

THE ACRES QUARTERLY

Winter 2018 | Vol. 56 – No. 4



ACRES
LANDTRUST

Chasing Wisdom on the Maumee

Being In Winter

Land Preservation, Conservation and Succession

To See is the Thing: Photographing ACRES

Seasonal Gift Membership Offer

From the Executive Director

Dear Members,

A land donor recently handed me a box of documents related to their family's land now owned by ACRES: photos, handwritten deed records from the 1800s, crop history, and other treasures. With box in hand, I was humbled, aware that ACRES is responsible for safeguarding not only the family's land, but also their memories of this place.

While this sense of responsibility is not new, the box's label, "PERISHABLE," provided a new perspective. ACRES preserves land forever. And ACRES also preserves, for as long as possible, things related to the land, such as this box of memorabilia. But perishable items eventually perish, which led me to realize that ACRES protects much more that is perishable than is permanent.

For example, a forest. While the land itself may not change too much for tens of thousands of years, and a forest system may remain intact for thousands of years, individual trees will live only a few hundred years, perennials a few decades, and annuals (as their name indicates), one year. Forest animals live from over 100 years to just a few days.

During the course of "forever," the lands ACRES protects and preserves will sustain countless generations of perishable plant and animal lives. Millions of human memories will be made, some captured, but most perishing with their originator. *The fragile, fleeting treasure of life itself relies on a constant to sustain us—the land.*

I'm glad we as ACRES members invest in land through ACRES. I'm glad for the land and for all the other perishables, including you and me, that benefit during our brief participation in forever.

Sincerely,



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



Cover photo by Thomas Sprunger from Hathaway Preserve at Ross Run. Read about his love of nature photography on pages 16–17, and join us for Creek Stomp Winter Edition 2 pm, Saturday, January 27, to explore the incredible gorge at Ross Run. [Details on page 12.](#)



ACRES Land Trust preserves, protects and manages 108 properties totaling 6,797 acres.

You can explore more than 70 miles of trails through forever-protected nature preserves, dawn to dusk, thanks to your member support.



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

acreslandtrust.org



WELCOME 57newmembers!

Michele Anderson
Cheri and Gil Bearman
from Mary Berghoff
Dana and Thad Berkes
Barbara Biedermann
Steven Buckles
Matt Burrell
from Marguerite Burrell
Kevin Butts
Nicholas and Michelle Castle
Richard Coslow
Jeff DeLucenay
Matthew and Jessica Dunno
Georgia Emmert and Janice Bogwell
from Sue Emmert
Susan and Tom Fisher
Jennifer and Lucas Graefnitz
Stephen Graves and Stacy Cortez-Graves
Brandi Grimm
Denise and Joel Harter
Nicole Jiminet
Daniel and Amy Johns
Justin Johnson
Leann Johnston
Amy and Scott Lazoff
Charles and Truus Leader
Lon and Jill Leech
Dennis Mahoney
Sara Marhenke
from Jayne Jones
Michael McMartin
Susie Meeks-Wade
from Karen Griggs

Mark and Janet Nelson
Roberta Peterson
Linda Reef
from Kathie Bishop
Nathan and April Reinhard
Chris Ruckman and Joe Francis
Tom and Rebecca Schaab
Ryan and Anna Schnurr
Doug Selzer
Foy Spicer and Jeff Diesburg
Peggy Stein
Tara Storey
Tonya Stuber
from John Stuber
Cheré Sullivan
Cheryl Taylor
Diane Vachon
Steve and Jacquelyn Wahlig
Cathy Walker
Mary Waltz
Diana Ward
Rhonda Ware
Sue Warren and Doug Wages
Jim and Marie Watkins
Katie and Christer Watson family
from Carol and Randy Roberts
Marshall and Chrissy Weadick
Doris Wenger
Sadie and Sam West
from Aunt Linda (Gaff)
Karla Yauchler
Dr. Jan Younger
Tim Zink

in honor of

Farrah Elsworth Hoffman
from Steve and Jacquelyn Wahlig
Indiana Division of Nature Preserves 50th Anniversary
from Fred Wooley

