



Quarterly

Winter - 1995
Volume XXXIV No. 1

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Bats and Berries

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Tamarack Trees
March for Parks

ACRES Active Members Make Things Happen!

News briefs from the Executive Director

Thank you to **Mike Gross** and **Russ Harmeyer** of Carroll High School for refinishing the stand and metal picture frames on an ACRES display! We are working to complete the display so visitors to the ACRES office will be able to see color pictures of our beautiful preserves.

Thank you to Education Volunteers **Nancy Malis, Gary Helmke, Roger Kriner, Bob Weber, Donna Bragg, and Carolyn Hurley**. Hundreds of school children have attended environmental education programs at **The Bicentennial Woods** in the spring and fall of 1994.

Thanks to **Harold Eyer Jr., Howard Blood** and **Alice Golden** for clearing the trails and leading the hikes at the **Lloyd W. Bender Nature Preserve** and Harold Eyer's farm. After a 2 hour hike at the Bender Nature Preserve, we hiked another 2 hours across the Elkhart river at Harold's farm and saw the backside of Bender. A fun, but exhausting, day was had by all!

If you would like baby Cottonwood or Willow trees, Harold has hundreds of them you can have at his farm. The saplings will need to be transplanted before April. Call Harold Eyer at 219-747-4450 if you are interested.

Thanks to **Rebecca O'Linn, Kelly Cochran, and Melissa Bilderback** for their help with the Benefit Concert at the **Wing Haven Preserve**.

Thank you to **Rebecca Seim** and **Carole Zilz** of the Allen County Library for their help with the display at the front of the library.

Don McCormack and **Jack Suter** have finished their work to repair and replace the fence around the **Edna Spurgeon Woodland Nature Preserve** parking area. Don also installed posts for signs at **The Bicentennial Woods** and has removed downed trees from the trails. Thank you!

continued on page 5

This issue's cover comes from Angola, Indiana, ACRES member Paula Glasper. Paula teaches art in Steuben County and is a frequent contributor to the **Quarterly**.

ACRES Welcomes New Members:

Hal and Ginger Atkinson
Chip and Teresa Balsius
Marilyn K. Battenberg
Drew M. Boxberger
Robert and Donna Bragg
Debbie Breitenwischer
Linda Bustamante
James E. Eber
Thomas R. Foltz
Dave and Linda Freund
Richard and Joyce Garmon
Robert and Lea Ann Gebhard
Jay Gulyas and Betsy Ross
Gulyas
Scott Michael Hack
Todd Hack
Marvin and Kathryn Hall
Randy and Pat Harter and Family
Julia Hollingsworth
Barbara Hullinger
Philip C. Kaiser
Tom and Jane Kaiser and Family
Mildred Kerley
John R. and Lois R. Link
Bill N. McKnight
Gerald and Roberta McLaughlin
Barb Meyer

Sam Mosley and Family
Joan L. Mount
Scott Nevin
Virginia A. Nixon
Rebecca O'Linn
Wally Orr
Carol A. Ort
Tony Parks
Barbara Parr
Angie Quinn
Ann Raker
Virginia R. Richards
Dorothy Rissing
Michael and Janice Sasser
Jeffrey C. Sharpe
Daniel and Susan Shullenberger
Nancy Simmonds
Mary Ann Stark
Carol N. Telschow
Betsy Thal
Robert L. Timbrook
Ron Torborg
Venetta Van Hoozen
Russ Voorhees
J. Mike and Diane Whitlock

Hyde Brothers Booksellers



On October 22, 1994, about 22 ACRES Members and friends (most pictured above) hiked the Lloyd W. Bender Preserve and the Harold Eyer, Jr. farm. More details on page 2.

In Memory

From time to time people remember and honor loved ones and special people by making gifts to ACRES in their names. We feel it is appropriate that they be recognized in the **Quarterly**. We respectfully submit the following names and proudly carry on our important work in their names.

Carl A. Hofer

Mindy Affolder and
Susan Mitchener
William and Ethyle Bloch
Jack and Lorie Briegel
James and Dixie Croxton
David and Jane Doswell
Tom and Jane Dustin
Susie K. Emrick
Betty G. Fishman
Jeff and Norma Hoepfner
Kenna L. Jackson
Philip C. Kaiser
Ann LaMar and Jeff Keisler
J. Dennis Mahuren
James and Joan Main
Nan McPherson and Jem
Brautzsch
Joan V. Mostes
Michael and Deborah Mullen
Josephine Rodocker
Krista L. Schloss and
John Maxson II

Fern Scholte

Patricia Smethers
Bob and Janet Weber
Walter J. Williams
Jefferson Young

Cole . Matott . Architects
West Central Neighborhood
Association

Barney Stellhorn

Tom and Jane Dustin

Alpha C. Miller
for the Cedar Creek Preserves
of Vandolah and
The Bicentennial Woods
Nature Preserves
Tom and Jane Dustin

ACRES' Wish List....

