



FRIENDS *of Retzer*

2025

Annual Report



Presented on: 05/02/2026



FRIENDS *of Retzer*

Mission Statement

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.



Board Members

Board Officers

Kathy Arts — President
Andi Kornowski — Vice President
Almuth Soffee — Treasurer
Jenny Carter — Recording Secretary

Board Members

Mary Kay Kelly
David Block
Kathy Strazishar
Cathy Ward
Susan Bosman
Meg Shad
Helen Holtz
Amy White
Joe Strazishar



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2025 Accomplishments



The Retzer Garden

Work is well underway on the Retzer Gardens project, which is transforming the existing Children's Garden into a space that better supports programs, improves visitor flow, and creates a welcoming experience for people of all ages and abilities. The design thoughtfully builds on the existing landscape while strengthening pathways and enhancing accessibility throughout the garden. Crews and staff have made significant progress, including installing new pathways, placing stone steppers, preparing planting beds, and spreading native seed. Planting is expected to begin in mid-May 2026, with project completion anticipated in June 2026. This updated space will provide new opportunities for hands-on learning, exploration, and connection with nature for the many children, families, and visitors who enjoy Retzer each year.



Beer Garden

The August 2025 Beer Garden was a fun and welcoming evening that brought our community together to enjoy music, nature, and great company at Retzer Nature Center. The event raised \$2,390 in support of Friends of Retzer, helping fund programs and initiatives that connect people to the outdoors.

We are especially grateful to North Pillar Brewing Co for their partnership and generous \$350 donation, the J. Ryan Trio for donating their time and talent, and Marcus Hillside Cinema for providing popcorn. Their support helped create a memorable event that strengthened community connections while supporting Retzer's future.



Discovery Lab

The Friends of Retzer Nature Center provided funding for the construction of the Discovery Lab. The Discovery Lab was completed and opened for programming in February of 2025. The lab allows for additional educational and event space. It was designed with flexibility in mind to accommodate a variety of group needs.

