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PUBLISHER"S LETTER



Kathy Wine

Takeaways

appreciated the wonderful freedom we all had before COVID; never will I take it for granted again!

In 2019, River Action updated its strategic plan; pandemic response was not in it. This year, we mostly were finding ways to keep functioning. Working from home, challenging! Fundraising, equally challenging! We learned that we are not an "essential" business, yet

getting outdoors was essential. COVID-19 accelerated normal evolution that might have taken place, I believe, but we observed what was happening, and it was informative. There were more bikers and hikers on the riverfront trails than ever before. Not a kayak could be found for sale in Quad City stores. We started planning and envisioning amazing adventures that would take these enthusiasts up close to the Mississippi and allow them to get immersed in the outdoors, stay healthy, and become stewards for riverfront access and clean water. We accomplished much of that in the events we were able to hold this summer.

But events aren't all that we do. Community and networking are essentials, too, but they become secondary to individual safety; large crowds are out, even the kind of networking we love to do at the Upper Mississippi River Conference each fall is out. A major reason for meeting is networking; meeting people you need to know, but don't. Hearing ideas you need to hear, but haven't. So conference planning began by the steering committee with a nimbleness that was outstanding; several of our conference speakers are instead featured in webinars this fall.

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The online programs have already attracted registrants from as far away as Massachusetts and South Dakota. An important takeaway of this virtual networking will be the increased understanding nationwide of the Mississippi River; hopefully, when the rest of the nation hears our voices, there will be change and improvements in the preservation and restoration of the nation's greatest river long after this pandemic is over.

Finally, the pandemic has given us insight into how dependent we are on our members and supporters. You have sustained us, so thank you! As we work to build First Bridge, (and we will have a real rip-roaring celebration of it when we do!), increase our Channel Cat Talks, our memberships, and our Retain the Rain projects, we understand that trails, outdoor events, and education all play a role in economic recovery, contribute to public health, and make River Action's action on the river sustainable.



November/December/January 2020-21 Volume 10 Issue 4

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eddy Magazine

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Our Mission:

River Action strives to foster the environmental, economic, and cultural vitality of the Mississippi River and its riverfront in the Quad City region.

Making it Work: 2020 Events





Top left: Pictured is the McShane family creating their 'flood wall' in Schwiebert Park during Ride and Seek. Top right: Taming of the Slough competitors tackle the mountain biking leg on Sylvan Island. Bottom left: Paddler enjoying Floatzilla, pandemic-style! Bottom right: Riders on the Senior Golf Cart Tours learn about Hampton history from Tom McKay, President of the Hampton Historical Society.

he year 2020 humbled us. Every year when we stage Ride the River, Floatzilla, Taming of the Slough, or the Senior Golf Cart Tours we embrace challenging situations. We never know if it's going to rain or shine, whether it will flood or not, or just how we will be iolted out of our comfort zone. because we usually are. But we did not anticipate a pandemic. We addressed this circumstance with the primary objective of treating our participants and volunteers as if they were the most important people in the world. Keep them safe!

In January and February, we had a different vision of each event while getting buy-in from sponsors. After lowa and Illinois initiated shut-downs, we had to describe to potential sponsors the point of view of participants if we held each event-what it would be like, and what would be exciting about the experience. We took them through registration, mailings, packet pickups, and day-of-event activities. Our concern was losing sponsors, but we

didn't! We actually added sponsors. We will be forever indebted to those who staved with us or joined us to support our events this summer. We could not have staged our events without them.

Creating memorable moments is part of managing an event. In the past, the image of families boarding the Celebration Belle on Father's Day, the thrusting of paddles in the air for the Floatzilla world record attempt, and the thrill of standing at the Taming of the Slough finish line gave us energy and atmospheric excitement. Would we be able to create memorable moments even with social distancing and masks?

So, event by event, we learned new ways to present. Families who were quarantining together could Ride and Seek answers in a new bi-state bicycle trail scavenger hunt.

