

THE ACRES QUARTERLY

Winter 2015 | Vol. 54 - No. 4



ACRES
LANDTRUST

I Love This Place
Sound Saving Science
Belonging: Membership Update
Making It Happen
Learning to Be Astonished
Take A Listening Walk



Photo by Tony Fleming

Letter from our Board President

What is it about ACRES Land Trust? Two experiences this past fall help me answer that question.

At an ACRES volunteer recognition event, I was struck by how many volunteers have decades-long connections to ACRES. These are talented folks whose services would be coveted by any organization. Yet year after year something strong connects them to ACRES. Each volunteer shares unique, individual stories in response to "Why ACRES?" Each plays a role in safekeeping this land.

The following week Lila and I hiked through Asherwood Preserve in western Wabash County on a beautiful autumn afternoon. The trails rise and fall over hills cut by Asher Creek on its way to the Wabash River and the Gulf of Mexico. In the woods, we noticed the old shallow-well hand pump, a reminder of a former use of the land, and we marveled at a majestic four-foot diameter white oak near the trail. Likely at least 250 years old, this tree was growing here long before European settlers. How did it escape their sawmills? Did they, and earlier peoples, marvel at an entire forest of huge trees when they walked these hills so many years ago?

Asherwood has hosted educational programming for public school children since 1974. How many young people have expanded their awareness of and love for nature here? This 160-acre property has been connected to many people over the years as it passed from forest to agriculture to education, and now, to a future protected by ACRES.

ACRES draws my support because it connects people and land, stories and nature, inspiration and habitat. I want to see more majestic oaks and inspired children, more spring flowers and inspired poets, more scientists seeking to understand our small part of planet Earth, more free flowing streams, and more inspired citizens as they connect to the land we preserve together, forever.

Steve Hammer
ACRES president

WELCOME 51newmembers!

Ruthann Angle
Andrew and Linette Barry
Carol Barton
Lana Bivenour
Gregory and Judith Butler
from Brian Johnson
Judi Carey
Paula Cassaday
Bill Cunningham
Audrey Davis
Greg Dunn
Ash Ellis
Charles Enea
Ann Garr
Jim and Julie Geise
Lynn Gerig
Mary Hambrock
Peg Heinze
Gary Heisler and
Coreen Spencer
Chantelle Huebner
from Ron Highland
Ken and Jennifer Jehle
Rick and Mary Key

Kristina Kindler
Sara Kruger
Alexander and Grace Maher
John McCory
Edward and Gaynel Murphy, Jr.
Nancy Murphy
Susan Murphy
David and Drusha Mussmann
Ralph and Becky Naragon
Kara Pearce
Ann Phillips
Nadine Piedmont
Melody Railing
John and Diana Rang
from Brian Johnson
Maureen Reidenbach Family
Gail Renier
Tristan Reitz
Paul and Sharon Rumohr
David and Nikki Sprunger
Stetzel Family
from Reta Rutledge
Jim and Carol Streater
Joni Sweeney

John and Kristie Timmerman
Frank Torres
Jean Tribolet
Jon and Laura Underwood
Lisa Worrell
Jo-Ann Yurosko
Susan Zwierko
life members
Dave and Barbara Kissel

YOU CAN PROTECT LAND WITH US!

*Annual membership starts
at \$25. Become an ACRES
member today and belong
to our growing legacy.*

acreslandtrust.org/membership

memorials

Richard Kessens
from Jerome Capecci
Pat McNagny
from Mary Frances Schneider
Sylvia Musser
from Frannie Headings, Jerry and
Juanita Miller, Michael and Michelle Scott
Annabelle Dixon
from Karen Griggs
Mary Ann Schwaab
from Don and Cheryl Skiba-Jones
Bob Roskusi
from Steven and Jeannine Bestard, Susan
Carey, Bob and Katey Dillon, Fort Wayne
Pet Food Pantry, Inc., Ann Hines, HOPE for
Animals, Inc., Joe and Lynda Klein, Mike
and Peggy McArdle, James and Susan Poiry,
Douglas and Billie Schaefer,
Buss and Kay Shady, Vicki Swanson,
Bob and Carol Welch, Don Williams

Anja Satek
from Anne Ladue-Satek and Jason Satek
Erma Wolfe
from Ken and Susan Till, Diane and John
Beuchel, Al and Sue Diefenbach, Homestead
Acres, David and Pamela Thoma
Matthew Shumaker
from Suzanne Dunn
Evelyn Dygert
from Barbara Gelder
Chris Smith and James Smith
from Sharon Pool-Smith
Norman Braun
from Gary King and Claudine King
Frank Kirschner
from Art Eberhardt, Joy Krug
Harriet Highland
from Ron Highland, Edward and Roberta
Meinzen, John, Nancy and Julie Reitz,
Susan Robinson, Jim and Mary Lou Sorg,
Marvin and Helen Tague