As our organization continues to expand, so too do our needs in our office. If you have any of these items to donate, or if you wish to purchase them directly for the office, they would be put to immediate use and be much appreciated:

*Fax Machine (preferably plain paper)
Two, four-drawer, legal size, file cabinets*

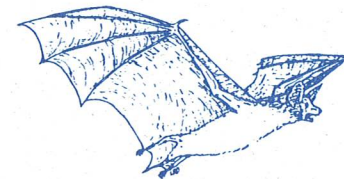
THANK YOU!

Bats and Berries of the Bicentennial Woods

by Tim and Mary Stucky

While hiking through the Bicentennial Woods on a warm, fall afternoon, we observed what we thought was a bird flying back and forth in a strange elliptical path. It caught our attention and upon further inspection, we saw to our surprise that it was a bat feeding on insects over the creek! As we had forgotten our binoculars (a good take-along for your hikes!), we could not easily see what species it was. It landed and roosted upside down on the side of a tree. Looking rather furry it resembled a giant tarantula.

We guessed it to be a silver-haired bat or a red bat. Silver-haired bats often roost in dark crevices during migration and are tree dwellers. They are among the slowest flyers and emerge earlier than most bats. All bats are harmless and quite beneficial. (We have two bat boxes at home to help with our pesky mosquitoes.)



We also were looking closely for Jack-in-the-Pulpit as we had seen this wildflower in bloom here early this spring. We were rewarded with a showy display of brilliant berries - easy to spot. As Jack-in-the-Pulpits are becoming rare in many areas, it is important to note how important it is to not pick the flowers (or berries!). The blooming process takes four years from seed to flower.

Unfortunately, we only saw one set of berries on our two hour hike. We were so taken by the beauty of the woods, however, we forgot to look!

- Tim and Mary Stucky are ACRES members from Fort Wayne.

ACRES News Briefs, continued from page 2.....

Two special thank yous to **Nancy Malis** for her work at the ACRES office and **Ken Millikan** for his work at several preserves.

Thanks to all of the 28 people who helped **Eagle Scout Shawn Russel** finish the second trail at **Seven Pillars Nature Preserve**. **Troop 501** has done an excellent job.

ATTENTION ALL ACRES MEMBERS: The ACRES 1994 Annual Report is available by calling the ACRES office at 219-422-1004.

- by Carolyn McNaghy, Executive Director

Field Trips & Special Events

Saturday, February 4. Footprints in the Snow.

Find out who is out and about in The Bicentennial Woods in the winter! Hike leader **Gary Helmke** will show how to identify tracks, a squirrel cache, winter dens, and more!

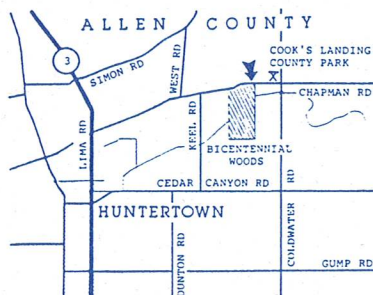
When: 2:00pm

Where: The Bicentennial Woods.

See map at right.

Bring: Warm winter clothes.

Contact Person: Carolyn McNagny, 219-422-1004.



Sunday, February 5. Wing Haven Nature Preserve Open House (1pm to 5pm)

Winter Tree Identification Hike with Bob Bryan.

Come to the Wing Haven Nature Preserve and Master Gardener Bob Bryan will lead you on a hike to find out which tree is which without their leaves. You will learn about bud and bark identification and how trees protect themselves through the long winter.

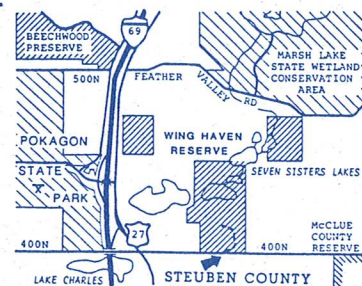
When: 2:00pm

Where: Wing Haven Nature Preserve.

See map at right.

Bring: Walking shoes and warm clothes.

Contact Persons: Carolyn McNagny, 219-422-1004.



Saturday, February 18. Cross Country Ski at Merry Lea!