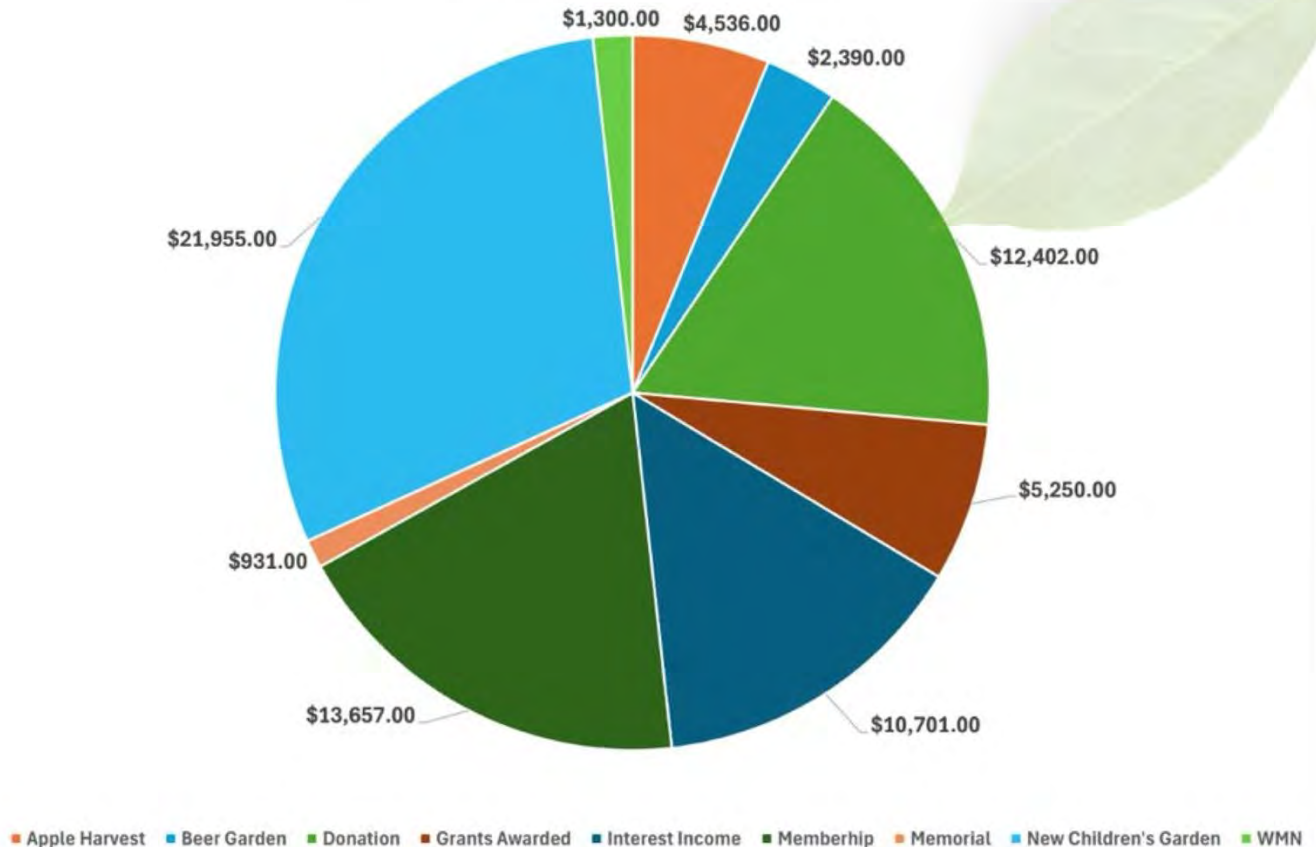




FRIENDS *of Retzer*

Financial Highlights *

Friends of Retzer - Income 2025



In 2025, Friends of Retzer brought in approximately \$73,000 in revenue through a mix of community support, events, and dedicated funding initiatives. The largest share of income came from the New Children's Garden, reflecting strong enthusiasm for investing in meaningful experiences for children and families at Retzer.

Memberships and individual donations also made up a significant portion of income, showing continued commitment from our supporters. Additional revenue from interest income, grants, and special events like Apple Harvest and the Beer Garden helped round out a balanced and stable funding picture.

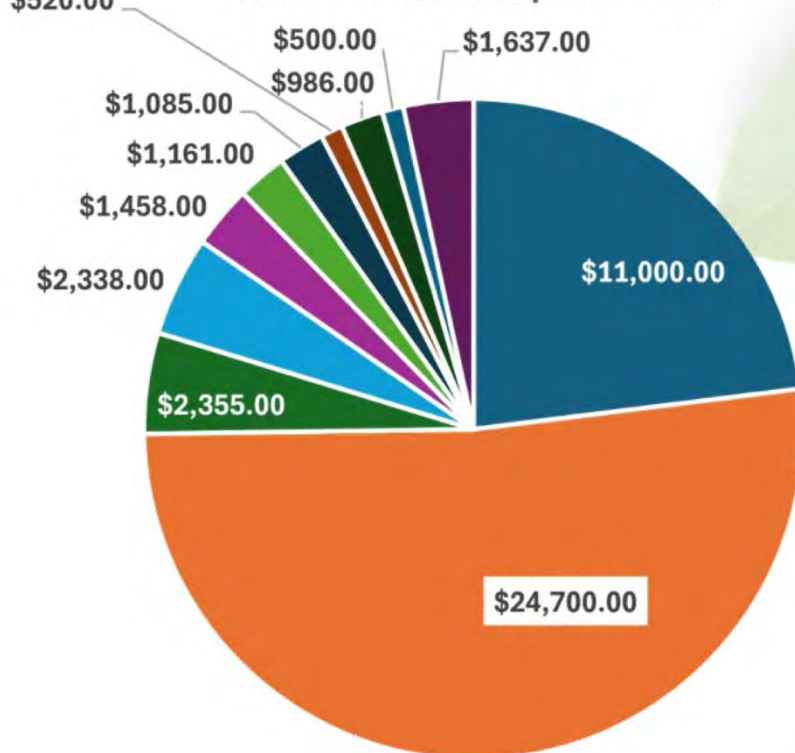
Overall, 2025 income highlights the generosity of our community and the success of efforts to support both everyday programming and special projects that enhance the Retzer experience.

