

THE ACRES
QUARTERLY

Spring 2021 | Vol. 60 - No. 1



ACRES
LANDTRUST

Access Update: Planning for Forever

Volunteers Digitize Preserve Records

ACRES Annual Report

Here We Grow!

Member Profile: Thomas Sprunger

Dear Members,

While spring always brings about a feeling of renewal, this year it seems amplified. We are still in the grips of the pandemic, but with the rollout of vaccines, we cautiously hope this is the beginning of the end. While the future is uncertain, it's comforting to know spring is coming, bringing an explosion of growth and bursting with freshness.

In the preserves, dormancy is shaken off and replaced by the year's most explosive time of growth. For some insects, spring contains their whole life cycle, so they are busy fitting an entire lifetime into one season. For annual plants, spring is a mad dash to reach maturity to reproduce prior to fall. For trees, spring provides an opportunity to lay down another ring of growth.

It is the trees' response to spring that I can relate to most readily. Like them, I've already seen several springs and hope to see many more. Since trees don't complete their entire life cycle in one year, they have the luxury of modifying their growth each spring, based on growing conditions. Trees respond proportionally to growing conditions: when poor conditions exist, trees grow poorly. When exceptional growing conditions exist, trees grow exceptionally well.

ACRES preserves are places where explosive spring growth occurs for all of nature, including us. Take advantage of spring's tremendous growing conditions. Extend your roots and reach for the light.

Sincerely,

Jason Kissel
jkissel@acreslandtrust.org
260-637-2273 ext. 2

During this season of explosive growth for plants, trees and wildlife, will you help ensure the same for ACRES? We understand times are tight for many. If you're able, please consider a donation beyond your membership. Every dollar helps!

Beginning February 15, ACRES office will be closed for renovation. We will have staff on-site for limited hours: Fridays from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m. at Dustin Barn, 1958 Chapman Road, Huntertown, IN 46748.

We anticipate construction to be complete by the end of April. Before your visit, please contact us at acres@acreslandtrust.org or call 260-637-2273. Thank you for your patience as we work to provide easy and welcoming access at our headquarters!

Cover photo by Thomas Sprunger: A wet, shady forest floor provides perfect habitat for the native Jack-in-the-pulpit wildflower to bloom. The unique flower structure is pollinated by small flies during spring. Explore the trails this season to see these blooms for yourself!

- April Adam
- David Affholter
from Jared & Sarah Kent
- Austin Aldrich
- Jennifer & Bryan Ballinger
- Kelsey Barnes
from Jared & Sarah Kent
- Ruth Barrett
from Katy Gray Brown & David Hupp
- Jason Beard
from Jared & Sarah Kent
- Robert A. Beaver
- Kaely & Garrett Bennett
from Julie & Ken Russell
- Steve & Cathy Berlin
- Dianne Bezdon
- Emily Blauvelt
- Janette Blauvelt
from Emily Blauvelt
- Bridgett Bodeker
from Mark Maffey
- Kathy Boling
- Casey Bowers
- Karen Bradley
from Kaitlyn Sproles
- Deor Brawn
from Carol Bower
- David Brough
from Jared & Sarah Kent
- Denny & Kathy Buesching
- Suzanne & David Burden
from Barb & Denny Burnett
- Denny & Barb Burnett
- Angela Carl
- Andy & Kathy Carr
from Mike & Leslie Carr
- John & Cindy Carr
- Dan & Sara Christman
- Audrey Clements
from Dorla & Paul Clements
- Molly Conner
from Julie & Dan Lepper
- Doug & Jean Daeger
from Monica & Mark Gloudemans
- Mary Daly & Nicholas Wilhelm
- Bennett Davidhizar
from Nate & Courtney Davidhizar
- Lauren Davis & Nicholas Weaver
- Amanda DeHaven
from Tom & Jeanna DeHaven
- Penny Delorenzo
- Paula Deming
from Kristopher Williams
- Sami & Matthew DeVries
- Doug Dietzen
- Rachelle Duffy

- Stella Early
- Mindy Eckert
from Jared & Sarah Kent
- Eckhart Public Library
from loyal library patron
- Elma Auchard
- Holly Eggelston & Jacob Richard
- Kim Elliott
- Jonathon Elwood
from Angela Elwood
- Kent & Lucy Emery
from Dorothea Duenow
- Cassandra & Benjamin Falk
- Jonathon & Amber Feichter
- Paula Felver
- Gary & Julie Fike
- Brenna & Kyle Finn
- Diane & Ron Finton
from Julie & Ken Russell
- Damian & Theresa Fleming
- Jessica & Dan Flores
- Max Foust
- Kelly Frahm
- Stephanie Frazee
- Zachary Frazee
- Eric & Jaime Garton
- Alison Gerardot
- Bryan Gibson
- Tracy Gilliland
- Monica & Mark Gloudemans
- Sue Gloudemans
from Monica & Mark Gloudemans
- Shane Gressley
from Hannah Berz
- Dustin & Sara Hamm
- Beth Hampshire
- Grant Harmeyer
from Emily Harmeyer
- Savannah Hendry
from Jared & Sarah Kent
- Kathy & Kevin Henze
from Denny & Barb Burnett
- Bridgett Hernandez & Christopher Stephenson
- Patty Hernandez
from Bridgett Hernandez & Christopher Stephenson
- Steve Hernandez
from Bridgett Hernandez & Christopher Stephenson
- Tiffany Herron
- Steve & Jane Hice
- Mark Hill
- Rick & Jennifer Hofacker
- Martha Hohman-Brogan & John Brogan

