

THE ACRES QUARTERLY

Fall 2016 | Vol. 55 - No. 3



ACRES
LANDTRUST

Remembering Ted Heemstra

Expanding on a Promise

Hiking Local

If These Forests Could Talk

Hoosier Roots Have Strong Pull



From the Executive Director

Dear Members,

An ACRES membership as a “thing” is optional, easy to obtain, inexpensive. However, for some, their ACRES membership is critical, invaluable, and elicits hard work. For these members, ACRES provides a way to exercise their core beliefs. Ted Heemstra viewed his membership in this way. For over five decades, Ted renewed his membership as a way of reconfirming to himself: “This is part of who I am.” (*You can read more about Ted’s involvement on pages 4–5.*)

As a member, you participate in what some might call an outrageous act. You help buy land you won’t own in order to share it for free with everyone and everything. In today’s world, that’s unusual and unexpected. It’s unusual and unexpected to plan in centuries rather than in years, to put other’s interests above your own, to preserve, rather than “use” land. Your actions and the actions of the rest of us ACRES members are unusual and unexpected—in the most wonderful way.

Membership in ACRES joins together people who, for different reasons, like to see part of our world remain natural. Some casually send in their membership, happy to do what they can to preserve land. Others partially fulfill their life’s mission through their ACRES membership. No matter why we joined, we made a deliberate choice to join—and that links us together. We make ACRES successful. We preserve land. What we do may be wonderfully unusual and unexpected, and we do it together.

Sincerely,

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

P.S. Did you notice the change in salutation from “Dear Friends” to “Dear Members”? Starting with this issue, only ACRES members receive the Quarterly. We will continue distributing in libraries and local shops a free (condensed to 8 pages) version of the Quarterly that includes an article, general information about ACRES and upcoming events, and encourages readers to join.

Cover photo of Yellow Foxtail by Jerry McCoy



ACRES Land Trust preserves, protects and manages 99 properties totaling 6,050 acres. You can explore more than 70 miles of trails through more than 50 forever-protected nature preserves, dawn to dusk, thanks to member support.



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



WELCOME

51newmembers!

Jim Baker
Suzanne Beyeler
from Karen Strong
Thomas Biebesheimer
Jean and Jeffrey Boord
Dennis Brown
Roger Bruce
Roger Bruck
Greg Burns
Shannon Connors
Megan Cooper
Gabe Curtis
Matthew DeHaven
Heather DeLorenzo
Jessica Dye
Jeff Eastwood
Ross Eagleson
from Sam Eagleson
John and Caryl Flesher
Katrina Folsom
Nathan Griggs
from Richard Griggs
Kim Harp and Dave Lewis
Bill and Sharon Harris
from Al and Sue Diefenbach
Kylee and Travis Hays
Karen Hellinger and Family
from Brian and Greta Ivanovic
Eric and Kim Heshner
David Keys
from Richard Griggs
Kimberly and Brian Koczan-Flory

Emily and Michael Liechty
George Manning III
Michael Mapes
Susan Markey
Ian and Paula Mercer
Ann Miller and Family
from Brian and Greta Ivanovic
Linda Miller
Bonnie and Tony Mitchell
Pamela Morton
Mark and Sandy Oda
Lachlan Ohman
Kyle and Kelly Penrod
Ray and Kristine Pulver
Reena Ramos
Greg and Michelle Rhoades
Sara Roehby
Charley and Christina Shirmeyer
from John and Anne Eddy
Tammi Smith
David Spreen
from Kelly and Craig Ray
Stetzel Family
from Reta Rutledge
Nicholas Uecker
Paula and Joe Weill
Steven and Ethel Wynder

life members

Barbara Boerger
Mark Troutman and Ann Wallace

Invite ACRES to your group!

Are you part of a group of folks with a high affinity for natural areas? You can share the joy of preservation. To schedule a presentation or a casual walk through a preserve, contact Kelly Shepherd, ACRES’ new Contractual Outreach Specialist at outreach@acreslandtrust.org. Thank you!

memorials

Von Hudson
from Louise Vare
Mary Cook
from Sue Cloak

tributes

Margaret Cook Suarez
from Sue Cloak

REMEMBERING TED HEEMSTRA (1928–2016)



by David Van Gilder

For over half a century, Ted Heemstra was a giant among ACRES volunteers, leaders and advocates.

