

Annual Report 2025



SEVERSON DELLS
NATURE CENTER

A Note from the President

Every day, we see the impact of the meaningful work we do. The green landscape of our “Forest City,” paired with the biodiversity of the Kishwaukee River, is no accident. It reflects the collective effort each of you makes.

At Severson Dells, soon Wild Roots Nature Center, there’s always a sense of excitement when a bus pulls in. It’s a real opportunity to make a difference. For each student, it can be the moment that sparks a lifelong connection to nature. Like many of you, my own passion started early—well before I could tell a hickory from an oak—but it’s those early experiences that shaped where I am today.

Nature education is an investment. Sometimes you see the impact right away, but more often it’s a seed that’s planted—one that grows over time into something much bigger: a thriving ecosystem, a lasting commitment, a ripple effect that reaches far beyond that initial moment.

Fifty years ago, Fannie Severson planted that seed when she donated her deer lodge, with the hope that it would become exactly what it is today: a place that grows, supports, and inspires thousands.

None of the progress over the last 50 years would have been possible without all of you. This is a community that shows up with curiosity, with commitment, and with a willingness to act. You’ve helped drive stewardship of this land, expanded our reach to places like Prairie’s Edge, and supported efforts to protect our local environment through advocacy and engagement.

That collective effort has strengthened our connection not just to the land, but to each other. And that matters.

I’m proud of the work you’ve helped inspire, and even more proud of the impact it continues to have. Without places like this, our “Forest City” would likely have fewer trees, and the Kishwaukee River fewer species calling it home.

Thank you for investing in nature education and for believing that our future can, and should, be greener and stronger.



Michelle Borgialli, Board President (right) and Ann Wasser, Executive Director (left).

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Michelle Borgialli".

Michelle Borgialli
Michelle.board@WildRootsNatureCenter.org

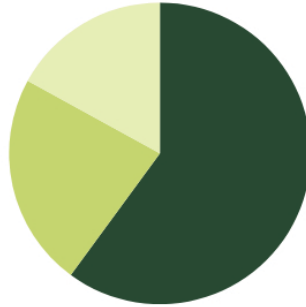
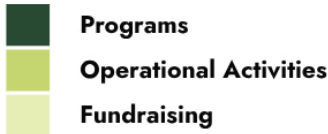


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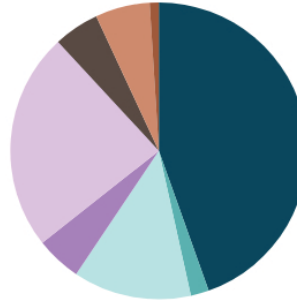
Severson Dells Nature Center is a 501(c)(3) non-profit nature education organization in Rockford, Illinois. Operating two locations: the historical Severson Dells and Prairie’s Edge, currently in the process of being restored, Severson Dells’ mission is to inspire conservation of nature through education and stewardship, cultivating connections between people and place.



EXPENSES:



INCOME:



ASSETS

Current Assets

Cash	\$672,057
Grants Receivable	\$27,184
Inventory	\$15,816
Total Current Assets	\$715,057

Non-Current Assets

Investments	\$2,593,562
Property & Equipment	\$1,193,552
Assets Held Externally	\$226,112
Endowment Investments	\$126,106
Total Non-Current Assets	\$4,139,332
TOTAL ASSETS	\$4,854,389

LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS

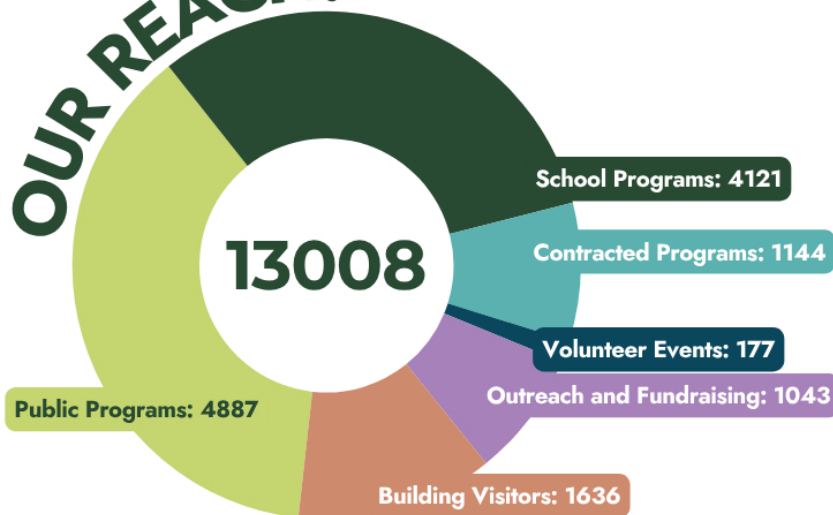
Current Liabilities

Accounts payable	\$224
Accrued wages & vacation	\$24,005
Deferred Revenue	\$14,730
Total Current Liabilities	\$38,959

Net Assets

Without donor restrictions	\$4,079,979
With donor restrictions	\$740,451
Total Net Assets	\$4,815,430
TOTAL LIABILITIES & NET ASSETS	\$4,854,389

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Heritage Society

Every sunset brings the promise of a new dawn. — Ralph Waldo Emerson

The Heritage Society recognizes those special friends who include Severson Dells Nature Center in their wills or estate plans. These legacy donors discover the joy of making sure their generous support for environmental education lives on.

