



WAWASEE AREA CONSERVANCY FOUNDATION

Spring 2018



Seasonal Bulletin
Recent work and watershed improvements
Earth Day Fun
Lake Talk and Eats - Farm Tour
WACF event calendar



Our mission statement continues

Dr. Joan Szynal
WACF Chair

This is my 8th year on the board of WACF. I continue to be amazed at how the organization grows. But with this growth we always revert back to our mission statement:

To protect, preserve, and enhance the Lake Wawasee Area Watershed for present and future generations.

We struggle with our mission at times and how to best utilize our funds. Do we purchase more wetlands? Some properties become available that are key to controlling our watershed. But if the finances are not there for purchase we may miss an opportunity that may never present itself again. Do we spend funds on mitigating the streams that enter the lake? Being here in the spring is quite an eye opener!! A major rainfall in April or May and it is unfortunately still too easy to see the sediment flowing into

the lake. We recently completed a Hot Spot Study on the watershed looking at areas that need help – areas of excessive erosion allowing phosphorus and nitrogen or sediment to reach the lake. But again, maybe the funding is not there. Or the landowner is not interested in working on them. Do we spend funds on education? We need to instill in our children an appreciation of the outdoors and this precious lake. We need to instill in the adults the knowledge to protect it. From putting in glacial stones in front of seawalls to planting native plants in yards to not churning up the lake bottom when we ski and board. Do we spend funds on invasive treatment? Unfortunately, this problem will never vanish but always requires allocation of resources to identify, plan and treat weeds and algae. Do we spend funds on water testing? This is always a dilemma. Why test the streams that come into

Wawasee? Well, it would lead us to “hot spots” to correct erosion. But some of this we can do by looking at the streams. Do we spend the money on testing or mitigating? I am reminded of the Geico commercial when the man goes to the dentist and the “dental monitor” finds a cavity but can’t fix it. The commercial ends with the announcer saying, “Why monitor a problem if you don’t fix it?”

If we had limitless funding and donations all these areas would be addressed more thoroughly. It is amazing how much has been accomplished already and the monitoring that WACF does is showing improvement to water quality. But I think WACF and its many volunteers have done a phenomenal job with this balancing act. Of being good stewards of your donations.... “to protect, preserve and enhance our watershed for present and future generations.”

Memorials & Honorariums

Memorials and honorarium gifts have a lasting impact, like the lives and achievements they recognize. All memorial and honorarium gifts are directed to the WACF Endowment Fund establishing a layer of stability under the Conservancy and ensuring it's strong and lasting future. Interest income from the Endowment Fund is used for ongoing Conservancy expenses, operating costs and programs.

Memorials

Helen Alderfer
Marianne Beesley
Hurleen Blumenthal
Tim Borne
Brandon Ryan Brown
Raymond H. Butler
Karen Call
Kim and Stephen Conrad
Mary Coyle
David Culp Jr.
David Culp Sr.
Ed Dahm
Gus Dueshmg
Stan Fox
Bob Garver

David Grandstaff
Danny Griffith
Beery C. Hage
Andrew Hardie
John Heidt
Dick Henderson
Frank Hirschman
Kyle Hollon
Rosalyn Howell
William Hurst
Robert and Rosalyn Jones
Keith E. Juday
Helen Just
Carol Knafel
John Knapp



A note from the Executive Director

Heather Harwood
WACF Executive Director

Lake Friends – Keeping some of the most important wetlands and lands pristine is the focus of WACF’s work. By protecting land around our lakes, we enjoy the beauty of the watershed, clear water and important wildlife habitats. There are many ways we work to keep our lakes clean. Erosion control projects, education, acquisition of important land, and of course our volunteers that help in many ways to further our mission.

Since 1991, WACF has grown from a few dedicated volunteers to over 500 friends supporting the work of WACF. Over the last twenty seven years the original 2 acres have grown to over 900 acres protected in 51 properties. Our organization has grown with

you and we are happy to be involved in protecting a healthy lake life.

We are grateful for the visionaries in 1991 and their work getting WACF established. Now you and I are taking the helm and doing our part to continue the important vision and work. Can’t imagine anything more important.