He became a member in 1965 and immediately contributed his keen intellect, superior attention to detail, willing physical labor and irrepressible positive spirit to help make ACRES into Indiana's largest and most successful regional land trust. While he was friends with the organization's founders, he also continually cultivated new leaders and volunteers. Ted influenced the entire 56-year span of ACRES' existence.

Art Eberhart, longtime board member and ACRES supporter from Angola, Indiana, remembers that Ted was always cheerful, always helpful, and especially enjoyed helping on ACRES volunteer work days. "There was nothing Ted was unwilling to do for ACRES." Art recalled the group puzzling over how to move a large boulder in the planned Ropchan Wildlife Preserve parking lot. Ted took action. He chained the boulder to his car and pulled it out—without damage to car, life, or limb. (Ted's engineering background, like Art's, may be key to this boulder-moving backstory.) Art says that Ted was like other ACRES volunteers: regardless of education, vocation or profession, a fascinating and friendly person who shared a passion for preserving vanishing bits of the Indiana landscape.

Jim Shearer, another longtime member and former ACRES board treasurer from Angola, recalled that Ted was always interested in the technical aspects of the organization, including the IRS Form 990. For the first ten years or so after ACRES was formed, the organization did not make any federal tax filing (the nonprofit Form 990), so Jim and Ted did the research and put ACRES on the correct path toward tax compliance.

"There was nothing Ted was unwilling to do for ACRES."

I remember traveling with Ted to the Noble County Commissioners' office to secure continued tax-exempt status for ACRES land in that county. Ted knew all the clerks and Commissioners in the courthouse and was on friendly terms with everyone (he also knew every County Recorder and staff in northeast Indiana). Ted was a "scholar and gentleman" in the truest sense.

I have heard only one knock against Ted: As president of ACRES he did not know how to stop a board meeting (unless the meeting was in Angola; then he adjourned promptly at 9 pm). But that was Ted: always interested in what everyone had to say, always attending to the details, and always working to make ACRES a more effective agent for preservation. Well done! *Thank you, Ted.*



memorial

TED HEEMSTRA

from Anonymous, Tom and Mary Jo Bland, Lee and Pat Casebere, Margit Codispoti, Art Eberhardt, Elizabeth Evans, Fred and Mary Anna Feitler, Joyce Gray, Karen Griggs, Steve and Lila Hammer, Jim Haw, Frances Headings, Eric and Mary Helfrich, Keith Klemm and Kathy Landrum, Mary McArdle-Bir, Angie and Dan O'Neill, Richard and Joyce Pacer, Ed and Cynthia Powers, Rodger Rang, Robert and Phyllis Robb, Rebecca Runnels, Tom and Doris Schlemmer, Mary Frances Schneider, Kirk and Linda Swaidner, David and Faith Van Gilder, Dawn Wilson and Mitch Harper, Lisa and John Winebrenner, Fred and Jackie Wooley.

Expanding on a Promise:

Dr. Don and Susan Richey add 59.51 acres to 80-acre Richey Woods Nature Preserve

“Saving this land is what my dad wanted, what I want; and if we can encourage other people to do the same, that’s fantastic. We’ve only got so much land, so the more we can preserve, the better.” – DR. RICHEY

Late this spring, Dr. Don and Susan Richey signed the deed closing a bargain sale to ACRES that added 59.51 acres to the permanently protected 80-acre state dedicated Richey Woods Nature Preserve between Fort Wayne and Columbia City.

In 1953, Dr. Richey’s parents, Earl and Mildred Richey, purchased this land, including a family farm and woods. The Richeys and their children developed a deep affection for the place. As his father foresaw and lamented the probable future of the farm, especially their beloved woods, Dr. Richey promised he would preserve it.

Fifteen years ago, the Richey family worked with ACRES to make good on this promise. The original preserve was sold at a discount in 2001, when it became Whitley County’s first ACRES preserve. Now the Richeys have chosen to protect even more.