The moment when paddlers abided by the flags marking where boats at Floatzilla launches should be staged (six feet apart) was memorable. The wearing of masks by

paddlers while on land, during the Sunset Park conclusion, and on shuttle buses warmed our hearts, too.

The memories created are lasting, from seeing racers who were competing for their own personal best times check out the posted results at Bass Street Landing for Taming of the Slough, and the cheers that went up for the five youths who competed for the first time as individuals in paddling, biking, and running.

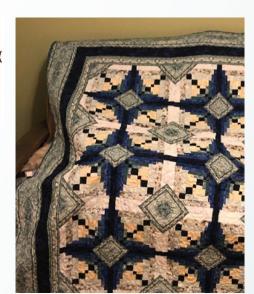
Finally, the memorable moments on the Golf Cart Tour could be multiplied by 688. the number of seniors in carts driven on six different tours, each conducted three times, on two of the most beautiful September days of 2020.

Did we earn the right to lead in 2021? Hopefully so, thanks to our actions concerning pandemic safety protocols, volunteers, and dedicated staff. So far, people have enjoyed adventuring along with us, as we have with them!

Fish & Fire Online Auction

— by Philip Tunnicliff

e were all disappointed to have to cancel our Fish & Fire Fundraiser Dinner and Eddy Awards presentation this year. So instead, the Fish & Fire 2020 Auction is under way online at www.32auctions.com/ Fish and Fire2020 and it will run until midnight, Nov. 8, 2020. Items donated for the auction have been posted for bidding. Included this year is a 17- by 60inch framed print of the iconic 2019 Flood photo taken April 23, 2019 by Mike Fetterer, a 2019 Green Bay Packers autographed football with signatures of every player from the team, a 12-inch multi-colored vase made locally by Hot Glass Inc., and an elegant guilt hand crafted for the event by River Action program manager Carol Downey. Log on now to bid on your next treasure!



"Chelsea" Quilt, designed by Jinny Beyer, pieced and quilted by Carol Downey.



The 2019 Flood Photo held by photographer Mike Fetterer, presented as offered, 17" x 60"



2019 Green Bay Packers Autographed Football



Channel Cat Tour: 1-74 Bridge



George Ryan, I-74 Bridge Corridor Manager, gave an insider's perspective on the construction of the new I-74 bridge on a special Channel Cat tour in September. More tours are being planned for 2021. Photo credit: Carol Downey. (©)



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previous purchases and any other coupons of promotions. In-stock items only.

STUDENT FILM COMPETITION: VIDEOS DUE NOV. 15

— by Carol Downey 📃



iver Action's QC Environmental Film Series Student Film Competition invites students to create and submit a threeto-five-minute video on local environmental issues related to the Mississippi River. The competition is open to middle schoolers, high schoolers, and college students. Two winning videos will be chosen from each group. Students may work individually or as a team and each winning video will receive a \$100 cash prize and \$150 for the winning student's teacher to be used in the classroom. Winning videos will be shown during the 2021 QC Environmental Film Series and will be viewable on Fresh Films' website at www.freshfilms.org. Winners also will be featured in an article for an

upcoming issue of the Eddy Magazine. Submissions must be uploaded to YouTube with #FreshFilms hashtag by Nov. 15, 2020 to be eligible. Winners will be selected by Dec. 15, 2020. For more information visit riveraction.org/videocomp.

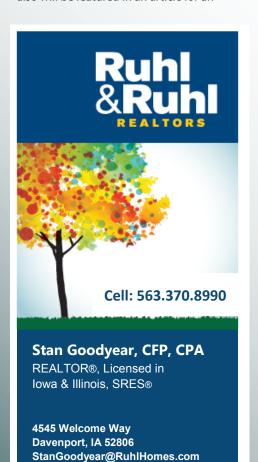




NEW INTERPRETIVE SIGNAGE ON ARSENAL ISLAND — by Kathy Wine



The Gathering Point, a steel mural at the western tip of Arsenal Island is a 1999 communitybuilt art project designed by Kunhild Blacklock for River Action that interprets natural resources and wildlife of the river. When new interpretive displays were needed, and in order to tell more of the rich history and legends of Native Americans on Arsenal Island, the US military fort, the first lock and dam, and the unique swing-span bridge, new signage was installed Sept. 15, 2020. Spearheaded by Professor Emeritus Norm Moline, Augustana College, and member of River Action's Board of Directors, it was the result of a collaboration with Arsenal and US Army Corps of Engineers historians and US Fish & Wildlife Service. Photo credit: Bailey Johnson