WACF’s Mission: to protect, preserve, and enhance the Lake Wawasee Area Watershed for present and future generations.

We thank you for your donations and support. We can’t do it without you!

With gratitude,
Heather Harwood
info@wacf.com

Join us for WACF’s Annual Celebration Breakfast Saturday, July 28th at 10:30 at the Ruddell Pavilion

Cover photo 'Heron in flight'
by Larry Baumgardt

Jackie Lanford
Charles Lantz
Don Law
John Leonard
John Long
Dr. George Lukemeyer
Carolyn Riddell
McDonald
Robert W. Mulhall
Nancy Myers
Robert Nelson
Marjorie Newcomer
Patty Norman
Don Osborne
Sherry Ott

Verne Petry
George and
Margaret Poole
Dick Reasner
George Rhetts
Jan Rolland
Edwin Rogers
Douglas Schmahl
Dean and Wynn
Schwalm
John Smith
John Spickelmier
Paul Stine
Dr. Mark Stinson
James Thompson

Linda Tillman
Betty Louise Tracy
Sarah and John A.
Wallace
Doug Walls
Malcom and Shirley
Williams
Jay Sheppard and
Amanda Wilson
Kenneth H. Woodruff
John and Marie
Zimmerman
*Deceased Morrison
Island Association
members*

Honorariums

Doug and Carolyn Anderson
Donn Baird
John Bearss - on Father's Day
Susie Cronin
Irv Deister - In honor of Susie's
90th birthday
Jane Finch - In honor of Irv's
birthday.
Bill and Connie Harris - In honor
of Jane's birthday
Rick and Carolyn McClure
Bob and Nancy Myers - In honor
of Rick and Carolyn's 40th
wedding anniversary
Paul and Linda Phillabaum
Bob and Sandy McNary
Pam Schumm
Mr. & Mrs. Steve Springer
Mr. & Mrs. Kerry Sullivan

Education Update

What an AMAZING Earth Day Festival we had on April 21. Hundreds of visitors arrived throughout the day to visit and participate in 20 different activities. We had wakeboards and paddleboards, balancing boards and skateboards; photography challenges; seed ball making; nesting box demonstrations; watershed information; a plastics-in-the-water display; archery for kids of all ages; fly tying and duck call making; soil texture comparisons and geo-cachers; duck decoys and fish spear decoys for sale as well as metal sculptures; rain barrel making instructions and demonstrations and free give-aways! We thank all who participated and helped make this second annual festival a huge success! Watch our Facebook page and website for information about next year's festival – you won't want to miss out on the fun.

The Education Team has been hard at work this winter preparing and presenting Discover the WACF to three great organizations – Wawasee Kiwanis, Syracuse Lions, and Kosciusko County Board of Realtors. We would be happy to give your organization a presentation about our watershed and our

mission. Simply contact education@wacf.com and we will get together with a date. These programs typically are presented January through March but could take place at any time.

Spring programs at WACF include our FIRST Bird Watching Walk on May 5 at 8AM. Docent Kaz Szynal (you will remember him as a WMS science teacher) will lead the walk. Bring your own binoculars and a bird identification book if desired. Dress appropriately for the weather and our trails may be a bit wet. We will also host WCSC 1st and 6th graders for field trips during the month of May. First graders learn about adaptations that organisms have to allow them to survive in nature. Sixth graders learn about what factors limit where organisms can live including alien species and native plants.

Our Lake Talk and Eats series kicks off with



Pam Schumm
Education Committee Chair



the June 2 Native Plant Sale. Aaron Stump from Indiana Wildlife will give an introduction about how to incorporate natives into your landscape. Vendors will be available with plants for you to purchase. On July 7 we have our Annual Bug Catch! Children of all ages enjoy getting in the water trying their hand at catching water invertebrates. Bring the kids and grandkids. We will supply the nets, you bring the water shoes! Aug. 1 is the Farm Tour to learn how farming and conservation can go hand in hand. Registration is required and space is limited. Contact info@wacf.com to make your free reservation. And Aug. 18 is our Lily Pad Cruise. This year our theme is WACF – our mission, our history and water testing. It's still only \$10 but reservations are a MUST! Please contact info@wacf.com for reservations.