**Anonymous
Francie Barnes
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Memorials & Honorariums

"No person was ever honored for what he received. Honor has been the reward for what he gave." — Calvin Coolidge

Memorials are a meaningful way to honor the life of a loved one after they have passed by supporting a cause the loved one was passionate about. Honorariums are a way to recognize a loved one or commemorate a special occasion with a philanthropic gift.

We are grateful to those who chose Wild Roots for these meaningful gifts.

**In Memory
Mark Culhane
Frances Dewey
Dave Kostka
Dennis Leaf
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**In Honor
Stanley Campbell**



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Urban Forest*
Vector Optics*
Village Green*
Waterside Financial Advisors
Wetzel County 4H Leaders Assoc
Wild Ones Rock River Valley
Winnebago County

Foundations & Non-Profits

Alpine Kiwanis Charities, Inc.
Ben Harding Family Foundation
Brubaker Charitable Trust
Community Foundation of Northern
Illinois
Crown Family Philanthropies
Dean Alan Olson Foundation
Etnyre Foundation
Gloyd Family Foundation
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Ike Nizam Foundation Inc
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*Indicates an In-Kind Donor

Become a Member today!

Membership benefits include:

- Reduced admissions to Wild Roots programs for all ages
- Members-only events at Wild Roots
- Early summer camp registration
- Newsletter published periodically and monthly e-mail updates
- Helping to connect people to nature and each other
- Being part of a community of nature stewards and enthusiasts
- Benefits at participating ANCA (Association of Nature Center Administrators) member nature centers around the country
- Check-out privileges at our library

Membership Type

- Individual \$45 Benefactor \$300
- Family \$75 Sustaining \$600
- Sponsor \$125 Patron \$1000
- I would like to have my membership automatically renew annually.
(Must pay by credit card)

Name _____

Email _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ Zip _____

Payment

- Check enclosed
- Please charge my credit card

Card Number _____

Exp. Date _____ CCV _____

- I would like to cover the credit card fees for this transaction.

Cut this form out and utilize the inserted envelope to submit payment or make a donation or join as a member online: WildRootsNatureCenter.org/become-a-member

CONNECT with us

now - June 30



facebook.com/seversondellsnature



[@SeversonDellsNatureCenter](https://www.instagram.com/SeversonDellsNatureCenter)



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SeversonDells.org

beginning July 1



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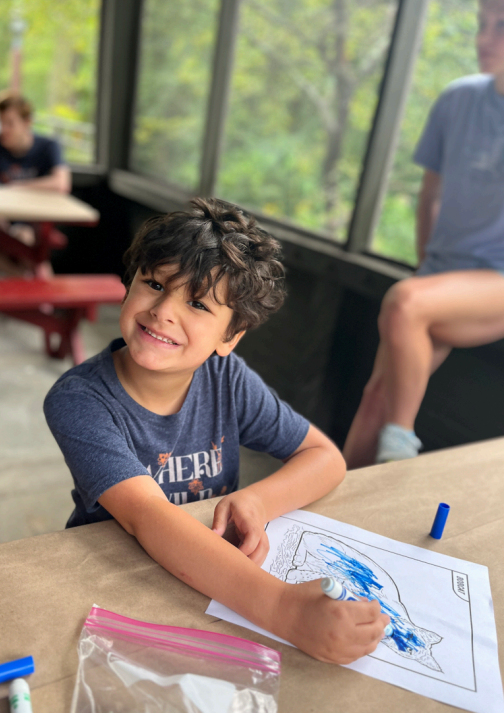
[@WildRootsNatureCenter](https://www.instagram.com/WildRootsNatureCenter)



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WildRootsNatureCenter.org





SEVERSON DELLS
NATURE CENTER

SeversonDells.org

815 - 335 - 2915

Severson Dells is open

Monday - Saturday

8am - 4:30pm

Our Mission: Our mission is to inspire conservation of nature through education and stewardship, cultivating connections between people and place.

Our Vision: A community inspired to explore, understand, and protect the natural world—where curiosity leads to stewardship, science informs action, and every person feels connected to each other and the land.

Board of Directors

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2025 Nature Center Staff

Ann Wasser - Executive Director
Andrea Wallace Noble - Education Programs Manager
Elly Salazar - School Programs Coordinator
Laura Sjoquist - Administrative Assistant
Linda Sandquist - Director of Development
Liz Wiener - Public Programs Coordinator
Rebecca Rankins - Community Engagement Coordinator

2025 AmeriCorps Members

Caedyn Wells - Community Science
Caroline Pacheco - Environmental Education
Emma Zimmerman - Science Communication
Lauren Bonavia - Environmental Education
Olivia Price - Environmental Education

Special note: Severson Dells Nature Center is undergoing a rebrand from Severson Dells Nature Center to Wild Roots Nature Center. To learn more, visit SeversonDells.org/WildRoots