



FRIENDS *of Retzer*

FRIENDS OF RETZER NATURE CENTER

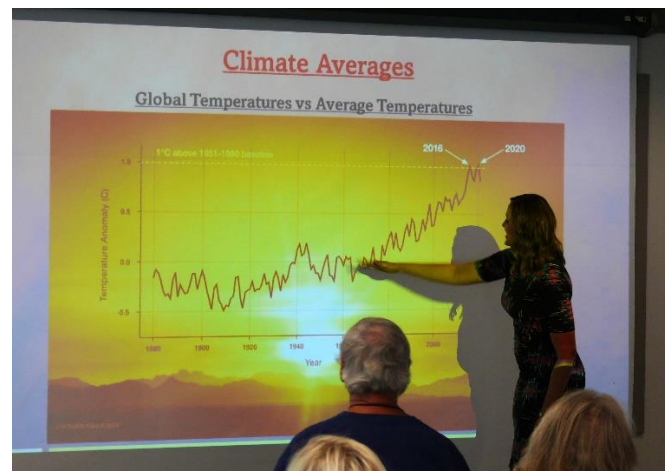
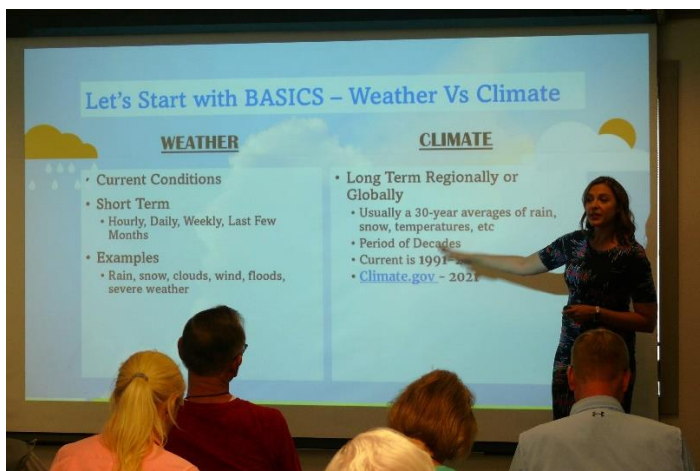
FALL, 2023 NEWSLETTER

COMING SOON to a favorite nature center near you...

Retzer Nature Center is celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2024, and our Friends organization can't wait to make it a memorable year! Nature center staff are currently planning commemorative events for the spring equinox next March, for Earth Week in April, for the summer solstice in June, and for the autumnal equinox in September. Meanwhile, our Board is exploring fundraising ideas aimed at supporting construction of a long awaited and much needed outdoor classroom for the benefit of future generations to come. Stay tuned for more information on both our website and Facebook page regarding ways one might support a fundraising appeal, volunteer time at a planned event, or simply embrace an opportunity to be part of the celebration.

Recent Events

- The Wisconsin Master Naturalist Training Workshop was hosted by Retzer staff the week of July 17-22. Over 20 participants attended. Presentation topics during the week included: the glacial geology of Waukesha County; contemporary weather and climate change; regional prairie, oak, and wetland plant communities; invasive species identification and management; freshwater resources and aquatic life; butterflies and moths; dragonflies and damselflies; snakes, bats, and pollinators. Field trips included stops at Pewaukee Lake, Fox River Park, Lapham Peak, UWM-Waukesha's Field Station, Carroll University's Prairie Springs Environmental Education Center, and the City of Waukesha's Clean Water Plant.



WISN-Milwaukee broadcast meteorologist Lindsey Slater addressed several relevant atmospheric science topics.

- For the second year, Retzer Nature Center hosted a summer beer garden on Friday, August 18 and Saturday, August 19. Raised Grain Brewing Co. provided the craft beer and Trampers Oven provided the pizza. It was a great way to bring people together on the nature center's beautiful grounds.



Cold beer, hot pizza, and (thankfully) mild, sunny summer weather attracted a friendly crowd on both nights.



Friends of Retzer Board members manned an information table at the Discovery Trail entrance to the popular play area.



Folks enjoyed gathering and picnicking on the west lawn and in the parking area woods.

- The Waukesha County Green Team's Sustainability Fair was held on Saturday, August 26. The theme of the event was, "Empowered Community – Brighter Future." The fair showcased over 50 exhibitors and featured informative presentations on sustainable yards, sustainable businesses, community tree planting, native plant and rain garden management, and recycling. The Horwitz-DeRemer Planetarium also offered free shows on Alaska's unique natural landscapes and the impact of climate change on the region's flora and fauna.