Larry Wallace, for his good deed
from Dale and Judy Zinn
Darrel Will
from Julianne Will, Gregg DuCharme and
Mia Stephenson

memorials

Pat Barrett
from Carol and Randy Roberts
Pat and Jim Barrett
from Fred Wooley
Ruth Brake
from David and Pamela Brake, Cedar Creek
Women's Club, Addison and Marna Johnson,
and John and Linda Stafford
Russell Hathaway
from Eric and Erin Hathaway
Kelsey LaVigne
from Sandra Killila
Steve Lewis
from Dana Wichern, Carol and Randy Roberts
Ian Rolland
from Fred and Mary Anna Feitler, Angie O'Neill
Matthew Shumaker
from Suzanne Dunn
James, Chris and Tory Smith
from Sharon Pool Smith

Doyle Rauh
from Anonymous, Kim Fenoglio and Friends at
Pyromation, Barbara Krehl and family, Stephen
Kresovich and Janice Kilburn, Edward Smith Jr.,
Richard Teders family, Nelda Worthington
Felix Lipsky
from Donley and Nancy Bell, Robin and Deborah
Bollinger, Mary Bornamann, Jim Chandler, Terry
and Susan Gaff, Larry and Patricia Gump, Patricia
Hart, Martin and Debora Heiny, Dan Heller, Paul
and Marilyn Lauver, Felix Jr and Eulalie Lipsky,
Oliver/Martin Lake Improvement & Conservation
Association, Joyce and Larry Phillips, Mike and
Belinda Renno, Stephen and Rae Ann Seifert,
Shawna and William Stanley, Leah and Daniel
Williams, Patrick and LaDonna Wiltshire
Joseph Werbiansky
from Karen Griggs
Rev. John Vickrey
from Marvel Munro

FINDING YOUR PLACE

WHAT THE RIVER KNOWS: Chasing Wisdom on the Maumee

Photos and article by local author Ryan Schnurr

Recently, I have been telling everybody I know about the Maumee River. Among the first things I usually mention are that it sits at the center of the largest watershed in the Great Lakes region, that it drains more than 6,600 square miles of land in Indiana, Ohio, and Michigan, and that it has a lot to do with the rafts of cyanobacteria that have been producing “dead zones” in the western basin of Lake Erie. If they are still listening, I add from there. Depending on who you ask, these questions and answers have been going on for a couple years now.



My interest in the Maumee River is largely genealogical. I was born in Fort Wayne, the city of three rivers, established at the place where the St. Joseph and St. Marys come together to form the Maumee. In the fall of 2013, my wife and I moved into the upstairs of a house on Columbia Avenue, along the Maumee near the junction of the three rivers. The proximity got to me. I started reading a lot about the river—local histories, news coverage, EPA reports—and didn’t stop. I had started to wonder: What does the river know?

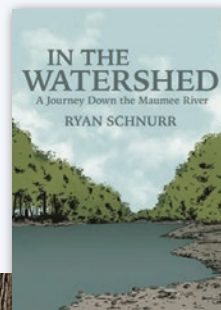
Still chasing that question in the late summer of 2016, I traveled from one end of the Maumee River to the other. The trip took eight days. I walked most of the way. At night I camped in backyards or on riverbanks, or slept in the spare

bedroom of relatives. In Defiance, Ohio, I stayed at a bed and breakfast. **For two days I paddled with a friend of mine in his canoe.** I kept a notebook of the journey, collecting observations and ideas that, together with a pile of research, became a book called *In the Watershed: A Journey Down the Maumee River*.