www.StanleyGoodyear.RuhlHomes.com

A Word About Weather

– by Kathy Wine

n Sept. 26, Eddy Magazine talked with Robb Ewoldt, Davenport farmer, about the best practices used on his 1,000 acres to combat weather and climate change. He calls them 'weatherproofing the soil.'

Asked if he had ever had an "aha" moment, he described an awe-inspiring encounter this way. "In 2011, I did a late planting of a rye cover crop in a 16-acre field: eight acres with the cereal rye and eight without. In 2012, I had that moment. It was a drought year, soybeans on the barren corn stalk field, no-tilled but without rye, produced 15 bushels per acre. What I saw in the field planted with rye was 35 bushels per acre. When you see that, you are sold. On our yield maps, you can see where we ran out of cover crop seed. It is very impressive."

He went on to say, "The soil has more of a root system; it's more alive with more microbes. The soil is actually alive and moving! It makes a huge difference even

on the end rows where we turn around; the yield is better."

That kind of excitement helps as he works with the Iowa Soybean Association, an organization he will head as president in 2021. He, along with the leaders of the association, have a new name for these sustainable practices—regenerative farming.

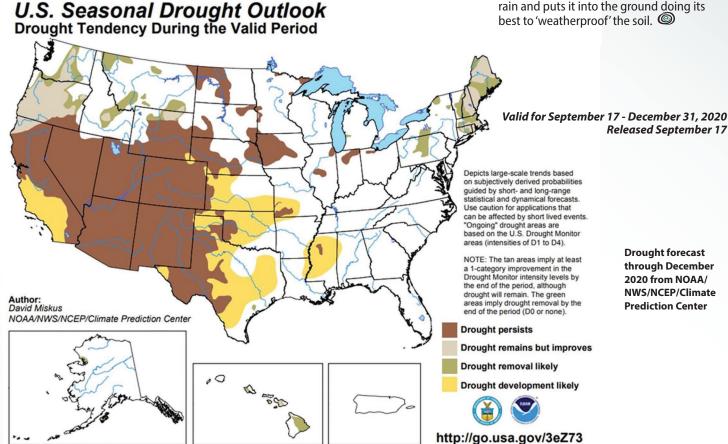
He told another story that supports regenerative farming. A producer in Rippey, lowa received only four inches of rain up to Aug. 10, 2020, the day the derecho came through Iowa. The wind completely leveled his corn field and harvest was not possible. For insurance purposes, he had to calculate the potential bushels per acre. On land that he had no-tilled for 20-25 years, and on which he had applied cover crops, he had 225 bushels per acre! Robb added, "We have learned to hybridize the seed for drought. We have not learned how to genetically do that for crops under water. That is why we



Regenerative farming advocate, Robb Ewoldt

are weatherproofing the soil and making the sponge bigger. It takes years, even decades. Every year we are making improvements, but we are not back to what it was when we broke the prairie during settlement."

