

A C R E S

QUARTERLY

Winter • 1966

Volume V No. 1



WINTER MEETINGS

CONCORDIA SENIOR COLLEGE SCIENCE AUDITORIUM

- FEBRUARY ④ 8:15 PM The meeting will begin by showing a sound and color film, "Islands of Green". Narrated by John Daly, this film was produced by the National Audubon Society, Nature Centers Division in cooperation with the USDA, Motion Picture Service and the U.S. Forest Service. Following the film a panel, lead by Tom Dustin, President of the Allen County Park and Recreation Board will discuss "County Park Systems, Their Role in Preserving Open Space and How to Get the Job Done Now". Comments and discussion will be encouraged from the floor.
- MARCH ④ 7:30PM For Children of all ages! "The Vanishing Prairie", a Walt Disney True Life Adventure film tells the story of the great American Prairie and its wildlife starring antelope, lion, buffalo, prairie dog, cougar and bighorn sheep. (Note the early hour. This is for the convenience of families with small children.)



Regular: \$2 Sustaining: \$10 Patron: \$50

STUDENT: \$.50

Make checks payable to ACRES, Inc.; send to--

106 W. WILDWOOD AVE. - FORT WAYNE, INDIANA

ACRES BOARD WELCOMES TWO NEW DIRECTOR MEMBERS

Father Conan Taylor, Assistant Principal at Bishop Luers High School and Richard T. Hurley, Instructor of Biology at St. Francis College have joined ACRES Board of Directors. The Board accepted with regret the resignation of Dr. William R. Eberly whose term was filled by Father Taylor. Hurley fills the expired term of Melvin Berg.

QUARTERLY COVER ARTIST is Florence S. Klotz, Charter ACRES Board Member. A graduate of Chatham College in Pittsburgh, she majored in elementary education. While busily raising seven children, Florence somehow keeps up with husband, Dr. John W., and then finds pleasure and accomplishment with art, music and nature study.

AN OUTDOOR LABORATORY FOR YOUR SCHOOL

By William B. Stapp

Author

William B. Stapp serves as Conservation Consultant to the Ann Arbor Public Schools. He is an Associate Professor in the Department of Conservation, University of Michigan. He comments directly to ACRES, "If we can get schools to think about school site development, we can create many green islands in communities across our nation. The concept (Outdoor Laboratories) is so sound educationally and can be used in so many meaningful ways by the community - that we must help school administrators and school architects see more clearly the great potential of school site development."

In most school systems little or no consideration is given to ways the school site can be used to enhance the school curriculum prior to the construction of the school building. For this reason many of the unique educational features on school sites are lost during the construction stage. The site becomes leveled, the native vegetation is stripped from the land, and the natural water areas are destroyed. Under these conditions the learning opportunities are far more limited, the environment is less pleasing, and the microclimate is more severe.

If one believes, like I do, that certain social and scientific understandings can be best taught beyond the four walls of a school building, then educational specification plans should be developed both for the site and the building.

I would like to describe a procedure operating in our school system that is effective in establishing outdoor laboratories on school sites.

In the selection of school sites, consideration is given to locations possessing natural features that can be utilized to enrich the school's educational program.

Once the land for the school site has been acquired, a school site committee is established to develop educational specification plans for the total site that will take advantage of unique natural features on the site. The site planning committee can be of great assistance to the school architect in making recommendations, such as, taking advantage of uneven topography in the layout of the site plan, the preservation of unusual specimen trees, or an area possessing a variety of habitats for an outdoor laboratory. The planning committee should be composed of a school board member, the school architect, the school principal, teachers representing various areas of the curriculum, and students.

Joint planning between administrators, teachers, and students will enhance the use of the school site, discourage vandalism, and perpetuate its use and value to the community.

During the period that heavy equipment is on the site, provisions must be made to make certain that the recommendations submitted by the site planning committee and approved by the school architect are fulfilled. It is important that the operators of heavy equipment be well oriented to the site plan and to the features on the site that are to be preserved. It is usually advisable to place markers around trees or habitats that are to be undisturbed.

As the school is being constructed, the landscaping phase of the site can be developed. This plan should be well conceived to blend beauty and utility. Plantings that provide food and cover will attract small animals for observation purposes that might otherwise not be seen around the school building. Thought should also be given to the placement of plantings to improve the microclimate. Proper plantings can make classroom and recreational areas more comfortable throughout the year.

