

A 🌰 Place 🌰 For 🌰 All 🌰 Seasons

FRED L WATERMAN CONSERVATION EDUCATION CENTER

2025 ANNUAL REPORT



Image Credit: Steve Brigode

FRED L. WATERMAN CONSERVATION EDUCATION CENTER

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AGENDA FOR 2026 ANNUAL MEETING

Saturday, January 24, 2026

1:30 PM – 3:30 PM

Opening / Welcome	Board President Matthew Kisloski
Introduction of Full Board	Board President Matthew Kisloski
Center Finances	
1. 2025 Financial Summary followed by brief Q & A	Board Treasurer Rex Decker & Executive Director Christopher Audette
2. Presentation of 2026 Budget followed by brief Q&A	
Introduction of Ex Dir.	Board President Matthew Kisloski
Director's Statement on the Center	Executive Director Christopher Audette
Introduction of Staff Present	Executive Director Christopher Audette
Election Committee presents slate of officers	Executive Director Christopher Audette
Call for vote by members in good standing in attendance	Board President Matthew Kisloski
Introduction of guest speaker: Allen Peterson	Executive Director Christopher Audette
Restoring Trout and Their Habitat: Trout Unlimited's Owego Creek Program	
Presentation of Awards	Executive Director Christopher Audette & Board President Matthew Kisloski
Closing Remarks	Board President Matthew Kisloski

2026 SLATE OF DIRECTORS

* Voted on by members in good standing during the annual meeting.

Existing Directors Running to Renew Their Term

Robert Rodgers

2026 SLATE OF BOARD OFFICERS

*For your information only. These officers are voted on by the board of directors after being approved by members in good standing.

Mathew Kisloski – Board President

Diane Wiener - Vice President

Rex Decker – Board Treasurer

Avery McLean – Board Secretary

THE CENTER'S GOALS

- Make quality environmental education resources and services readily available to all.
- Collaborate with and support other environmental education providers throughout New York.
- Enhance, promote, and complement the effectiveness of existing environmental education programs. Identify needs and trends to help inform environmental policy and educational program development

OUR MISSION

Waterman Conservation Education Center's Mission is to promote conservation, education, outdoor recreation activities, and environmental literacy.

OUR VISION

Our vision and our members are united in the belief that we need to prepare the next generation with the knowledge and skills to seek sound, balanced decisions that maintain public health and the environmental quality of our community and the world.



2025 BOARD OF DIRECTORS AND STAFF

Executive Board

Matthew Kisloski	President
Diane Wiener	Vice President
Rex Decker	Treasurer
Avery McLean	Secretary

Board Members at Large

Scott Clarke	Dylan Horvath
Sally Guydosh	Stephen Majka
Jerry Michael	Robert Rodgers
Jeff Smith	Jim Shuler

Staff

Christopher Audette	Executive Director
Steve Brigode	Conservation Technician
Courtney Fitzgerald	Executive Assistant
Michelle Knuepfer	Programs Specialist
Karen Ritter	Weekend Receptionist

Camp Administration

Courtney Fitzgerald	Camp Director
Maria Gorman	Medical Director (volunteer)

Cam Counselors

Maura O'Brien	Dominick Curley	Oakley Bilella
Amanda Bryla	Abigail Kaurin	Maisie Waitkus

Alternate Camp Counselors

Debbie Miller	Bethany Miller	Michelle Knuepfer
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FROM THE EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The forest speaks with a voice that transcends sound. You can understand it if you pay careful enough attention. It reverberates with echoes of the past, is punctuated by lifetimes of footprints, and sings with hope for the future and the promise of a new day.

The year 2026 marks our fiftieth anniversary as a conservation organization dedicated to welcoming our neighbors back to nature, celebrating the singular joy obtained from being outside, and protecting the open spaces that are so critical to our planet's and our own well-being. As the cold and quiet of January blankets us with stillness, I find myself reflecting on our journey and who we've become. I spend time listening to our forest and envisioning its memories of children's laughter cascading like water down the hillside, of hammers and picks building boardwalks or carving trails, and the footfalls of families and individuals. I listen keenly for whispers of our future.

I'm rewarded by calls from Chickadees and Crows and the brittle creaks and croaks of trees bent by wind in the cold. It's a beautiful reward. It makes me think about everyone who has done this exercise before me - in *this place* - what we aptly call "A place for all seasons".

For fifty years, we've been community-driven, always with the goal of being here for anyone who needs us. I've come to understand the reasons that inspire people to visit our trails are as profoundly diverse as people are themselves. It is impractical to try to describe the array of ages, circumstances, and motivations that guide thousands of visitors to us, but please allow me to submit that the Waterman Center is a place for all seasons - of life.

This year, our staff, board, and volunteers had meaningful interactions with people just beginning their life's journey as well as those at the very end. Something that unifies these experiences is a sense of wonder, joy, and connection. Whether rooted in education, service, or recreation, there is something deeply fulfilling about sharing our experiences in nature with others. This is the core of our being and what will guide us into the next fifty years of Waterman!

The pages that follow detail some of the connections and impact that we made last year. I'm grateful for the part you played, and I hope you will join me sometime, when I listen to the forest.

Yours in nature, hope, and peace,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Audette", with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending to the right.

Christopher Audette
Executive Director

SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR PARTNERS IN CONSERVATION

Achieve
Allstate, Landers Agency
Apalachin Fire Department
Apalachin Garden Club
Apalachin Lions Club
Audio Classics
Avangrid-NYSEG
BAE Electronic Systems
Barney & Dickenson
Best Buy Green Team
Binghamton Garden Club
Binghamton University Emerging Leaders Program
Boy Scouts of America
Broome County Planning Department
Broome County Department of Public Works
Broome County Legislature
Broome-Tioga BOCES
Chemung Canal Trust Company
Cook's Tree Service
Community Foundation of South Central New York
Community Options
Cornell Cooperative Extension of Broome and Tioga Counties
Cornell New York State Hemlock Initiative
Managing and Monitoring Ash – Ecological Research Institute
M&T Bank Green Team
Delta Engineers
Direct Driven Motorsports
Endicott Precision
The Family Reading Partnership & Book Bus
Farmer Brown's Marketplace
Franziska Racker Center
Fuddy Duddy's
Garden Club of Endwell
George A and Margaret Mee Charitable Foundation
Girl Scouts
Hillside Garden Landscaping
Kiwanis Club of Owego
Lockheed Martin Day of Caring
Mildred Truman Faulkner Foundation
Naturalists' Club of Broome County
New York State DEC
NJE Tree and Landscaping
Owego Kitchen
Riveo Creative
Robinson Lumber
Scott Smith and Son, Inc
Sierra Club, Susquehanna Chapter
SRW Products
The Stewart W. and Willma C. Hoyt Foundation
Stiletto's Fine Arts Studio
Sweeney's Market
Taylor Garbage (Casella)
Tioga Arts Council
Tioga County Soil and Water
Tioga County Youth Bureau
Tioga State Bank
Town of Owego
Town of Union
Triple Cities Hiking Club
Tri Town Insurance
Two River's Photography Club
United Way of Tioga County
Upstate Shredding
Vestal Recreation Department
Vision's Federal Credit Union
Zuke's Excavating, LLC

