



FRIENDS *of Retzer*

FRIENDS OF RETZER NATURE CENTER

FALL, 2024 NEWSLETTER

Upcoming Nature Center Events

- WINTER JANBOREE at RETZER: The event is set for Saturday, January 18 (11am-2pm) and will include snowshoeing, guided hikes, a warming campfire, planetarium shows and Mama D's hot drinks and treats.
- WILD WINTER NIGHT at RETZER: Our first sponsored event of the year will be held on Thursday, February 13 (6pm-8:30pm) with focus on a wildlife winter survival "Coping With Cold" theme.
- SPRING WORKSHOP is slated for Saturday, March 13 (9am-noon), with presentations addressing backyard birding, nature gardening, and other themes.

For more information on this upcoming event, please reference the following link when it is posted in January.
www.waukeshacounty.gov/landandparks/park-system/find-a-park/retzer-nature-center/specialevents/

Recent Events

- WAUKESHA COUNTY PARKS SUMMER BEER GARDEN: Retzer Nature Center hosted the event on the evenings of Friday, August 23 and Saturday, August 24. Mother Nature cooperated this time with perfect weather on both days. *Raised Grain Brewery* offered an assortment of brews, while Trampers Pizza and Dahlia's Bistro provided additional food truck entrees. Back by popular demand, *JRyanTrio* provided an entertaining jazz performance each night and the planetarium offered a dazzling laser show inside. Meanwhile, Friends of Retzer and 50th Anniversary Committee volunteers conducted a 50/50 cash raffle and sold commemorative items and s'mores to raise funds for the proposed *Outdoor Classroom and Shelter*.



Beer garden beverages and food truck munchies drew visitors to the nature center each evening.



(left) Friends volunteers sold 50th Anniversary commemorative items and conducted a 50/50 fundraising raffle
 (right) JRyanTrio drew an enthusiastic crowd of beer garden visitors

- APPLE HARVEST FESTIVAL:** Retzer’s Friends-sponsored annual event was held on September 21 and attracted a large crowd on a warm, humid final day of summer. Highlights included the Apple Market, live music by JC Ayer, the Delafield Brewhaus beer garden, 29 arts & crafts vendors, 11 “Partners in the Pines” exhibitors, a Passport Expedition along the Discovery Trail, the annual Scarecrow Lane competition, and a special presentation in the Horwitz-DeRemer Planetarium. Friends Board members and volunteers organized the annual “Reading Corner” book sale outdoors plus a “theme basket” silent auction and raffle activity indoors. Over \$3000 was raised at the event.



Over two dozen craft vendors greeted visitors entering the event grounds



Apple Fest entertainment included AC Ayer’s music in the parking lot, the kids’ learning and play area along the Discovery Trail, ... and Salley holding Retzer’s “animal ambassador” corn snake.



Friends members Kathy and Joe Strazishar volunteered at the Reading Corner; Paul and Rita Keber at the Friends info table



The silent auction and gift raffle raised \$2600 for our proposed Outdoor Shelter project

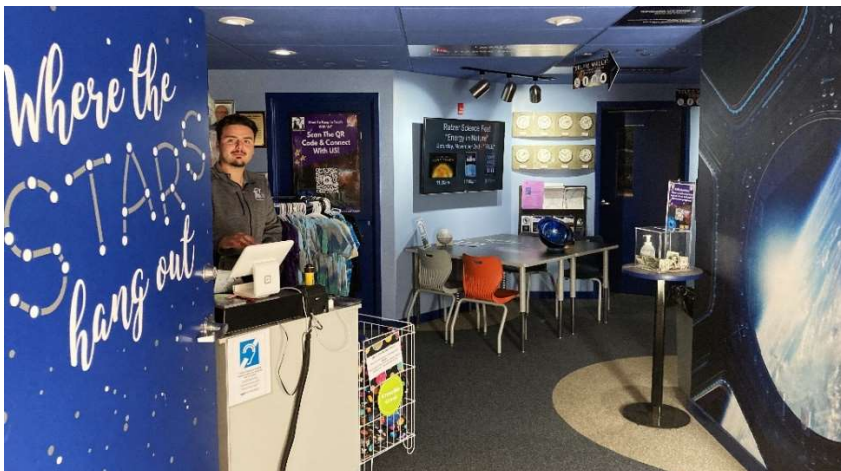
- **SCIENCE FEST:** Co-sponsored by the Friends of Retzer and Generac Corporation, this year's event was held on Saturday, November 2 and drew a crowd of over 300 visitors. Hands-on activities and presentations embraced an "Energy in Nature" theme, including such topics as wind energy, solar energy, food chain webs and pyramids, water and land resources, aquatic invasives, and rain gardens. A demonstration by *FIRST* Robotics was held in the new nature lab, hourly planetarium shows ("Sunstruck" and others) were offered indoors, and guided hikes ("Energy in Water" and others) were led outdoors. Thanks to the co-sponsors, event admission was free for all.