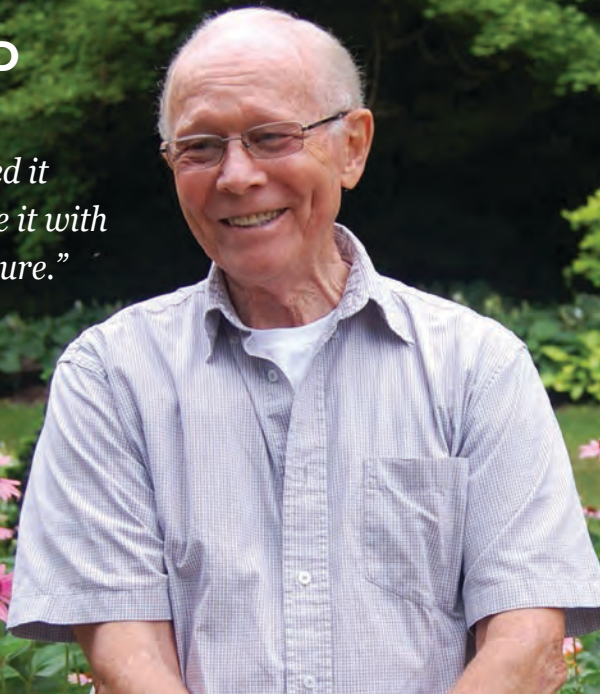
tributes

Kirk Swaidner
from Cornerstone Youth Center
Jim Haddock
from Don and Barb Lauer

Nathan and Aubrey Short
from Sandra Killila in honor of their wedding

PROTECTING LAND

"I love this place. I wanted it preserved...I wanted to share it with everybody who enjoys nature."



"I have enjoyed Tel-Hy for 20 years, free of charge, especially in winter."

Phillip Smith's donation of an addition to Tel-Hy in Huntington completes protection of the whole escarpment zone, from the top of the bluff, pictured above left, to the bank of the Wabash River.

Drawn by the sound of waterfalls, Phillip Smith knows others will love his land too.

By Connie Haas-Zuber

In 2015, Phillip Smith added to ACRES' Tel-Hy Nature Preserve in Huntington County the 6.9 acres he has loved and lived on for 36 years. He saw his actions as a natural extension of his life.

A 1968 wildlife management graduate of Purdue University, Smith has spent hours researching his property's plants, creating gardens that are the destination of garden club visits.

Smith knew the Goldenbergs, who donated Tel-Hy. He house-sat for them and cared for their dogs. Smith's property has views of two waterfalls. He explained that what drew him there "was the sound of waterfalls" that he could hear while walking the dogs. "The bottom of the Wabash River is solid limestone; there's no dirt."

Adding to Tel-Hy is an important priority for ACRES. Smith's addition completes protection of the whole escarpment zone, from the top of the bluff to the river bank, and includes a creek with an exposed bedrock bottom.

ACRES' vision matches Smith's vision for the land's future: "I love this place. I wanted it preserved. I didn't want the trees cut or ATVs on the land. And I didn't want just one or two people to enjoy it," he said, "I wanted to share it with everybody who enjoys nature."

Smith had heard of ACRES, attended a few events, then talked with ACRES a few years ago as he considered whether and how he might protect the land. He and ACRES finalized the plan, and the discounted sale received additional support from the Indiana Heritage Trust.

Smith made his first connection to the property about forty years ago through the Goldenberg's neighbor who often fished at the Huntington Reservoir when Smith was manager there. The fisherman and his wife also needed a house and dog

sitter when they went to California for the winter. On their return in the spring, Smith was able to buy the 6.9 acres from them.

Smith's connection to ACRES land donors actually goes beyond the Goldenbergs, even pre-dating ACRES' formal organization. For three summers in his youth, 1959, 1960, 1963, he worked for Helen Swenson at her Wing Haven family resort. Swenson later bequeathed her and late husband Ben's home and personal property to ACRES as what is now Wing Haven nature preserve, named for and located across from their resort. "That place really impressed me." He led bird walks, helped with cookouts and helped families haul their gear to cabins for week-long visits. He vividly remembers the birds he saw at Wing Haven: "In the evening, the Wood Thrushes would sing and also the Eastern Towhee, and I remember the first time I saw a Rose-breasted Grosbeak cross the path."

