



CONSERVANCY VIEWS

FALL 2022

*In this issue:
Taking Action in our Watershed
Ecology Updates
Eli Lilly Lifetime Founders Society*

Message from the Chairman:



John Bearss
Board Chairman

We all share the same goal of protecting and improving our watershed. To accomplish that goal, we need to work together. No one individual or organization can accomplish this objective alone. The task would be difficult enough if our environment remained in a constant state, but as we are all aware, our environment is actually in a constant state of change. Those changes can be naturally occurring or brought on by our desires to affect change.

Our community is naturally interested in improving the quality of our lives. Those improvements reach every aspect of our daily lives, and for many of us, include enhancing our surroundings through landscaping or home improvements. And while it may not be top of mind, it is important to remember that some of these improvements may have a direct impact on our watershed.

Whether you are the home owner or contracted partner completing the work, it is imperative that all work together to address any unintended consequences to the water quality. By proactively considering potential impact and working to address these issues before they start, we can lessen the impact of our actions. Through the foresight of planning, utilizing the protective tools available, monitoring the process and making sure that you follow all regulations and inspection requirements, your project will be done right and minimize the impact on our watershed.

Thank you for all you do for our watershed and if you are in the midst of an improvement and have questions about the watershed impact, please don't hesitate to reach out to WACF. We would be happy to help connect you to the proper tools and experts to ensure your project is a success!

“

If you don't have the time to do it right, when will you have the time to do it over. - John Wooden

”

Memorials & Honorariums

Memorial 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 WACF Endowment fund is used for ongoing Conservancy expenses, operating costs and programs.

2021 - October 1, 2022 WACF Memorials & Honorariums —

In Memory of:

Helen Alderfer
Gayle Atkins
Gayla Angert
Dawn Baker
Bob Baugher
Arch and Della Baumgartner
Paul Beck
Marianne Beesley
Mary Lou Brewer
Dick Campbell
Angelo J. Carnaghi
Mary Agnes Gingrich Carter
David Cates
Kim Conrad
Brendan Pearce Cronin
Carol Darr
Dottie and Bob Dickinson
Patricia Poole Dorsett
Dr. Mark Doyle
Howard and Lynn East
Elaine Eckman
Ken Ellenberger
Ven Endsley
Gail Ernst
Larry Farver
Larry Farver
Al Fiechter
Edgar Filby
William 'Reno' and Joni Freihofer
Nan and George Freyn
Mary Beth Gadus
Annie Gallaban
Mary Alice Gawronski
William Cy Gehl
Neanne Gerber
Ronald J. Gerling
Ronnie Giles
Edward William Gingrich
Grace Gingrich
Benjamin Gingrich
Agnes Clyde Gingrich
Dorothy Gitlin
Mary Alice Gawronski
Richard Green
Jason Grumbacher
Michael and Patrick Hanlin
Andrew and Annie Laurie Hardie
Lorna Hentze
Richard Hetler
Dr. Robert Hirschman
Lynne Diane Hirschman

Jerry Holland
Kyle Hollon
Don Hooley
Tom and Judy Hughes
David Edward Hunzicker
Bill Hurst
Needham Hurst
Don Impey
Dr. Jane Irmscher
Wanda Quinn Isenbarger
Robert and Rosalyn Jones
James H. Jordan
Phil Keim
Susann and George Kellogg
Mike and Carol Kiley
Kathleen Kiley
Carolyn and Lou Kincannon
Jim and Sara Kroh
Kroh Family
Jon R. Lassus, Jr.
Katie Leeuw
Jennifer Copeland Lilly
Eric Longenecker
Clara 'Nanny' Lopez
Vance Lopp
Maurice and Lucille Lung
Debbie Macomber
Robert Martin
Janet Newcomer Massey
Tom and Marilyn Michael's parents
Jackie Morrival
Don 'Moto' Morris
Deceased Morrison Island Members
Robert and Nancy Myers
E.S. and Virginia Needler
Susan Ann Juday Neff
Peter Nicholas
Mark Nill
Patty Norman
PADOROMA
Dr. Wm. and Mary Patterson
Leonard Penner
Chris Peterson
Carol and Tom Peterson
Kathleen Kiley Phillips
John and Rolene Popp
Tom Prickett
Peggy Rapp
Brenda Rinehart
Quinn Robison
William N. Salin and Sophia C. Salin
Douglas A. Schmahl

