



FRIENDS *of Retzer*

Summer 2026 | Newsletter

Upcoming Events

Raise a Glass for Nature at the Friends of Retzer Beer Garden!

Friday, July 31, 4-8pm

Retzer Nature Center

Rain Date: Saturday, August 1

Join us for an evening of local craft beer from North Pillar Brewing Co., delicious food, live music, planetarium shows, and family-friendly fun at Retzer Nature Center.

Stay after sunset for a special Moths & Bats program with local experts. Free parking and a 50/50 raffle will also be available.

See the included flyer for additional details. We hope to see you there!



Limited-Edition Beer Mugs Available

Take home a commemorative 14 oz. Friends of Retzer/North Pillar Brewing Co. beer mug for just \$5 (beer sold separately).

Use your mug during the Beer Garden and receive \$1 off every beer refill. It's a great keepsake from the event and a fun way to support the Friends of Retzer.

Available while supplies last.

Retzer Garden Dedication

Friday, July 31, 1:30-3:00pm

Join us as we celebrate the official opening and dedication of the beautiful new Retzer Garden!

Dedication remarks begin at 1:45 p.m.

Following the ceremony, guests are invited to enjoy light refreshments and explore the garden at their own pace.

This new space has transformed the area surrounding the nature center into a welcoming, accessible garden for visitors of all ages. We are grateful to the many donors, volunteers, partners, and staff whose vision and dedication made this project possible.

We hope you'll join us for this special celebration!

Retzer Garden Update

The new Retzer Garden took a major step forward on May 15 thanks to an incredible team of volunteers.

During Baird Gives Back Week, volunteers from Baird, Retzer Teaching Naturalists, Retzer Gardeners, the Ben Goss Bird Club, and Waukesha County Parks and Land Use staff planted 1,200 native plants in just 10 hours.

Thank you to our donors, volunteers, Louisa, our landscape designer, and the Retzer Nature Center/Parks and Land Use team for making this beautiful new garden possible!



FOR Field Trip | Discover Gwenyn Hill Farm

Friends of Retzer members are invited to an upcoming visit to Gwenyn Hill Farm later this August, where we'll enjoy a guided tour of this beautiful working farm and learn about its commitment to land stewardship, sustainability, and education.

Retzer Nature Center and Gwenyn Hill Farm share a common vision of caring for the land while inspiring future generations to appreciate and protect the natural world.

More information, including the date, time and registration details, will be shared soon.

Watch your email for your invitation—we hope you'll join us!

Save the Date: Apple Harvest Fest
Saturday, September 19, 2026,
from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

Mark your calendar for Saturday, September 19, 2026, from 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., as Apple Harvest Fest returns to Retzer!



Plans are coming together for another exciting day filled with family-friendly activities, the Apple Market, arts and crafts vendors, delicious food, live entertainment, a beer garden, and planetarium shows.

We hope to see you there!

New Board Member Spotlight

Ed Roeger

Ed joined the board to learn more about Retzer Nature Center and help support its continued growth and community engagement. Since moving to Waukesha a few years ago, he and his family have enjoyed Retzer's peaceful hiking trails, educational programs, and outdoor events.

With a background in economic research and data analysis, Ed looks forward to contributing to the Membership Committee and the redevelopment of the Friends of Retzer website. Outside of Retzer, he enjoys kayaking, biking, gardening, traveling throughout Wisconsin, and exploring communities across the state.

When asked about his favorite place at Retzer, Ed shared that he especially enjoys morning walks through the tallgrass prairie wildflowers and winter sunsets after a fresh snowfall.



Welcome to the board, Ed!

Dawn Carr



Dawn has been involved with Retzer Nature Center for more than 25 years. She began as a Retzer Teaching Naturalist under the guidance of Larry Kascht, leading educational programs for school groups and sharing her love of nature with countless students. She also previously served as Recording Secretary for the Friends of Retzer Board.

Over the years, Dawn has remained an active volunteer, contributing to the Children's Garden project and completing the Wisconsin Master Naturalist program under Janet Barthel. She looks forward to helping advance new initiatives, including the Retzer Garden, while supporting the Friends' ongoing programs and activities.

We're thrilled to welcome Dawn back to the board and look forward to her continued dedication to Retzer.

Karen Olivas

Karen brings more than 35 years of corporate leadership experience in communications, training, and operational management. As a Wisconsin Master Naturalist and Wisconsin Bat Ambassador, she volunteers as a citizen scientist for numerous wildlife census projects throughout the state and county.

Karen is excited to combine her professional experience with her passion for wildlife conservation as she helps support the Friends of Retzer and its mission.

Outside of volunteering, Karen enjoys reading, creating art, kayaking, biking, and hiking. She also leads a women's book club and organizes quarterly Craft Camps for adults.

We're delighted to have Karen on the board and look forward to the enthusiasm and expertise she'll bring to the organization.



Reminder! Membership Renewal

If you haven't renewed your Friends of Retzer membership yet, it's not too late! You can renew in one of the following ways:

- a) Mail your check to Retzer Nature Center attention: Friends of Retzer Nature Center.
- b) Pay online via our website using a credit card or PayPal.
- c) Stop at the nature center's front desk with check payment .

Thank you for your continued support! Your membership supports vital projects and programs at Retzer Nature Center.

Mission Statement of The Friends of Retzer

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.

Your general donation supports over 450 acres of natural habitat and educational facilities at Retzer Nature Center. All donations are tax-deductible – and any amount is always welcome.

