with the Guard. Thompson has been the Commander of the American Legion Post 183 for about eight years, and currently is holding that position. He is also the District 11 Americanism Chairman, and the Saline County Vice Commander for the American Legion. Additionally, Thompson has been a member of the Friend Volunteer Fire Department since 1994.

Why not plan to attend next year's Arbor Day Program in your town? You will not regret it.

#### ***Arbor Day Proclamation***

Whereas, in 1872, J. Sterling Morton proposed to the Nebraska Board of Agriculture that a special day be set aside for the planting of trees, and

Whereas, this holiday, called Arbor Day, was first observed with the planting of more than a million trees in Nebraska, and Arbor Day is now observed throughout the nation and the world, and

Whereas, trees reduce erosion of our precious topsoil by wind and water, cut heating and cooling costs, moderate the temperature, clean the air, produce oxygen and provide habitat for wildlife, and

Whereas, trees are a renewable resource giving us paper, wood for our homes, fuel for our fires and countless other wood products, and

Whereas, trees in our city increase property values, enhance the economic vitality of business areas, and beautify our community, and

Whereas, trees wherever they are planted, are a source of joy and spiritual renewal, and

Whereas, The City of Friend, Nebraska has been recognized as a Tree City USA by The National Arbor Day Foundation and desires to continue its tree-planting practices.

Now, therefore I, James W. Vossler, Mayor of the City of Friend, Nebraska, do hereby proclaim, April 25, 2008 as Arbor Day.