Growing up on a farm near Clear Lake, Smith remembers days spent in the woods. These youthful adventures and his Wing Haven experience led him to Purdue. His education was interrupted by two years of military service with the U.S. Army. After graduation he worked for the Indiana Department of Natural Resources as Huntington Reservoir Manager. He later

worked in a hardware store in Markle for 33 years, "enjoying doing what I wanted." When he bought the acreage next to Tel-Hy, the only way to cross the exposed bedrock creek that feeds the Wabash River was to wade or walk across a log, so he had someone build both the bridge that is there now, and his house.

He has watched a few generations of Bald Eagles being raised along the river near his home. The property is on a birder route, part of an annual collection of call data. Red fox pups chase each other in his gardens "running through beds of zagreb coreopsis, flattening them!"

Smith said, "I have enjoyed Tel-Hy for 20 years, free of charge, especially in winter. I knew Hy, and I appreciated him, too—he was a character!" (Tel-Hy includes Hy's outhouse collection.)

Smith has a life estate* in the property, so he will continue to watch eaglets grow up and foxes chase each other along the Wabash River.

**What is a life estate? As he lives out his life on the property, Smith's land donation to ACRES will remain closed to the public. He likes to joke that ACRES is his landlord.*



SOUND-SAVING SCIENTISTS ADD FASCINATING NEW PERSPECTIVES ON THE LIVING WORLD AROUND US

by Carol Roberts

Photo submitted by
Kristen Bellisario

Just before sunrise on a summer day in 2015, a tripod holding a weatherproof stereo microphone array is placed in the interior forest of Kokiwanee.

Kristen Bellisario, a doctoral student at Purdue University, is using innovative technology to record the sounds of creatures and the environment her microphone encounters.

"These standardized recording units can be programmed; they have the internal power to be left outside up to a month in a remote location." At Kokiwanee, she recorded in three sites: a wetland, an area with thicker canopy resembling a forest interior, and a section of the forest where the understory was very tall, due to a thinner canopy. She also recorded in Asherwood's interior forest.

While Bellisario's background includes music and signal analysis, her focus at Purdue is on soundscape ecology, a blend of landscape ecology and bioacoustics. She is working with the *Center For Global Soundscapes* at Purdue (centerforglobalsoundscapes.org) whose goal is to preserve the sounds of Earth. The Center's work highlights how changes to these sounds by animal species indicate changes in environmental habitat. The sounds help scientists understand how animals interact amid habitat modification.

Bellisario describes the benefits of sound recording: "Previously, massive numbers of people were out in the field gathering data, doing point counts, or what they saw or heard on location, such as the Christmas Bird Count, but with this new system we can get a lot more (and more illuminating) data." She uses metrics to describe how active a natural community is, based on its biodiversity and species richness. She analyzes time domain — all that happens during a time period, including whether the animal sounds are interrupted by human-made noises, and frequency domain — a three dimensional representation of sound in a spectrogram. "If we look into frequency distribution, we can say, *OK, time's important — but — here's a beautiful melody! Here are all the songs being sung by all the different creatures...and the different ranges, from low to high.* Using this visualization tool, scientists can get a 3-D picture of all that's happening."

At the Center for Global Soundscapes, researchers such as Bellisario are recording Earth's soundscapes with high-tech equipment and then comparing the audio data to written records from the past (Lewis and Clark's handwritten notebooks, Aldo Leopold's daily journals, and other sources). The sound-based story that Purdue researchers are telling includes locations around the globe (e.g., Costa Rica, Borneo). It is a project both epic and intimate. The Midwest Initiative, which Bellisario supports, "studies sounds in the Midwest...a huge, very settled area. The wild areas are fairly fragmented. It's good to do some comparison/contrast studies because of these land changes." The Center has been studying Tippecanoe County for the past 7 years, looking at changes over time: "Can we explain the changes in sound? Do these sound changes correlate with, for example, an invasive species, or with anthropogenic noise (that people make with motorcars, motorboats, airplanes, etc.)?"

She is working as a project lead for soundscape study under the direction of Purdue University for the benefit of an ecological exhibit sponsored by the Indiana State Museum to describe and explain the Central Till Plains ecoregion.

To this end, she is studying ACRES' Kokiwanee and Asherwood nature preserves. "It's very exciting to see

Kokiwanee and Asherwood—there are very few of these wood stands/forest preserves still around! Of course I'd like them to be 3,000 to 5,000 acres, as preserves. I can't quite get the sounds I hoped. What I hoped to do is be able to say: 'This is the composition of a forest before 1816.' To determine a forest before 1816, we are using historical documents and other resources such as comparing the number of trees that host a particular species that tell us what the composition of the trees would have been at that time."