When I talk with people about that trip, they often ask some variation of “*So, what did you learn?*” It’s not an easy question to answer. I learned the sound of ripples surfing river bottom at the Maumee River Overlook, and how cyanobacteria blooms across the surface of a body of water. I learned the terms and conditions of a watershed, and the consequences of eliminating a million-acre swamp. **I learned a thousand other things, too, most of which I probably do not yet recognize.**

The Maumee has become, for me, a way of understanding the history, culture, and ecology of this region. It has influenced and been influenced by, among other things, glacial formation, Native communities, European invasion and settlement, transformation of wetlands, agricultural development, industrialization and recreation. **Studying the Maumee, I have come to better know my place—and my place within it.**

The novelist Iain Sinclair has called rivers “ribbons of memory” in an age of cultural amnesia. In them we see a history of our tenure in this land, and a reflection of our present. The Maumee is a long-standing member of the region, bearing in its course the accumulated wisdom of thousands of years. **Maybe the river can teach us how to live in this world. It remembers, even as we forget.**



Ryan Schnurr is a writer and sometimes poet from northeast Indiana. His first book of nonfiction, *In The Watershed: A Journey Down the Maumee River*, is now available from Belt Publishing.

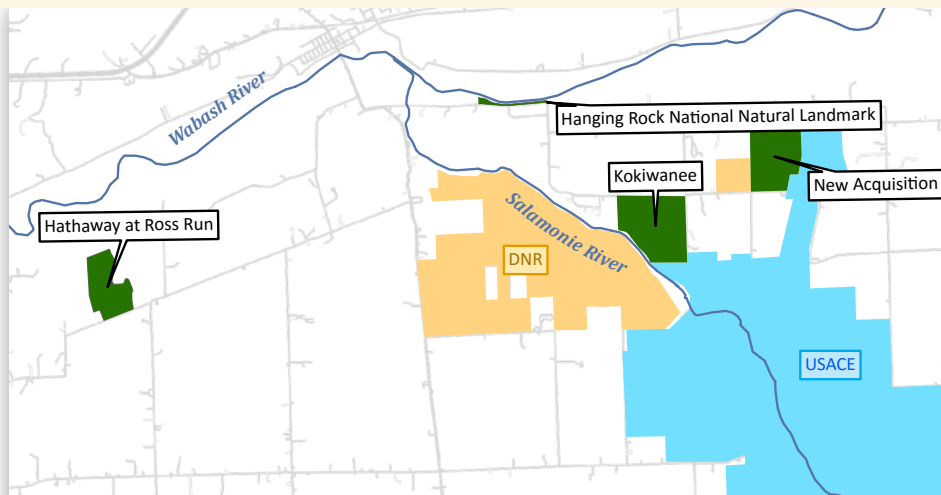
*Portions of this essay are adapted from “Seeing the Maumee River,” first published by the author in *Old Northwest Review*.

You’re invited for a Walk and Talk with Ryan, 2 pm, Sunday, February 18, on the trails of Blue Cast Springs along the Maumee River. More information on page 13.

PROTECTING LAND

ACRES Expands Protection within Conservation Area, near Kokiwanee

by Jason Kissel, executive director



ACRES acquired 96 acres of forest and meadow within a priority area for conservation—the area near the confluence of the Salamonie and Wabash rivers. Although a lot of land conservation work has already been completed in the area, ACRES wants to see even more protected.

This newly protected land lies between a Department of Natural Resources (DNR) property and a U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). Nearby natural places include ACRES' Kokiwanee Nature Preserve and Hanging Rock National Natural Landmark; the Salamonie River State Forest, and the Salamonie Reservoir.

This land is being conserved by funding and technical assistance made available as mitigation for habitat impacts anticipated to arise through construction of the Greentown Reynolds Transmission Line in partnership with ACRES Land Trust and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. This funding partnership with NIPSCO allows the utility to meet its mitigation requirements and, together with your support, ensures the habitat will be protected forever.

NIPSCO's resources gave ACRES an opportunity to protect a place we've watched, and where we've developed a relationship with the owner for about a decade. A crucial requirement for this funding was our ability to act rapidly and protect land in this area. While this acquisition took place rather quickly, within months of receiving the initial phone call from the funder, in truth, protecting this land required nearly ten years of patience, diligence, and relationship-building.

The result? 96 acres—newly protected, forever. This property is closed to the public.