WATERMAN CENTER VOLUNTEERS 2025

Achieve Residents	Deborah Dittrich	Lockheed Martin
Nancy Agranoff	Elizabeth Donovan	Colton Luker
Tom Babcock	Kathy Eddy	M&T Green Team
Bill Baburchak	Farr Family	Stephen Majka
Bunny Begeal	Molly Farray	Gary Malyszek
Fran Berry	Al Fiato	Anna Manowarda
Bill Bitner	Linda Frisbie	Rick Marsi
Rachel Blaasch	Girl Scout Troops	Dave Martin
Lorraine Bleiler	Maria & Andy Gorman	Avery McLean
Larry Blumberg	Cosmo Grill	Jerry Michael
Loretta Brady	David Grindel	Kevin Millar
BSA Troops (various)	Sally Guydosh	Gail Morrison
Beth Burton	Michael Haas	Joe Morrison
Mary Ann Cascarino	Vitus Haggemiller	Julie Mundt
Rick Chrisler	Chris Harasta	Pat & Rick Musa
Scott Clarke	Dylan Horvath	Joyce Neira
Community Options Residents	Randy Howell	Kathy Nichols-Newell
Jarrod Comstock	Joan Hunt	Orzel Family
Tyler Coy	Joe Italiano	Stella Palladino
Dominick Curley	Tom Kelly	Ellen Pasto
Jeniffer Cutter	Gary King	Eric Phelps
Bob Dannecker	Brian Kinney	Elizabeth Pimpinella
Rex Decker	Deb Kisloski	Karen Prowda
Janet Deliman	Matt Kisloski	Robert Rodgers
Dallin DeNinis	Joyce Kruger-Knuepfer	Jean Rodgers
Samantha Denny	Kennie Leet	Onna Roosa
Gary & Connie Diehl	Anna Garcia Llewlllyn	Chris Rounds

Luke Saunders

Justin Scheidweiler

Dongkook Shin

Jim Shuler

Nina Smith

Jeff Smith

Gale Thomas

Triple Cities Hiking Club

Fred Trost

Thomas Vriesma

Jeanette Wertz

Diane Wiener

Winter Wildlife Fun Day Cast
and Crew

Cam Winzinger

Colleen Wolpert

2026 SALLY GUYDOSH EXCELLENCE IN VOLUNTEERING AWARD

The Sally Guydosh Excellence in Volunteering Award is awarded annually at the Waterman Center Annual Members Meeting to two volunteers who, over the past year, have given exceptional service and made a significant impact. This award was created in honor of Sally Guydosh, who was the heart of our volunteer program for many years, devoting herself to coordinating volunteers and singing their praises.

Nature and Trails – Bill Bitner

Events and Fundraising – Gail Morrison

2026 HONORARY MEMBERSHIP

The Waterman Center's Bylaws allow the Board of Directors to "...by unanimous vote, designate Honorary Life Membership upon such individuals who have given meritorious service to The Center."

Those designated as honorary members will no longer be required to pay dues and will enjoy the same rights and privileges as life members.

While the Board of Directors is not required to award honorary memberships each year, very few have been awarded in the recent past, therefore three will be awarded this year. Going forward, one honorary membership will be awarded each year.

The Board of Directors is proud to recognize the following individuals as Honorary Members:

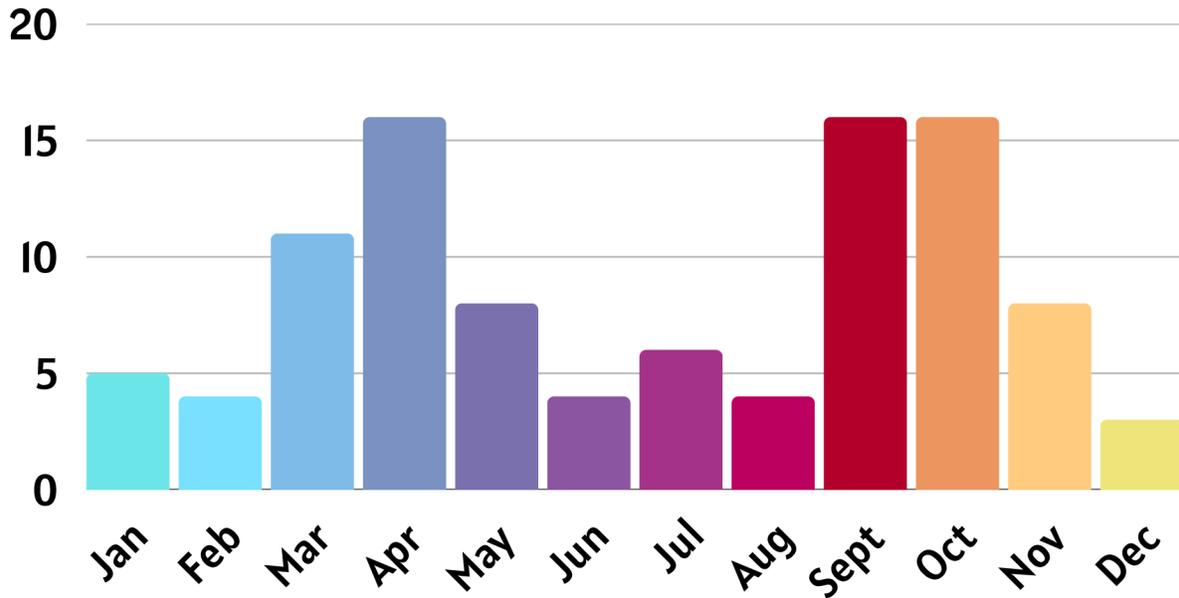
Mary Ann Cascarino

Jerry Michael

Joan Hunt

2025 Program Breakdown

We held 91 programs and attended 10 events in 2025!