■ Retzer’s annual *Apple Harvest Festival* was held on Saturday, September 23, and attracted a huge crowd (1679 carloads to be exact) on a warm, sunny fall day. Over 30 vendors showcased their artistic wares, and festival volunteers handled everything from Apple Market sales of tasty apple pies (thanks WCTC chefs!) to Passport Expedition programming along the Discovery Trail. Refreshments were provided by Delafield Brewhaus, musical entertainment was provided by JC Ayer, planetarium shows were offered every half hour, visitor center displays showcased the interactive recycling area and beautiful lobby displays, and Scarecrow Lane drew hikers away from the crowd to the nature center’s quieter forest and prairie trails. The Friends Board organized a fundraising gift raffle, children’s book sale (thanks Kathy Strazishar), used book sale (thanks Marlin Johnson), and miscellaneous products sale, all of which tallied over \$2100 for future support of nature center initiatives. As always, the event was sponsored by our Friends organization, and entrance was free for Friends members.



Artisan vendors lined the parking lot; the popular Apple Market featured tree-picked apples, pies and cider; volunteers included students from Mukwonago High School.



Delafield Brewhaus provided refreshments and JC Ayer the music.



Board members Kathy Arts, Cathy Ward and Carrie Frantz managed the Friends’ gift raffle.



Elaine Haberichter monitored Friends' sales of Indian corn; MK Kelly and Kathy Strazishar managed the Discovery Trail Reading Corner, and numerous volunteers read to Passport seeking kids.



In "The Pines" Activity area: Carrie Frantz offered insights on bats; Larry Kascht and Jerry Strom chatted up pollinators; and kids busied themselves at numerous craft tables.



Scarecrow Lane was an annual event favorite for visitors heading out to enjoy a walk on the wild side.

[Upcoming Activities](#)

- Science Fest is slated for Saturday, November 4, from 11-2pm, and is co-sponsored with Generac. The event connects people with science, technology, engineering and math in fun and exciting ways. This year's theme is *Now You See It – Now You Don't* (topics like bird migration, glacial landscapes and climate change) and will feature interactive activities for all ages to enjoy. Admission is free.
- Once again, Retzer Nature Center's 50th Anniversary is coming in 2024! Look for special event activities beginning with a spring equinox program highlighting John and Florence Retzer on March 19 and a summer solstice program highlighting the past and future of Retzer Nature Center on June 21-22.

For more information on all upcoming spring events, please reference the following link

www.waukesha.gov/landandparks/park-system/find-a-park/retzer-nature-center/specialevents/

Mission Statement of the Friends of Retzer Nature Center

The mission of the Friends of Retzer Nature Center shall be to promote and support activities and initiatives which enhance the goals of natural resource conservation and environmental education and involve the community, through financial support and volunteer work, in the growth and improvement of programs and facilities at Retzer Nature Center.

FRIENDS BOARD UPDATE: CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS

Class of 2024:

David Block, Vice President, newsletter editor
Steve Martin, Legal Adviser
Mary Kay Kelly, Co-Treasurer, RTN
Dave Zemanovic, RTN
Almuth Soffee, Treasurer, RTN

Class of 2025:

Larry Kascht, President
Elaine Haberichter, RTN, President emeritus
Kathy Arts, Secretary
Carrie Frantz, RTN
Cathy Ward, RTN

Class of 2026:

Andrea Kornowski, Digital Communications
Susan Bosman
Jim Kavemeier
Kathy Strazishar, RTN

Membership Renewal Reminder

As always, if you need to renew your Friends of Retzer membership, you may do so as follows: a) mail your check to Retzer Nature Center; b) stop at the nature center's front desk; or c) pay online via our website: www.FriendsofRetzer.org. Your membership truly helps support vital projects and programs at the Nature Center, and provides discount benefits for such events as Apple Harvest Festival and Wild Winter Nights.

<u>Membership Levels:</u>	\$ 30.00 "Individual"	\$ 40.00 "Family"	\$ 50.00 "Contributor"
	\$ 75.00 "Supporter"	\$100.00 "Sustainer"	\$250.00 "Benefactor"

FYI: Stay up-to-date with what is going on at Retzer Nature Center, plus help us meet our 2022 goal of getting 500+ likes on Facebook, by [liking our page](#) and sharing it with friends. Thanks for your support!

Newsletter editor: David Block David@FriendsOfRetzer.org