Would you like to talk with ACRES about protecting land near existing protected places? Whether you're planning for the next ten months or ten years, give us a call so we can be ready when the time is right.
Jason Kissel, 260-637-2273, ext 2.

IN THE PLACES YOU PROTECT

BEING *in* WINTER a two-part love story

by Nancy and Joe Conrad

Nancy:

My first glimpse of the world came during an Indiana blizzard blowing a foot of fresh snow over the ground. I have felt at home in the winter landscape ever since.

Although Mother Nature feigns sleep at this time of year, undercover she is alive with activity. She beckons into her wondrous, quiet world those of us open to adventure. Fortified with a down jacket, warm gloves, sturdy hiking boots, and a strong walking stick, you are ready to enter a tranquil world of sight, sound, smell and touch unlike any other.

First, the stillness: the hush of falling snow, the gentle swoosh of heavy-laden pine boughs swaying in the breeze, the barely audible scurry of woodland creatures out for a brief foray before hunkering down once again. Your ears become accustomed to listening for subtle, muted sounds often missed in the cacophony of different, more active seasons.

A woodland blanketed in glistening snow, undisturbed by human footsteps, brings calm and serenity lasting well beyond the encounter itself. Ice crystals sparkling beside a slowly trickling creek remind us how nature sustains life in all manner of conditions, even

in the uncertainty of a season without warmth. Barren trees stand silent exposing the soul of their being. Strong. Steady. At rest. They hold the secrets of new life at their core.

The winter forest's clean, crisp smell brings memories of childhood romps on sleds and frozen ponds, of unbridled energy without worry or stress, filled with the joy of the outdoors. Feel the soft kiss of snow on your cheeks, the sting of cold air across your nose and ears, the tingle of your fingers forming snowballs. Trees invite you to touch their naked bark, to crunch lingering leaves, to reach beyond the cold to feel the life deep within.

These are the delights that enchant in the winter woods where the world is peaceful, alive with the heart of all things natural. Get out there. Explore. Learn. Enjoy.

And don't forget the hot chocolate!

(continued on page 8)

IN THE PLACES YOU PROTECT

(continued from page 7)

Joe:

I was once a fair-weather walker. Quick to the woods in spring or fall with its fair, fresh breeze, the beauty of the place soon drew me back (netting and DEET in hand) to enjoy summer bloom. But when yellow petals dropped with red leaves following, when earth blanketed in white, I sounded full retreat.

Why risk frostbite, slippery ice, belly-deep snow for a forest starkly stripped of beauty? Winter winds pierced my bones, ran my nose, numbed my toes, chilled my soul. I stayed by the hearth, wasting winter months dreaming of spring thaw.

But when I married Elsa the Snow Queen—whose exuberance for the frozen months shalt not be contained—she dressed me in insulated boots, a hat that covered my ears, warm gloves, layers, and a proper coat. Then she took my hand and led me into her wondrous world—a world not dead (or even sleeping), a world of bright quiet, fresh clean air and endless marvel.

She led me to a meadow where hoarfrost encapsulated yesterday's flowers, transformed them to gems, and reflected their beauty tenfold. She drew me by a tree whose bold black branches lay naked its soul across the white November sky. We followed snow-covered virgin trails and came upon a small cluster of hickories with the tale of a squirrel's full travel itinerary laid before us on the snow. Sliding down a stream, peering through ice, we smiled at the minnows grinning back at us. We paused by a waterfall to note that the rain had paused there as well—perhaps just to reflect the sunlight upon all the places it had seen.

I began to see with my ears in this silent world—listening to the slow groan of trees,



the breeze rustling dry oak leaves, a bird's solitary trill, the melt of an icicle, the shuffling of a field mouse in his snow burrow.

Nature does not die in winter, it merely hunkers down and takes its sheltered place. To know winter requires a little more quiet patience and thoughtful attention than other seasons.

Winter may now be my favorite time to walk. And safety aside, a blizzard is perhaps the best time to go! Nature reveals her awesome wonder and mystery in a storm. How magnificent to be at the center of it all! I don't miss flying insects, repellents, oppressive heat, the drip of sweat. I'm glad to be rid of the mud and the claustrophobia I feel walking in understory growth.