1176 people attended our programs and 1330 people stopped at our tables

Program Attendance

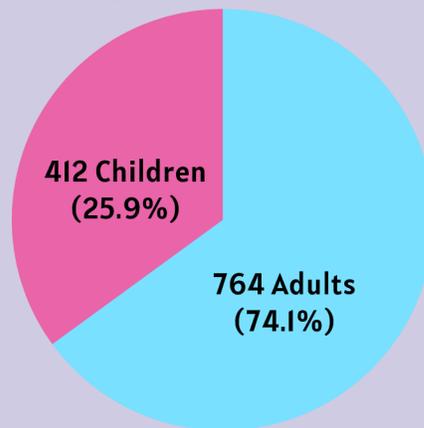
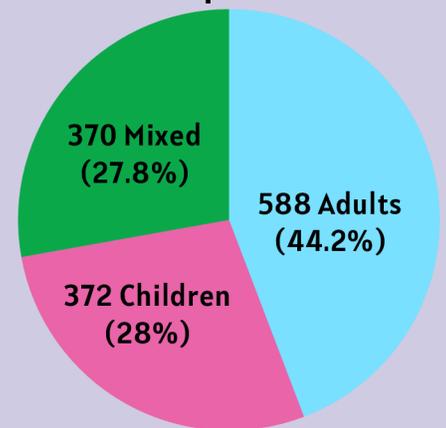
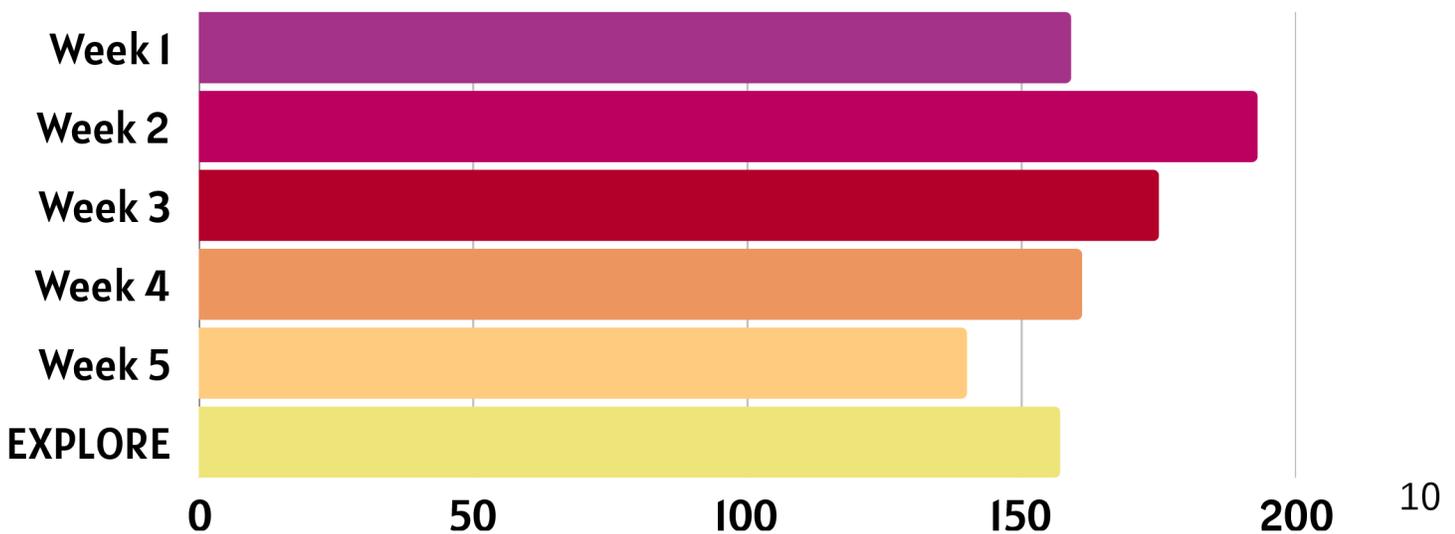


Table Stops at Events



We had 985 Camper Days this summer!