The sounds Bellisario has recorded in Kokiwanee and Asherwood will be assembled into a *time lapse sound recording* spanning from pre-European settlement (approximately 1816) all the way to the present. These sounds will be heard by visitors in a "soundtrack" at the Indiana State Museum. Next fall (2016), you will be able to move through sound, space and time as you travel through the Indiana State Museum exhibit. Bellisario says this exhibit will be "something the public can go to and enjoy, to understand more about sounds in nature as time has moved on."

Spring 2016, Bellisario will return to Kokiwanee and Asherwood to do the same kinds of recording she did in summer 2015 "to really find out what the populations are in these interior intact forests during the breeding season."



"The sounds Bellisario has recorded in Kokiwanee (pictured) and Asherwood will be assembled into a time lapse sound recording spanning from pre-European settlement (approximately 1816) all the way to the present."

MEMBERSHIP UPDATE

Belonging—a community of the land

*“When we see land as a community to which we belong,
we may begin to use it with love and respect.”*

— ALDO LEOPOLD, from *A Sand County Almanac*

LISTENING TO MEMBERS, STRENGTHENING MEMBERSHIP

From the beginning, ACRES chose a unique approach to protecting natural areas: membership. When our twelve founders solidified their vision in 1960, they pooled their \$2 memberships to become our very first members. Today, during periods of unprecedented growth, membership still connects us to our grassroots and embodies the collective spirit of our work together, protecting the places we love.

While annual membership starts at only \$25, ACRES recognizes that joining, belonging, establishing some roots with us means something more—our shared values and investment in the land. To strengthen membership, we are responding to members’ requests for the following:

Member-only programming

Selected annual programs and events honor the ACRES community of members. To celebrate membership—your belonging, member programs offer a little more, such as free music, cookouts, beer in the barn, or a unique preserve opportunity.

Membership invoicing

ACRES supporters who thought they were current members have shared alarm at discovering a membership lapse. Lapsed members lament the interruption in their belonging, and, recently, have requested invoices to place in a “bill” or “to do” pile. We hear you! Beginning this winter, prior to the expiration of your membership, you will receive an invoice notification to renew. Thank you for letting us know you want to belong—and that we can help you by sending an invoice as a reminder.

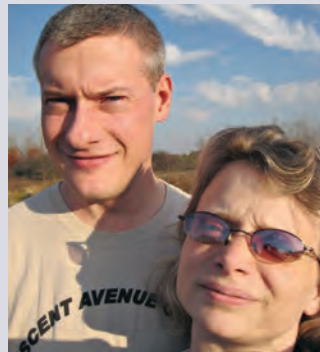
Automatic membership and/or gift renewal

Using a credit card, you can keep your membership current with a one-time sign up—for years to come (as long as your credit card information is current). To set up this option, you can wait for your membership invoice to arrive, or visit www.acreslandtrust.org/autorenew. You also may choose to set up automatically recurring gifts (as explained by Elizabeth and Mark Leppek on the following page). Each year, ACRES will send confirmation of your auto-renewal sign-up and notify you prior to billing.

We hope you value these changes in membership and gift renewal, part of your connection to protecting land with us. Thank you for belonging to the ACRES community.

Making It Happen: *Fund Development* Angela Mapes Turner

Finding the Right Frequency: Sound giving through recurring gifts



Mark and Elizabeth Leppek support ACRES, their ‘hometown hero’ with a recurring monthly gift. Photo submitted by the Leppeks.

When Elizabeth and Mark Leppek sat down to make a list of their priorities for philanthropic giving, ACRES Land Trust immediately came to mind.

The Leppeks, of Fort Wayne, say that while they appreciate the benefit of manicured parks, they find something special about wild, natural places. They consider ACRES the “hometown hero” regional equivalent of America’s National Park System.

“It’s a local benefit!” Mark says.

For the Leppeks, budgeting their ACRES donation into monthly installments seemed logical, and auto-withdrawal means the pressure is off them to remember to give every month. Mark explains: “It’s a little bit easier to make a smaller monthly donation than come up with one big donation once a year.”

The Leppeks have been exploring ACRES’ spaces since they first received a Preserve Guide at the Fort Wayne Home and Garden Show about 10 years ago. That Guide serves as their hiking diary of sorts, where the Leppeks date their visits to each preserve. A decade later, there have been many visits.

Their favorite places to hike are Bicentennial Woods in Hometown, with its towering old trees along Willow Creek, and Kokiwanee in Wabash County, with scenic bluffs along the Salamonie River.

The Leppeks often hike with their 15-year-old son and 12-year-old daughter. The family usually meets friends or relatives and makes an event of their visit. Mark says, “It’ll turn into an afternoon where we can walk around and appreciate nature and visit while we’re walking—it’s a time of togetherness, of catching up.”