Given the ease of frozen stream crossings, the sense of solitude which comes with a winter hike, what better time to go? And the very best part of a winter hike—I get to walk beside my queen!

Once a fair-weather hiker, I'm now a convert to the winter walk. I do love to trek through ACRES preserves during the coldest months. That's MY penchant!

(But please, don't let this persuade you to try it. I love the solitude out there.)

The Conrads hike in Bicentennial Woods, Robb Hidden Canyon, and so many more places you help protect. Will you, too? Head out on your own, or go with a group—join an ACRES event. Happy trails!

Center Spread by Thomas Sprunger at Hathaway Preserve at Ross Run. Wish you were there? If his photo has you longing to see this place for yourself, then join us. Explore this spectacular gorge at Ross Run from the creek! Come out for Creek Stomp, Winter Edition, 2 pm Saturday, January 27. See page 12 for details.

Discover Sprunger's love of the places he helps protect as a member: Read about his volunteer work photographing the preserves for you on pages 16-17.



SHARE THE TRAILS HIKES – Free to the public, donations encouraged. Come join in the winter woods and wetlands.

Saturday, December 2, 10 am

STEBEN COUNTY | Marion's Woods
805 Calvary Lane, Angola, IN 46703

Take a stroll through this mature, open woodland—a rare gem in an urban setting.

First Hike & Open House

Monday, January 1, 10 am – 12:30 pm

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

Welcome the New Year with invigoration—and cocoa!

Saturday, February 3, 10 am

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

Explore this popular preserve's trail along the Wabash River, on bluffs with sycamore, sugar and black maple and red elms.

FIRESIDE BOOK CHAT

Braiding Sweetgrass: Indigenous Wisdom, Scientific Knowledge and the Teachings of Plants, by Robin Wall Kimmerer

Friday, January 19, 6 pm

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

How has Kimmerer's writing shaped your view of the natural world and your place in it? Let's talk. Come with your responses, questions, favorite or puzzling passages, your book-loving buddies and for community with others who share your connection to natural places. In the spirit of reciprocity, ACRES will share the gift of a warm fire, warm beverages and light snacks.

CREEK STOMP—WINTER EDITION

Saturday, January 27, 2 pm

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

This creek is active all year, during the winter months revealing a whole new batch of discoveries: 20-foot icicles, frozen waterfalls, and fossils. Come see what you've been missing! Weather depending, we'll either be walking through frigid water or on ice—waterproof boots suggested. Regardless, you'll be cold, wet and captivated. *Presented by the Kissel Family*



WORLD WETLANDS DAY HIKE

Part of a community-wide celebration of wetlands with conservation partners like IPFW and Little River Wetlands Project

Friday, February 2, 4 pm

ALLEN COUNTY | Mengerson Nature Reserve
5895 Stellhorn Road, Fort Wayne, IN 46815

How do wetlands help urban areas? This place tells a muddy tale of collecting rainwater and surface drainage for a large city neighborhood. Mengerson's giant beech and maple trees will catch your eye—and you'll love exploring the incredible value this place offers.

Watch for more events online: acreslandtrust.org.

NATURE NOTECARD WORKSHOP FOR MEMBERS

Tuesday, February 6, 6:30 – 8:30 pm

Allen County | ACRES Office
1802 Chapman Road, Huntertown, IN 46748

Come make a set of colorful, nature-inspired note cards to brighten up your winter. Using a Gelli printing plate and simple printing process, anyone is able to make fun and visually interesting pieces. Do not wear your Sunday best. All ability levels welcome! Snacks and supplies provided. *Presented by artist Hannah Burnworth of Milk House Studio. Space is limited. RSVP to hbarth@acreslandtrust.org.*

Art by Hannah Burnworth. Visit manchestermilkhouse.com to see more, then join Burnworth at the ACRES Office to make your own nature notecards on February 6.