Wetland Adventures will enter its third year of programming. These morning programs

continue to grow each year and children come back excited to learn about nature. Each week they will participate in different crafts, experiments and activities to learn about nature and wetlands. This year we will be hosting youth on Wednesday mornings from 9 – 11. These activities are geared to pre-school and elementary children and a parent to accompany them on each activity including a canoe scavenger hunt! For your comfort, please provide your own life jackets. These are FREE programs, no registration required, held July 11, 18 and 25. We look forward to seeing you there!



WACF is excited to announce a new partnership with Dr. Jerry Sweeten



Dr. Sweeten is a professor of biology at Manchester University. He has a long history of partnerships with county, state and federal agencies to plan and implement mitigation projects to decrease nutrient loads (Nitrogen and Phosphorus) into the Eel River which flows just south of this area through North Manchester. A group from WACF was fortunate to be able to visit sites of his stream projects. He has used 24 hour stream sampling gauges and modified shore banks through the use of buffer grasses and native plants to diminish runoff. We were particularly impressed with his ability to make these modifications a "win-win" for land owners and those

vested in improved water quality.

Dr. Sweeten has also served in a consulting capacity for water quality projects throughout the southern and central areas of Indiana.

These types of projects are exactly what WACF has done at Turkey Creek, Dillon Creek, Ritter Branch, Village Lake Stream, and Martin Creek. We welcome his assistance in continuing to improve our water quality. His consulting company, Ecosystems Connections Institute (ECI), also includes Herb Manifold who is a graduate of the Environmental Studies Program.

Please plan to attend our Annual Lake Celebration Saturday July 28th to welcome Dr. Sweeten and his associates.



News from the Ecology Committee



Beth Morris
WACF Ecology Chair

Over the winter, we were busy expanding our network of technical specialists who can provide our volunteers with expertise and insight in fields such as limnology

(the study of biological, chemical and physical features of lakes and other bodies of fresh water), wetlands assessment practices and methods for developing partnerships over the long term with producers in our watershed.

Several members of the Ecology Committee took a field trip to North Manchester to see an agricultural drainage ditch improvement project completed by Dr. Jerry Sweeten and Herb Manifold, limnologists from Manchester University. The concepts employed in remediating the ditch are state-of-the art as is the automatic water quality sampling system that monitors the water in the ditch at the site of improvement and further downstream. The in-line sampling apparatus could be applied to several inflows into our watershed as we seek real time information on the effects of major rain events on the deposit of nutrients and sediment into our lakes. Dr. Sweeten will retire from Manchester this month, and he and Herb are starting a consulting firm that will be leveraged to help us develop a comprehensive watershed monitoring plan.

In December, I had the opportunity to attend a lecture by Dr. David Baker, a well-known and retired limnologist from Heidelberg University who has researched and published extensively