Join us for a day of skiing at the beautiful Merry Lea Environmental Center with Else Matott.

When: 11:00am.

Where: Kesling Farm at the Merry Lea Environmental Center. Take US 33 to Wolf Lake. Turn south on State Road 9 and follow signs.

Bring: Lunch and ski equipment.

Contact Person: Else Matott, 219-745-7877.

Please note: In case of poor snow conditions on February 18, we will reschedule to ski on February 25.

Sunday, March 5. Wing Haven Nature Preserve Open House (1pm to 5pm)

SPECIAL EVENT: The *Samhradh* (meaning "summertime" in Gaelic) ensemble will play their fiddles and pipes for you to enjoy! Come to Wing Haven and listen to Irish and Scottish traditional dance music and songs. *Samhradh's* musicians are Bill Reeder, Ralph Reppert, John Brennan, and Connie Halt..

When: 2:00pm

Where: Wing Haven Nature Preserve (see map on previous page).

Bring: Warm clothing and walking shoes if you would like to hike the trails before or after listening to *Samhradh*.

Contact Person: Carolyn McNagny, 219-422-1004.

Saturday, March 11. Pancake Breakfast and Maple Syrup Camp Tour at the Maplewood Nature Center.

Learn how to tap trees and tour the sugar house to see sap being boiled down into delicious maple syrup. After the tour, we will sit down to a brunch of pancakes, sausages, and Maplewood's own maple syrup.

When: 10:00am

Where: Maple Wood Nature Center.

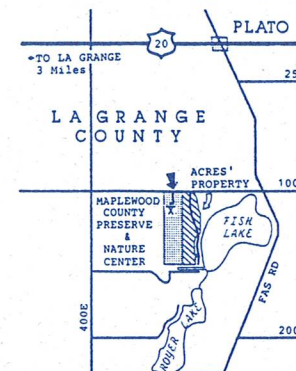
See map at right.

Bring: Warm clothing and walking shoes to go through the maple syrup camp.

Contact Person: Carolyn McNagny, 219-422-1004.

Cost: \$3.50 for adults, \$2.00 for children.

Reservations Required, please call ACRES office at 219-422-1004.



Saturday, March 25. Trail Guide Training.

Come to the ACRES office if you are interested in helping with Environmental Education programs in 1995. We will hike The Bicentennial Woods after a brief introduction to trail guiding. Get involved with the rewarding work of introducing children to nature.

When: 9:00am to 2:00pm.

Where: The ACRES Office, 2000 North Wells Street (at the YWCA).

Bring: Dress for the weather and wear walking shoes. Also, **bring a sack lunch.**

Contact Person: Carolyn McNagny (219-422-1004).

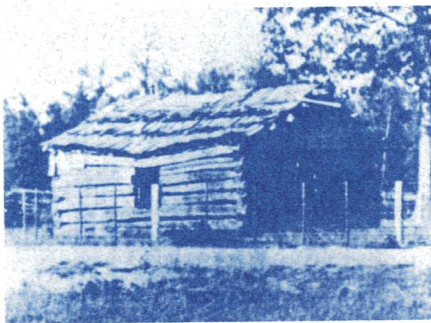
Sunday, April 2. Wing Haven Nature Preserve Open House (1pm to 5pm)

ACRES Acquires Second Natural Area in Jay County: Madison Township School Nature Preserve

by Carolyn McNagny

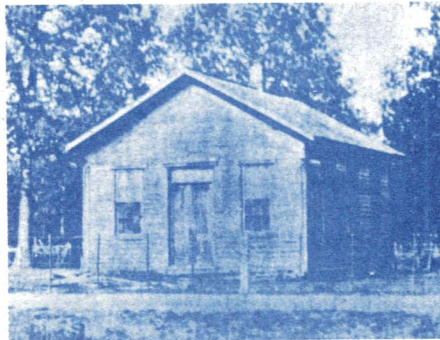
Thanks to Louis A. (Sam) Bibler and the Madison School Alumni Committee, ACRES Land Trust now has a second nature preserve in Jay County, not far from Sam's first gift, the 104-acre Bibler Nature Preserve. This 26-acre natural area, called the Madison Township School Nature Preserve has natural beauty and local historical significance.

According to information provided by the alumni committee, the Madison Township School site was the home to not one, but four schools. The first was built in 1854, when volunteers built a school "in the middle of the great forest and in perfect harmony with its surroundings". The first school was a one room log cabin with an earthen floor, a fireplace for heat, and split logs mounted on four rustic legs for seats. (Can't you just see it!)