The Richey’s 59-acre addition includes about 26 acres of re-forested upland and a 26-acre US Fish and Wildlife Service wetland restoration project where Great Blue Herons actively nest. The remaining 7 acres are split as several small parcels located throughout the preserve. The original preserve protects undisturbed portions of marsh and floodplain woods featuring towering sugar maple and white oaks, groves of pawpaw, and beautiful vistas from steep ravines covered with large-flowered trillium in spring.

The Solon Ditch, a tributary of the Eel River, runs through the preserve. This addition protects more forest around this waterway, expanding preservation of the riparian corridor, and connecting two previously separate parcels of the original preserve.

The Richey’s retain life estate rights to the land. The preserve is currently closed to the public.

ACRES ANNUAL MEETING & PICNIC OPEN HOUSE

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 12:30 – 4:30 PM

Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve

Entrance to Dustin Barn, ACRES Office and Preserve trails

Celebrate the land you love on land you protect with your fellow members!

You can come and go from this year’s annual meeting as you like; the agenda is fairly open. Chat with friends new and old, explore the preserve on your own or on a guided hike, or simply stretch out and relax with simple food and great music.

You’ll find picnic tables and benches in the barn, or you can bring your own picnic blanket, favorite lawn chairs, even frisbees, kites, and binoculars.

Annual Meeting Schedule

- | | | |
|----------|---|---------------|
| 12:30 pm | Annual Report by Jason Kissel, executive director | Dustin Barn |
| 2:30 pm | <i>(Jason will speak twice, welcoming members who arrive later)</i> | |
| 1 - 4 pm | Farmland Jazz Band | Dustin Barn |
| | Help yourself to chili prepared by ACRES Board members (meat and vegan options)! All the fixin’s, cornbread, fruits and veggies, too. | |
| | Vote on board members | ACRES Office* |
| | <i>This year’s nominees are all returning board members: Craig Bobay, Joe Conrad, Norm Cox, Mark O’Shaughnessy, David Van Gilder and Connie Haas Zuber.</i> | |
| | Share your feedback on the value of membership | ACRES Office* |

Optional Hikes – Choose Your Own Adventure

- | | | |
|----------|---|------------------|
| 1 - 2 pm | Children’s Hike – Bill Smith | from Dustin Barn |
| | Flat hike above Cedar Creek – Jordan Marshall | from Dustin Barn |
| 3 - 4 pm | Photography Hike – Thomas Sprunger | from Dustin Barn |
| | Bring your camera or smartphone or both! | |
| | Hike down the ravine to Cedar Creek – Ben Hess | from Dustin Barn |

**Golf carts available to escort you from the barn to the office if you need a ride*

*Picnic, \$10 / person. Visit www.acreslandtrust.org/annualpicnic for picnic reservations, or call the ACRES office at (260) 637-2273 or stop by at 1802 Chapman Road, Hometown, IN 46748 by **September 16**.*

Fall back and slow down: **HIKING LOCAL**

by Fred Wooley

Hathaway Preserve at Ross Run

Every fall we all set our clocks back, but we each approach the extra hour differently, some sleeping in, others simply appreciating the luxury of extra “found” time.

I see autumn as a slowing of pace, the perfect time for us to take note of nature, to take stock of what happened during the busy growing season. We breathe easier in cool fall air and even stop to consciously breathe in the smell of fall leaves.

Years ago, when I was starting as a park interpreter, many asked if I aspired to “go west” to work at one of the big national parks. But the answer was no. I’ve always felt at home in the Midwest. I’ve found many areas out west arid— even desolate, compared to our lush woodlands, verdant wetlands, colorful prairies, and diverse oak openings.

Grand Canyon? Amazing, yes, but I’ll take our ACRES Robb Hidden Canyon for a near-home visit, thank you very much. The Sequoias are impressive, but the big trees of Bicentennial Woods are no seedlings! A rushing mountain stream that looks good in an outdoor ad has nothing over the cascading waterfalls of our own Hathaway Preserve at Ross Run.