Technical assistance is normally available to every school system through the services of the district soil conservationist, game manager, and forester. The district soil conservationist is available to assist schools by making a soil map of the site. A soil map is very useful in selecting trees and shrubs to plant on the school ground. The soil conservationist might also be helpful in determining the suitability of the creation of a small pond on the site. The district game manager can offer technical assistance as to types of plantings and their placement for wildlife. The district forester could provide schools with information regarding the availability of free or inexpensive planting stock from the state nurseries. Few school systems avail themselves of the free services rendered by these federal and state employees.

In every subject matter there are important understandings and concepts that can be best taught on the school site. As an example, just recently a one acre shallow pond was created in the outdoor laboratory of our high school. Basic physical, chemical, and biological data of the pond were obtained by high school students.

To determine information on water volume and depth contours, mapping skills acquired in math classes were utilized by students to make a hydrographic map of the pond. Chemical data of the water, such as dissolved oxygen, carbon dioxide, and alkalinity, were collected by applying techniques developed in chemistry classes. The biology classes made a biological analysis of the water and bottom sediments. Students enrolled in conservation classes are presently compiling the data and developing a fish planting program.

The pond and surrounding land that comprise the outdoor laboratory on our high school site is used not only by science classes. Social studies classes use the outdoor laboratory to discuss social concepts. The industrial arts department has constructed a sturdy dock and a barge for water sampling on the pond, as well as nesting houses, trail signs and sampling equipment used by students to carry out basic research. The mentally retarded classes have constructed wildlife shelter and feeding demonstrations and assume the responsibility of placing food in the feeding trays during the winter months. Art classes frequently use the laboratory for sketching and painting. Elementary and junior high school classes, that do not have adequate outdoor facilities on their own school sites, frequently use the outdoor laboratory for natural history, ecological, or conservation oriented field trips. Many community youth groups use the outdoor laboratory after school hours for field trips or to volunteer their services for work duties. Youth groups have been very helpful in maintaining trails in the laboratory, planting shrubs and trees, and in maintaining the various habitats. The outdoor laboratory also serves as a natural area for family groups to enjoy.

Once an outdoor laboratory is established, it will probably be used the year around. In Ann Arbor the recreation department hires a naturalist during the summer months. This individual conducts informal outdoor nature programs for early elementary children and a formal field science program for late elementary and junior high school students at the high school

outdoor laboratory. The public school system offers a seven week summer enrichment course in field biology and conservation at the high school. This class makes extensive use of the outdoor laboratory every day. Once established, outdoor laboratories will be used by individuals, youth groups, and classes throughout the year.

Once teachers experience the amount of learning that can be achieved and the excitement generated through the use of the school site, the utilization of the outdoor environment will become a way of instructing that will add a new dimension to the teacher's effectiveness. However, few teachers are trained in our colleges and universities in methods of using the natural environment to enhance instructional goals. For this reason an in-service training program might be necessary to maximize the use of the site that has been developed to extend instruction beyond the school building. The most effective type of in-service training is that which is taught in the natural environment. It is best to offer an in-service training program regularly through the school year. It is hoped that in the future our teacher training institutions will play a leading role in helping teachers to acquire the skill needed to effectively utilize the school site to enhance instructional programs. The higher institutions could also alert administrators to the many existing agencies at local, state, and national levels available to assist school officials in school site planning.

The school site *can* be used effectively and *should* be used to enhance instruction programs. School land *can* play a key role in helping our students increase their interest, awareness, and understanding of the natural environment. As a result of this greater awareness, and understanding of the environment, I strongly believe that students will take a more active interest in issues relating to man's environment. It is through this greater interest and understanding of the general public that progress can be made in solving some of our major resource issues of the present and the future.

How about an outdoor laboratory for your school and community?

SALUTE TO MRS. LEROY BRADLEY

"Sometimes I feel like I live in a beleaguered city. It seems they are constantly cutting the trees down all around me," said Mrs. LeRoy Bradley, a lover of trees and wild places who lives along the St. Joe River in Fort Wayne.

But you can't discourage Mrs. Bradley. She went to work for ACRES and in her North Anthony Blvd. neighborhood she singlehandedly raised the funds to buy a rustic rail fence to protect the open edges of the Hanna's Ford Nature Study Area.

She personally visited every merchant in the nearby shopping center. She gathered pennies and dollars from neighbors and friends. There isn't anyone in her neighborhood that doesn't now know about ACRES or what it does. She has made many new friends for our purpose and she feels encouraged that so many people approve and were glad to help salvage even a little piece of open land.