- Theresa Hulbert
- Matthew Hunnicutt
from Audrey Hunnicutt
- Nathan Hyde & Family
from Deb Kaiser
- Emily & Joshua Jackson
- Jessica & Eric Jubin
- Betsy & Jeff Kachmar
- Dre & Tony Kline
- Amanda & Matthew Kling
- Marilyn Klotz
- Kim Koehlinger
- Andrew & Lydia Kopec
- Chad & Laura Kukulhan
- Janet Lange
from Jared & Sarah Kent
- Justin & Jennifer Lange
- Paul LeCoque
- Daric Lepper
from Julie & Dan Lepper
- Tina & Adam Lepper
- Kay L. Lilie
- Rosannah Mack
- Audrey & Jared Marks
from Julie & Ken Russell
- Kelly Marks
from Belva Hatton
- Sarah Marty-Schlipf & Ben Schlipf
- Thomas & Kate Mason
- Jelena & Luke Maucher
from Julie & Ken Russell
- John McGauley
- Melissa McKenna
from Jared & Sarah Kent
- Keith & Mary Miller
- Travis & Katie Miller
from Jason & Amanda Rivich
- Kathryn Murray
- Joy Nagel
- Jonathan Nixon
- Adam Noblitt
from Jared & Sarah Kent
- Christian & Katherine Pearson
- Rob & Gayle Peters
from Mike & Leslie Carr
- Ann Petro
- Christopher & Kristin Pletcher
- Chad & Erin Price
- Sue Rakes
- Michael Ramer
from Mike Biesiada & Jeanine Herold
- Cindy Reichwege
- Steve & Sarah Rines

continued on p15



ACRES Land Trust owns and protects natural and working lands, inspiring people to value, appreciate, and support these places for the benefit of all, today and forever. Today, we protect and manage more than 100 properties totaling 7,269 acres. In addition to helping care for and restore our local land, your support also offers trail systems where you and others can explore thriving natural places, from dawn to dusk, at no charge. Thank you!

1802 Chapman Road, PO Box 665 | Huntertown, IN 46748-0665
260.637.ACRE (2273) | email: acres@acreslandtrust.org

acreslandtrust.org



ACCESS UPDATE Planning for Forever

Visitor amenity updates are underway at Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve, where a new gravel parking lot has been installed on Chapman Road in Huntertown.

As ACRES plans for the future, we understand that our work—protecting local land—continues long after our lifetimes. This means we must continually inspire support in our mission to protect and care for land.

When ACRES leadership realized that the preserve visitor experience varied greatly from property to property, we raised our standards for visitor amenities.

Today we're making progress on a four-year plan to improve our signage, parking, trail maintenance and online maps.

Last year, we shared the difficult decision to retire trail systems at about 20 properties that don't meet our new standards. Although the number of trail systems will decrease, the quality of the visitor experience will increase, inspiring new support for protecting local land.

The first phase of visitor amenity improvements will be complete this spring. Visitors to the following properties can expect improved parking, better maintained trails and new signage that strengthens our brand, states preserve rules and encourages visitors to join ACRES:

Lloyd W. Bender Memorial Forest
Lonidaw
Fogwell Forest

Edna W. Spurgeon Woodland Reserve
Bibler Nature Preserve
Acres Along the Wabash

Trail systems at the following properties will retire Dec. 31, 2021: Stark Nature Preserve, Richard G. and Mary H. Culp Nature Preserve, Art Hammer Wetlands, Detering Nature Preserve, Little Wabash River Nature Preserve, Cypress Meadow, Anna Brand Hammer Reserve, Munro Nature Preserve and Madison Township School.

Although daily public access to these properties will end, ACRES will continue to dedicate the same level of stewardship to these areas.

Our members help protect and care for 7,269 acres of natural and working lands on over 100 properties, each one an inspiring place worthy of appreciation. As we retire trail systems at these properties, we will highlight each one in the *Quarterly*. For the first article in this series, check out Chris Fairfield's story on the opposite page.

For a complete list of retiring trails and public access updates for ACRES nature preserves, visit acreslandtrust.org/raisingourstandards.

HISTORY LESSON: Protected Land Includes Schoolhouse Sites

By Chris Fairfield

ACRES Land Trust's mission is to own and protect natural and working lands. So why does ACRES own two schoolhouse properties? One answer is that the donors expressed a desire for both the land and the memory of these two educational buildings to be preserved always. Both schoolhouses served their communities well. Now, under the watchful eye of ACRES Land Trust, their land will always be a benefit to all.

MUNRO NATURE PRESERVE

The foundation and façade of the one-room schoolhouse at the Munro Nature Preserve rests on what was once part of the 13,000-acre Limberlost Woods and was known as the Porter Farm. Officially named Hartford Township District No. 6 School, it is better known to generations of readers as the Brushwood School in Gene Stratton-Porter's book, *A Girl of the Limberlost*, published in 1906. The school and surrounding 25.6 acres were donated in 1993 by Edith Munro and Esther Munro Cooper. ACRES agreed to preserve the land and seek a historical organization to restore or stabilize the frail structure. To date, none have had the capacity to tackle the project.