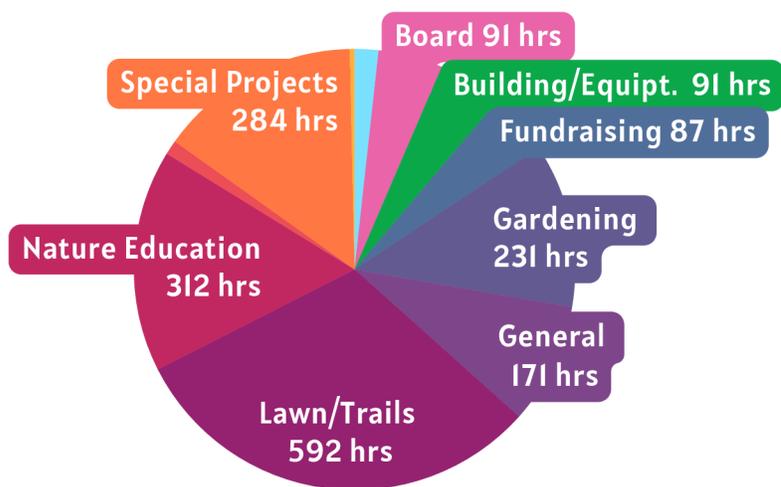
2025 Program Breakdown

Guided Hikes	Educational Events & Presentations
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • New Year Hike • Wildlife Tracking with Linda Spielman • Owl Prowl • Girl Scout Troop 30020 • Spring Birding Walk • Bird Migration Lyceum Field Trip • Amphibian Walk with Cam Winzinger • Sit with the Birds at Brick Pond x2 • Spring Wildflower and Birds • Pride Month Birding Hike • Fall Birding Hike • Fall Foraging with Cam Winzinger • Fall Foliage at the IBM Glen • Kidventures Field Trip • Fall Fungi • Night Hike • Apalachin Marsh Guided Hike • Christmas Bird Count 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Intro to Backyard Birding • Birdwatching Basics • BOCES Animal Science Field Studies x 5 • Butterflies & Moths Class I & II with Colleen Wolpert • Southern Tier Homeschool Group • Vestal Rec Winter Tracking I & II • Trout Unlimited Training • Envirothon • Susquahanna Series <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Peter Knueppfer - Geology ◦ Steve Brigode - Photography ◦ Jacob Earle - Wetlands ◦ Victor Lamoureux - Map Turtles ◦ Rick Marsi - Wetlands ◦ Dan Rhodes - American Eel ◦ Emma Sedore - Hiawatha Island ◦ Joe Onafino - Muskie Fishing ◦ Anna Garcia-Llewellyn - Rehabilitation ◦ Heather Guillford - Trees
Tabling Events	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Chenango Valley STEAM Night • BU EcoBlitz • Earth Day CV State Park • Glenwood Open House • Strawberry Fest • Berkshire Blueberry Fest • Binghamton Porchfest • Owego middle School Open House • Tioga CCE Pumpkin Smash 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lyceum <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ◦ Bird Migration ◦ WISE Project ◦ Birdfriendly Backyard • Pettus Celebration at the Windsor Historical Society • Water Birds of the Susquehanna • Water Bugs I and II • Animal Furs at Achieve Youth Summer Program
Miscellaneous	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Critter Conundrum Puzzle Room x 9 • Ted's 25th Birthday Party • River Cruises x 16 • Build-A-Box Scout Day 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Moth Night with Colleen Wolpert • Nature Journals with A New Hope • Hiawatha Purchase Committee • Cornell Raptors x2 • Nature Sensory Drop-In • Macroinvertebrates at Nat Club • Karen Kucharski Fallingwater

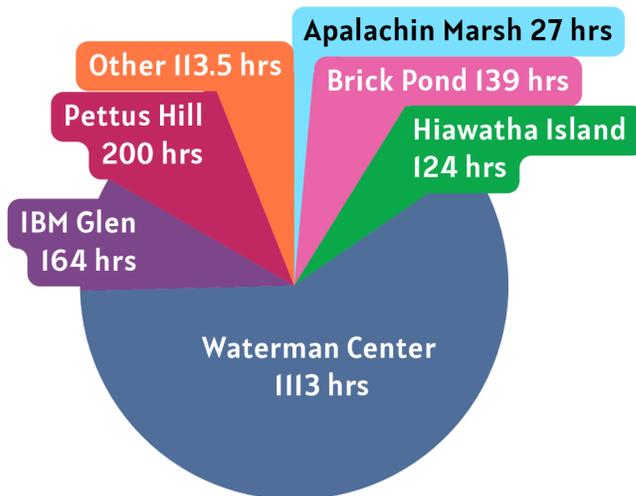
2025 Visitors and Volunteers

Volunteers recorded 1918.4 hrs this year!

Hours by Category

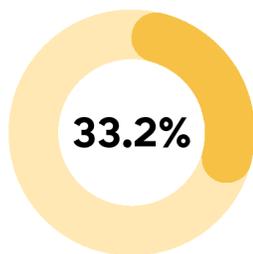


Hours by Location



Visitor Breakdown - 4,797 Visitors, Hikers & Volunteers

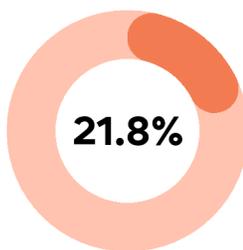
Hikers at IBM Glen, Brick Pond, Apalachin Marsh, & Pettus Hill are not included, unless the hiking club reported attendance numbers. We estimate an additional 3,000 hikers at IBM Glen and 2,000 at Brick Pond. Not all volunteer hours and volunteer days are recorded.



Hikers

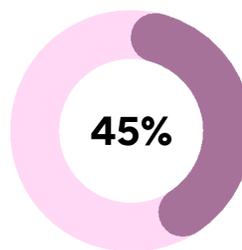
Visitors

1384 adults
208 kids
26 clubs



Volunteer Days

1044
volunteer
days



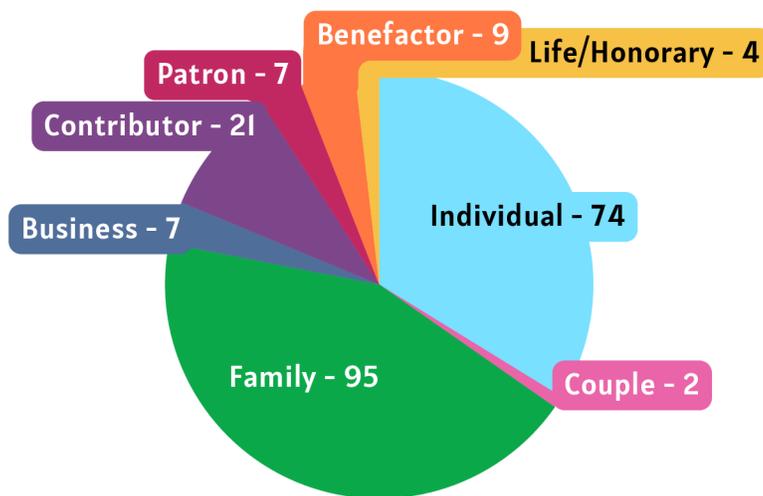
Programs

We hosted **91 programs** this year!
Serving 764 adults & 412 kids.

Plus **985 Camper Days** this summer!

We gained 65 new members!

219 total members!



LOOKING BACK AT 2025'S SPECIAL PROJECTS



Along with the fantastic work our volunteers and staff do every day that enables us to offer all of our excellent programs, exhibits, and trails, each year we work on several special projects. Some of these are passion projects, such as Beth Burton's long-running effort to bring more native plantings to our interpretive grounds. We're dreaming about Black Gum trees next! We also worked with an (almost) Eagle Scout to retrofit our display cases with LED lights. A different sort of passion project, Ethan learned a ton and changed the face of the auditorium and museum substantially.

Some grow from memorial projects such as the Cynthia Ford Memorial Observation Platform at Brick Pond or replacing the bird blind at the Apalachin Marsh in honor of Harriet Marsi. We were very fortunate to complete both of those installations over the course of 2025.



This year, we were very lucky to have several community groups offer help.

In 2026, we hosted two companies for group volunteering days. Lockheed Martin continued the huge effort started by Eagle Scout Owen Majka to repair our boardwalk. It is now patched and much more level. Employees from M&T Bank's Green Team also came to Waterman's properties – twice – to lend a hand. In the spring they planted saplings on the hill next to our interpretive center to stabilize the ground and help shade invasive plants. In the summer, they converged again, this time at the IBM Glen to tackle projects there.