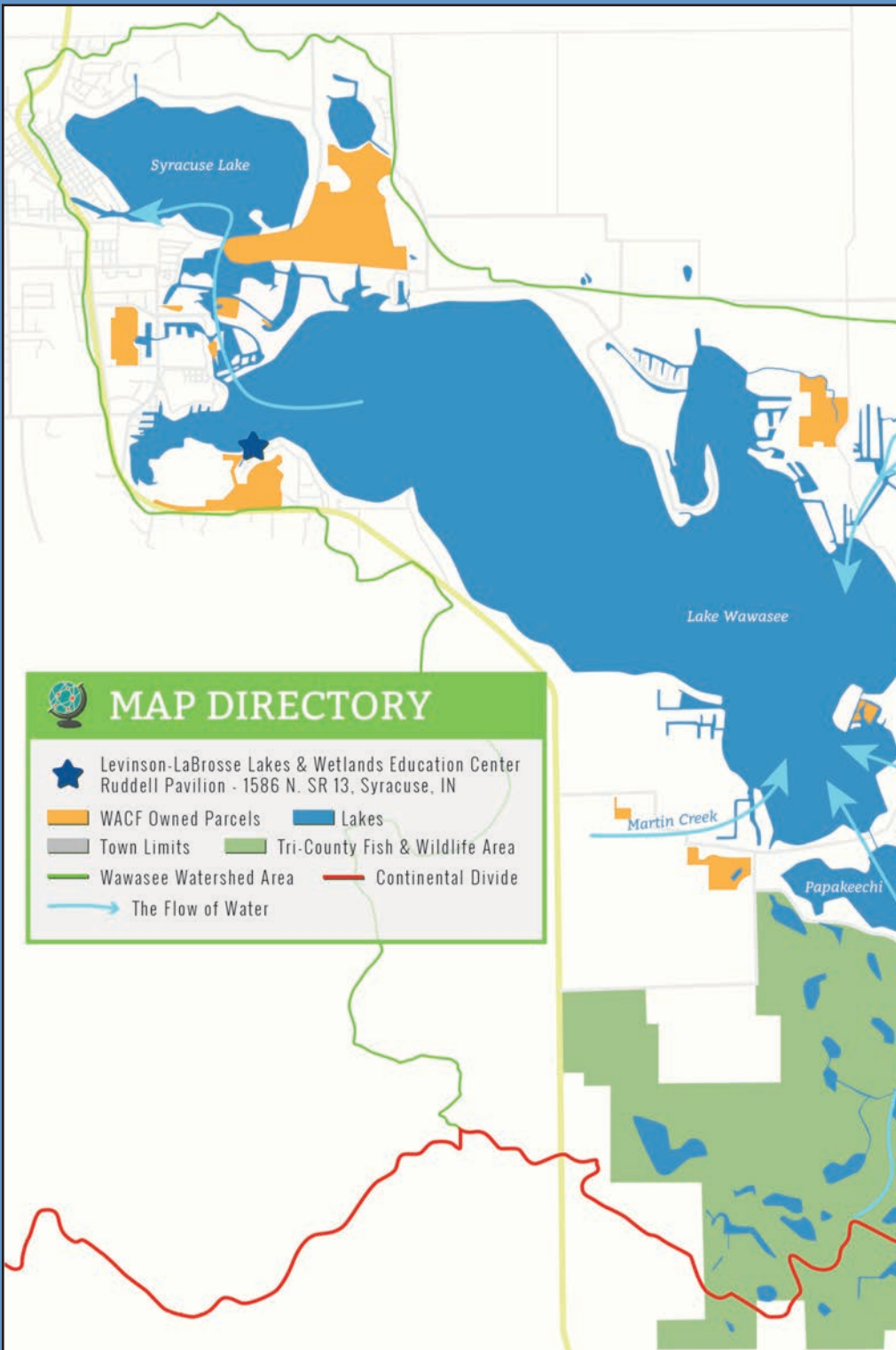
about Lake Erie watershed issues over the last 25+ years. After the lecture, he graciously provided some one-on-one guidance regarding concepts for implementing a watershed monitoring plan.


One of our goals is to grow partnerships with agricultural producers in our watershed, a long-term undertaking in relationship development. Rob DeBeck and Russell Anderson have been very active in conversations with local experts from the Soil and Water Conversation District to help us understand more about the barriers that must be overcome to develop such relationships.









Diana Castell, Heather Harwood, Joan Szynal and Rob DeBeck attended the Indiana Lakes Management Society (ILMS) meeting in March. They came away with many new networks as well as benchmarking data on what other watersheds are doing to improve and monitor their health. More benchmarking has been done by Tom Yoder and others on the Sanibel-Captiva Conservancy Foundation and the Leelanau Conservancy to gain insight into how they comprehensively monitor the health of their watersheds.

Additionally, Steve Coyle has been researching ways to monitor the health of our wetlands. He has recently added new information to our website. Check it out at <http://wacf.com/water-quality/watershed-wetlands/>.

The Ecology Committee will finalize their 2018 action plan at our May meeting as we continue WACF's 25+ year journey pursuing our goal of preserving our beloved watershed in its splendor for future generations.