*(left) Vice President Kathy Arts and President Andi Kornowski shared news of membership benefits and funded Retzer projects
(right) Board members MK Kelly and Kathy Strazishar oversaw children's books and 50th Anniversary commemorative item sales*



Young learners were wowed by hands-on demos of wind energy, aquatic invasives, and other interesting topics



Horwitz-DeRemer Planetarium shows and local robotics team demonstrations were a unique visitor draw

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 MEMBERS

Class of 2027:

Helen Holtz
Mary Kay Kelly, Co-Treasurer, RTN
Almuth Soffee, Treasurer, RTN
Meg Shad

Class of 2025:

Larry Kascht, President emeritus
Kathy Arts, Vice President
Cathy Ward, RTN
Jenny Carter

Class of 2026:

Andrea Kornowski, President and Digital Communications Coordinator
Susan Bosman
Kathy Strazishar, RTN
David Block, newsletter editor

FYI: Stay up-to-date with what is going on at Retzer Nature Center, plus help us meet our 2025 goal of increasing our reach by liking us on [Facebook](#) or [Instagram](#) and sharing our posts with friends. Thanks for your support!

Membership Renewal Update

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 (S14 W28167 Madison St. Waukesha, WI 53188)
- b) stop at the nature center's front desk with check payment
- c) pay online via our website: www.FriendsofRetzer.org using a credit card or PayPal.

Your membership truly helps support vital projects and programs at Retzer Nature Center.

Changes to Memberships in 2025

- Memberships will now run annually from **January 1st - December 31st** of that year. We are hopeful this change will help us to streamline the membership renewal process.
- In partnership and collaboration with Waukesha County Parks, we are excited to offer some additional membership benefits to the **“Supporter,” “Sustainer,” and “Benefactor”** membership levels.
- We will be sending out membership renewals in the coming weeks for those of you who are up for renewal, and we hope that you will continue supporting at your current membership level or might consider supporting at a higher level with the introduction of some of our new benefits.
- Please see an outline of our current membership benefits below:

2025 MEMBERSHIP BENEFITS	Friends of Retzer Nature Center - Membership Levels *NEW: Memberships run January 1st - December 31st *All memberships are for the immediate household			
	Friend \$50	Supporter \$100	Sustainer \$250	Benefactor \$500+
FREE admission to <i>Friends of Retzer Sponsored Events</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wild Winter Night (\$5/person value) - Earth Week (FREE) - Science Fest (FREE) - Apple Harvest Fest (\$10/carload value) 	✓	✓	✓	✓
Access to exclusive Members-Only events <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Annual Meeting (April) - Guest Speakers - Guided Hikes - Local Field Trips 	✓	✓	✓	✓
Subscription to quarterly email newsletter	✓	✓	✓	✓
Waukesha County Park Annual Membership (\$40 value) *valid for the membership holder only		✓	✓	✓
Access to 3 FREE Retzer Nature Center Programs (\$5 value each = \$15 value) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Wee Wonders - Outdoor Classroom - Adult Programs *Programs must be registered for in person at Retzer Nature Center.		✓	✓	✓
Invitation to participate in one "Behind the Scenes" at the Nature Center Experience (Offered 2 dates/year)			✓	✓
Recognition in Newsletter/ Annual Report			✓	✓