So successful was Mrs. Bradley that the Hanna's Ford Nature Study Area Fund bought the fence and has a small balance to buy some planting materials to give nature a hand at healing the terrible gash cut in the area by the city sewer and highway construction.

Altogether more than 80 individuals participated in this effort, either by contributions of money, time or labor. A great many students from the Concordia High School worked very hard supplying much of the labor to put up the fence. Mrs. Bradley has ample praise for all their hard work. The students dug many post holes through buried debris of asphalt and cement.

This small area is the first in the city to be designated as a "Nature Study Area." Its establishment and perpetuation is very significant as the beginning of a system of nature study areas close enough to school children to be used frequently for class work.

We salute Mrs. Bradley! Without her the establishment of Hanna's Ford Nature Study Area would not have been possible.



JAMES BARRETT III DRAFTS STATEWIDE NATURE PRESERVES BILL

Fashioned after recently enacted Illinois legislation, James M. Barrett III, ACRES Vice President, has drafted an Indiana Nature Preserves Bill which would create a State Board of Nature Preserves and a statewide system of natural areas with a state program of control and management. Barrett is preparing the measure as chairman of the State Izaak Walton League's Wilderness and Natural Areas Committee. State League president Tom Dustin authored the endorsement of state nature preserves adopted by the Governor's Conference on Natural Resources and Natural Beauty.

The following is from the first section of the legislative draft and tells the intent of the proposed statute:

"As a part of the continuing growth of the population and the development of the economy of the State of Indiana it is necessary and desirable that natural areas be set aside and preserved for the benefit of present and future generations before they have been destroyed: for once destroyed they cannot be recovered. Such areas are irreplaceable as laboratories for scientific research, as reservoirs of natural materials not all of the uses of which are now known, as habitats for plant and animal species and biotic communities whose diversity enriches the meaning and enjoyment of human life, as living museums where people may observe natural biotic and environmental systems of the earth and the interdependence of all forms of life, and as reminders of the vital dependence of the health of the human community upon the health of the natural communities of which it is an inseparable part. It is essential to the people of the State of Indiana that they preserve the opportunities to maintain close contact with such living communities and environmental systems of the earth and to benefit from the scientific, esthetic, cultural and spiritual values they possess. It is therefore the public policy of the State of Indiana that such areas be acquired and preserved by the State and that other agencies, organizations, and individuals, both public and private, be encouraged to set aside such areas for the common benefit of the people of present and future generations."

ACRES Board and members at large will be watching the progress of this legislation closely as the State's 1967 General Assembly prepares for action.

"STEWARDSHIP"

The Metropolitan New York Open Space Action Committee has just published a book called "Stewardship". It is designed to assist them with their Every Owner Canvas of the Metropolitan region of New York State. This project, chaired by ACRES' National Advisor, Richard H. Pough, will be contacting every land owner with 20 acres or more in private or non-commercial use. A determination will be made through personal interview of the owners' future plans for their land.

"Stewardship" deals with a region's quality, case histories of those who have been or are now open land stewards, land philanthropy, new development plans that incorporate open space needs as integral community parts, open space easements and finally, statutes and rulings that effect a land owner considering open space action.

The book (paper bound) is \$3.00 and available from the Open Space Action Comm. 205 E. 42nd St., New York, New York.

Our national penchant for fastidiousness and conformity has produced this definition of the Strange American — strange because his attitudes and actions are not generally accepted:

1. He declines to cut down a dead tree because he sees grace and pattern in its sharp silhouette; he knows that woodpeckers and bluebirds may nest in it, and hawks may alight in its top branches.
2. He does not burn over his land each spring and fall in order to "neaten up" the place. To him the brown grasses, the wild flowers, the seedling trees, are preferable to a charred albeit neat wasteland.
3. He leaves some brush piles. Instead of burning all accumulated branches, grass, etc., he puts at least some of it in piles which he knows will be attractive to brown thrashers, wrens and towhees, as well as rabbits, squirrels, chipmunks, raccoons and other wildlife.
4. He doesn't cut all the underbrush in sight on the theory that it harbors snakes and other so-called "dangerous" critters. Rather, he enjoys observing nature's plant succession and how, miraculously, the wildlife community changes as the vegetation matures.