After months of spring-summer’s tunnel-like wooded trails through deciduous forests, I find comfort in this lushness and growth “opening up.” We are awed by autumn’s changing colors, but it’s just as satisfying for me when falling leaves open up new views, distant views, views no longer hidden. Even on familiar trails, we see things differently.

Bicentennial Woods



Virginia Creeper by Fred Wooley

As we gaze down Robb Hidden Canyon’s deep ravines, we again get a feel for topography. It’s a different preserve than just weeks before.

As days shorten, changes begin. By mid August, walnut leaves are beginning to yellow. In September, Virginia creeper’s red-maroon flames lick up against gray tree trunks. By mid October, even evergreens get into the act.

Most every fall, I get inquiries from people who think their white pines are in trouble: “My pines—there’s something wrong! They’re turning yellow and losing needles!”

I assure them it’s all normal. Though “evergreen,” the needles are not evergreen forever. Each year about a third change color when their chlorophyll leaves, and then they drop. A few brisk autumn winds



Robb Hidden Canyon

later, this wonderful gold-green mix of needles forms a gold carpet beneath boughs that are, once again, all evergreen.

The spring and summer business of bird breeding is behind us now. Baltimore and orchard orioles traveled back and forth to the jelly feeders in our yard all summer, but we could never find their nests. These birds are in the Deep South now, picking bugs from tropical trees. When the leaves fall, we hope to locate the orioles’ pendant, grass and fiber ball nests that swung hidden in the thick canopy of summer.

In fall, we can slow down and visit our favorite ACRES preserves. Days of planting, watering, weeding, picking and preserving are over. Mowing slows, outside projects are done, it’s our time again. If you walk slowly, you can search high and low for this year’s nests. Notice newly gnawed holes in trees you’ve walked by before. See how familiar woods are different now that they are open for greater scrutiny and study.

Fall is my favorite time to get the lay of unfamiliar land, so make a point to pick a new ACRES preserve to visit for the first time. You may well return when winter’s blanket covers an even more open landscape. Things really slow then for nature, but not for us.

Center Spread photo by Stephen Perfect. The sun sets over Cedar Canyon, from the Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve.

You’re protecting this special place and moments like this for future generations.





SHARE THE TRAILS HIKES

Trek the trails with ACRES on the first Saturday morning of the month. If you'd like to be a volunteer hike leader, see page 18 for a training opportunity.

PRESERVE WORK DAYS

Support ACRES with your own hands. This fall, you can help control invasive shrubs. Wear long pants and long sleeves. Bring your own loppers, handsaws, work gloves and water. A limited number of tools will be on hand.

MEMBERS ONLY

Exclusive members-only events celebrate members' investment, commitment and shared values in protecting land. Thank you!

SHARE THE TRAILS HIKE

Saturday, September 3, 10 am

MIAMI COUNTY | Seven Pillars Nature Preserve
3555 E. Mississinewa Road, Peru, IN 46970

Presented by Jason Kissel

INDIANA HUMANITIES CAMPFIRE TREK & TALK - MEMBERS ONLY

Saturday, September 10, 6 - 8pm

ALLEN COUNTY | Dustin Barn, Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve
1802 Chapman Road, Huntertown, IN 46748

Trek the trails, pondering the words of Hoosier writers. After the hike, gather around the campfire for a light snack, beer and conversation on nature, literature, and place.

Space is limited. RSVP by 9/8 to outreach@acreslandtrust.org. Made possible by the Edward D. and Lone Auer Foundation.

PRESERVE WORK DAY

Saturday, September 24, 8 - 10 am

ALLEN COUNTY | Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve
1802 Chapman Road, Huntertown, IN 46748

ANNUAL MEETING & PICNIC OPEN HOUSE - MEMBERS ONLY

Sunday, September 25, 12:30 - 4:30 pm

ALLEN COUNTY | Dustin Barn, ACRES Office & Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve
1802 Chapman Road, Huntertown, IN 46748

See page 7 for event details and ticket information.

Made possible by the Edward D. and Lone Auer Foundation.