MADISON TOWNSHIP SCHOOL

A large stone monument and two limestone entrance placards now mark the Madison Township School and its 27.3-acre nature preserve. This former 11-room brick building was the fourth educational structure on the site. The school's last class graduated in 1967; the building was demolished in 1976. Louis (Sam) Bibler, a 1933 graduate and 1994 donor, asked ACRES to save in perpetuity the school's memory and the attached acreage. Today, the still-visible building site is ensconced in the growth of a secondary forest.



Having originally arisen amidst surrounding forest, these two schools are returning to nature under the permanent care of ACRES. ACRES will retire the trail systems at these properties Dec. 31, 2021, but these historic grounds will remain protected forever.

PRESERVING HISTORY



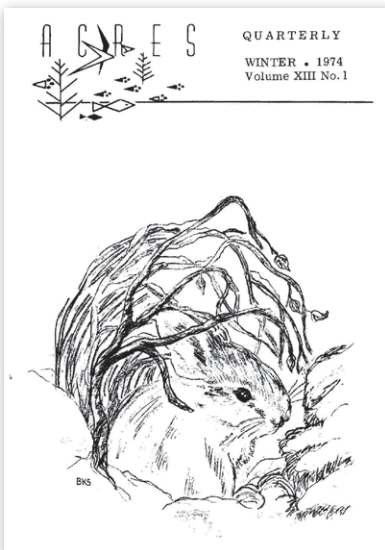
Carol Spallone at Lonidaw



Chris Fairfield at Madison Township School

ACRES ARCHIVE Volunteers digitize preserve records

When ACRES acquires new property, we become steward of both the land and its records. These files include everything from legal documents, like deeds and wills, to artifacts like newspaper clippings and handwritten notes.



Two ACRES volunteers have spearheaded an effort to digitize records for all ACRES properties. Thanks to their hard work, these records and the stories they contain will be preserved forever.

Carol Spallone started volunteering with ACRES while completing service hours for the Indiana Master Naturalist Program. She began work on the preserve archive project in early 2019.

Volunteer Chris Fairfield was also interested in learning more about the history of ACRES preserves. She saw a need for more accessible records when she began volunteering as a trail leader.

"I found it cumbersome to research the donors and property details before a walk. When I heard that ACRES was thinking about digitizing its history, I hoped they would ask me to contribute," she said.

Carol and Chris got to know one another leading a Share the Trails hike. Afterward, Carol asked Chris if she would like to work on the project together as they bring complementary skills to the project.

While working for Indiana State Museums, Carol completed the tour script with supportive documentation that interpretive guides continue to use for creating tours of Gene Stratton-Porter's cabin at Wildflower Woods on Sylvan Lake.

Chris' experience as a legal assistant/paralegal years ago familiarized her with many aspects of real estate documentation and other legal records. "This has come in handy with labeling the documents and connecting the events for explanation," she said.

METHODICAL PROCESS

The volunteers started digitizing preserve records in August 2019. Throughout the pandemic, they have worked from home, stopping by the ACRES office to pick up and drop off files.

"My part of the team effort is to open the file and see what's in there," Chris said. "Each file is a new adventure into time."

She reviews each document and labels it with a sticky note, spending three to five hours per week on the project.

Carol then scans and names the documents so they're easy to find. "File names are to be consistent and descriptive," she said. "With the help of a business and technology librarian at Allen County Public Library, we are using the best format for this project."

Each file varies in size and contains up to three accordion folders filled with documents. Carol spent 17 hours digitizing the Fogwell Forest file. Some of the challenges she has encountered include digitizing faded and hand-written documents so they're legible; making sure file names are descriptive, not too long and include appropriate abbreviations.

PRESERVING STORIES

So far, Carol and Chris have digitized records for 10 ACRES preserves. Throughout the project, they have encountered interesting stories about these places and the people who helped protect them.

"I am encouraged and inspired by the gathering, collaboration and cooperation of donors, neighbors, fundraisers, environmental stakeholders and government agencies to save land, water and corridors," Chris said.

Each land donor's story is unique and wonderful, Carol said. Their motivations for protecting the land include memories of loved ones, family outdoor activities and care for the environment.



Acres crew

A sign which reads, "Spirit of the Woods," and marks the entry of Lonidaw nature preserve, was installed in 1968 by the Acres, Inc. crew pictured above. Standing, from left are James M. Barrett III, present Acres vice president; Frank Kirschner, a member of the national advisory board for Acres; and Thomas Dustin; John Klotz, first president of Acres. Kneeling are Mrs. Dustin, secretary of Acres, and Mrs. Klotz. The metal design piece was donated by Mrs. L.H. Lawson when she put the 25-acre woods into custodial care of Acres. (Photo contributed)

Work party scheduled for Lonidaw Saturday

A work party to clear trails is scheduled for Saturday, beginning at 9:30 a.m. at the Acres, Inc. Lonidaw preserve. The public is welcome to take their cutting tools, work gloves and sack lunch and join Acres members in the cleanup. Entrance to the preserve is between county roads 700 and 750N on 1000E, just northeast of the city. Parking will be permitted that day directly across the road from the entrance. An open house, complete with tours of Lonidaw, will be held in the fall. Acres is presently sponsoring a campaign to raise \$30,000 to purchase the Lonidaw preserve which has been in its care since 1968 when Mrs. L.H. Lawson put it under Acres care in memory of her husband.