Bob Seger
Dr. Alan E. (Bud) Sheline
Mary Kay Stanley Shirley Myers
Pat Siri
Joan Buletty Slocum
John and Barbara Smith
Suzanne Hipskind Kiley Southern
Joanne Spurgeon
Mark Stinson
Michael Surso
Linda Swank
Roger Symensma
Mary Ann Teeter
Peter Tenhula
James Thompson
Dick and Linda Tillman
Joyce E. Truitt
Tom Tuttle Sr.
Fran Van Lue
Charlie Walker
John M. Wallace
Kristine West
John Williams
Joyce Williams
George Witwer
Thomas Wolfrum
Patricia, Ken and Barbara Woodruff
Matt Wuebker
Leonard Ziskie

In Honor of:

Donn Baird
John and Julia Bearss
Donn Baird
John Dalton
Bob Fanning
David and Kathlene
Johnston's grandchildren
Tom Kelly's 70th birthday
Jon and Becky Marler
Bridget McBride's 18th birthday
Northshore Neighbors
Jeff Nelson Family
Pete Nicholas' 80th birthday
Walter Palmer on Father's Day
Marianne Salaymeh
Pam Schumm

From the desk of the Executive Director



Heather Harwood
WACF
Executive Director

To protect our water quality and pristine lands in the Wawasee watershed, WACF is taking action with a variety of projects to help prevent nutrients and sediment from eroding into our lakes. Opening trails to our community is also a priority to showcase why it's so important to preserve and protect land. Below is a quick overview of the efforts we are currently leading.

Forestry Management

To protect forest health and remove invasive plants, WACF has received Environmental Quality Incentive Program (EQIP) funding to implement our forestry management plan. \$280,000 has been allocated from the EQIP program for timber stand and forest improvement. These funds will be used for improvements on 375 acres of WACF-owned land in the Wawasee Area Watershed. EQIP is overseen by the US Department of Agriculture and managed locally through the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

When you are looking into a wooded area and see dense brush like honeysuckle, buckthorn and autumn olive, it is a sign of an unhealthy forest. These types of brush are considered invasive plants and not only impact the trees and other native plants trying to grow, they also impact animal life as the invasives take over their natural habitat. An unhealthy woods is bad for the entire surrounding ecosystem, including the water. Simply put, in order to have strong healthy watersheds, you must have a strong sustaining ecosystem around it.

In order to be considered for these funds, we worked with a Forester to create a Forestry Management Plan. This entailed reviewing each of our wooded areas and developing a map and summary of specific improvements needed. This took over a year to complete.

With a project of this scale, it is best phased-in to be efficient and maximize our resources. WACF will start with invasive plant removal beginning at our WACF lands in the Knapp Lake area and work our way across our 375 acres of wooded areas. The total project length expected to be six years. Our goal is to not only remove the invasive plants but to also build a sustainable environment to keep the invasives from returning. We are grateful to have the help of Chris Egolf, Indiana Forester, who helped us identify best practice tools to make the most of these important funds.

Protecting and preserving our watershed means we must take action. Thanks to strong support from our donors and organizations like the USDA and NRCS, we are taking action and making change to ensure we have clean water for generations to come.