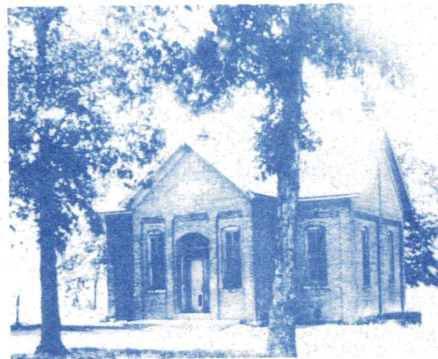


The community quickly outgrew the log cabin school and in 1861 replaced it with a frame structure. Frame buildings were replacing log cabins in other parts of the township and Madison did not want to be left behind. The log cabin school was relegated to a wood shed behind the

new school.



In 1895, the frame school was inadequate and a small brick schoolhouse was built. At the time, the township of Madison was thriving. In the small town of Salem and Salamonina, there were four churches, four dry good stores, saw mills, the Gimble Blacksmith Shop, two cream stations (where farmers turned their milk into money), a feed grain mill, and cane mills to make molasses out of sorghum. Students would walk to school or arrive by horse and buggy.



But the time of the one-room school house was ending. In 1923, a new consolidated school was built at a

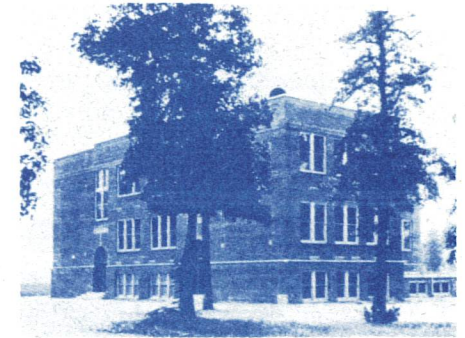
cost of \$50,000 and the brick schoolhouse was torn down to make way for progress. The consolidated school replaced 11 smaller one-room schoolhouses in the Township and included a high school for the first time.

Although the new school was much bigger, the classes remained small. The senior class ranged in size from 4 (1924) to 36 (1931). The school was the social center of a community of family farms and small businesses. Ralph May, one of the graduates of Madison High (class of 1939 and an ACRES member), remembers that the school year ran from September to April. The shorter school year gave children time to help their parents on the farm. Butchering day, or any time when the parents needed the children at home, was looked forward to -- it meant no school!

When asked what parents and children did for amusement before the age of television, Mr. May answers, "Basketball". Since the classes were smaller, Madison High School's team consisted of boys from freshmen to seniors. Principal, Harold S. Brubaker, also served as coach, pulling double duty. Parents would come for all of the games which were played in the school's basement. The gym was so small it was nicknamed the "crackerbox". Mr. May said, "it was important to keep the ball low, as the ceiling left little room for arching shots."

Madison School graduated its last class in 1967. Students were then bused to Portland High School. A few years later, the fourth and last school was torn down. Of the 770 who graduated from Madison High School, over 300 come to the alumni

reunions held once a year.



When the alumni committee, spearheaded by Ralph May and Gail Eley, decided to raise a plaque on the site commemorating the school, they mentioned their project to Louis A. Bibler (class of 1932). Mr. Bibler felt that to ensure perpetual existence of the marker and the school site, the entire area would need protection. Upon hearing that the six-acre school site and 20 acres of surrounding farm were available, he purchased and donated the two pieces to ACRES. The 26-acre Madison Township School Nature Preserve will be a fitting background for the alumni committee marker which is a tribute to the Madison High School. In effect, the land has come full circle and the "great forest" that surrounded the 1854 log cabin will return and remain forever.

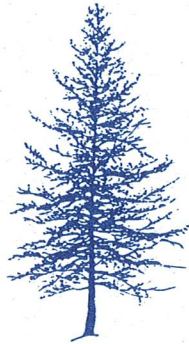
- photos courtesy of *Madison High School Highlights. Story of a school, 1924-1967*, by Ralph May

In addition to his contribution of the two Jay County preserves in four years, Mr. Bibler has also protected a 550 acre ranch with a conservation easement in Montana. The conservaiton easement is held by the Montana Land Reliance and will preserve the ranch in perpetuity.

Tamarack Preserved

Located along the Elkhart River, the Art Hammer Wetlands Preserve protects an area of sycamore trees and ponds, irises and blue herons. Art Hammer has been steadily adding to the preserve, which has grown to 247 acres in size. In 1993, Art purchased a 10-acre stand of Tamarack trees, which will become a part of his preserve.