One project surprised us, though. The “Build a Box Activity Day” offered in partnership with the Scouts was only supposed to be about getting young people comfortable swinging a hammer and excited about making things. It grew into a gargantuan effort undertaken by an elite Waterman volunteer group known as **The Screech Squad** to install the twelve Eastern Screech Owl boxes built by the scouts. In trees. 10 feet off the ground. Across all of our preserves. Plus, they had to do it before nesting in February and March. They met the task in record time, leaving only the box on Hiawatha Island.

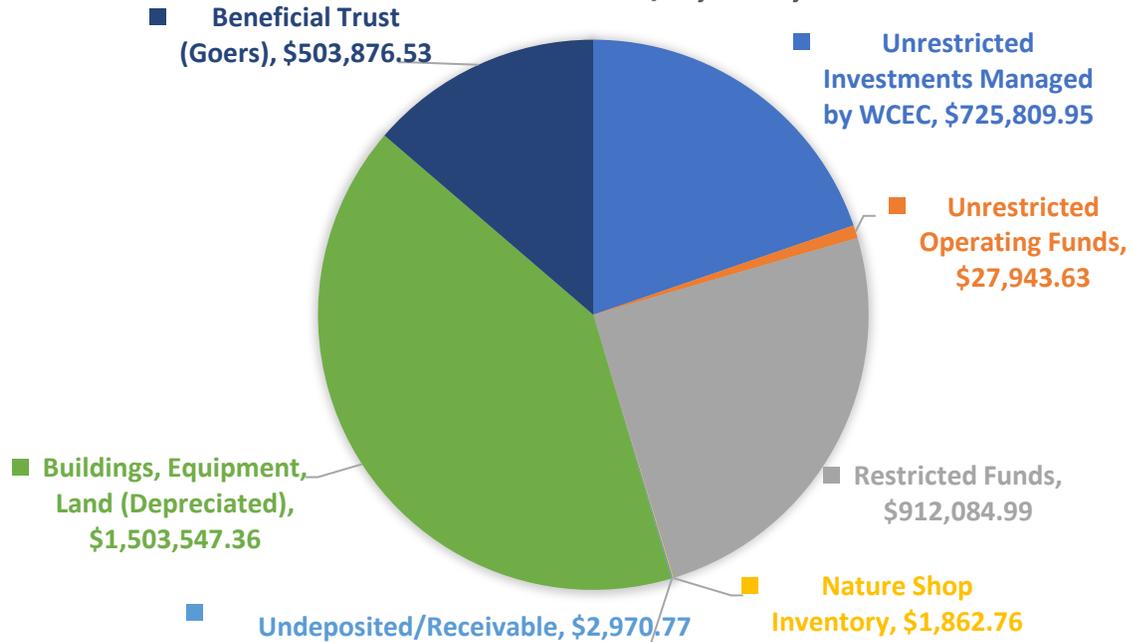


TREASURER'S REPORT AND FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

Summary Charts of Financial Position and Cash Flow

2025 WATERMAN CENTER ASSETS

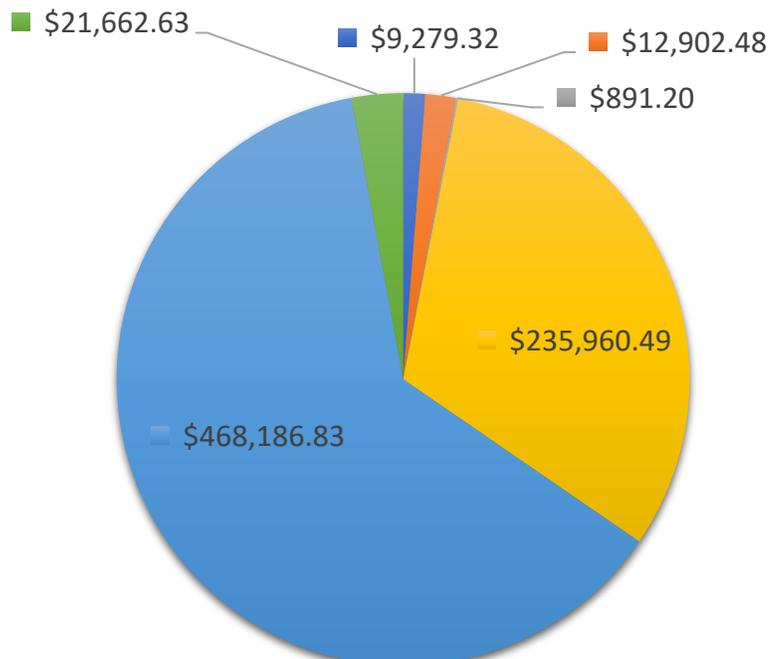
TOTAL ASSETS : \$3,678,095.99



2025 Unrestricted & Discretionary Funds

(As of 12/31/2025)

- Operational Checking
- Discretionary Savings
- Fox Road Royalties
- Barton Discretionary Investment
- Sbarra Discretionary Investment
- Conservation Technician Custodial Account