Native Planting

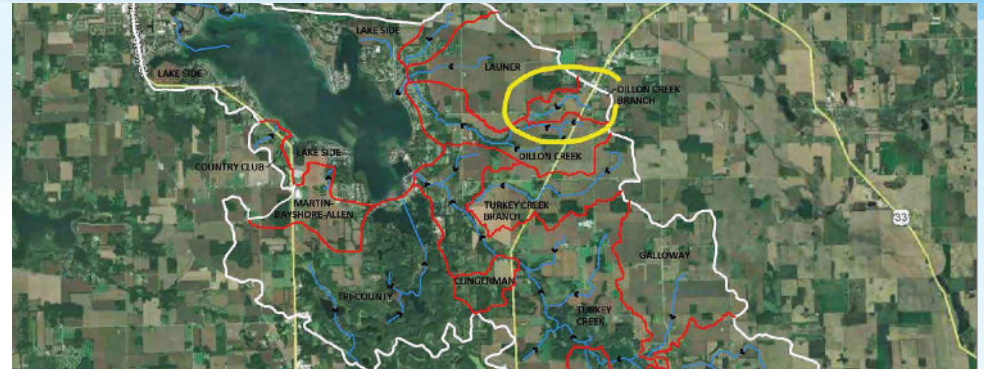
With the help of the US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), the lakefront acreage at the Levinson-LaBrosse Lakes and Wetlands Education Center is being restored to native planting. The process of replacing the existing turf grass with natives will take several seasons to establish and will make such a positive impact on the surrounding ecosystem.

Adding and Enhancing Our Trails

We have new trails at our Zimmerman Preserve at Blackpoint Road and East Wawasee drive along with new signs and walking trails. Come enjoy a hike and see the Johnson Bay Wetlands and the previous flow of Dillon Creek.



Zimmerman Preserve trail signage – East Wawasee and Blackpoint Road



Remediation Work

Stream bank stabilization and restoration will be under construction this fall in the upper reaches of Dillon Creek Branch. The project includes grass waterways, water and Soil containments basin, rock riffles and streambank stabilization.

Aquatic Plant Management

Erasian Water Milfoil (EWM) and Starry Stonewort (SS) survey and treatment is ongoing in Wawasee and Syracuse Lakes. Thanks to IDNR Lake and River Enhancement (LARE) for funding our grant application for survey and treatment of EWM and to the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GRLI) for SS treatment funding. And many thanks to the Wawasee Property Owners Association – and YOU – for the donations toward weed treatment in Lake Wawasee. We were pleased to see the recent survey revealed EWM was more under control in both lakes this year.

Since SS was first discovered in a channel off Johnson Bay, the total acreage has grown from 15 acres in 2009 to 180 acres this summer in Lake Wawasee and 21 acres in Syracuse Lake. That year and since, with help through GRLI and IDNR, treatments have been made in both lakes. These treatments have ranged from 11.29 acres to 67.39 acres. Growth has appeared to stabilize as of this year and we are hopeful this is a trend we will see in the future. Both exotic plants are continually monitored as part of aquatic plant management strategy.

Launching New Partnerships

National Water Quality Initiative (NWQI) federal funding is a program that WACF has been advancing with help from the NRCS. This USDA program is specifically targeting water quality efforts by incentivizing farmers to incorporate voluntary conservation practices and improve soil health. The NWQI will fund farmer's conservation practices in the Wawasee Area Watershed and will provide cost-share dollars for efforts such as cover crops, no-till farming, and filter strips in ag areas. You can read more about this exciting development in our Ecology report in this newsletter.

IDNR Lake and River Enhancement (LARE) is also providing grant funding for on-going erosion and pollution control projects in agricultural fields and our feeder streams including grass waterways, rock shoots, and stream bank stabilization continuing this fall.

All of our strategic projects happen because of the faith and partnership we receive from our donors and like-minded community organizations. Thank you for your trust and support!

Largest Number Inducted into the



2022 Eli Lilly Lifetime Founders Society.
From left to right, seated: Nancy Yoder; Maria Hinrichs; Sally Reel; Joan Marcuccilli; Pat Marcuccilli; Carol and Doug Anderson. Left to right, second row: Tom Yoder; Ron and Tami Baumgartner; Sarah Hinrichs; Josie Brusca and Andrew Hinrichs; Tom Marcuccilli; Jim Marcuccilli. Left to right, third row: Lindsay, Marcus and Walter Freihofer; Joe Hinrichs; Nancy and Tom Cottrell.

On August 26th, WACF was honored to announce the latest Founders of the Eli Lilly Lifetime Founders Society. It was our privilege to celebrate the nine new Founders, our largest induction to date. These individuals and families were recognized for their significant contributions of \$100,000 or more made over the course of their lifetimes. They received a medallion and a plaque with their name was added to the Eli Lilly Lifetime Founders Society wall located at the WACF Levinson-LaBrosse Lakes and Wetland Education Center.

