



## **FRIENDS OF RETZER NATURE CENTER SPRING 2017 NEWSLETTER**

After all of our nice weather in February, with the local lakes and ponds opening, with cranes spotted overhead, and the early bulbs starting to peak their leaves through the ground, then came March – in like a LION! All was white with snow. Then came the winds! The birds were again searching for food and visiting the feeders. The great horned owls were calling at night – their eggs already in their nests. We can only hope that March goes out like a lamb, and our little peaks of green can survive.

### ***Annual Meeting & Chili Dinner***

The Friends of Retzer will again hold their Annual Meeting and Chili Dinner on Monday, April 24, 2017 at the Nature Center starting at 6:00 PM. As usual, we will be providing beef and vegetarian chili and beverages. We ask that everyone planning on attending the meeting call the Nature Center and let us know the preference for chili. We also ask that those attending consider bringing a salad or dessert to share. The phone number for the Nature Center is 262-896-8007. Please call on weekdays between 8:15 AM and 4:15 PM You may also email me at [elakar@aol.com](mailto:elakar@aol.com)

We will be showing some slides from past trips during the dinner and will then hold our business meeting. We will have several vacancies for the Board. After dinner, our program for the evening will be a show in the Planetarium. For those of you who have never attended a planetarium show, you are in for a treat.

We hope to see many of our members at this time. If your membership is not current, you may renew it at the Annual Meeting.

And speaking of memberships, we have spent many hours working on a new computer program for memberships. It is finally up and running. Please bear with us, as we send out expiration notices. We hope to be sending out Newsletters via email again very soon...or you may read it on the Friends of Retzer website.

## ***Projects***

The Friends are sponsoring and working with the Waukesha County architect in designing new enclosures for the live animals on display in the nature center. The present enclosures have not been updated for about 15 years and are in need of new material especially for the floors. Also the two snakes need horizontal enclosures as they are not climbing snakes. MK Kelly from the Friends Board has put many hours into this project and has come up with excellent ideas. The areas will be slightly larger, the Plexiglas will be replaced and the backgrounds will be more natural. We are hoping to have these new enclosures finished early this summer.

The Friends of Retzer have offered to be one of the sponsors of the Planetarium as they upgrade to a new state of the art digital system. The Waukesha School Board has to approve this upgrade.

Also, pardon our dust! Part of the Retzer Nature Center is being remodeled to accommodate space for Waukesha recycling and water education programming. In addition, there will be interactive exhibits, and many programs offered for schools, scouts public groups and adults. One large store room (behind the scenes) and some of the Retzer employee spaces are being reconfigured. Also, the reception area is being modified too. This remodeling portion of this project has a targeted completion date of April 2017. The recycling and water programs will be added sometime after.

## ***Native Plant Sale***

The Spring plant sale and workshop is on Saturday, April 29<sup>th</sup> from 9:00 am to 1:00pm. You may order plants in advance via online services at [waukeshacountyparks.com](http://waukeshacountyparks.com). Compost bins and rain barrels with diverter kits are also available.

## ***Earth Week - April 18 thru 22"***

Earth Week Celebrations sponsored by the Friends of Retzer include a program on Raptors by the Wildlife in Need Center on 4/19, plus other happening during the week. On earth Day, April 22nd, there will be bird hikes, planetarium shows, trees and wildflower hikes, a concert by Tom Pease, family and children activities and crafts, and much more. Plan to attend with the whole family. Earth Week activities are free events all week long.

Spring is bursting out all over. Join us.

Elaine Haberichter

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