It is fitting that a man who loves trees should find and protect one of the southernmost stands of Tamarack trees in the United States. Tamaracks thrive in northern wetlands and bogs and, as Art says, "they like their feet wet". The field guides show Tamaracks as growing from Labrador to the west coast, but few show them growing as far south as Indiana. It is unknown why this small pocket of them remain on Stienbarger Lake in Dekalb County. The dense stand hugs the shoreline and provides a glimpse of Canada in Indiana.



Taken from the *Peterson's Field Guide to Trees and Shrubs* by George Petrides.

The Tamarack tree, also known as Eastern Larch or Hackmatack, is a conifer and grows to 80 feet in height. Unlike most conifers, the Tamarack is deciduous and loses its leaves in the fall. Clusters of lacy, blue-green needles turn gold before falling and the tree stands bare through the winter, except for the tiny cones. Many animals, especially squirrels, rely on the seeds to provide food for them through the winter.

Art Hammer has protected many havens of natural beauty. With Indiana changing at such a rapid pace, he is protecting many plants and animals that are becoming increasingly rare. The Tamarack trees are fortunate he has found them.

- by Carolyn McNagny, ACRES Executive Director



MARCH FOR PARKS CELEBRATES 25TH ANNIVERSARY OF EARTH DAY

*Volunteers needed to organize events
in local communities*

NPCA's SIXTH ANNUAL March for Parks will once again be the nation's largest walking event for parks and open spaces. Held in conjunction with Earth Day, March for Parks raises awareness of park problems and funds for park projects across the country. More than 500 marches are expected to be organized to help celebrate the 25th anniversary of Earth Day on April 22, 1995.

NPCA encourages people with an interest in preserving or restoring a park in their community to organize a march sometime on Earth Day Weekend, April 21-23, 1995. One hundred



percent of the proceeds from each march will stay in the local community,

to be donated to a park. To support each march, NPCA will provide, free of charge:

- ▲ A comprehensive guidebook on how to organize a local march;
- ▲ A Teacher's Guide for events focused on children;
- ▲ A sample brochure/pledge form for walkers;
- ▲ March for Parks posters and signs;
- ▲ Sample press releases, psa's and logo sheets;
- ▲ Certificates of Appreciation for walkers;
- ▲ A toll-free number for advice and answers to your questions.

For free March for Parks materials, fax a signed copy of this form to: 202-659-0650. Or mail to NPCA, March for Parks, 1776 Massachusetts Ave., N.W., Washington, DC 20036. For more information, call 1-800-NAT-PARK (x225).

Name: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: (____) _____ Marcher Goal: _____ \$ Goal: _____

Name of Park: _____ Type of Project: _____

Date of March: ☐ April 21 ☐ April 22 ☐ April 23 Time: _____

"I agree to hold a March for Parks on Earth Day weekend (April 21-23, 1995), using the official March for Parks logo and national sponsor logos on all printed materials. I will accept sponsorship only from companies who are not in conflict with national sponsors. I will donate all of the proceeds from my march to the public park of my choice. I will send results, photos and other information to NPCA after my event is completed."

Signature: _____ Date: _____

The Back Page...

The Snowman...

My little boy was aching for snow. His big wish was to build a snowman. This burning desire stemmed mostly from a videotape he got last winter. It is an enchanting video called *The Snowman*. It is based on an equally beautiful book bearing the same title by the same author/artist, Raymond Briggs. Our three year old son is mesmerized by the images and music of this tape and wanted so badly to build a snowman.

For the most part, what few snows have fallen have been too powdery to pack. That is until three days ago, when conditions were just right for several inches of perfect, wet snow. It was a delight to watch him with his new tall friend in the front yard. He patted the

snowman gently and hugged him as if receiving the same affection in return.

It was wonderful to see in him such a simple, refreshing enthusiasm for the white stuff that I too have long since enjoyed. I consider myself lucky to still get excited with freshly fallen snow. So often, as people grow older, they allow news anchors and weather forecasters to whip them into a frenzy over a one-inch dusting.

There are few things, I think, more fresh and invigorating than a clean blanket of snow. It takes the rough edges off of nature, muffles a meadow, and brings a lovely hush to a deep forest. Don't hibernate yourself this winter. Get out and enjoy the white stuff... and maybe build a snowman.

- Fred J. Wooley, Editor

The ACRES Quarterly welcomes letters, articles, artwork, black & white photos, and anything else of interest to our readers. Send any and all items to **Fred J. Wooley, Editor, ACRES Quarterly, 180W., 400N., Angola, Indiana, 46703-9502.** Deadline for the Spring issue is **March 1, 1995.**  printed on recycled paper 

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