To the right, is list of the 2022 Founders and a brief history of their connection to our community and to our cherished Wawasee Area Watershed.



Doug and Carolyn Anderson

The Anderson family has a long and rich history at Lake Wawasee. Doug Anderson's grandparents bought their current 67-acre property adjacent to the lake in 1897. Doug met Carolyn Sue Green in 1968 at Northern Illinois State University, where he served as an Assistant Professor of Finance and they married the following year. In 1977, Doug and Carolyn bought the Wawasee Boat Company and moved to Lake Wawasee permanently in the summer of 1978.

The family finds rest and solace at the lake and its wooded surroundings. The Anderson's son, Russell, and his wife Mary are also members of the Eli Lilly Lifetime Founders Society and Russell serves on the WACF Board.



Ron and Tami Baumgartner

Ron Baumgartner is president of The Papers Inc., a printing and publishing company located on Main Street in Milford. He graduated from Milford High School and went on to Indiana University, where he earned a journalism degree in 1966. Returning to his hometown, he joined the family business and has been employed there for the past 56 years. Married to Tami since 2014, Ron has two daughters, Criss Corson and Jennifer Baumgartner, and Tami has a daughter, Jennifer Foster and son, Ben Moore.

Ron has served three terms on the WACF board and counts them as an enlightening experience and a real education on the importance of the health and wellbeing of our lakes and streams and the steps we must take to preserve our waterways for today and in the future.



Tom and Nancy Cottrell

Tom and Nancy Cottrell met while students at Indiana University. They have three daughters, Katie (Aaron), Jackie (Eli), and Maddie, (Caelob) and four grandsons. Tom practiced public accounting in Leo, Indiana since 1990 until retiring in 2015, and Nancy worked as an interior designer and later raised their children. Tom's grandfather, Robert S. Clifford, built the family's original cottage in the early 1940s on Bay Shore. It remains in the family today. In 2003 Tom and Nancy bought their family cottage on Cedar Point.

Tom serves on the WACF board and recognizes the gift that Lake Wawasee is to all of us, and hopes to help preserve and protect it in order to pass it on to future generations.

Eli Lilly Lifetime Founders Society



William A. (Reno) Freihofer, posthumously
Reno first ventured to the shores of Lake Wawasee in the summer of 1963. Renting several cottages along Natti Crow beach, Reno had found his happy place with the people he loved most. In 1965 he began what has now been 57 years of fun at Pier 270. Not many weekend summer nights passed that Reno, Joanie and their four kids didn't spend skiing, sailing, swimming, golfing, and all other things fun. Reno also purchased an e-scow and most night sails included stops at the Frog Tavern and in many cases the sun was up before the boat was back.

Reno loved Lake Wawasee and through this gift it is hoped that the legacy he started in 1963 for his family, carries forward for many generations to come.



Joe and Maria Hinrichs and Andrew, Sarah and Anna Hinrichs
Joe and Maria, who met while attending University of Dayton, first came to Lake Wawasee with friends, in 2001. They returned to visit for the next 10 years until purchasing their own home on Waco Drive in 2012. Joe retired as President of Ford Motor Company's global automotive business in 2020 and Maria has been a tireless supporter of her family during their 32 years of marriage. Oldest daughter, Dr. Anna (Hinrichs) Ward is in residency at Detroit Children's Hospital and son, Andrew, is a Financial Advisor with Horizon Advisors LLC. Daughter, Sarah, is an Engineer

in the Ford College Graduate Program in Vehicle Connectivity.

The entire family enjoys all the water sports – wake surfing, jet skiing, and boating (especially on their two Hacker Craft mahogany boats) – as well as entertaining family friends and working on their gardens.



Jim and Pat Marcuccilli
Married for 47 years this month, Pat and Jim have been property owners at Lake Wawasee since 1994. They are parents to three children. Daughter, Dr. Morgan Marcuccilli, works for IU Health and she and her husband, Edwin, are parents to Margot. Daughter, Kristin, is the President of STAR Financial Group, and son, Thomas, is a Sr. VP for STAR Bank and oversees their retail operations and sales. He is married to Ashley, and they have a son, Theo.