SHARE THE TRAILS HIKE

Saturday, October 1, 10 am

ALLEN COUNTY | Herman F. Hammer Wald Nature Preserve
16905 Rupert Road, Grabill, IN 46741

SOLTRÉ BARN SHOW

Saturday, October 1, 6 - 8:30 pm, Soltré plays at 7

Dustin Barn | Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve
1802 Chapman Road, Huntertown, IN 46748

Irish Americana tunes and cash bar. Picnic tables and benches on hand, or bring your favorite lawn chair or blanket.

Admission \$5 at the Barn, free for ACRES members. *Made possible by the Edward D. and Lone Auer Foundation.*

PRESERVE WORK DAY

Saturday, October 8, 9 am

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

IDNR GUIDED HIKE

Saturday, October 15, 10 am - noon

ALLEN COUNTY | Blue Cast Springs
21412 Bluecast Road, Woodburn, IN 46797

Presented by Ben Hess, east central regional DNR ecologist, and Casey Jones, ACRES director of land management. Space is limited. RSVP by 10/13 to bhess@dnr.in.gov

OCTOBER BARN SERIES - MEMBERS ONLY

Hot dogs, hamburgers, bean patties and beer, good company and great musicians in a casual setting. *Made possible by the Edward D. and Lone Auer Foundation.*

ALLEN COUNTY | Dustin Barn, Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve
1802 Chapman Road, Huntertown, IN 46748

Thursday, October 20, 6 - 8 pm - Ken Jehle and Fernando Tarango

Thursday, October 27, 6 - 8 pm - Kitchen Table Players

POPP OPEN HOUSE - MEMBERS ONLY

Sunday, October 23, 1 - 4 pm

ALLEN COUNTY | Emanuel M. Popp Nature Preserve
12129 Tonkel Road, Fort Wayne, IN 46845

Campfire hotdogs, refreshments, and hiking in this old-growth forest open only once a year.

Presented by Larry Biggerstaff, Popp caretaker

GRAND OPENING! JAMES P. COVELL NATURE PRESERVE

Friday, November 4, 4 - 6 pm

DEKALB COUNTY | James P. Covell Nature Preserve
Roughly 2727 County Road 52, Auburn, Indiana 46706
(or, more accurately, 41.338816, -85.063175)

Celebrate the opening of DeKalb County's first ACRES preserve with good company, cake and a hike!

SHARE THE TRAILS HIKE

Saturday, November 5, 10 am

LAGRANGE COUNTY | Fawn River Nature Preserve
Just west of 10100 E. 800 N, Orland, IN 46776

Presented by Shane Perfect

PRESERVE WORK DAY

Friday, November 11, 4 - 6 pm

DEKALB COUNTY | James P. Covell Nature Preserve
Roughly 2727 County Road 52, Auburn, Indiana 46706
(or, more accurately, 41.338816, -85.063175)

Made possible by NIPSCO.



“How did the forests’ different protection and management histories affect the richness of understory, midstory, and overstory plant species?”

IF THESE FORESTS COULD TALK: *Reading Mengerson, IPFW and Fogwell Forests*

by Carol Roberts

Understory, Midstory, Overstory... The *2008 ACRES Preserve Guide* described those components of ACRES’ Fogwell Forest Preserve as “an impressive display of spring wildflowers,” “flowering dogwood and pawpaw,” and “old-growth forest with giant oak and beech trees where great horned owls live.”

Now we appreciate Dr. Jordan Marshall’s IPFW field botany class for their detective work explaining this abundance of Fogwell, compared to other forests. Who did what? When? Where? Why? Marshall and the students revealed their answers in a co-authored article in *The Michigan Botanist* journal, as recounted below.

Once upon a recent autumn, 25 IPFW biology students exited their lecture halls and laboratories and entered three nearby forests: ACRES Fogwell Forest Nature Preserve; ACRES Mengerson Nature Reserve; and Indiana University-Purdue University Fort Wayne forest.

The class knew that “prior to [this area’s] large-scale conversion of forest to cultivated agricultural land and urban development, [the three forests] were likely connected by contiguous forested land.” Dense forests grew in northeastern Indiana

for thousands of years, nurturing thousands of animal species and hundreds of plant species. Today this land is dominated by agriculture, with sparse forest fragments constituting only 8% of the land cover (*ChicagoWilderness.com*).