She rediscovered two fascinating legends about the Lonidaw property in Noble County in a 1982 *Kendallville News-Sun* article by Terry Housholder: "In the northwest area of the woods stand the remains of an old orchard. It is said that Johnny Applesseed planted the seeds to start the orchard. The orchard, which sits atop a ridge, also contains a three-foot-long stone embedded in the dirt. Legend also says an old Indian chief used to sit on the rock and watch the wagon trains pass below."

Digitizing our archives will make stories like these more accessible to staff, volunteers and others who want to learn the preserves' history. This work also ensures that materials remain intact for years to come, said ACRES Office Manager, Natasha Manor.

Thank you, Carol, and thank you, Chris, for helping preserve ACRES history!

ANNUAL REPORT July 1, 2019 – June 30, 2020

ACQUISITIONS

PROPERTY	ACRES	COUNTY	DESCRIPTION
Kauffman Nature Sanctuary	78	Hillsdale (MI)	First Michigan preserve
Victory Noll Acres (expansion)	10.5	Huntington (IN)	Expand existing preserve
Victory Noll Acres (expansion)	20.3	Huntington (IN)	Expand existing preserve
LaGrange County property	4.2	LaGrange (IN)	Investment property

HIGHLIGHTS

August 2019	Victory Noll expands by 30 acres
November 2019	ACRES partners with Fort Wayne Children's Zoo to install the first MOTUS towers on ACRES properties. The towers are part of a worldwide project to study the movement and migration of small animals. Learn more at acreslandtrust.org/motustowers
December 2019	ACRES launches its first-ever capital campaign to care for more land and a growing community of supporters ACRES acquires first Michigan property, the 78-acre Kauffman Nature Sanctuary. Take a virtual tour of the preserve at acreslandtrust.org/kauffman-tour
March 2020	ACRES Land Trust turns 60 years old!
April 2020	Adapting to the COVID-19 pandemic, ACRES hosts a virtual wildflower hike with retired professor and botanist Dave Hicks
June 2020	ACRES begins work to develop a management plan for the endangered Eastern Massasauga Rattlesnake. Learn more at acreslandtrust.org/acres-massasauga-research

YOUR INVESTMENT: FINANCIAL REPORT

NET WORTH

Value of Nature Preserves	\$24,921,407
Bank Accounts	\$1,496,834*
Equipment	\$276,607
Investments & Endowment	\$5,480,916
TOTAL	\$32,175,764

*\$500,000 is restricted as a self-loaning account for new acquisitions.
ACRES has no long-term liabilities.

REVENUE / EXPENDITURE STATEMENT

Revenues	\$1,163,635
Expenditures	\$844,167**
NET REVENUE	\$319,468

**By accounting standards, cost to purchase land is considered a "transfer of an asset" and cannot be shown here as an expenditure.

PEOPLE PARTICIPATING



1,723
MEMBERS

29 States (coast to coast)
109 Memberships Gifted
105 Lifetime Members
34 Members, The Acorn Society

(as of 6/30/20)

140

VOLUNTEERS
2,190 Hours
13 Work Days

7

INTERNS
1,680 Hours

15

BOARD MEMBERS

7

STAFF MEMBERS



7.4K FACEBOOK FOLLOWERS

CARING FOR LAND

546

ACRES OF INVASIVE PLANT CONTROL

400

TREES PLANTED

58

TRAIL SYSTEMS MAINTAINED

116

PROPERTIES MAINTAINED & PROTECTED

7,269

ACRES PRESERVED

A YEAR OF GROWTH

265,338 estimated preserve visits, a **54%** increase from 2019

205,415 website views, a **56%** increase from last year (131,397)

61,154 website visitors, a **54%** increase from last year (39,607)

Photo spread on pages 10–11 by Chuck Fletter: A female ruby-throated hummingbird feeds her chicks. Hummingbirds prefer to nest in undisturbed forested areas, returning to the same nest each year. To build their nests, they gather down from dandelions and other plants, along with ferns, mosses and young leaves, bonding all with spider webs and attaching the nest to a tree limb with spider web and tree sap. They use lichen to camouflage their nests. Female hummingbirds lay 1-3 eggs at a time and produce 1-2 broods each summer.



ASHERWOOD MAPLE SYRUP TASTING & TOURS FOR MEMBERS

SATURDAY, MARCH 13, 9 am - noon
WABASH COUNTY | Asherwood
7496 W. SR 124, Wabash, IN 46992

It's sugar bush season! You're invited to a guided tour of ACRES maple sugaring operation. Learn how trees are tapped, step into the historic sugar shack and taste this sweet treat for yourself. ACRES syrup will be available for purchase if you'd like to take some of the harvest home. Come early or stay late to explore the trails.

Space is limited. RSVP to outreach@acreslandtrust.org or call 260-637-2273 by March 11. Presented by Grady Stout, Asherwood caretaker; Jason Kissel, executive director; and ACRES volunteers.