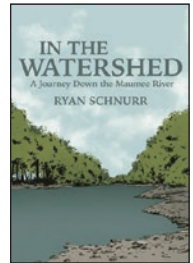


IN THE WATERSHED WALK & TALK WITH LOCAL AUTHOR RYAN SCHNURR

Sunday, February 18, 2 pm

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

Talk with Schnurr about his adventure down the Maumee while exploring trails on bluffs 30 feet over the river. History, culture, and ecology—the river tells an epic tale of our region, stories mirrored in this preserve's land use history. Learn more about Schnurr's curiosity about what the river knows and the journey it led him to take on pages 4-5.



“LAY OF THE LAND” DISCUSSION

Friday, February 23, 6 pm

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

Share your thoughts and questions with others who also think a lot about land, conservation, and the act of protecting the places we love. This is a great opportunity to get answers to your questions beginning “I’ve always wondered how ACRES...” Spirited conversation about land among like-minded and diverse folks while sitting around a roaring fireplace—what’s not to love? *Presented by Jason Kissel*

ASHERWOOD MAPLE SYRUP MAKING & PANCAKE BREAKFAST FOR MEMBERS

Saturday, March 10, 9 am – noon

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

Can you smell the warm pancakes and fresh-made syrup? Feel the cool, crisp air of the winter woods on your cheek? It's sugar bush season! You're invited to breakfast and a guided tour of ACRES' maple sugaring operation. Volunteers needed. See page 18 for details. *Presented by Bill Harmsen and Jason Kissel.*

No reservations required. \$5/person, children under 5 free. Come early or stay late and explore this incredible place that your membership helps protect.

*ACRES members, you're encouraged to bring friends
and family to members-only events.*

Land Preservation, Conservation, and Succession

by Ben Hess, DNR Regional Ecologist

Ecological oases are isolated postage stamps of biological richness surviving in a vast landscape of monocultures controlled by blade or plow.

As we locate and preserve these remaining oases—these hidden gems, we realize they have progressed for years through a dynamic ecosystem striving to protect itself from periodically emerging environmental impacts. *Conserving land by preserving and restoring it is a dynamic process as plants once limited by sunlight, soils, hydrology, or competition attempt to fill newly created niches. The lands that we protect will always experience ecological succession.*

In our protected lands, each stage of succession requires individualized species management. For example, underneath an old-growth forest's massive trees are saplings of other species waiting for life-giving light to become available.

When one of the great trees falls, the canopy opens, light floods the forest floor, and there is an acceleration of natural succession—the transition from large, old-growth trees of mid to late successional species, like oaks, hickories and beech, to the early successional species of fast growing ash, dogwoods and maples. When you hike a trail, note the many small saplings growing on the forest floor. These trees are the next great canopy waiting for a chance to claim their spot within the ecosystem.

Most tree saplings, such as oak and hickory, never make it to adulthood. These early saplings compete for the dappled sunlight that trickles to



Photo by Jarrid Spicer

the forest floor, most surviving only a handful of years. But some grow large enough to supersede the forest floor's shrub layer. This natural cycle of dominance from species to species is a process that plays out over centuries. It is nature's response to environmental change. Nature is ever changing to another stage in life.

Since the arrival of Europeans led to the onset of the ornamental landscape, humans have allowed (or encouraged, sometimes unknowingly) the process of natural succession to be altered by non-native species such as multiflora rose, honeysuckle, and border privet. As our native species try to fill open niches, these non-native species are waiting in the shadows—sometimes just stems a few feet above ground—to emerge with a vengeance when they are exposed to bright sunlight again striking the

forest floor. Many of these non-native shrubs are able to grow faster, cover more ground, and consume more resources than even our fastest growing native successional species. It then becomes a race of who can reach above others to claim this most valuable resource—light.