A graduate of Ball State University, Pat is a retired educator as well as a licensed education administrator. Jim graduated from Notre Dame University and currently serves as Chairman & CEO of STAR Bank where he has been employed for 49 years. He's shared an office with his brother, Tom, another 2022 ELLFS inductee, for 47 of them.



Tom and Joan Marcuccilli
Tom & Joan Marcuccilli have lived in Fort Wayne since 2000, and originally came to Wawasee in 1995 where they shared Pier 280 with Jim and Pat Marcuccilli. They quickly realized the lake home was not big enough for both families. They bought their own place and rebuilt it in 2010 so it can be shared with their five children and six grandchildren. They love the sandy beach as well as the evening sunsets over the east side of the lake.

Tom is the Chairman of STAR Financial Group and has been with the bank for 47 years and is in his 3rd year of working on retirement. Joan spends the summer at the lake, and you can find her reading daily on the deck.



Joan Buletty Slocum, posthumously
Joan grew up in Chicago and moved to Syracuse in the mid 1970s where she graduated from Wawasee High School in 1976. She attended Indiana University where she received both her bachelors and master's degrees in education. Joan was incredibly smart and had a great way with kids. Those who knew her felt fortunate to have her in their lives.

A generous soul, Joan came to WACF offering to finance a project, and she enthusiastically chose to fund a pavilion at Between-the-Lakes. The foundation was completed when sadly, she passed away. Work will resume this fall, and the dedication plaque on the pavilion will read "Joan M. Buletty Pavilion."



Tom and Nancy Yoder
Tom and Nancy Yoder have resided on the south shore of Lake Wawasee since August 1973. Their lake home was formerly a summer cottage built in 1888 by a well-known early settler, John Vawter. Tom and Nancy met in high school and are now parents to four children and 6 grandchildren, all of whom love coming to the lake to visit. Tom retired from Eli Lilly and Company after 31 years of service, and Nancy kept the family organized and served in many volunteer positions over the years.

Tom came to the WACF board in September 1997. He served as chairman in 2001-02. He has chaired the Development Committee and currently chairs the Land Acquisition Committee where he continues to look for those properties that can help protect and preserve the watershed.

The Eli Lilly Lifetime Founders Society is a vital part of our organization's distinguished story. The Founders have all demonstrated a commitment to our watershed and a passion for protecting it for generations to come. We are grateful for their leadership!

Science and Action: A Watershed Win with WINS



By Beth Morris
Ecology Chair

Do you know how lucky we are to live in the Wawasee Area Watershed? Bordered by the North-South Continental Divide, our 24,448-acre watershed has **no water coming in from any other drainage basin**. It's a relatively small watershed whose four major tributaries – Turkey Creek, Dillon Creek, Martin Creek, and Papakeechee inflow – drain 72% of the watershed. Every drop of water flowing through our watershed will eventually end up in Lake Michigan, flow out the St. Lawrence Seaway and into the Atlantic Ocean.

We are lucky because **almost 1,000 acres of wetlands are protected by WACF** through ownership or permanent conservation easement. Wetlands are important in a

watershed because they work like natural filters that slow the movement of water over land and trap nutrients, sediment and other pollutants before they can enter the creeks and lakes. They also provide habitat for species of aquatic and terrestrial plants and animals and help with shoreline erosion control.

We are lucky that **WACF focuses on keeping nutrients and sediment out of our lakes and protecting our wetlands**. In the last 25 years, WACF has completed over 25 remediation and restoration projects stabilizing shoreline and providing erosion control on inlet streams. Recent projects on Turkey Creek and Dillon Creek Branch provided annual prevention of 324 pounds of phosphorous, 415 tons of sediment, and 613 pounds of nitrogen from entering the lakes! And several grants from U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have enabled projects maintaining numerous WACF-owned wetlands and uplands.

We've all heard that **luck is not a strategy**. That's why WACF initiated the **Water Inlets Nutrient Study (WINS)** in 2019. This ground-breaking 3-year intensive study has helped us understand the health of our lakes, their health trajectory, and establish a baseline for progress in maintaining their health. More importantly, the data provides guidance for prioritizing future projects to protect the health of our lake.