If, like the Leppeks, you view ACRES as a “hometown hero” in protecting natural areas, please consider a recurring gift. Your gifts will be a dependable source of support that ACRES can count on throughout the year.

Lives today are busy. That’s why we’ve made it easy for you to make a gift to ACRES on your schedule, not ours. You can give monthly or annually, and can even set your ACRES membership to auto-renew! Please visit acreslandtrust.org/recurring for more information and to set up your recurring gift to ACRES Land Trust. Our mission is preserving natural areas—forever.

Center Spread: Vandolah Nature Preserve in northern Allen County protects a portion of the Cedar Creek Corridor. With nearly 1.5 miles of trails, some through a 55-foot ravine, if you visit Vandolah, you’re guaranteed an engaging hike in all seasons. Photo by Shane Perfect.



21ST ANNUAL CHRISTMAS SING-ALONG

Sunday, December 6, 2–3 pm

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

Gather around a wood-burning stove for an old-fashioned sing-along. Enjoy festive refreshments and celebrate the holiday season at the Wing Haven Studio.

Presented by ACRES friends Art Eberhardt, Jim Shearer, Jeanine Samuelson and Steve Eyrich



GEMINIDS METEOR SHOWER

Saturday, December 12, 8:30 pm

WABASH COUNTY | Hathaway Preserve at Ross Run
1866 E Baumbauer Road, Wabash, IN 46992

Enjoy a crisp winter night watching the meteor shower in the dark skies of rural Wabash County. Bring a blanket or chair to gaze into the sky from — coffee and hot chocolate will be provided. If it happens to be cloudy, we'll look a little closer to the ground and explore the night life of this amazing preserve.

Presented by the Kissel Family

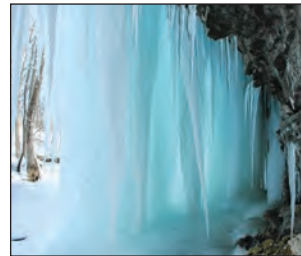
CREEK STOMP — WINTER EDITION!

Saturday, January 30, 2 pm

WABASH COUNTY | Hathaway Preserve at Ross Run
1866 E Baumbauer Road, Wabash, IN 46992

The creek is active all year, revealing new discoveries during the winter months: 20-foot icicles, frozen waterfalls, and fossils are frequently seen. Come see what you've been missing!

Presented by the Kissel Family



SIGN MAKING

Saturday, February 20, 2 pm

WABASH COUNTY | Mary Thornton Nature Preserve
1541 E 300 N, Wabash, IN 46992

Many new preserves will open in 2016 — and they all need signs. Help create the signs that will greet preserve visitors for years to come. We will work in the heated barn. Supplies and refreshments provided.

Presented by the Kissel Family

MOON SHADOW

Monday, February 22, 6:30–8:30 pm

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

Take to the trails under a Full Snow Moon and enjoy shadow play across hilly topography. If it's cloudy, bring a flashlight to make our own shadows. Meet in the studio for hot coffee and cocoa before we venture out.

Presented by Shane Perfect, Wing Haven Caretaker



Photo by Bryan Utesch

MAPLE SYRUP MAKING AND PANCAKES

Saturday, March 12, 9–noon

WABASH COUNTY | Asherwood Environmental Center
7496 W SR 124, Wabash, IN 46992

If the smell of warm pancakes, sausage, fresh-made syrup and the cool, crisp air of winter sounds inviting, then join us for this winning combination plus a guided tour of the sugar bush at Asherwood in Wabash County. Volunteers needed. See page 18 for more information.

Presented by: Bill Harmsen, Asherwood Caretaker, and Jason Kissel

No reservations required.

\$5/person, children under 5 free.



Photo by John Raub

Art for ACRES Call For Entry!

Regional artists are invited to participate in the **2016 Art for ACRES** show, presented by the Garrett Museum of Art, opening July 15, 2016. Are you artistically inspired by the preserves? By nature? Give life to your artistic expression! As you visit the preserves over the next several months, gather ideas, snap photos and create.

Details:

- The entry fee is \$20 for up to three pieces. Entries will be accepted beginning this summer.
- The show may be juried by an outside adjudicator.
- Cash awards totaling \$500.
- A percentage of sales benefits ACRES.
- 2D and 3D art will be accepted including traditional mediums as well as photography and digital manipulation.
- New work accepted. Work previously shown not eligible.

For more information, please contact the Garrett Museum of Art at 260-357-4917.



ACRES member Andy Boyden submitted two oil paintings to the Garrett Museum of Art's 2015 "Art for ACRES" show. Boyden's rendering of the Dustin Barn won first prize. Art for ACRES 2016 accepts submissions June 22–July 14.