Financial Highlights *



FRIENDS *of Retzer*

Friend's of Retzer Expenses 2025



- Event Sponsorship
- Retzer Garden
- Science Lab
- Communication
- Fundraising Expenses
- Wisconsin Master
- Insurance
- Bird Club
- Member Benefits
- Educational Programs
- Misc

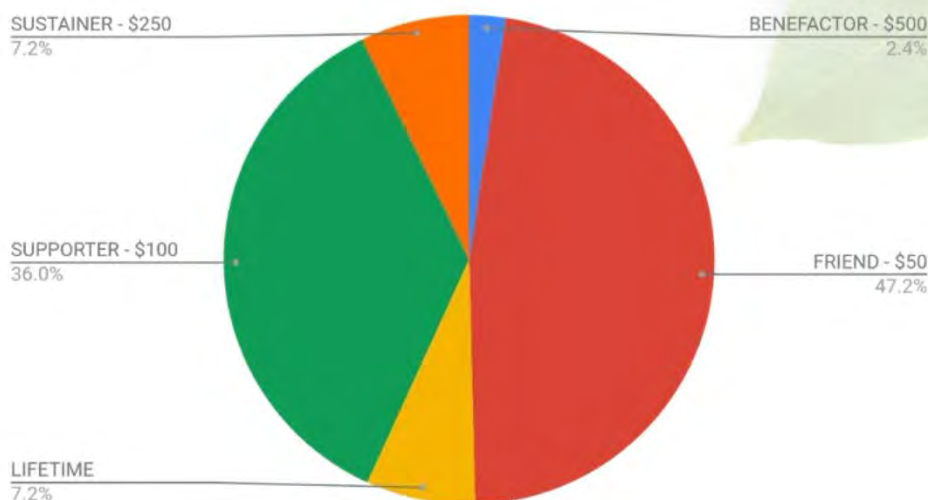
In 2025, Friends of Retzer invested \$47,740 to support the growth and accessibility of Retzer Nature Center, with a strong focus on enhancing the Retzer Gardens and bringing the community together through events. Additional funding supported educational programming, partnerships, and the behind-the-scenes operations that keep everything running smoothly. Together, these investments reflect our ongoing commitment to conservation, learning, and creating meaningful outdoor experiences for all.



FRIENDS *of Retzer*

Friends * Membership

2025 Membership Level Information



128 Total Members

Member Listing

59 Friends Level Members (\$50)

45 Support Level Members (\$100)

Benefactors

John and Sandra Bolger
Anonymous
Emily and George Lorenz

Sustainers

Gail and Paul Taylor
David Culp
Jane Delzer and Ken Finkel
Ellen and Gerald Demers
Mary Kay Kelly
Almuth Soffee
Thomas Giese and Beth Handrich-Giese
Rebecca Lynn and Jeffrey Zuhlke
Mary T. Schoultz



FRIENDS *of Retzer*

Thank You



Thank you to our members, donors, volunteers, partners, and community supporters who make the work of Friends of Retzer possible. Your generosity, time, and enthusiasm help create meaningful experiences in nature for children, families, and lifelong learners.

Because of your support, we are able to enhance programs, improve spaces like the Children's Garden, and continue growing opportunities for people to connect with the outdoors at Retzer Nature Center.

We are grateful to be part of such a caring and committed community, and we look forward to another year of learning and exploration.