Data from over 50,000 tests has helped us understand the quantity of phosphorous, nitrogen and sediment coming in, going out, and staying in the lake. And because we sampled each inlet stream, we also know the contribution each tributary makes to the load.

The Chronic Nature of Nutrient and Sediment Accumulation

The difference in rainfall in the three years drove big swings in annual nutrient and sediment loads. A dry year in 2020 drove a significant accumulation of phosphorus and

sediment when compared to 2019 and 2021. This caused more nutrients and sediment to stay in the lake. Over time, they accumulate and can gradually reduce water quality. The WINS data gives us a greater understanding of the magnitude of the quantity of nutrient and sediments coming into the lake and staying here, the year-to-year variability based on weather conditions, and the chronic nature of this "pollution." Over the 3 years, 788 tons of sediment came into the lake, and **446 tons stayed in the lake**. Turkey Creek and Dillon Creek accounted for 85% of the sediment and 79% of the phosphorous over the 3 years.

In all three years, the amount of phosphorous, the biggest driver of excess algae and weed growth, was higher than desired for maintaining a healthy lake. **Taking action to change this trajectory is at the heart of WACF's mission.**

Taking WACF action to the next level: National Water Quality Initiative

The science of WINS has helped us understand that while past remediation and restoration projects have been important, the magnitude of nutrients and sediment staying in the lake calls for an additional tool in our toolkit to maintain the health of the lakes and watershed for future generations to enjoy. What is that tool? National Water Quality Initiative. Thanks to the robust data from the WINS study, WACF is proud to be the first lake watershed in the state to receive a Readiness Grant to become designated as a National Water Quality Initiative.

What is The National Water Quality Initiative, or NWQI?

- It's a premier program of the USDA focused on water quality efforts by incentivizing farmers to accelerate voluntary on-farm conservation practices and also improve soil health.
- It is Partnership-driven and will deepen WACF's existing partnerships with NRCS and other agencies as we build new relationships with the farming and lake communities in our watershed.

When granted, what will the funding do?

100% of the grant funds will be available to farmers solely in our watershed as cost-share dollars for practices such as cover crops, no-till planting, and filter strips. As more farmers start using these practices, it creates a win for everyone:

- We have the shared values of a strong desire to preserve the land and water for future generations.
- These practices will yield healthier soil, reduce erosion and nutrient and sediment run-off. This will positively impact water quality AND profitable farming.

We are excited to get started on this next big phase for WACF as we live out our mission to protect our lakes and watershed for future generations!

Working Together to Create a Vibrant, Sustainable Community



By Priscilla Brown
Development Officer

Recently, I attended a breakfast meeting with the members of the Kosciusko Leadership Academy where Heather Harwood, our executive director, in conjunction with Dr. Nate Bosch of the Lilly Center for Lakes and Streams, presented the work of the WACF to a roomful of businesspeople in our county and explained how our activities have a direct impact on their professional and personal lives. In answering one of their members' questions about our engagement with the local community, I highlighted the intelligence, insight, and commitment of our volunteer board. This group of people makes up a true "working board," and every gathering with them feels like a Mensa meeting with deliberations on ecological concerns within our watershed, discussions around future land acquisitions, and debates over projects and funding – all conduct indicative of vibrant, healthy leadership.

For 31 years, everyone in our watershed has benefitted from the vision and guidance of past WACF leadership giants such as David Culp, Harriett Inskip, Al Campbell, and Betty Knapp - just to name just a few. The current WACF board recognizes that we must build upon the solid foundation they laid to remain vital and relevant for the next 31 years and beyond. For several months our board members have dedicated a great deal of time to creating a strategic plan for the organization encompassing the areas of Research and Monitoring, Restoration/Remediation, Land Management/Land Acquisition, Education, and Partnership and Leadership - five areas members identified as critical to the future success of the work of the WACF.