No-till and minimum-till practices keep the residue that remains after corn or soybeans are harvested on the land through the following spring to help keep soil in place. Rather than plow or disc the ground for planting, they are planted right in the residue, so the fields are never bare. With this practice there is less disturbance and less chance for it to wash away. Finally, the blanket of residue absorbs the energy of the rain and puts it into the ground doing its







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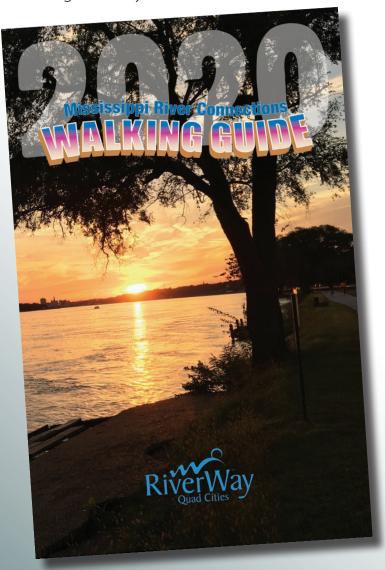
David A. Johnson, D.D.S.

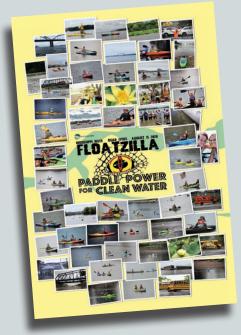
3512 Jersey Ridge Road Davenport, IA 52807

(563) 359-3494

Get yours today! 2020 Walking Guide

The 16-page, 2020 Mississippi River **Connections Walking Guide** is available for distribution in offices. Pick up a copy for personal use at River Action, or find it online at riveraction.org. It covers riverfront walking trails, and new this year, Black Hawk State Historic Site. Graphic design by GAH; Printing courtesy of Mancomm.

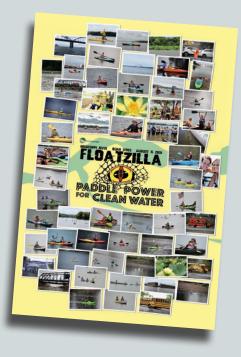




Floatzilla Posters for Sale!

– By Noah Truesdell

lithout the world record attempt and group photo, we had to get creative with this year's Floatzilla poster. We took paddlers' photo submissions along with photos taken by our floating master of ceremonies, Bill Boom, from aboard his boat. This photo collage with the Mississippi and Rock Rivers in the background along with the Floatzilla logo is the 2020 Floatzilla poster. A big thank-you to Greg Gackle of GAH for designing the poster, and Mancomm for printing. Posters can be purchased for \$5 (pick up) or \$10 (mailed) on our website at riveraction.org.



SAVE THESE 2021 DATES!



April 23 Fish & Fire Fundraiser Dinner

nner and Silent Auction

June 1 – September 15

Explore the River Education Series





June 1 – 30 **Ride and Seek** Riverfront Scavenger Hunt



Golf Cart Tours

September 2–3 Senior Citizens-Riverfront **Golf Cart Tours**

August 21 **Floatzilla** Paddlesports Festival





2020 Upper Mississippi River Webinar Series

— By Carol Downey

oin River Action this fall as we take our annual Upper Mississippi River Conference into the virtual world. The 2020 UMRC Webinar Series will feature hour-long sessions and a live question-and-answer session with each speaker. Certificates of a ttendance for continuing education credits will be issued upon request. A unique link and instructions will be sent to all registered attendees prior to each webinar. Certificates of attendance will be sent as requested following each webinar. Register now at riveraction.org/UMRC/schedule — \$10 per webinar or three for \$25.



Kirsten Wallace Upper Mississippi River Basin Association



Trevor Sample Illinois EPA



Patrick Elliott Milwaukee Metro Sewerage District



Kris Johnson, Ph. D. The Nature Conservancy



Eugene Yacobson The Nature Conservancy





Roger Viadero, Ph.D. Western Illinois University



Tanya Fonseca GRAFF-USA



Zachary Moss Izaak Walton League



graphic design | photography pidesigninc.com

2020 UMRC Webinars

November 5, 2020 - 2 p.m.

Roger Viadero, Ph.D. Western Illinois University

Headwater Streams: Their Importance in the Upper Mississippi River Basin

November 10, 2020 - 2 p.m.

Patrick Elliott, Milwaukee Metro Sewerage District and Tanya Fonseca, GRAEF-USA

The Rediscovery and Healing of an Urban River - Kinnickinnic River, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

November 12, 2020 - 2 p.m.