 **MAP DIRECTORY**

-  Levinson-LaBrosse Lakes & Wetlands Education Center
Ruddell Pavilion - 1586 N. SR 13, Syracuse, IN
-  WACF Owned Parcels
-  Lakes
-  Town Limits
-  Tri-County Fish & Wildlife Area
-  Wawasee Watershed Area
-  Continental Divide
-  The Flow of Water

IT'S ALL ABOUT *Clean Water*



CANOE TRIPS

FRIDAY MORNINGS JUNE - AUGUST

Register for your trip at www.wacf.com







Your Gift Matters!

Every donation to the WACF helps us continue the work of preserving and protecting our watershed with the ultimate goal of clean water.

With your generous help, the WACF focuses on four key initiatives that support our mission.

Watershed Projects



Testing water quality, funding studies to identify threats to the watershed, construction remediation to address sediment and erosion pollution, creek and tributary stabilization work are some of the many watershed projects that protect our watershed and help keep our waters clean. WACF relies heavily on grants from INDNR Division of Fish & Wildlife's Lake and River Enhancement (LARE) section. LARE grants require co-funding by the WACF in the range of 10 -50% for each project. **YOUR GIFTS HELP FUND CRITICAL WATERSHED PROJECTS.**

Expanding Education



Because so many of the threats to our watershed and water quality can be traced to human actions, education plays a significant role in improving and maintaining the quality of our lakes. WACF Board member Pam Schumm, Chair of the Education Committee, along with a hard-working and enthusiastic volunteer group, has introduced many new education programs. Information outreach to adults on lake friendly gardening & landscaping, native plant information, safe and responsible boating practices continue to grow in popularity. There are now annual education

programs that reach deep into the Wawasee Community School system, with field trip programs for elementary, middle school and high school students. **YOUR GIFTS HELP FUND MEANINGFUL EDUCATION PROGRAMS.**

Land Acquisition

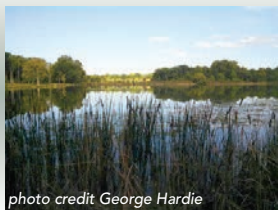


photo credit George Hardie

The WACF continues to focus on acquiring wetlands and endangered areas along the shorelines of watershed lakes, feeder streams, and tributaries. Properties identified in the Commonwealth Engineering Study, identified as crucial to the WACF mission continue to be priority targets. Last year, WACF acquired two important wetland and shoreline properties; the Bushong property on the shores of Gordy lake and the Johnson Bay East Preserve wetland property. **YOUR GIFTS HELP FUND SIGNIFICANT LAND ACQUISITIONS.**

WACF Endowment



To truly ensure the long-term health and quality of our watershed, requires stable and on-going funding. In order to maintain existing properties and programs, the WACF is focusing on building an endowment. Operations, including ecology, education, watershed projects, land management, and development along with other general expenses total approximately \$200,000 per year. Building the endowment fund will allow WACF to react more quickly to threats in the watershed and continue monitoring water quality on a consistent basis. **YOUR GIFTS HELP BUILD A SECURE ENDOWMENT.**

Our success depends on the generous support of friends and neighbors, like you, from around the watershed, lucky enough to call the beautiful place home.

All gifts are tax-deductible and if you prefer to donate on-line you'll find a secure link on our webpage at www.wacf.com.

The Never Ending Battle



David Brandes
WACF Board

It is so easy to sit on our porches and piers and look out at our beautiful watershed without considering that it takes tremendous effort on the part of the Wawasee Area Conservancy to protect and enhance it.

The good quality of our waters doesn't just "happen". With your support, our "army" of volunteers and hired ecological companies do battle from the headwaters of our watershed in Noble County to the dam in Syracuse where the waters leave our watershed and head north into the Saint Joseph's river basin and eventually to Lake Michigan.

Over the past 27 years, WACF has spent millions of dollars and endless hours protecting and enhancing this treasure we all enjoy. Unfortunately, the battle never will end. Nature and humans will find ways to alter this environment. Because of this we will need you to continue to support WACF with finances and volunteerism.