Just as area business owners are interested in learning that partner organizations and nonprofits like WACF are dedicated to creating a vibrant, sustainable community for all its citizens, we know that WACF supporters and donors like you want to know that your transformative philanthropic gifts are funding responsible projects that continue to preserve and protect our watershed. The laser sharp focus of our strategic plan will help do just that. We know that you can choose to give your hard-earned money to a multitude of great works, and many of you do just that! WACF leadership is committed to our mission, and it takes great care to ensure the time, talent, and treasure that so many of you give to us is used appropriately and prudently. Thank you for your continued support not only of the work of WACF, but also of all our volunteers and staff. We can't do what we do without your help, encouragement, and dedication, and we consider you our partners in helping us keep the watershed healthy and clean for ourselves and for future generations.

WACF Education Team Had a Strong 2022 Season



By Pam Schumm
Education Officer

This summer we surpassed **2400** individuals who came to WACF to hear our message about water quality! If that number includes you — THANK YOU for being invested in water quality and the WACF. We think that's something to celebrate!

A few details:

- We enjoyed great weather and high attendance for our Lake Talk & Eats Annual Bug Catch and all the Wetland Adventures.
- Play Dates and the Pollinator Workshop were well attended too.
- Snapshot Water Testing Day was a success and we gained information about our stream water quality to assist our ecology committee.
- This year we learned about the importance of clean water from Dr. Jerry Sweeten and Dr. Nate Bosch on the Lake Talk & Eats Lillypad Tour. We also played Ecology Bingo and gave away over 30 prizes thanks to generous donors.

The summer season came to a close and the school field trip season began. We hosted field trips for Wawasee community School Corporation students in grades K through 4 and 6. Over 800 students and parents attended these activities. Each grade level has a theme for their

activities: Variation (K), Adaptation (1), It's for the Birds (2), Trees Tell Tales (3), Bug Fest (4) and Limiting Factors (6). Our volunteers are the best and they help the students complete educational crafts and activities each day. If you are interested in becoming a WACF volunteer, please let us know by emailing pamschumm@gmail.com.



Lastly, by the time this newsletter is printed our Falltastic Trail Walk will be completed. Two miles of trails will be decorated for fall and Halloween. It's a community favorite and a great time to go on a leisurely stroll with your family (and dogs) through the trails at WACF. You will be able to visit our Facebook page to see pictures from this two-day event. This year we had 350 visitors!

We look forward to seeing you next summer at one or more of our educational events. We are so grateful for your support!



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- Priscilla Brown
Development Officer
- Jeff Herdrich
Land Management Officer
- Pam Schumm
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- Nancy Nelson
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Volunteer Spotlight

Sue Kraft



It's amazing to see the numbers! Over 1200 youth and 700+ adults have been exposed to the WACF's mission this past year. That takes a lot of coordination and volunteer effort. We could not educate our community without the help of over 50 different volunteers and the exceptional work of our coordinator Sue Kraft! We ran 26 different programs this season, for a total of 38 days of activities, and they ran seamlessly because Sue recruits and organizes the volunteers. It's not an easy job.

It takes hours of communicating with over 75 volunteers (sometimes on a weekly basis) to secure all the help needed to run an elementary school activity (just imagine 60 first graders moving in 6 different directions)! Our volunteers have put in over 1100 hours this season.

Sue began volunteering at WACF as an instructor of children's activities. When the position of volunteer coordinator became available, she stepped up and immediately did an excellent job! Sue grew up in Syracuse, graduated from Wawasee High School, raised her family here and is still giving back. She is retired from serving the Wawasee School Corporation and is now able to enjoy life on the lakes with her family. Sue loves working with the children and helping them understand why it is important to keep our lakes clean.

Wetland Collaboration

WACF and Grace College collaborated this summer on a wetland project to rehabilitate a pond on the WACF Levinson-LaBrosse Lakes & Wetlands Education Center. Stephen Foy, Grace College student, worked to eliminate invasive and undesirable plants and make room for natural plant growth. This effort will help future students improve their knowledge and understand what a restored wetland means.

Special thanks to the advisory guidance of Dr. Nate Bosch, from Lilly Lakes & Streams, and Steve Coyle, WACF Ecology Committee member.



Stephen Foy consulting with Scott Fetters, Private Lands Biologist, US Fish and Wildlife Service.