



# FRIENDS *of Retzer*

## FRIENDS OF RETZER NATURE CENTER

### SPRING, 2024 NEWSLETTER

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

Retzer Nature Center is celebrating its 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary in 2024, and our Friends organization can't wait to make it a memorable year! Commemorative events include a summer solstice celebration (Saturday, June 22) and a fall gala affair (Saturday, October 26). Meanwhile, our Board is exploring a 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary fundraising campaign focused on construction of a long-awaited, much-needed, Friends-funded *Outdoor Classroom and Shelter* which will benefit nature center patrons for 50 years to come. Yay!

Stay tuned for more information on both our website and Facebook page regarding ways we as Friends members can support this fundraising cause, volunteer time at a planned event, and simply embrace an opportunity to join us in celebrating Retzer's heralded half-century history.

### Upcoming Nature Center Events

- Retzer's Spring Workshop is set for Saturday, March 16 from 9am-noon. Invited presenters will address topics and issues relating to plant composting.
- EARTH WEEK: Commemorative activities are planned at Retzer on Saturday, April 20 from 10am-1pm, including a birding hike, adventure hike and Story Hike on the nature center trails. In addition, free viewings in the Horwitz-DeRemer Planetarium of "Our Violent Planet" will be shown. Those interested in participating in the "Volunteer Clean Up Workday" can register on the nature center's website.
- Retzer's 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Summer Solstice Event is slated for Saturday, June 22 from 3pm-9pm. Tentative plans include a tree planting ceremony at 3pm, followed by tours of the grounds and the Retzer homestead. Free food and music entertainment will be included.

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

[www.waukesha.gov/landandparks/park-system/find-a-park/retzer-nature-center/specialevents/](http://www.waukesha.gov/landandparks/park-system/find-a-park/retzer-nature-center/specialevents/)

- **SAVE THE DATE...** for our **FRIENDS of RETZER ANNUAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING and DINNER** We're hosting our annual membership meeting on Monday evening, April 22. That's Earth Day! A buffet chili dinner will be served at 5:30pm, followed by our Friends business meeting at 6:15pm and featured presentation at 7:15pm. You'll have a chance to learn about our *Outdoor Classroom and Shelter* plan and donate to our "\$50 for 50yrs" project funding appeal. Drawings for free commemorative gifts will also be held. Look for an RSVP reminder in early April so that we can make dinner prep plans accordingly. Should be fun!

## *Recent Events*

- Retzer's annual Science Fest was held on Saturday, November 4 and co-sponsored by the Friends of Retzer and Generac Corporation. The event theme was *Now You See It – Now You Don't* (topics like bird migration, glacial landscapes and climate change). An estimated 300 folks attended the event. Admission was free for members.



*Larry Kascht and MK Kelly shared bits of wisdom at the Friends information table; Kathy Strazishar sold children's books.*



*Indoor hands-on activities included walking sticks, cockroaches and an endangered native turtle.*

- Waukesha's JanBoree celebration at Retzer was held on Saturday, January 20 and included opportunities for residents to go snowshoeing or take a self-guided scavenger hunt on several of the nature center's scenic trails. The weather was very chilly, but sunny skies and warm spirits prevailed.



*Kathy Strazishar, MK Kelly and Larry Kascht chill out with special JanBoree guests; weather was perfect for hiking and snowshoeing*

- Wild Winter Night was hosted by Retzer on Thursday, February 29. “Owls of Wisconsin” was the Learning Session theme, and “Cosmic Cycles” the planetarium show. Clear, crisp weather -- but absolutely no snow – eliminated any snowshoe use, so the candlelight trail was graciously extended to a half-mile length for night hikers. Mama D’s had hot drinks and sweet treats for sale in the Community Room, where several interactive activities for kids were held. Over 200 people attended the family-friendly event.



Left: RTN Cathy Ward investigated the contents of owl scat.



Right: RTNs Lisa Conley and Diane Wilke-Zemanovic demonstrated the specific function of various bird beaks.

### 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  
 Almuth Soffee, Treasurer, RTN

#### Class of 2025:

Larry Kascht, President  
 Elaine Haberichter, RTN, President emeritus  
 Kathy Arts, Secretary  
 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:

- mail your check to Retzer Nature Center (S14 W28167 Madison St. Waukesha, WI 53188)
- stop at the nature center’s front desk with check payment
- pay online via our website: [www.FriendsofRetzer.org](http://www.FriendsofRetzer.org) using a credit card or PayPal.

Your membership truly helps support vital projects and programs at Retzer Nature Center, and provides discount benefits for such events as Apple Harvest Festival and Wild Winter Nights.

Membership Levels: \$ 50.00 “General Membership (individual or household) \$ 75.00 “Contributor”  
 \$ 100.00 “Supporter” \$250.00 “Sustainer” \$500.00 “Benefactor”

FYI: Stay up-to-date with what is going on at Retzer Nature Center, plus help us meet our 2024 goal of getting 500+ likes on Facebook, by [liking our page](#) and sharing it with friends. Thanks for your support!