We need everyone to step up their donations because it is getting more expensive to keep this watershed as clean as we all would like it to be. The value of your properties is due to the fact that this watershed is clean and you have WACF to guard it. Think of how much you spend maintaining your property, your boats and putting in a pier. Isn't maintaining our lakes worth that or more yearly? Would you enjoy the lakes as much if you didn't put in a pier? Well how about spending an equal amount toward helping keeping our lakes as clean as we can make them?

Remember " If you love something, you must do all you can to protect it".



***Do not blow leaves into the LAKE –
it's filling the lake and against the law.
Remind your landscaper!***

Syracuse Wawasee Trails Update



The Conklin Bay boardwalk and trail is completely designed and permitted. The trail committee has worked closely with WACF, the army corps of engineers, Indiana DNR and others to limit the impact on the wetland habitat. Besides making it easier for people to use non-motorized transportation to access WACF, the boardwalk will include signage to help inform trail users about the importance of wetlands.

Though everything is in place to start

construction, the trail committee does not want to start until a significant portion of the estimated cost has been raised. Thanks to generous donations from the Dekko Foundation, the Ruth Lilly Philanthropic Fund, the Miller Family Foundation, the Harkless Family Foundation, the Wawasee Property Owners Association, The Papers and many private donors we are close to that magic number. Keep an eye out for construction equipment as early as this summer!



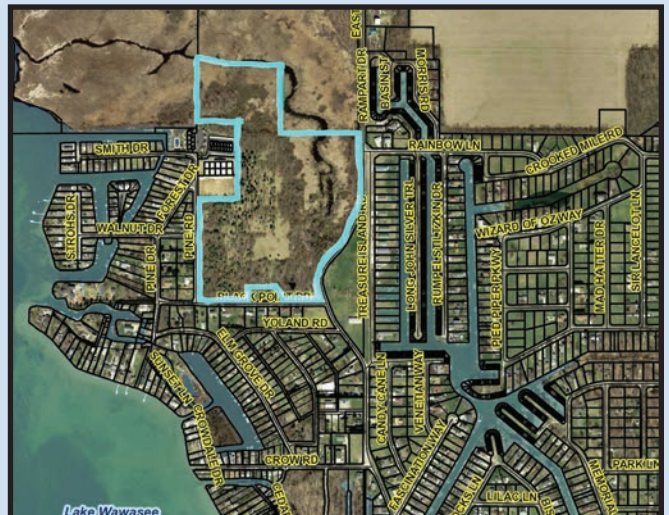


Agricultural Watershed Tour

One of the highlights of the WACF Education schedule is the Annual WACF Agricultural Watershed Tour hosted by Russell Anderson and his family on the beautiful land of Anderson Farms. Russell explains how responsible farming practices and activities are of vital importance to the water quality in the Wawasee watershed. A rustic tractor and wagon tour of Dillon Creek as it flows through the fields of Anderson Farms is the popular finale of this 2-hour free event.



WACF's newest acquisition (January 2018) is Johnson Bay East Preserve which neighbors the Johnson Bay wetlands and the B&O Railroad to the north and Johnson Bay wetlands to the west. This special 41 acre preserve once provided the outflow of Dillon Creek into the Johnson Bay/Wawasee wetlands and headwaters.





Memory Garden

Thanks to a generous gift from Dick and the late Linda Tillman, WACF soon will have a memory garden on its property. This area of tranquility will be available to all supporters of WACF as a place to scatter a loved one's ashes.

There will not be any burial allowed, only the ability to place one's ashes on the surface of this well delineated and beautiful area overlooking Lake Wawasee and the wetland area. There will be benches to sit on and a sculpture in the center of the memory garden.

WACF knows that over many years, many families have placed

their loved one's ashes into the lake. We feel this memory garden gives a more appropriate option since it doesn't pollute the lakes and gives people a place to pay their respects. There will not be any plaques allowed to demarcate the spot where ashes were left.

This area in our woods will offer a serene place for families to reflect on their loved ones as well as reflect on the beauty of the wetlands and lake itself.