Photo by Bright family

SPRING CLEANING

Get in the spirit of spring cleaning and help us keep our preserves beautiful! Bring a friend and take a hike afterwards. Gloves, bags, visibility vests and light snacks provided.

SATURDAY, MARCH 6, 10:30 am - noon

DEKALB COUNTY | James P. Covell Nature Preserve
Approximately 2727 County Road 52, Auburn IN, 46706

Space is limited. RSVP To outreach@acreslandtrust.org or call 260-637-2273 by March 4.

FRIDAY, APRIL 9, 3-4:30 pm

STEBEN COUNTY | Brammall and Richard Bruner Nature Preserves
2630 E. US Highway 20, Angola, IN 46703

Fall 2020, volunteers filled over 40 bags with shredded tire scraps. Help ACRES remove the rest of this litter from the preserves! Space is limited. RSVP to outreach@acreslandtrust.org or call 260-637-2273 by April 7.

SATURDAY, APRIL 24, 10:30 am - noon

KOSCIUSKO COUNTY | Wildwood
409 E. SR 14, Silver Lake, IN 46982

Join us and our friends at Manchester University to clean up Wildwood. From picking up litter to removing invasive garlic mustard weeds, there's plenty to do! Presented by the Manchester University Environmental Studies Club



GARLIC MUSTARD WORKDAYS

This is a great time of year to remove the easy-to-pull invasive garlic mustard weeds. Bring a friend and take yourselves on a hike afterward! Gloves, bags and light snacks provided.

SUNDAY, APRIL 11, 3-4:30 pm

ALLEN COUNTY | Spring Lake Woods and Bog
12905 Lake Everett Drive, Fort Wayne, IN 46818

Space is limited. RSVP to outreach@acreslandtrust.org or call 260-637-2273 by April 9.

SATURDAY, MAY 1, 10:30 am - noon

ALLEN COUNTY | McNabb-Walter Nature Preserve
16138 Davis Road, Spencerville, IN 46788

Space is limited. RSVP to outreach@acreslandtrust.org or call 260-637-2273 by April 29.

WEDNESDAY, MAY 19, 10:30 am - noon

ALLEN COUNTY | Bicentennial Woods
340 E. Shoaff Road, Huntertown, IN 46748

Space is limited. RSVP to outreach@acreslandtrust.org or call 260-637-2273 by May 17.



WILDFLOWER HIKES FOR MEMBERS

SUNDAY, APRIL 18, 2-4 pm

WABASH COUNTY | Kokiwanee
5825 E. 50 S, Lagro, IN 46941

Discover spring wildflowers and enjoy the waterfalls as you hike along the Salamonie River. Hosted by Dave Hicks and Jason Kissel. Space is limited. RSVP to outreach@acreslandtrust.org or 260-637-2273 by April 16.

SUNDAY, MAY 2, 3-5 pm

NOBLE COUNTY | Edna W. Spurgeon Woodland Reserve
9478 N. 600 W, Ligonier, IN 46767

Explore this hilly preserve as you learn about a variety of spring wildflowers. Hosted by John J. Smith and Tony Fleming. Space is limited. RSVP to outreach@acreslandtrust.org or 260-637-2273 by April 30.



WING HAVEN SPRING CELEBRATION

SATURDAY, MAY 15, 1-5 pm

STEBEN COUNTY | Wing Haven
180 W 400 N, Angola, IN 46703

Celebrate the spring season among the ravines and lakes of Wing Haven. Local musicians Ken Jehle and friends will present an original acoustic composition that was commissioned as part of our 200 Year Ecological Reflections project at this preserve. Learn more about the project and see previously submitted work: [acres200er.org](https://www.acres200er.org).



Photo by Nancy Conrad

BOOK DISCUSSION: *Braiding Sweetgrass*

FRIDAY, MAY 28, 7 pm

ALLEN COUNTY | Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve, Dustin Barn
1958 Chapman Road, Huntertown, IN 46748

ACRES volunteer Theresa Ransbottom will lead a chat about *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teachings of Plants* by Robin Wall Kimmerer. To help get our creative minds flowing before Robin's visit in June, we'll explore excerpts from the book and discuss our own thoughts about land. Come early and hike before we settle in. Space is limited. RSVP to outreach@acreslandtrust.org or 260-637-2273 by May 26. Learn more about Robin's visit on the back page.

NATIONAL TRAILS DAY

SATURDAY, JUNE 5, 3-4:30 pm

WELLS COUNTY | Acres Along the Wabash
182 S.E. SR 116, Bluffton, IN 46714

Join us on a hike along the ravines and bluffs of the Wabash River to celebrate Trails Day! Space is limited. RSVP to outreach@acreslandtrust.org or 260-637-2273 by June 3.



Social distancing (keeping at least 6 feet of distance between individuals at all times) will be implemented at all events. Please stay home if you feel ill or have recently been exposed to someone with COVID-19. Masks are required at all indoor events.

To check the status of an event please call 260-637-2273, email outreach@acreslandtrust.org or visit [acreslandtrust.org/events](https://www.acreslandtrust.org/events)

CAPITAL CAMPAIGN UPDATE



Here We Grow!

Growing pains caught up with us a few years ago. Working in a remote area has its limitations, so we thought long and hard...should we stay put or relocate? ACRES Board of Directors and staff decided to remain headquartered in the Cedar Creek Corridor and invest in easy and welcoming access, and to consolidate equipment, materials and tools currently housed across the region.