ACRES hosts a growing number of events. Read the full list online:

www.acreslandtrust.org/events

Sign up for our monthly event newsletter at www.acreslandtrust.org/updates

Learning to Be Astonished: *Finding Poetry in the Preserves*

By Kim Bowers

*“When I read Mary Oliver, I want to get out in nature.
I want to feel the sun on my shoulders, I want to take a hike,
listen for birds, notice the beauty in all creation.”*



Kimberly P. Bowers is an Associate Professor of English at the University of Saint Francis where she teaches a variety of classes including Environmental Literature. Her students read poetry, essays, short stories, and the occasional novel to think more deeply about the natural world, human connections to it, and how nature impacts our relationships. She has published essays on environmental pedagogy and the Dixie Chicks.

I'm often reminded of poetry when I'm in the preserves. I'll just be walking along, and a line of poetry will come to mind. Sometimes from a poem, sometimes from a piece of prose.

Whatever the source, the words enhance my experience. They inspire me and help me enjoy the preserves even more. To my delight, ACRES has gifted me with the luxury of sharing some of this inspiration with you in a forthcoming monthly online blog series, **Poetry and Preserves** (www.acreslandtrust.org/blog).

Nature offers us an opportunity to walk free from the stresses of life. To remember what matters. In her poem **The Messenger**, Mary Oliver explores how nature encourages her to be grateful. She worries: "Are my boots old? Is my coat torn? Am I no longer young, and still not half-perfect?" She then prays to "keep my mind on what matters." She notices "the phoebe, the delphinium. The sheep in the pasture, and the pasture." And as she notices natural beauty, she finds gratitude. She makes "standing still and learning to be astonished" her "work." *What beautiful work.*

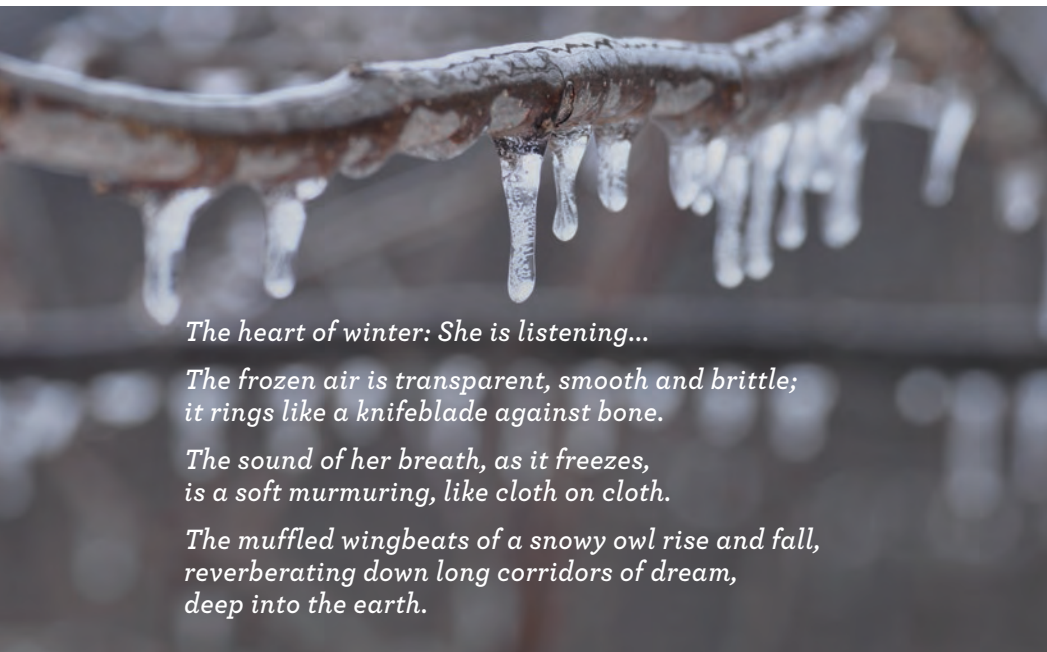
ACRES preserves offer the opportunity to make walking in nature part of our life's work. When we're in nature, we're reminded to take care of it. And because nature helps us slow down and remember what matters, it also reminds us to take care of one another.

What would happen if we began to think of walking in nature as important work? Would we walk more often? Would we encourage others to walk as well?

When I read Mary Oliver, I want to get out in nature. I want to feel the sun on my shoulders, I want to take a hike, listen for birds, notice the beauty in all creation. Other writers also inspire me to get outside walking: Scott Russell Sanders, Langston Hughes, Gene Stratton-Porter, Emily Dickinson. The list goes on and on.