Located on Trail #1, it will be easy for all to access this tranquil garden. Construction should take place Summer and Fall of 2018.

Calendar of Events

JUNE

Saturday, June 2, 9 AM Ruddell Pavilion

Lake, Talk & Eats - Native Plant Sale - native plants for sale from local nurseries and guest Aaron Stump, Habitat Programs Coordinator, IN Wildlife Federation with friendly garden & landscaping practices for your lake property.

Friday Mornings from Mid-JUNE to Mid-AUGUST, 7:30 AM - 12 noon

WACF Canoe Trips - First-class watershed & wetlands education as you canoe the 10 lakes of the upper watershed. Led by WACF Canoe Team, use WACF canoes or bring your own canoe or kayak. Registration required. Complete info at www.wacf.com. Sign-up early, canoe trips fill-up quickly.

Saturday, June 23, 8 AM Ruddell Pavilion & WACF Trails

"Mudtastic Classic" Have fun & get dirty at the Syracuse Parks & Recreation Department 4th Annual Mudtastic Classic. Information and registration at Syracuse Community Center or www.runreg.com/mudtasticclassic

Friday, June 29, 7 - 11 PM

Ruddell Pavilion

The Event - Summer Social 2018 - Celebrate summer with friends, neighbors, and the WACF. "Tapas & 'Tails" will feature catering by Blu-Spoon Catering, great music from HiFi2WiFi and a grand prize give-away. Registration & ticket required; available on line at www.wacf.com

JULY

Thursday July 5th, 9 - 11AM Between-the-Lakes

Fishing with the DNR. Join us for a morning of fishing at our Between the Lakes property at 5814 E Pickwick Rd, Syracuse. The DNR will supply fishing rods and bait - and help us learn how to cast, and fish. No registration required. Note: State fishing regulations apply - including a valid fishing license for anyone 18 and older.

Saturday, July 7, 9 AM Ruddell Pavilion

Lake, Talk & Eats - WACF Bug Catch! Bring the kids for the most popular event of the year! WACF Education Center / Ruddell Pavilion

**Find information on all
WACF events at www.wacf.com.**



Wednesday - July 11, 18, 25, 9 AM - 11:30 AM Ruddell Pavilion

Wetland Adventures - Adventures in nature for kids accompanied by a parent or adult. Each week will focus on a different aspect of the wetlands with outdoor activities, crafts, & a canoe scavenger hunt. No Registration equired, please bring a life jacket for each child.

Saturday, July 28, 10:30 AM Ruddell Pavilion
WACF Lakes Celebration / Annual Meeting & Brunch

AUGUST

Wednesday, August 8, 9:30 AM Anderson Farm

WACF Agricultural Tour - Everything is connected. Agriculture, our lakes, and clean water examined by WACF Board Member Russell Anderson on the Anderson Farm. Free and no registration required. Details and directions on www.wacf.com.