We announced ACRES first-ever capital campaign in December 2019, and we're pleased to announce improvements at our headquarters are well under way:

- **A new parking lot was installed at the Dustin Barn to provide a safe space for preserve hikers to access the trail system without bothering about whether or not the office gate is open.**
- **You'll now see two areas along the single-lane driveway for cars to pull over when faced with oncoming traffic.**
- **Construction crews have been working sun-up to sun-down to improve accessibility to the office, as well as business and visitor parking.**

Construction of the new maintenance barn is complete and work is underway on improvements to the office.

Although messy and inconvenient in the short-term, these changes will allow ACRES to better care for the land we are sworn to protect and better serve ACRES members, volunteers and visitors.

These improvements come with a hefty price tag—\$600,000. We've raised more than 70% of this and are grateful to everyone who has already pitched in. You too can help by making a gift at acreslandtrust.org/grow or by sending your check with "Capital Campaign" on the memo line to:

ACRES Land Trust
P.O. Box 665
Huntertown, IN 46748-0665

newmembers! *continued from p3*

Taylor Rodriguez
from Tayler Milliken
Brent & Peggy Roth
Roland & Mary Jo Roth
Thomas Scheele
from Donna Scheele
Dr. Jessica Pickard
from Janet & James Canino
Sara & Josh Snyder
Terri Sowards
Lisa Spiegel
Sam Stahl
George & Marie Stephenson
from Bridgett Hernandez &
Christopher Stephenson
Monte Stevenson
from Jared & Sarah Kent

Rebecca Stockert
Melissa Stone
from Dawn Sawyer
Judi Sturges
from Mike Biesiada and Jeanine
Herold
Bobi & Mike Tierney
Tom Wagoner
Richard & Susan Walter
from C.J. Canino
Abbi Ward
from Jared & Sarah Kent
Karen Welch
from Dee Smith
Karen Weller
Jeanette & Dave Wells
Linda Bates

Katie Whetstone
from Julie & Dan Lepper
Paige & Dane Wilkins
Ronan Wilkins
from Paige & Dane Wilkins
Brent & Sonja Winebrenner
Andrew Wolfe
Karen J. Wood
Catherine Zdenek
Becky Zulager
from Mikah Simmons & Tice
Ashurst
CORPORATE
AB Seed Laboratory
T.E. Mix Heating & Air
Conditioning

ACRES reached 2,000 members in January. Thank you for helping us reach this incredible milestone!

in memory of

Kathy Albers Dowden
from Sandra Killila

Chris & Judy Eckert
from Rebecca Stockert

Tim Goodman
from Alpha Phis, Betty J. Applegate, Craig & Nancy Bobay, Andrew Goodman, Colleen & Jeffrey Hall, Thomas & Susan Herr, Dennis Kleinrichert, Pat Roller, Jeff & Lisa Sordelet, Joni & Jerry Sweeney, Karen Weller, Norman and Catherine Zeigler

Mary Heffelfinger
from David Heffelfinger

Frances Hughes
from David Greene & Susan Tuori

Ethel Klopfenstein
from Brian Kieffer & Natalie Wolski-Kieffer

Avonne Lee Knecht
from Joanne & Judd Case, Karla & Gary Funk, Gary & Karen Runkel

Doug Kneller
from Charlene Hoffman, Mary Lou McDaniel & James B. Coffey, Georgean Johnson-Coffey

Joyce Lloyd
from Andrew Wolfe

Anne Michel
from Lee Wietfeldt Burris, Janet & James Beal, Sara & Kaitlin Binkley, Dawn & Bob BonAmi, Rebecca & David Byrum, Tim Carr, David & Mara Cawein, Marsha Coyner, Bill & Donna Hemmig, Stephen & Deborah Holdzkom, Mark & Janet Jacobs, Carole Michel, David Michel, Don & Nancy Michel, Chris & Paul Newman-Jacobs, Peter Noot & Rebecca Wright Noot, Larry & Wilma Ray, Rod & Linda Ray, Pat & Alan Riebe, Stan & Delia Searles, Dennis & Diana Shock, Julie & John Stevens, Roger & Judy Summers, Dave & Jean Sweigart, Jan Tice, Mary Kay & James Walters, William Leroy Wise, Brian & Sally Witwer, Jim & Lisa Wolf

Florence Pauly, Evelyn Pauly & Evan Pauly
from George Pauly

Mary Frances Schneider
from Alan & Carolyn Critchfield, Anna Gunzenhauser, Mitch Harper & Dawn Wilson, Richard & Linda Hite, Ken & Susan Till, Larry & Elizabeth Walker

Maggie Schrein
from Jack & Janis Woodruff

Matthew Shumaker
from Suzanne Dunn

Shawn Stiver
from John Stiver

Gene Stratton-Porter
Susan & Mark Matzke

in honor of

Norm Cox
from Forrest & Karen Carleton

Don & Linda Jervis
from Lisa Spiegel

Jason Kissel
from Bill & Linda Glass

Mike & Michelle Wedaman
from Scott & Catherine Hill

WINTER PHOTO CONTEST WINNERS

LANDSCAPE



LuAnne Letizia
Down in the Canyon

*A small stream snaking along the canyon floor.
Robb Hidden Canyon*

MACRO



Jenny Weatherford
The Artistry of Ice

*Natural artwork on the frozen Davis Fisher Creek.
McNabb-Walter Nature Preserve*