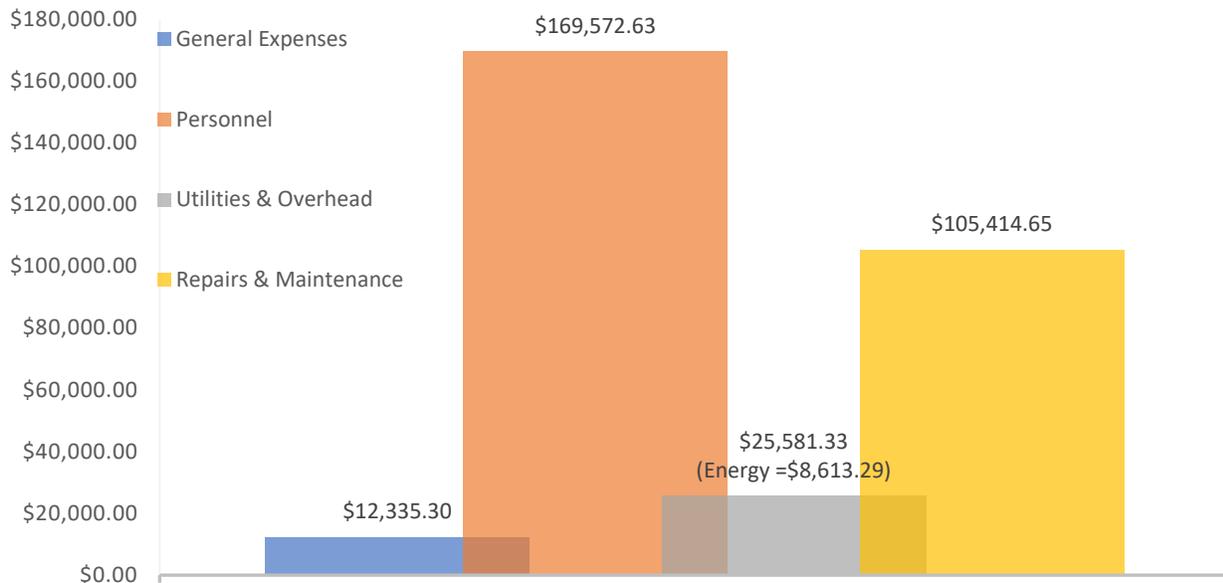


2025 Revenue - \$288,764.05



Note on Donation Income: \$76,825 of the 2025 donation income was contributed for the purpose of constructing the Cynthia Ford Memorial Observation Platform at Brick Pond. This sum may be considered as directly applied to the "Repairs and Maintenance" expense category below. The remaining \$65,726 supported our regular operations and development.

2025 Expenses - \$312,903.91



Expense Category Definitions:

General Expenses – Program supplies and materials, office equipment and supplies, cleaning, promotion, and taxes.

Personnel – Wages, payroll processing, and payroll taxes.

Utilities & Overhead – Energy, insurance, internet, and professional services.

Repairs & Maintenance – New construction as well as regular maintenance of equipment, property, and vehicles.

2025 FINANCIAL STATEMENTS

ASSETS & LIABILITIES

Assets

Bank Accounts

0001 JOURNAL	0.00
1000 UNRESTRICTED	
1070 PayPal	4,857.28
1071 WIX Clearing	0.00
1075 Square Clearing	0.00
1090 TSB Bingo Checking	3,636.79
1100 TSB Checking (General)	9,279.32
1105 TSB Savings	0.00
1105-0 Discretionary Savings	12,902.48
1105-1 Designated-Abrams	-421.50
1105-2 Designated-Forest School	20,000.00
1105-3 Designated-IBM Glen	68,000.00

Total for 1105 TSB Savings	\$100,480.98
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1115 TSB Fox Road Savings (Gas Lease)	891.20
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1190 Petty Cash/Cash On Hand	13.35
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Total for 1000 UNRESTRICTED	\$119,158.92
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1200 RESTRICTED

1205 CCTC Brick Pond Critter Trust	236,586.61
1210 CCTC Barton Estate	235,960.49
1215 CCTC Pettus Estate	584,283.09
1220 CCTC GIGP Checking	0.00
1225 CCTC Sbarra IM x2778	468,186.83
1230 CCTC Sbarra Custody Account	21,662.63

Total for 1200 RESTRICTED	\$1,546,679.65
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Total for Bank Accounts

	\$1,665,838.57
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Accounts Receivable

Accounts Receivable	250.00
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Total for Accounts Receivable

	\$250.00
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Other Current Assets

1300 Inventory-Nature Shop	1,862.76
1400 Undeposited Funds	2,720.77
1500 Contributions Receivable	0.00

Total for Other Current Assets

	\$4,583.53
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Total for Current Assets

	\$1,670,672.10
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Fixed Assets

2100 Equipment & Furniture	134,280.93
2105 Buildings & Improvements	1,108,015.13
2110 Intangibles	4,909.70
2150 Accumulated Depreciation	-590,886.90
2180 Land	827,624.00

Total for Fixed Assets	\$1,483,942.86
Other Assets	
1600 Beneficial Interest in Trust	503,876.53
Construction in Progress (Brick Pond Observation Platform)	19,604.50
Total for Other Assets	\$523,481.03
Total for Assets	\$3,678,095.99
Liabilities and Equity	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	
2000 Accounts Payable	9,737.05
Total for Accounts Payable	\$9,737.05
Other Current Liabilities	
2010 Payroll Clearing	0.00
2015 Payroll Tax Payable	0.00
2020 FWH / FICA	0.00
2035 SWH (State W/H)	0.00
2040 SUTA	0.00
Total for 2015 Payroll Tax Payable	\$0.00
2050 Direct Deposit Payable	0.00
2300 CCTC Line of Credit (GIGP)	0.00
2400 PPP Loan Payable	0.00
2450 Accrued Payroll	930.02
2500 Accrued Expenses	0.00
2800 Deferred Revenue	0.00
2901 New York Department of Taxation and Finance Payable	240.90
Out Of Scope Agency Payable	0.00
Total for Other Current Liabilities	\$1,170.92
Total for Current Liabilities	\$10,907.97
Total for Liabilities	\$10,907.97
Equity	
3200 Opening Balance Equity	0.00
3999 Retained Earnings	3,545,840.54
Net Income	121,347.48
Total for Equity	\$3,667,188.02
Total for Liabilities and Equity	\$3,678,095.99

INCOME & EXPENSES

(As of 12/31/2025)

	<u>Total</u>
Revenue	
Donation Income	142,551.71
Fundraising	6,114.50
Grants	54,163.12
Membership Dues	15,833.50
Nature Shop Income	3,700.28
Tuition & Program Revenue	58,897.84
Lease Income	7,492.52
Uncategorized Income	10.58
Discounts given	0.00
Sales	0.00
Total Revenue	<u>\$ 288,764.05</u>
Cost of Goods Sold	
5004 COGS-Fundraisers	56.61
5005 COGS-Nature Shop	1,051.38
5006 COGS-Program/Event	638.57
Total Cost of Goods Sold	<u>\$ 1,746.56</u>
Gross Revenue	<u>\$ 287,017.49</u>
Expenditures	
General Expenses	\$12,335.30
Personnel	\$169,572.63
Utilities & Overhead	\$25,581.33
Repairs & Maintenance	\$105,414.65
Total Expenditures	<u>\$ 312,903.91</u>
Net Operating Revenue	<u>(25,886.42)</u>
Other Revenue	
4400 Interest Earned	1,224.99
4440 Investment Income-Trust	57,662.23
Total Other Revenue	<u>\$ 58,887.22</u>
Other Expenditures	
6900 Investment Expenses	<u>11,452.57</u>
9977 Unrealized Gain/Loss on Trust	<u>(9,829.10)</u>
9987 Unrealized Gains (Losses) from Investments	<u>(91,770.15)</u>
Total Other Expenditures	<u>113,051.82</u>
Net Other Revenue	<u>(54,164.60)</u>
Net Revenue	<u>(80,051.02)</u>