Kris Johnson, Ph.D. and Eugene Yacobson, The Nature Conservancy

Science and Decision Tools to Guide Floodplain Protection & Restoration in the Mississippi River Basin

November 17, 2020 - 2 p.m.

Trevor Sample, Illinois **Environmental Protection Agency** Implementing the Illinois Nutrient Loss

Reduction Strategy ~ and ~

Zachary Moss, Izaak Walton League

Getting Your Feet Wet: A Stair-Step Approach for Engaging Community Members in Volunteer Water Ouality Monitoring

November 19, 2020 - 2 p.m.

Kirsten Wallace, Upper Mississippi River Basin Association and Paul St. Louis, US Army Corps of Engineers

Flood, Sediment, and Drought Management Planning

Register online at: www.riveraction.org/UMRC/ schedule

First Bridge Project Vision



creen capture from drone footage showing the planned route for a recreation trail and bicycle/pedestrian bridge providing panoramic views of the river and a safe crossing over River Drive and the Canadian Pacific rail line into River Heritage Park. Visit www.riveraction.org to view the video. Many thanks to Andrew Palmer, Tri-City Electric Co. for the drone video and Rob Eckert, Republic Companies, for editing and labels.



Calenda

Please check program websites for possible changes in schedule.

November

River Action's Upper Mississippi River Webinar Series



Roger Viadero, Ph.D., Western Illinois University

Headwater Streams: Their Importance in the Upper Mississippi River Basin

Nov 5, 2 pm, 563-322-2969, riveraction.org/ UMRC/Schedule

Continuing education certificates available. Single webinar \$10, select three for \$25.





💋 🌑 🌗 Upper Mississippi River Conference

Nahant Marsh: Breakfast Nature Club -**Topic TBA**

Nov 6, 8-9 am, Nahant Marsh Education Center, 4220 Wapello Ave, Davenport, nahantmarsh.org



Nahant Marsh: Nature Hike

Nov 7, 9-10 am, Nahant Marsh Education Center, 4220 Wapello Ave, Davenport, nahantmarsh.org

round on the first Saturday of the month and give visitors an opportunity to learn more about the diverse flora and fauna of received will aid Nahant Marsh's public

River Action's Upper Mississippi River Webinar Series



Patrick Elliott, Milwaukee Metro Sewerage District **Tanya Fonseca,** GRAEF-USA

The Rediscovery and Healing of an Urban River - Kinnickinnic River, Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Nov 10, 2 pm, 563-322-2969, riveraction.org/ UMRC/Schedule

Continuing education certificates available. Single webinar \$10, select three for \$25.





Upper Mississippi River Conference

River Action's Upper Mississippi River Webinar Series



Kris Johnson, Ph.D. **Eugene Yacobson,** The Nature Conservancy

Science and Decision Tools to Guide Floodplain Protection & Restoration in the Mississippi River Basin

Nov 12, 2 pm, 563-322-2969, riveraction.org/

Continuing education certificates available. Single webinar \$10, select three for \$25.



Deper Mississippi River Conference

Quad City Audubon Society's Lock & Dam 13 Field Trip

Nov 15, 7 am, Brothers Restaurant, 1718 2nd Ave, Rapids City, quadcityaudubon.org

This field trip focuses on migrating waterfowl with an emphasis on the Mississippi River from Lock and Dam 13 to Savanna, IL. Meet at Brothers Restaurant for carpooling/caravan. Free.

River Action's **Upper Mississippi River Webinar Series**



Trevor Sample, Illinois Environmental **Protection Agency** Zachary Moss, Izaak Walton League

Implementing the Illinois Nutrient Loss **Reduction Strategy**

Getting Your Feet Wet: A Stair-Step Approach for Engaging Community Members in Volunteer Water Quality Monitoring

Nov 17, 2 pm, 563-322-2969, riveraction.org/ UMRC/Schedule

Continuing education certificates available. Single webinar \$10, select three for \$25.