PEOPLE ON PRESERVES



Sarah Taylor
Lost in Thought and Appreciation
*Thoughtfully observing the gently flowing
Maumee River.
Blue Cast Springs*

WILDLIFE



April Raver
Watchful Guardian
*This eagle kept watch over the preserve.
Seven Pillars Nature Preserve*

SELFIE



Leslie Krock
Winter Hike
*Unplugging and enjoying wintry nature.
Bicentennial Woods*

***Congratulations to all the winners!**
And thank you to everyone who submitted entries.
Take a closer look at these winning photos online at
[acreslandtrust.org/photocontestwinners](https://www.acreslandtrust.org/photocontestwinners)*



MEMBER PROFILE - THOMAS SPRUNGER

Over the last four years, photographer Thomas Sprunger has transported *Quarterly* readers to ACRES preserves across the region through his stunning images. An ACRES member and volunteer, Thomas shared his story with Communications Manager Bridgett Hernandez in a video interview.

From waterfalls frozen in icy splendor to the intricate beauty of spring wildflowers, Thomas' nature photography captures a sense of wonder. "When people see the photo and say, 'I would like to be there,' that's when I know I did my job," he said.

Although Thomas began working with ACRES about four years ago, he had started shooting photos in ACRES preserves long before that.

Since answering an ACRES callout for photographers, Thomas' work has been featured on our website, in the *Quarterly* and on postcards announcing newly protected places. He hopes his photos connect people to the preserves and inspire them to support ACRES mission: "I'm really appreciative of the fact that ACRES is preserving this land for us to enjoy forever," he said.

Capturing the perfect shot isn't always easy. He's not an early riser by nature, but when weather conditions look favorable, he's willing to get up earlier for sunrise shots.

"It's worth it. It's hard to get up out of bed in the morning, especially if it's cold outside, but once you get out there, once you get the shot, you're really glad you got up and actually did it," he said.

Thank you, Thomas, for sharing your story and your talents with ACRES!

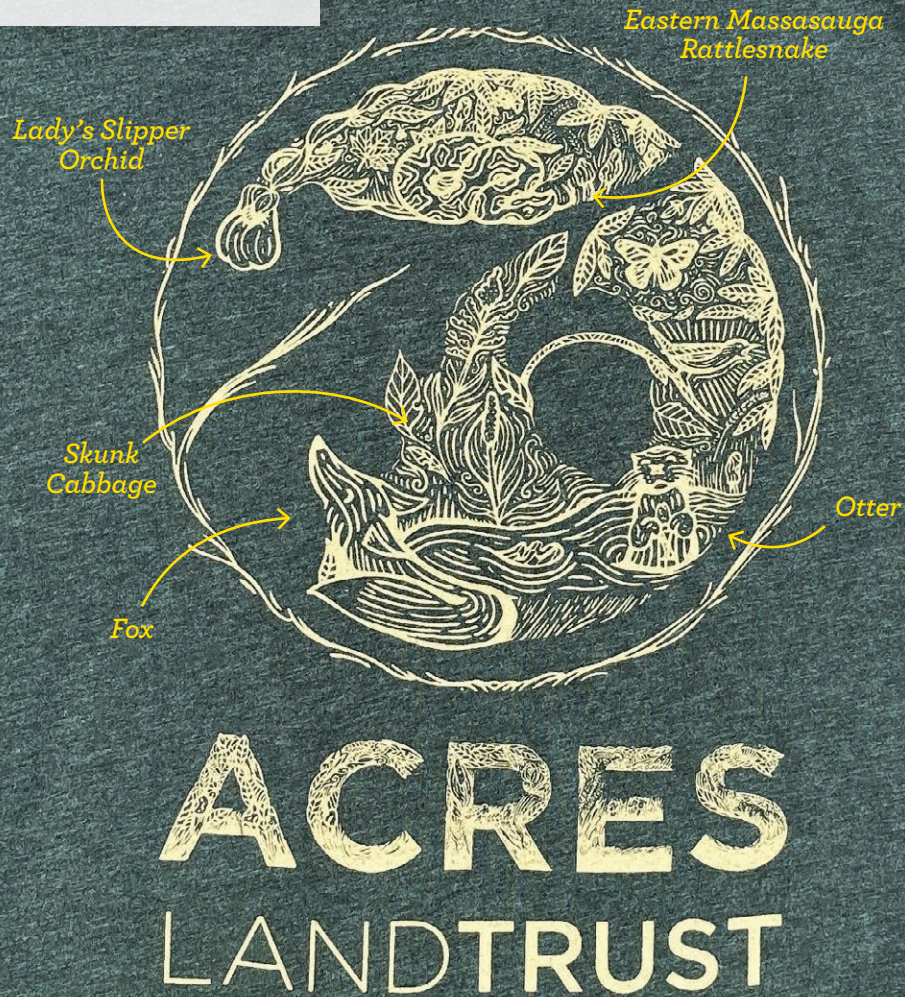


Check out the video at
[acreslandtrust.org/yourstories](https://www.acreslandtrust.org/yourstories)

Enjoy ACRES New Artsy Design

by Ian Ruisard
on a comfy T-shirt

Short sleeve or long sleeve options, available in sizes XS-3XL. Shop online at [acreslandtrust.org/shop](https://www.acreslandtrust.org/shop) or at the ACRES office.