2026 BUDGET

Income

Category	Amount
Donations	\$75,000
Events, Fundraising, & Sales	\$9,000
Fox Rd Royalty Income	\$7,000.00
Grant Income	\$36,000.00
Membership Dues	\$14,000.00
Miscellaneous Income	\$119,985.00
Program Revenue	\$61,000.00
Total Income	\$321,985.00

Expenses

Category	Amount
Bank Fees	\$1,800.00
Cost of Goods Sold	\$2,100.00
General Administrative Expenses	\$8,500.00
Insurance	\$8,750.00
Miscellaneous Expenses	\$2,000.00
Personnel Expenses	\$175,000.00
Professional Services	\$15,375.00
Repairs and Maintenance	\$129,750.00
Taxes	\$1,000.00
Utilities and Telephone	\$12,500.00
Total Expenses	\$356,775.00
Net Operating Income	(\$ 34,790.00)

Note on Fundraising for Upcoming Projects:

In 2026 we anticipate the need to raise funds for interpretive center roof repairs and to replace the barn. 2026 grant revenue has been conservatively estimated to reflect grant development for this purpose. Corporate support will also be pursued for these improvements and repairs.

We also plan to complete work on the Hoyt Foundation funded project at the IBM Glen to improve the trail to the stone arch "Kissing Bridge" over the next six months. We are carrying over \$68,000 of grant revenue from the Hoyt Foundation for this project which is included in the budget under the "Miscellaneous Income" category. This category also includes regular disbursements from our investment accounts as governed under the Board of Director's Investment Policy.

Memories of Sally and Jim – A Tribute for Two Friends

By Christopher Audette

This year we lost two dear friends of the Waterman Center: Sally Guydosh and Jim Pratt. Both left an indelible mark on the Waterman Center. We would not be who we are today without their energy, brilliance, and dedication.

Sally Guydosh found space in her already busy and accomplished life for volunteering at the Waterman Center through her friendship with Mary Ann Cascarino (herself a Waterman Center icon). The compassion and vigor with which she approached volunteering was most certainly driven by her lifelong love and reverence for nature.

Sally quickly became involved with many of our projects and events, eventually taking the position of Front Desk Receptionist where she nurtured the gift shop and public facing areas of the center into engaging and welcoming spaces. Hers was the cheery voice on the phone and the bright smile for everyone who came through the door.

Sally particularly enjoyed working with our volunteers, even creating a dedicated newsletter called the "Volunteer Voice". While she eventually moved on to work for the Apalachin Fire District, her volunteer service with the Waterman Center continued and she eventually joined the board of directors becoming our Board Secretary. Sally exemplified our volunteer culture, spirit, and impact. For that reason, we created the Sally Guydosh Excellence in Volunteering Award, which we award for the first time in 2026.

Jim Pratt had a deep love for being outdoors and a particular affinity for trees. He amassed an impressive and innovative collection of wood, leaf, and seed samples from all major native tree species which he used for educational programs for years at our center. He later gifted his collection to us, and we continue to utilize it to this day.

Jim was also an expert bacon chef for our Father's Day Breakfasts, but also deftly guided visitors around the trails explaining Hiawatha Island's unique history. He adored the Island and was among the core group of volunteers who took care of it from its early days as a Waterman Center nature preserve. He worked particularly well with Casey Sierzant – with whom Jim developed a deep friendship for many years. Casey is memorialized at our Riverfront Park where we access Hiawatha Island – a spot we call "Casey's Crossing".

The Waterman Center is fortunate to have its history populated by many individuals who, like Sally and Jim, felt driven to serve their communities and help inspire in others the love they felt for nature, hiking, and environmentalism. We began as a small, caring group of people devoted to making a positive impact in the community. Though we've grown, we retain those values and gratefully remember all who came before us!

Notice Of Annual Meeting

December 31st, 2025

Dear Waterman Center Members,

I would like to personally invite all of our members to attend our Annual Membership Meeting from **1:30 PM – 3:30 PM on January 24th, 2026** as we enter our 50th year as the Southern Tier's original conservation education center!

The meeting will be held in our interpretive center auditorium located at
403 Hilton Road, Apalachin NY.

At the annual meeting, Waterman Center members will vote on this year's slate of directors for our board, hear an overview of our 2025 programs and plans for 2026, and learn about the financial health of the center. This year there will be a special program from **Trout Unlimited about innovative Brook Trout habitat restoration in the Owego Creek Watershed.**

We enthusiastically invite every member to vote on the slate of directors. Our bylaws require members to be in good standing in order to vote, so every year we make a list of active members. This year, the list will be produced on January 14th, 2026. If you wish to vote at the annual meeting, we kindly ask that you please make sure you are current on your dues before that date.

Slate of Directors: (to be voted on by members)

Existing Directors Running to Renew Their Term

Matthew Kisloski

Robert Rodgers

Slate of Officers:

(for your information only. These officers are voted on by the board of directors after being approved by members in good standing.)

Mathew Kisloski – Board President

Diane Wiener – Board Vice President

Rex Decker – Board Treasurer

Avery McLean – Board Secretary

Sincerely,

The Waterman Conservation Education Center Board of Directors

Waterman Conservation Education Center Annual Meeting

Saturday, January 25, 2025, 1:30 pm
Hilton Road, Apalachin, NY

ANNUAL MEETING @1:38pm

[same attendance list]

We are in the “foundational years” - growth and improvements, ramp up programming, large scale projects, out in the community
We will go over accomplishments and what we want to do in the future
Open to questions and comments from the group

Vote to approve minutes from last annual meetings - approved

Introduce Chris (executive director)

- thank you for coming out to the annual meeting
 - small business portion of the meeting - going over finances, summary of the state of the center entering 2025, ask membership to approve/certify the board of directors for 2025
 - page 3 - two new directors to be approved by the membership, and two board members renewing their terms to be approved by the membership
 - followed by presentations