Upper Mississippi River Conference

Nahant Marsh: Families in Nature – Terrific Turkeys

Nov 14, 10-11 am, Nahant Marsh Education Center, 4220 Wapello Ave, Davenport, nahantmarsh.org wild turkeys. \$10; no fee for accompanying adults.



River Action's Upper Mississippi River Webinar Series



Kirsten Wallace, Upper Mississippi River Basin Association and Paul St. Louis, US Army Corps of Engineers

Flood, Sediment, and Drought **Management Planning**

Nov 19, 2 pm, 563-322-2969, riveraction.org/ UMRC/Schedule

Continuing education certificates available. Single webinar \$10, select three for \$25.



Deper Mississippi River Conference



Nahant Marsh: Birding with Jimmy Nov 28, 8-10 am, Nahant Marsh Education Center, 4220 Wapello Ave, Davenport, nahantmarsh.org Both experienced and beginner birders will enjoy

this hike led by AmeriCorps Environmental Educator, Jimmy Wiebler. Learn about bird identification, which characteristics make a bird a waterfowl, or why some birds breed and lay eggs at different times of the year. Happy Birding! \$10 (Binoculars are available to rent).









Quad City Arts Festival of Trees Special Virtual Event

Nov 21, 10 am, KWQC, qcfestivaloftrees.com Watch a televised one-hour Festival of Trees Holiday Special. This special event will consist of coverage from past parades, centerstage acts, messages from staff, volunteers, and community members as well as a message of hope from Santa.





www.32auctions.com/Fish_and_Fire2020



River Action's Environmental Book Club Nov 24, 7 pm, River Action Office, 822 E. River Dr, Davenport, 563-322-2969, riveraction.org Discuss The Man Who Quit Money by Mark Sundeen. An account of how one man learned to live, sanely and happily, without earning, receiving, or spending a cent. Daniel Suelo lives in caves in the Utah canyonlands, forages wild foods and gourmet discards. He manages to amply fulfill the basic human needs to an enviable degree. Sundeen raises provocative and riveting questions about the decisions we all make, by default or by design, about how we live - and how we might live better. Free and open to the public.

Calendar continued on page 14 >



Rain Barrels for Sale!

Every gallon of rainwater collected keeps it out of our already swollen rivers and streams, and potentially out of your basement or business. River Action sells 60-gallon recycled food-grade barrels for rain collection. The barrels come with spigot, downspout diverter, mosquito netting, and overflow valves. Barrels are available at the River Action office or www. riveraction.org. Every gallon counts!



< Calendar continued from page 13

December

Nahant Marsh: Breakfast Nature Club

Dec 4, 8-9 am, Nahant Marsh Education Center, 4220 Wapello Ave, Davenport, nahantmarsh.org Topic to be announced. \$5 suggested donation.

Nahant Marsh: Families in Nature

Dec 12, 10-11 am, Nahant Marsh Education Center, 4220 Wapello Ave, Davenport, nahantmarsh.org Program to be announced. \$10, no fee for accompanying adults.

Quad City Audubon Society Monthly Meeting Dec. 10, 7 pm, Butterworth Center, 1105 8th St, Moline, quadcityaudubon.org

Club president, Jody Millar, will share her knowledge on Bald Eagles. Pie Night follows the program with a one-way line into the kitchen and seating at small tables in three rooms to accommodate social distancing. If able, please bring your favorite pie to share. Free.



Christmas Bird Count

Dec 13 through Jan 4, quadcityaudubon.org Be a part of this annual tally of wild birds. Contact Kelly McKay 309-235-4661 to participate.

Send us your suggestion(s) for the 2021 Environmental Book **Club Reading List!**

itle:
author:
our contact info:
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outhor:
our contact info



Bald Eagle Days

Jan 8-10, QCCA Expo Center, 2621 4th Ave, Rock Island, accaexpocenter.com

This three-day event includes live eagle, hawk, owl, and vulture flying demonstrations along with educational programs and over 200 fun and informative exhibits. Be sure to stop by River Action's booth! Adults \$6, Children age 6-15 \$1.