Ian Zebulun Ruisard works as a graphic designer in Fort Wayne. Inspired by his parents, Ian enjoys exploring natural areas and believes protecting local habitats is important in creating a healthy community.

To create an artsy ACRES logo, Ian pulled from his experiences in nature and studied local Indiana animals and plants to incorporate into the design.

Learn more about Ian and this intricate design at [acreslandtrust.org/ian-ruisard](https://www.acreslandtrust.org/ian-ruisard). See more of Ian's work online at ianruisard.com.

SPECIAL thanks

AB Seed Laboratory
Seed testing

ACRES Board of Directors & Committee Members

B & J Rental in Columbia City
Donated sharpening services

Bonnie Bloom
Video interviews & editing

Brammall and Richard Bruner Tire Cleanup Volunteers

Dave Brumm
Office Repairs

Kris Connerly
Donated a garden rake

Chris Fairfield, Mary Anna Feitler & Carol Spallone
Archive Projects

Fogwell Forest Seed Collection Workday Volunteers

Richard and Mary Hertel
Donated a tarp

Janet Kauffman
Sharing story in a preserve video

Harry Oelschlager
Donated bottled water

Orion Woods Cleanup Volunteers

Perfect Lake Nature Preserve State Dedication
Ceremony Speakers
Federal Judge William Lee & Tom Swinford from the IDNR Division of Nature Preserves

Keith Pomeroy
Donated a cement mixer

Louise Pomeroy
Office Support

Popp Open House Volunteers
Larry Biggerstaff & Pomeroy Family

Promotional Video Voices
Dave Brumm, Kris Connerly & Tedra Hemingway

Richard and Nancy Rooker
Donated items from wish list

Seven Pillars Cleanup Volunteers
Thomas Sprunger
Participating in a video interview

Jean Sutton
Donated a chainsaw

Tres Beaux Gardens
Donated native landscaping services

Volunteer Preserve Stewards, Caretakers & Trail Monitors

Weed Wrangle Workday Volunteers

Diane Jones
Digitizing fundraising records

Winter Quarterly Assembly & Distribution Volunteers
Dave Brumm, Mary Campbell, Laura Colpitts, Kris Connerly, Nancy & Joe Conrad, Norm Cox, Barb & Terri Gorney, Jim Haddock, Tedra Hemingway, Mark Maffey, Kim McDonald, Shane Perfect, Louise Pomeroy, Judy Schroff & April Steury

wish list

Order from ACRES Amazon Wish List: Under "Find a List or Registry," search for "ACRES Land Trust" or request a link at acres@acreslandtrust.org.

ACRES membership and your stories

10-15 amp portable jobsite table saw

2-cycle oil

Bar oil

Batteries (AA, AAA, C, D & 9 volt)

Belt sander

Bottled water

Chainsaw backpack(s)

Compostable cups, plates, bowls and dinnerware (no Styrofoam, please)

Extractor Classic, Up Rooter, and/or Weed Wrench

Facebook and Instagram followers

Gas cards

Hardware store gift cards

Mike's Car Wash gift cards

More Farm Store credit (money can be added to ACRES Inc account)

Paper towels

Safety glasses

Snacks for events (individually wrapped)

Trash bags (33 gallon or larger)

USB flash drive

Used iPhones for field work (needs to support at least iOS 13 updates: iPhone SE, 6, 7, 8, X and or 11)

White copy paper (letter size)

DIRECTORS: Dawn Ritchie, President; Joe Conrad, Vice President; Wayne Shive, Vice President; Mark Maffey, Secretary; David Schnepf, Treasurer; John Caffray, Barb Clark, Dan Ernst, Bob Hake, Steve Hammer, Ben Hess, Stan Moore, Rob Parker, Phillip Smith II, Jerry Sweeten and Terry Thornsby. Chris Fairfield, Recording Secretary.

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“I could hand you a braid of sweetgrass, as thick and shining as the plait that hung down my grandmother’s back. But it is not mine to give, nor yours to take. *Wingashke* belongs to herself. So I offer, in its place, a braid of stories meant to heal our relationship with the world. This braid is woven from three strands: Indigenous ways of knowing, scientific knowledge, and the story of an Anishinaebekwe scientist trying to bring them together in service to what matters most. It is an intertwining of science, spirit, and story—old stories and new ones that can be medicine for our broken relationship with earth, a pharmacopoeia of healing stories that allow us to imagine a different relationship, in which people and land are good medicine for each other.”

Excerpt from *Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge, and the Teaching of Plants* by Robin Wall Kimmerer

Learn more at milkweed.org/book/braiding-sweetgrass

SAVE THE DATE!

ACRES Land Trust will host author Robin Wall Kimmerer for a two-day visit June 16–17, 2021. More details coming soon!



**BRAIDING
SWEETGRASS**

INDIGENOUS WISDOM, SCIENTIFIC KNOWLEDGE,
and the TEACHINGS of PLANTS

ROBIN WALL KIMMERER



ACRES
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