I go to the preserves often. Sometimes to clear my mind of the day's stresses, to take a break from grading, to unblock writer's block. Sometimes I go with my dog or with a friend. Always I go with lines from literature I've stored over the years, lines that encourage me to reflect on my life and increase the joy I find in nature.

In **Poetry and Preserves**, I will share some of those lines. Perhaps you will remember a line or two when you next walk in the preserves. Perhaps you will grab a favorite book of poetry before you head out. Whatever the case, I hope you will walk with me a little, through the preserves. Through a book of poetry—and be astonished by life and all creation.



The heart of winter: She is listening...

*The frozen air is transparent, smooth and brittle;
it rings like a knifeblade against bone.*

*The sound of her breath, as it freezes,
is a soft murmuring, like cloth on cloth.*

*The muffled wingbeats of a snowy owl rise and fall,
reverberating down long corridors of dream,
deep into the earth.*



Photo by Claire Cook



Photo by Paul McAfee



Photo by Jerry McCoy

SAVORING SOUNDSCAPES: *Take a Listening Walk*

by Lettie Haver

This poetry of John Luther Adams, a Pulitzer-prize-winning composer whose music is inspired by nature, describes "The place where you go to listen." Here's your invitation to take a listening walk through ACRES preserves.

A winter walk through a preserve can be surprising to the novice. The stillness, the profound change in scenery in a woods, a prairie, a wetland, can shift our understanding of the natural cycle and what it means to protect natural areas.

Although winter has been called a time of silence, our intentional listening invites us into another aspect of preservation. *How does this work?* Each of us has experience both tuning into, and trying to tune out, the sounds around us. Let's stop right here: *when you reach the end of this sentence, try pausing and listening intently.*

What did you hear? Sounds you may have missed before? What happens when we become deliberately aware of our auditory environment? If we practice intentional listening in a nature preserve, will natural sounds bring the trails alive for us in new ways?

Sound walks—listening walks—are ways to appreciate natural areas and their preservation, to feel a stronger connection to the land, to build sensitivity to and respect for the natural world.

Sound ecologists like Kristen Bellisario (*featured on pages 6–7*) use special equipment and training to collect, monitor and interpret soundscapes. However, you can enjoy sound walks with only your ears. Or you can bring a journal to capture notes to return to later (perhaps as you revisit a preserve), or a smartphone to record and share your soundscape experience.

Responding to the following may provide you with a practical guide of your own:

How will you select which preserve to listen to? A preserve along a major waterway, near a major road, or with a large forested interior (as Bellisario chose)? With canyon walls, forests, meadows? How might topography or landscape affect acoustics and thus, your experience?

If you choose to walk with others, a pact of silence sometimes helps. Depending on the sensitivity, curiosity, awe, and (perhaps!) age of your companions, a range of responses, from giggles to gasps to "shhhh!" to silence can be expected. Will you agree to stop at certain spots to talk about what each has heard? Or will you speak on the way home?

Walking alone offers unique opportunities for observation and reflection. Will you start your listening walk at the trailhead

or before—or will you start with yourself! What do you sound like in winter—your breath, your body, your boots as you move? How do the sounds of your footsteps change as you slog through mud, slide on ice, crunch through snow?

As you walk, will you wonder: "How do my sounds change as I walk? Does my breath fall into rhythms? Is careful listening enhancing my other senses? What natural sounds am I hearing? What might be making them? If I stand still for a few moments with closed eyes, what sounds can I locate around me in every direction? How far can I hear?"

Before your walk, will you brainstorm a list of earth sounds to listen for—chickadees chattering, woodpeckers hammering, ice dripping, wind rustling oak leaves... snow crystals hitting your jackets... and perhaps best of all, the sounds of silence...

Whichever preserve we choose to walk in, and whether we choose to walk alone or with others, intentional listening invites us into a new way of appreciating natural areas preserved not for just one season or two, but forever.

VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES

Home & Garden Show

February 25 - 28

Help at the ACRES booth by greeting guests, selling merchandise and memberships and sharing your excitement about ACRES. Volunteers will get a free exhibitor's pass to the show.

Training for this event will be Saturday, February 13 at 10 am at the ACRES Office on the Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve in Allen County (1802 Chapman Road, Huntertown, IN 46748).

If you are interested, please contact: Tina Puitz at 260-637-2273, extension 4 or tpuitz@acreslandtrust.org

Share the Trails

Do you love the preserves? You can help ACRES Share the Trails! ACRES is looking for nature lovers interested in leading casual hikes. If you'd like to lead groups along the trail of your favorite preserve, sharing your enthusiasm and a few notes, consider joining our all-volunteer Share the Trails program.

Instead of being an expert, you and your group will explore and learn about nature together, using reference notes provided by ACRES.

