



FRIENDS *of Retzer*

FRIENDS OF RETZER NATURE CENTER

SUMMER, 2022 NEWSLETTER

Recent Activity

■ ***(April 18-23) Earth Week at Retzer:***

Local photographer Eddee Daniel kicked off a week of activity with a wonderful slide presentation on parks, nature preserves and other unique green spaces in SE Wisconsin, and underscored the privilege of living between two true national treasures – Lake Michigan and the National Ice Age Trail. You can find out more about his “Preserve Our Parks” initiative at: www.awealthofnature.org.

The nature center’s *Earth Week Finale Celebration* on Saturday included several Discovery Trail attractions, a story hike, ongoing recycling exhibit presentations and planetarium shows, and “Mission Possible” garlic mustard removal volunteer activity. Cool, sunny weather was ideal for the event.



*Left : Kathy, Elaine and Chris pose at the Friends info table behind Rayna and “Okee” the corn snake
Right: Jerry oversees one of the educational exhibits set up along Discovery Trail*



Left: Ella and Joanna greet folks at the Green Team booth Right: Jill and Shawn assist at the Bridges Library booth



“Mission Possible” Waukesha North Eco-Warriors (left) and Rose Glen Pack 63 Scouts attacked garlic mustard stands



A mallard couple feed quietly in a pond adjacent to the boardwalk



Left: a garter snake forages through creekside undergrowth Right: a wild turkey grabs a snack beneath the seed feeder

- ***(April 25) Friends of Retzer Annual Membership Meeting and Chili Supper:*** Thanks to all who were able to join the Friends Board for a bowl of chili, salad, cake and Costa Rican coffee as we met in person for our annual membership meeting after two years of Covid separation. Our featured speaker was Waukesha County Landscape Architect Jason Wilke, who provided us with a slide update on Retzer’s ambitious Discovery Trail project and led us on a short walk around the paved trail. In addition to a summary of the past year’s activities and business transactions, we thanked retiring colleague Andi Kornowski for her years of official service to the Board, and welcomed newly elected member Carrie Frantz to a three-year term. Carrie is a 2006 graduate of Carroll College who has volunteered as a Citizen Scientist and Water Action advocate since 2019, and became a Retzer Master Naturalist in 2021. Her energy and enthusiasm for outdoor volunteering is infectious. Carrie currently resides in Waukesha with her husband and two kids.



Landscape Architect Jason Wilke was featured presenter at the annual meeting on Discovery Trail progress



Completed Discovery Trail attractions include the Eagle Nest sitting area (hewn ash logs) and Insect Exploration Station

- **(April 2) “Kohls Cares” Arbor Day Tree Planting Event:** Thanks to Julia Robson and her citizen science team for organizing a wonderful tree planting activity at Minooka County Park. Over three dozen Kohls volunteers participated in planting 550 hardwood trees at the field site.





■ **Discovery Trail Phase 2 Award and Ribbon Cutting Ceremony:** At its May meeting, the Friends Board unanimously approved a donation of \$16,000 to Retzer Nature Center for completion of the Wingspan and Spiders Web activity sites. A ribbon cutting ceremony was held on June 22 to celebrate the opening of several new trail amenities and initiate promotion of Phase 3 plans. Speakers at the event included Waukesha Park System Manager Rebecca Mattano, County Executive Paul Farrow, Friends of Retzer President Larry Kascht, and a spokesman for the Waukesha Rotary Club. Retzer Nature Center Supervisor Janet Barthel (below right, in red) was granted the ribbon cutting honor.



(left to right: Rebecca Mattano, Paul Farrow and Larry Kascht were among those who addressed ceremony attendees)



(The Friends set up an information table for attending guests, and were prominently featured on the trail's donor board)

- **Membership Survey Feedback:** Thanks to Digital Media Coordinator Andi Kornowski for compiling a quick, informative sample survey of members who attended our recent annual meeting. To summarize...
 1. Regarding how membership benefits are utilized, over two-thirds mentioned support for the annual meeting, receipt of the quarterly newsletter, and free attendance at Apple Harvest Festival as primary benefits; about half identified members-only events (like sponsored natural history trips or last summer's *Night of Nostalgia* gathering) as added benefits; and a smaller number identified free attendance at Wild Winter Night, Science Fest, and Earth Week events as important membership benefits.
 2. Regarding how our Friends organization allocates funds, most viewed Apple Harvest Festival, educational programming, and citizen science initiatives at Retzer as key funding priorities, whereas funding for school program sponsorships and international partnerships was deemed less important.
 3. Regarding ideas for increasing the membership base, several good ideas were shared: targeting young families, adjacent neighborhoods, and parents whose children visit the nature center on school outings; partnering with related organizations; and promoting membership at sporting goods stores, recreation centers, and retirement facilities.
 4. Regarding ideas for increasing financial support for nature center projects, several good ideas were shared as well: marketing to environmental consulting firms in the area; offering more appeal-related social events (e.g. a summer concert or wine and cheese tasting event); and organizing a run/walk event.

- **July Beer Garden Event:** Retzer Nature Center will be hosting a *Raised Grain* Pop-Up Beer Garden on the center's west pavilion from 4-9pm on Friday, July 8, and 3-9pm on Saturday, July 9. The casual event will feature seven tap beers, a hard seltzer, and a food truck pizza selection. The planetarium will also offer laser shows for \$5. It's a great opportunity for neighbors and friends to meet and greet one another!

FRIENDS BOARD UPDATE: CURRENT BOARD MEMBERS

Class of 2023:

Lyle Drier, Treasurer
 Beverly Dunk, Correspondence Secretary
 Gerald Strom, RTN, President emeritus
 Kathy Strazishar, RTN

Class of 2025:

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

Class of 2024:

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



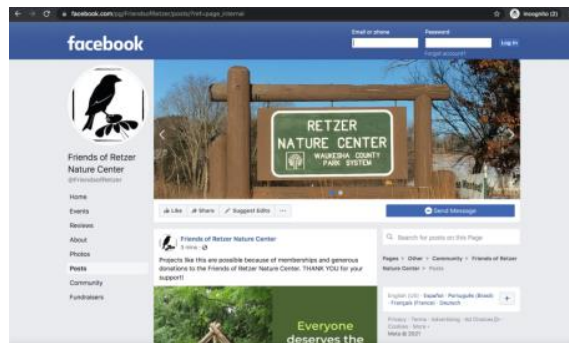
Annual meeting dessert cake... membership has its (sweet) privileges!

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.

Membership Levels: \$ 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 prepared by: David Block, Vice President David@FriendsofRetzer.org