Financial Report (Rex) - Overview

- willing to do Q&A now or meet at any other time to discuss
- Pie charts in the annual report to use as reference
- looks like we have a lot of assets but a lot are restricted funds
- Chris is great at writing grants, and we fundraise primary for our funds to be used
 - discretionary funds are available in case of emergency
- 2024 revenue updates - some significant funds coming in but as mentioned they are restricted
- expenses exceeded revenue this year, part of this is based on the grants we have received and some use of restricted funds
- basis is to get into the community more - we want to be a spot for the community, and we want to expand on that with programming
- statement of financial position - details of what we have on hand at the end of the year, also outlines the restricted funds we have access to
- detailed list of expenses, and ongoing operations, also provided, this includes payroll for employees who run our programming
 - we have good people and we are happy to have them
- this is not a break even budget but we are transparent - we have a best guess for 2025 and where we expect to be
 - gives an idea of where our funds come from and how we plan to utilize them
- Chris - the fund that we received a distribution from, was from Nicholas Sabara who trusted us money when he passed away - this is a boon to us, we are managing that fund with restrictions to the point that we want to utilize the income off of it for strategic purposes. it is a really important safety net and that is how we would like it to remain. This was a substantial gift and resource for the Waterman Center

Directors Report - State of the Center Address (programs and impact), including hearing from our staff

- Driveways, parking lots, bathroom facelifts, flooring, you name it - Chris has been working on improvements for future developments (past)
- 2024 = focus on programming (2025 - still active plans to improve access to the Kissing bridge at IBM Glen, Brick Pond deck and parking lot in memory of Cynthia Ford, cosmetic/functional upgrade plans for the Center itself, continue work with Hiking Group and trail development, Harriet Marcy bird blind, Shores of Susquehanna river and island programs for 2025)
 - Michelle and Chris set goal for guided program at least once a week - expanded to programs here, other sites
 - partnered with many Volunteers, Naturalist club of Broome County, etc.
 - goal of more monthly talks (presentations/talks) and expanding school programming
 - BOCES programming - treated as a laboratory for yearlong curriculum
 - most successful summer camp season since the pandemic

- illustrated in chart on projector - first five weeks in partnership with Town of Owego/County of Tioga Youth Bureau (free to attend for Owego households, \$80 approx. cost per child)
 - one week of Watermann explorer - tuition based nature camp (academic focus) - costs \$200+ a week to attend
 - attendance speaking to the positive perception of the center and our reputation in the community
- addition of Steve to the center
 - “Boat Pilot” - brought back river tour program, and well positioned to continue
- 8000 people (just shy) of participation with the Center - suspect that the number is actually higher with trails/social media/online considered
- estimate that at least 3000 people in a given year take maps to navigate the IBM - estimates of even 10,000 to the IBM Glen in a year - ever expanding and difficult to document
- 69 programs presented to the public in 2024 - participated/partnered in even more
 - surpassed at least one programming a week
- more than 2000 volunteer hours - request to record the volunteer hours from board/membership
- our volunteers are critical to what we do, how we appear publicly, and maintaining our welcoming culture.
 - they fulfill all roles we ask and may even just need.
 - Chris took time to recognize volunteers at this time (listed in annual report) - volunteers asked to stand up for a round of applause.
- recognizing the work of the Board members - asked to stand for a round of applause.
- exceptional year for programming and visitation at the Center - thank you to all volunteers and visitors for making this possible
- thank you to our staff - introductions of Steve (conservation specialist)
 - Steve (Conservationist)
 - not sure how he ended up here - but summed up as crisis intervention.
 - construction background - happy to help with structural issues.
 - working on project with Chris
 - Jerry - thankful for your time and assistance in ongoing training (you too Jim)
 - applicators license (pesticides)
 - excited for upcoming summer’s boat tours
 - lands manages and trails are clear - majorly in the intent of our efforts to save hemlock trees by getting applicators license (long path ahead of him)
 - Courtney (executive assistant)
 - was a former camp staff member and director - now at the desk answers emails/calls?
 - still does all the camps
 - makes newsletters and redesigned the website (online presence)
 - grew up working in nonprofit - very used to small team do a lot, pull where you can
 - Michelle (program specialist)
 - been with the center for in 2021 as a volunteer and has moved up from there
 - cares for animals (including Ted - who had commentary during the meeting as well)
 - variety of different programming - especially birding programs (specialty)
 - looks to collaborate with other local programs
 - Chris provides special thanks for how hard Michelle has worked at diversifying our revenue stream with the increase in programming - critical for the future and Michelle has hit that out of the park
- we all have a different reason for being here and what Waterman means to us
 - “a place for all seasons, a place for all people” - this is a spot for you to find peace, be educated/stimulated
- “I am honored to be the executive director” - Chris

Gail Morrison - February programing

- “the critter conundrum” escape room
- escapes rooms are puzzles where you gather clues and information to solve the mystery of who is the commotion creator
- participation in the mystery provides and introduction to the preserves, our Center, and the nature around us
- thank you to Steve for helping facilitate the preparation
- invite to the board to come together and solve the mystery in the next few weeks (board, volunteers, staff - free of charge)
- any questions - feel free to ask

Nominating Committee Chair - Steve Mika

- executive elections, board member elections
 - Matt running as President again
 - Rex running as Treasurer again (joined in 2017)
 - VP is vacant and remains vacant at the moment
 - Secretary - Sally is stepping down (has been here for decades), will be interim secretary until filled
 - Avery, Steve, Diane, and Scott for Board
- volunteers, if you are interested in joining the board, please let Steve, Chris, or Matt know
- approved

Guest Speakers

(1) DEC Enforcement Officers (Tony Rigoli and Oz) - discussing what they do and how we can help out as a Conservationist org/Nature preserve

- Tony is zone supervisor (Broome, Tompkins, Tioga) (transferred to Broome county when provided the opportunity)
- Ozzy (Isenberg) - conservation officer for over 30 years
- NOTE - only 4 guys in the zone right now (supposed to be a lot more)
- available to the public 24/7 (run a flex schedule to ensure coverage)
- rely on community reports (reliance on public communication)
- Tony came to summer camp here
- emphasis on connection to nature (especially children)
- Call 1-844-DEC-ECOS (1-844-332-3267) to report poaching and polluting complaints to a DEC dispatcher. They are open 24/7.

(2) Local Artist, Karen

- artwork/portraits have been on display here for 2 months
 - discussed 7 pieces that have been on display (not completely finished works but close)
- was an intern with a former director
- drawing volunteer workshop
- worked at the summer camp
- 2016 program about Native people - brought in Native speakers
- concluded with a short video

Chris - concluding remarks of thanks

Matt - final thanks and request for input from volunteers and community (specifically for programming)

- we made a lot of great progress this year and we are in a fascinating spot. there is so much we have done but more we want to do. we cannot do it without the volunteers and their ties to the community

ADJOURN @ 3:38pm