All three forests had experienced human disturbances related to forest management, but not equally so. The students asked: *“How did the forests’ different protection and management histories affect the richness of understory, midstory, and overstory plant species?”*

To answer this question, they conducted an ecological survey. The class overlaid a grid of twenty plots onto aerial images of each forest, counted the number of species in each forest’s understory, midstory, and overstory, and collected a specimen of each species, marking the non-native ones.

After two months of work, the students and teacher had compiled their data. The result? The forest with the longest history of preservation—Fogwell—had the greatest canopy cover, the richest understory, and the highest number of native plant species.

The class determined both time and location have been in Fogwell’s favor: Although not donated to ACRES until 1976, Fogwell had been protected for over 80 years; in 1930 it was designated a “classified forest.” And unlike the other two forests, Fogwell is in a rural location.

In contrast, Mengerson (donated to ACRES in 1989) has been protected for 40 years, with only the northern 1/3 forest-covered in the 1930s, and its southern portion still “sparsely forested.” Mengerson is surrounded by urban development. IPFW forest, adjacent to the university campus and acquired by IPFW in 2004, has been protected passively (without management) for 10 years.

While the midstory strata of both IPFW and Mengerson differed in species’ richness and diversity, Mengerson’s midstory density was significantly greater than IPFW’s and Fogwell’s. The abundance of shade-tolerant species increased as the percentage of canopy cover increased, while shade-intolerant species decreased.

Focusing on the number (“richness”) of plant species as key evidence, the students found that at IPFW and Mengerson, the non-native [invasive] understory species were 16% and 26%, respectively. However, at Fogwell, protected the longest, they found a complete absence (0%) of



non-native understory species. They concluded that “the longer a property is protected, the more resilient it is to disturbance.”

ACRES appreciates Jordan Marshall’s class for their conclusions. When I asked Casey Jones, Director of Land Management, how this might help “direct” our work, he replied: “ACRES recognizes the magnitude of disturbance to pristine natural areas in our area. This research helps to quantify the effects of disturbance and also estimate the extent of adverse effects, based on the time a particular area has [or has not] been protected.”

“An unnatural disturbance occurs when a member of a biological community outcompetes and reduces the survivability of others in the biological community. Humans are more often the culprits, but feral cats upset the balance, as do invasive plant species and an overabundance of deer. Even our least disturbed areas have been impacted by disturbance on neighboring lands,” Jones explained.

These findings—that the period of time a woodland is undisturbed can greatly impact its ecological integrity—connect directly to ACRES long-term perspective: preserving land forever. Today, through ACRES, you are creating habitats that have the same potential as Fogwell Forest, potential that will be realized in just 100 years.



For ACRES donor Josie Fox, Hoosier roots have strong pull by Faith Van Gilder

Although Josie has lived on the west coast for more than 40 years, her roots in east-central Indiana run deep. She grew up as an only child in Muncie, and her father died when she was 7. On long drives to Madison, Indiana, to visit relatives, Josie observed the forests, rivers and open spaces, and her mother taught her the importance of respecting nature, thriftiness, and conservation.

At Burriss K-12 Laboratory School in Muncie, one of Josie's favorite teachers was Ruth Dutro, who taught biology. Josie earned a bachelor's degree at Ball State University, then majored in art history at the University of Wisconsin-Madison where in 1962 she met her husband, Geoff Fox. While raising four children in San Jose in 1974, they co-founded Fox Head, Inc., supplier of high-performance race apparel.



Josie's sense of land stewardship began when they traveled to Europe in the late 1970s to report on motocross races. She was impressed by the landscape restoration in the town of Norge, Holland: before the race, the site was a pristine soccer field; after the race, workers restored it to its former condition.

The Foxes sold their company in 2014 and now have time to travel regularly back to the Midwest. "We share a deep sense of gratitude for the natural areas of Wisconsin, Illinois and Indiana," Josie said.

"ACRES caught my eye during trips to Indiana over 20 years ago," says Josie Fox. She and husband Geoff gave a major donation helping ACRES protect Spring Lake Woods and Bog (pictured here and right).