5. He doesn't drench his land with poison sprays.

THE STRANGE AMERICAN

6. He respects swamps and marshes.

7. He doesn't try to mold the wild community to his own design.

by Ken Morrison

In short, the Strange American

At the sight of an insect on a favorite shrub, the Strange American doesn't rush for a bottle marked "poison" and spray it on all vegetation within reach. He may do some careful selective spraying now and then to control an insect outbreak, but he knows that blanket spraying will eliminate insects that are helpful as well as those doing the damage. Equally convincing is his awareness that poison broadcast upon the landscape will silence many bird songs and change the ecology of his small part of the earth in myriad ways that are as yet little understood.

He knows that these water reservoirs are important in nature's scheme of things, serving to hold flood waters and maintain the water table. He has discovered that more wildlife finds refuge in his marsh than in any comparable area of his stewardship.

His conviction, developed through long and sympathetic observation of nature, is that the web of life is not an accident, so he does not yield to the temptation to judge the creatures of the wild by human moral standards. Instead he observes and enjoys all the wildlife with which he shares the land, sensing that each kind has its part to play in nature's massive pageant.

lives in harmony with the land. For our own sake, let's hope that some day the man who abuses and wars upon the land will be the Strange American, instead of the man who lives in harmony with it. □

Editor-in-chief of Audubon Magazine for seven years, Ken Morrison maintains that "a conservationist isn't a man who makes a speech or writes a book; he's a man who lives in harmony with the land".

THE PRESIDENT'S COLUMN

When you are on a treadmill you have to run fast just to stand still, and sometimes I have the feeling that this is what we are doing in the matter of land preservation. The pressures of our technological society, the increasing number of people, our very affluence which enables more and more people to move out into the suburbs - all of these make more difficult the preservation of natural areas. One after another they are damaged or chewed up. We cannot depend on private owners to keep some of their land undisturbed: we've got to pursue an active program such as we have in ACRES.

Yet there are many reasons for satisfaction over what ACRES has been able to accomplish. We've been running a lot faster than is necessary just to stand still. We've acquired four natural areas and are, we hope, in the process of acquiring still others. These will be set aside in perpetuity. We've found a great many like-minded citizens in northeastern Indiana who share our concerns and who want to do their part in setting these areas aside for future generations. The educational program which we've carried out to show the general public what's necessary in the way of natural area preservation has achieved some success. People know ACRES as a responsible, worthwhile organization.

Developments on the area, state, and national level are also encouraging. We have a County Park Board headed by a charter member of ACRES. A Governor's Conference on Natural Beauty has been held. We're cooperating with the Izaak Walton League in supporting a bill in the state legislature which will set up a statewide system of nature preserves. Developments on the national level have also been encouraging.

Yet we can't rest on our laurels: we continue to need not only the support of our members but also their assistance in gaining new members. We don't make great demands on our members: our dues are modest and we make few requests for assistance. We hope you will tell others of our program and invite them to join us. A good way of showing people what ACRES stands for is to pass around your copy of the ACRES QUARTERLY and to invite your friends to our winter meetings. We'll be glad to have them attend and will be even happier to have them join us. We hope to see you in February and March, and we hope you'll bring some prospective members along.

John W. Klotz

ACRES, Inc.
106 W. Wildwood Ave
Fort Wayne, Indiana

NON-PROFIT ORGANIZATION

DIRECTORS: John W. Klotz President; James M. Barrett III, Vice President; Jane H. Dustin, Secretary; Ethyle Bloch, Treasurer; William Bloch; Florence Klotz; Allen J. Lomont; Glenn W. Poe; Elbert O. Roe; Robert C. Weber; Arthur Eberhardt; Thomas E. Dustin; Richard T. Hurley; Father Conan Taylor.

NATIONAL ADVISORY BOARD: Howard Michaud, Prof. of Conservation, Purdue University; M. Graham Netting, Director, Carnegie Museum; Richard H. Pough, President Natural Area Council; Durward L. Allen, Prof. of Wildlife Management, Purdue University; A.A. Lindsey, Prof. of Biology, Purdue University; Lynton K. Caldwell, Prof. of Government, Indiana University.

The QUARTERLY is published by ACRES four times each year at 106 W. Wildwood Ave. Fort Wayne, Indiana for the interest of its members, friends and others similarly dedicated to the permanent preservation of natural areas in northern Indiana. ACRES is a not-for-profit corporation, incorporated under the laws of the State of Indiana. Contributions to ACRES are deductible for tax purposes.

EDITOR: Thomas E. Dustin