Nahant Marsh: Nature Hike

Dec 5, 9-10 am, Nahant Marsh Education Center, 4220 Wapello Ave, Davenport, nahantmarsh.org

Join a naturalist for an interpretive trail walk through the Marsh. Hikes are offered yearround on the first Saturday of the month and give visitors an opportunity to learn more about the diverse flora and fauna of this unique natural area. Free, donations received will aid Nahant Marsh's public education programs.

River Action's Environmental Book Club

Jan 26, 7 pm, River Action Office, 822 E. River Dr, Davenport, 563-322-2969, riveraction.org

River Action and Sierra Club host a monthly environmental book club. The book for January will be announced on River Action's website once selected. Book discussions are free and open to the public.



Connect with Us



For over 30 years River Action has been dedicated to connecting people to the river. Our supporters help us to improve the quality of water that flows down the river. They help us instill a love of the river through encouraging participation in many activities that involve the river. Plus, River Action encourages educational programs that help our residents better understand river issues.



engage







celebrate



learn







JOINS L

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www.riveraction.org

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563-322-2969

Please indicate membership level

\$130 Action Membership

Includes benefits of individual membership, Riverine Walks (Up to two heads of household and dependent children under the age of 18), and 2 tickets to a River Action event. Choose one: Ride the River, Taming of the Slough, Floatzilla, Golf Cart Tour, or Channel Cat Talks.

\$75 Household Membership

Includes benefits of individual membership. River Wine Walks (Up to two heads of household and dependent children under the age of 18).

\$45 Individual Membership

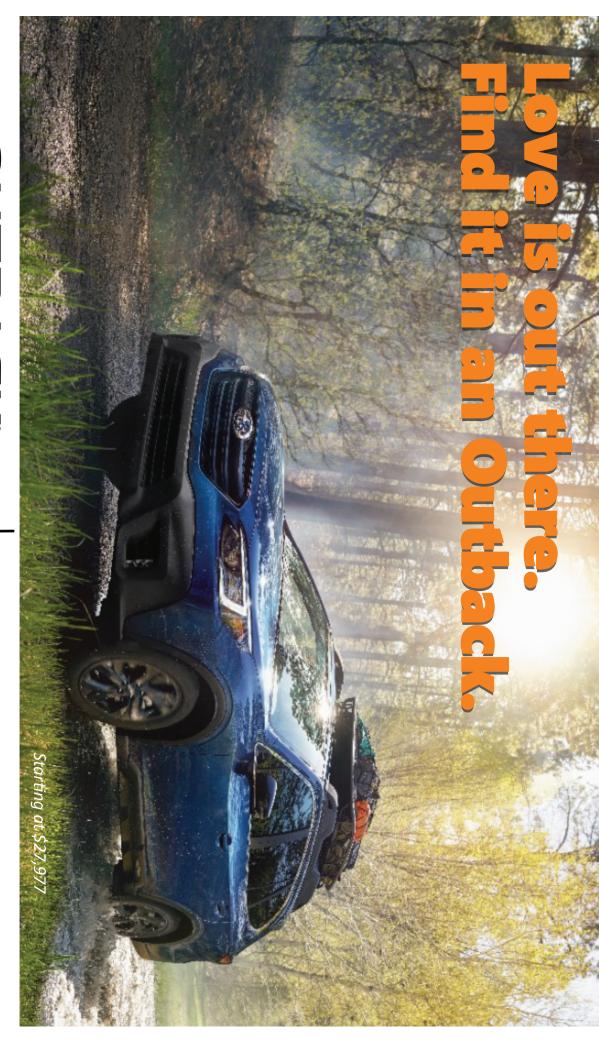
Includes membership card, eddy Magazine and Riverine Walks.

\$20 Student Membership

Includes membership card, eddy Magazine and Riverine Walks.



Please check here if you would like to be involved as a volunteer.



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