"ACRES caught my eye during trips to Indiana over 20 years ago, and this has evolved into a mentorship. ACRES' programs are outstanding! Their pipeline of information to members is always high-quality. As a result of my ongoing interaction with ACRES staff, I feel confident asking how to carry out tasks on local, regional and state topics. ACRES oversees projects from start to finish, providing in-house and outside research and planning to create the big picture."

While Josie was visiting Muncie in 2009, a commercial real estate sign posted on a 16-acre woodlot on West Kilgore Avenue presented the chance to save the site as an urban woods. In 2012, the Foxes purchased the property and gifted it to Red-Tail Land Conservancy, naming it Dutro Woods in honor of Josie's biology teacher. Two years later, Dutro Woods grew by 15 acres, thanks to a gift from Karen Ernst and Augie da Silva, with support from the Bicentennial Nature Trust and Indiana Heritage Trust. Dutro-Ernst Woods is now Muncie's largest nature preserve. Josie says her vision is "to restore the 31-acre property with hiking trails, parking, signage for wildlife habitat and education, and a restored woods and native prairie."

In 2015 the Foxes gave a major donation to enable ACRES Land Trust to purchase

Spring Lake Woods and Bog on Lake Everett, Allen County's only natural lake. The preserve's biodiversity includes four-toed salamanders, six-foot tall cinnamon ferns, and cypress knee-sedge.

The Foxes had viewed aerial photos showing urban expansion from Fort Wayne heading toward the site. Mindful of the opportunity to protect lakeside land, they hiked the site with Jason Kissel, executive director and Heather Barth, director of fund development, who answered their many questions.

"As we departed, I observed a settlement of cabins nestled near Lake Everett," recalls Josie. "It was a quiet, remote scene that I hoped was destined to remain low profile. The idea of urban sprawl encroachment on natural areas reinforces my commitment to land conservation. As we familiarize ourselves with open space, we learn to value our native oaks, maples and shrubs protected from commercial development. It's up to us as stewards of the land to lessen the negative impact of climate change," she says. "Land conservation is people-friendly—we all need natural trails for hiking, viewing wildlife, and learning the natural history of plants."

"we all need natural trails for hiking, viewing wildlife, and learning the natural history of plants."





Welcome Evan Hill to the ACRES Land Management Team!

Evan, a Purdue University Wildlife graduate, joins ACRES as a full-time Land Management Specialist to care for our growing acreage your membership helps protect.

Evan brings experience to the job, having served ACRES for two summers as an Olive B. Cole Foundation land management intern and as a short-term habitat technician for the Division of Wildlife in Colorado. Earlier this year, he returned to ACRES to manage the intern program and support land management as a temporary contractor.

Evan will help mark boundaries, fight invasive species, maintain more than 70 miles of trails and manage summer land management interns and ACRES contractors. Evan helps ensure the properties are protected, well maintained, and healthy. Welcome, Evan!

VOLUNTEER HIKE LEADER SEMINAR—SHARE THE TRAILS

Saturday, October 8, 2-4

ACRES Office| Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve
1802 Chapman Road, Huntertown, IN 46748

Discover skills and knowledge about leading ACRES hikes, meet other volunteers, take a hike and share tips and tricks with each other. Register with Kelly Shepherd at outreach@acreslandtrust.org.

Wild Walkers explore ACRES

You can join Wild Walkers, a self-directed adult hiking group. In addition to other hikes, the group will explore ACRES preserves this fall:

KOSCIUSKO COUNTY | Wildwood, Friday, September 9, 8:30-10 am

ALLEN COUNTY | Blue Cast Springs, Friday, September 23, 9-10:30 am

HUNTINGTON COUNTY | Tel-Hy, Friday, November 11, 9-10:30 am

STEBEN COUNTY | Ropchan Wildlife Refuge, Friday, December 9, 9-10:30 am

Questions? Contact Karla Yauchler (260) 427-6008 or karla.yauchler@cityoffortwayne.org

ALLEN COUNTY TRAILBLAZERS



6TH ANNUAL ALLEN COUNTY TRAILBLAZERS PROGRAM

The 2016 Allen County Trailblazer program runs from September 1-November 30. ACRES Land Trust, Allen County Parks, Fort Wayne Parks and Recreation, Fort Wayne Trails, Little River Wetlands Project and New Haven Parks and Recreation partner to provide the trail network for this annual hiking rewards program. Visit allencountytrailblazers.org to register and see the trails featured in this year's program.