In addition to notes, trail guides will receive one-on-one training and shadowing with an experienced hike leader.

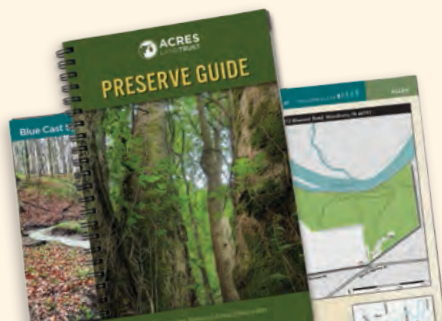
If you are interested, please contact: Tina Puitz at 260-637-2273, extension 4 or tpuitz@acreslandtrust.org

SHARE YOUR JOY: Give the gift of ACRES

Are you, or is someone you love, nuts about ACRES? Check out the new limited edition, hand-screened t-shirt by Yonder Clothing Company! All proceeds support ACRES. \$22 at yonderclothing.com/product/acres-land-trust

Welcome your friends and family to the thrill of discovering ACRES preserves with the gift of our Preserve Guide. Featuring more than 70 miles of trails, the guide holds the opportunity for countless hours of exploration of protected natural areas.

\$13 at acreslandtrust.org



Maple Syrup Making

Saturday, March 12, 9 - noon

WABASH COUNTY

Asherwood Environmental Center
7496 W SR 124, Wabash, IN 46992

If you've never seen the process of making maple syrup, you're in for a treat. Volunteers are needed at Asherwood for parking, cooking, greeting, check-in and syrup sales.

To volunteer, contact: Jason Kissel at 260-637-2273, extension 2 or jkissel@acreslandtrust.org

SPECIAL thanks

All our Quarterly distributors

All our preserve monitors and stewards

All our administrative volunteers

Aetna Fort Wayne

donating office supplies and funds

Joe Armstrong Family, Craig and Nancy Bobay, John and Barb Clark, Allison Ellis, Pam George, Ted and Tedra Hemingway, Deb Leinker, Mark Maffey, Peg Maginn, Kim Miser, Kathy and Doug Rogers, Carol Roberts, and David Van Gilder

helping out at the Barn Series

B & J Rentals sharpening chainsaws

Ralph and Mary Campbell, Laura Colpitts, Joe and Nancy Conrad, Ted and Tedra Hemingway, Ed and Cynthia Powers, Angie O'Neill, Allyson Ellis, Molly Puitz, Zelle and Lena Haver-Meyer collating the fall Quarterly

Nancy and Joe Conrad coordinating the Barn Series

Cub Scout Pack 3117, Central Christian Church, Huntington

clean-up service project at Pehkokia Woods

Pam George and Charles Enea helping ACRES at the Allen County Trailblazers kick-off

Ted and Tedra Hemingway, Peg Maginn

and Susie Watson

helping ACRES at the Allen County Senior Information Fair

Huntertown Cub Scouts

building boardwalk for preserve trails

Mary Ibe and Nancy Eagle

leading the Project Learning Tree environmental education workshop

Jim Firestone

donating tarps and storage containers

Georgian Johnson-Coffey, Doug and Kathy Rogers, Erna Vanhelfter helping ACRES at Little River Wetlands Project's Monarch Festival

Robbie Keaffaber, Chimney Sweeping & More inspecting the chimney and wood burning stove at Wildwood

Louise and Keith Pomeroy donating refrigerator

Carol Roberts

revising and editing the Quarterly

Pio Market II

discounting hamburgers and brats for the Volunteer Appreciation Dinner

Pita Village

discounting food for Land Management committee meeting

Yonder Clothing Company

donating proceeds from the sale of new ACRES t-shirts

wish list

2 cash boxes with money trays

A Go Pro camera

Postage stamps

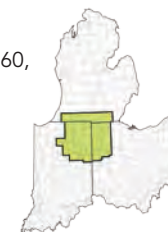
Bird seed



Dedicated to preserving natural areas since 1960, ACRES manages and protects 94 properties totaling 5,725 acres.



Like our page at www.facebook.com/ACRES.LT



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Cedar Creek by Shane Perfect



Last January I walked alone in a preserve, enjoying the brittle cold, the silence of fresh snow. Cedar Creek flowed beside me, black, swift and clear beneath a fragile film of ice shelves.

And then—fur and bright eyes. Two river otters poked their heads over ice on the creek's far bank. We three held still, perfectly quiet, watching each other for a long time. It must have been ten minutes. I think they were as astonished as I. My feet grew numb. Reluctantly, I was the first to turn away. While I had never seen them before and have never seen them since, I was there, and so were they.

— Carol Roberts, *Quarterly* editor