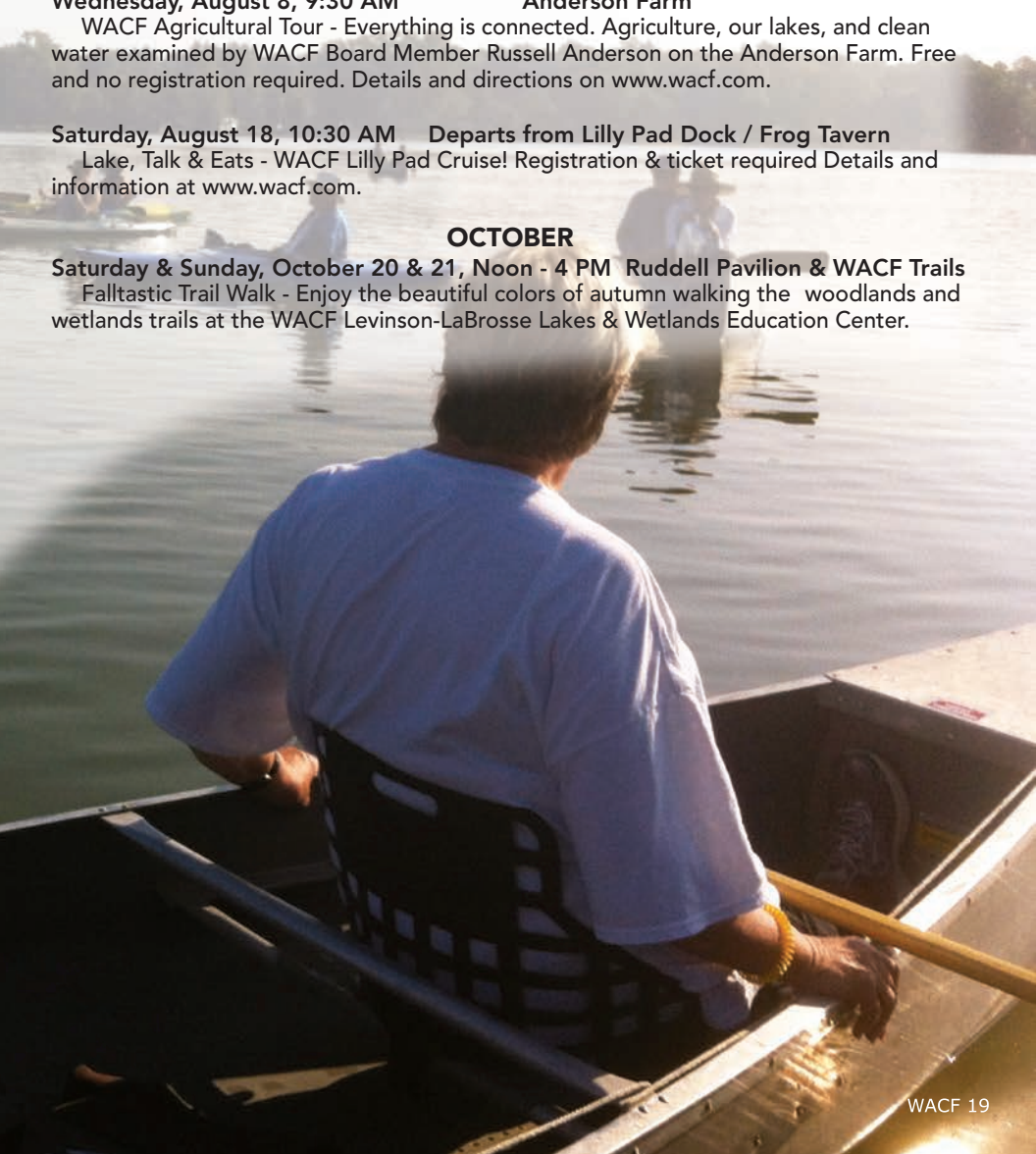
Saturday, August 18, 10:30 AM Departs from Lilly Pad Dock / Frog Tavern

Lake, Talk & Eats - WACF Lilly Pad Cruise! Registration & ticket required Details and information at www.wacf.com.

OCTOBER

Saturday & Sunday, October 20 & 21, Noon - 4 PM Ruddell Pavilion & WACF Trails

Falltastic Trail Walk - Enjoy the beautiful colors of autumn walking the woodlands and wetlands trails at the WACF Levinson-LaBrosse Lakes & Wetlands Education Center.



Join WACF, friends, and neighbors in celebration of summer and lake-life. An evening you won't want to miss!

The Event
WACF

SUMMER SOCIAL

FRIDAY June 29th 7-11 pm
WACF Rudwell Pavilion

Tickets also available at WACF Center
11586 N SR 13, Syracuse
or Northern Lakes Insurance,
201 E Palm Dr, Syracuse

wacf.com — 574-457-4549

Like us on Facebook

Wawasee Area Conservancy Foundation
11586 N. SR 13, PO Box 548
Syracuse, IN 46567

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Our mission is to protect, preserve and enhance the Wawasee Area Watershed now and for future generations.



Established in 1991, The Wawasee Area Conservancy Foundation (WACF) is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt, non-profit organization. Contributions to the WACF are tax-deductible to the extent current tax law allows. Please check with your tax advisor. Thank you for your support