SPECIAL thanks

Marti Berry, Dave Brumm, Ralph and Mary Campbell, Laura Colpitts, Joe and Nancy Conrad, Angie O'Neill, Judy Schroff and Louise Pomeroy

for collating the Summer Quarterly

Ex Officio

for donating InsectShield bandanas

Rachel Tobin-Smith

for coordinating strategic planning with ACRES Board of Directors

Pam George

for coordinating the Annual Meeting

Carol Roberts

for revising and editing the Quarterly

Bill Smith

for coordinating volunteer hike leaders

Laura Colpitts, Katia Cook, Ted and Tedra Hemingway

for helping at Peddle Paddle and Play

Jill Noyes

for hosting National Trails Day

B & J Rental (Columbia City)

for donating and discounting chainsaws and supplies

Joe and Nancy Conrad, George and Mary Morrison, Jill Noyes, Keith and Louise Pomeroy, and Bill Smith

for helping with events and leading hikes

Vicki Bahls, Laura Colpitts, Joe and Nancy Conrad, Erna VanHelfteren, Darrell and Sue Will

for helping at Cedar Creek Canoe Day

Al and Sue Diefenbach

for donating a bag of sunflower seeds

Michael Findley
for donating snack mix, birdseed, batteries and folding sawhorses

Irving Sand & Gravel Co., Inc.
for discounting gravel for office drive

Jeri Kornegay
for donating coffee and Aussie bites

Dick Loney
for donating paint, a pole trimmer, linear measure wheel and wildlife book

Everitt Padgett and Keith and Louise Pomeroy
for donating postage stamps

Tom Reed
for donating batteries

The Gravel Doctor
for discounting driveway repair

Ralph and Mary Campbell
for donating a wildlife book

Fort Wayne Community Schools, The Language Company, Parkview YMCA Active Older Adults, Rotary Club of North Manchester, and Wabash County History Hunters
for requesting ACRES presentations and guided hikes.

wish list

AA batteries

Bird seed (excluding niger)

Forever postage stamps

A hearty thanks to a new generation of land preservationists!

Many thanks to 2016 Olive B. Cole Foundation summer interns! Land management interns Gabe Curtis, Jessica Dye, Reena Ramos, and Cole Uecker helped control non-native invasive species and more. Outreach intern Shannon Connors helped share ACRES stories. Thank you for protecting land!

DIRECTORS: Steven Hammer, President; Carol Roberts, Vice President; Joe Conrad, Vice President; David Schnepf, Treasurer; Norm Cox, Secretary; Craig Bobay, John Clark, Pam George, Connie Haas-Zuber, James Haddock, Ashley Motia, David Nugent, Angie O'Neill, Mark O'Shaughnessy, Angie Quinn, Dawn Ritchie, David Van Gilder, Michelle Briggs Wedaman.
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STAFF: Jason Kissel, Executive Director; Heather Barth, Director of Fund Development; Lettie Haver, Outreach Manager; Evan Hill, Land Management Specialist; Casey Jones, Director of Land Management; and Tina Puitz, Office and Volunteer Manager.

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ACRES Land Trust 19



Blue Cast Springs

In this election year marked by divisive partisanship, I am deeply moved by how ACRES' diverse members unite in our mission to protect and preserve land. Our preserves are held in trust for all people for all time.

Through ACRES, a broad demographic collaborates to cultivate the connection between healthy natural areas and healthy people. You have no prerequisite for membership—not gender, ethnicity, race, religion or political affiliation. Our preserves are held in trust for all people, for all time.

What brings ACRES members together? We share the desire to make a tangible, positive impact on our shared Earth, at a local level.

For our communities, ACRES' preserves are common ground.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Carol".

Carol Roberts, Quarterly editor

You can celebrate our common ground at ACRES' Annual Member Meeting & Picnic on September 25! See page 7 for details.