Non-native species can grow six or more feet in a growing season, eventually making an impenetrable layer that native canopy tree species cannot surpass. When native forest-floor species do not receive enough light or other resources to successfully vegetate and flower, a dead zone is created. In this zone, instead of a diverse and vibrant ecosystem, only a small variety of life are able to hang on. *As land stewards, we must manage—remove—these non-native species to allow native species' natural succession to occur.*

Forest succession: the process by which dominant species change over time. With little disturbance, in our region, forests become relatively stable in species composition, becoming dominated by late successional species—beech and maple, preceded by mid-successional dominant oak and hickory, and early successional dominant ash and dogwood.



Photo by Jarrid Spicer

IN YOUR WORDS: A Member Profile

To See is The Thing: Photographing ACRES

by Lettie Haver, Outreach Manager

If you've been a member over the past year or so, you've seen amateur nature photographer Thomas Sprunger's preserve photos on your new preserve announcement postcards and here in your *Quarterly* (throughout this issue). You see his work on ACRES' website, and in our media releases. Thomas visits the preserves often, on his own; he also volunteers "on call" for ACRES, collecting images on assignment.

Thomas first came to my attention on Facebook when he tagged ACRES on photos of Kokiwanee and Hathaway Preserve at Ross Run. Since then we've developed a relationship around the places we protect, sharing new and favorite spots and discoveries, talking about how he captures these moments and how they inspire others. Thomas shares how he found ACRES, and a bit of what's going on behind his camera: "I've always liked natural places. In 1964, when I was a kid, my mom and dad and grandparents went out west on a month-long trip. We stayed in a rustic cabin in Yellowstone National Park. Times were different then, bears would come in for food. I remember kids chasing a baby bear until it hid under the cabin. I remember when my mom opened a window, a bear put its paws in. Unbelievable."

Fast forward to a 2009 Komets Hockey game, taking photos with friends: "Someone suggested we all go to Rocky Mountain National Park. That trip rekindled my interest, sparked me to seek more places."

"Coming back home, you think there are no photos to take around here. So I did an internet search for nature preserves and found Kokiwanee. I was surprised by how neat it actually was. It made me feel like I was not in the part of Indiana I thought I was."

Since then, time spent photographing ACRES' geologically unique preserves has given Thomas fresh eyes for our even more common flat open spaces and farmland: "I realize now that the farm community can yield some great shots. The familiar is beautiful when you can really see it."

"This is the biggest part of photography. To see. The technical aspect comes. To see is the thing."

Sprunger explains his craft: "Nature photography requires patience. You can't be in a hurry. Part of this is the discovery aspect, keeping your eyes there, open, just standing, seeing what you see. If it's a photo I want, I'll take whatever time it takes to convey... you gotta work it."



Photos by Thomas Sprunger
Clockwise from top: Kissing Falls, Kokiwanee,
Kokiwanee trail, Bloodroot.



I like the peace you get when you're in places like this. It gives you respite from the stress of everyday life. Sometimes I stand still and almost inhale it. So—that's a hunk of it for me. The peacefulness. Another aspect is the beauty. I'm drawn to that, always have been. I'm looking for the view that when I see it, I think, 'that's beautiful'.

"Of course, with photography, this is a way for me to be creative and convey a sense of what I'm feeling and seeing in a place like this. The peacefulness is what I aim to convey. Sometimes people will see my work and say, 'I wish I could be there.' Then I've accomplished what I'm doing."

Thomas' wife, Melinda, shares his interests: "She's taking photos at Rocky Mountain

National Park. We go every year, stay in the same cabin. She's developed a kinship with that place. We both have an affinity for it, like coming home."

Thomas has particular affection for a few ACRES preserves, often developed over time, visit after visit. He notes, "With photography, you need to keep going back. Spring, for example, is wonderful every week. Old places, new ones, too, are always better than expected. Often, when I'm done and it's time to leave, I don't want to go."

Thomas will soon have more golden hours in his happy places: "Once I retire, I plan to spend quite a few just-before-sunrises and just-before-sunsets in the preserves."

DUST OF SNOW

by Robert Frost

The way a crow
Shook down on me
The dust of snow
From a hemlock tree

Has given my heart
A change of mood
And saved some part
Of a day I had rued.

Promote Preservation: Give the Gift of ACRES

Seasonal Gift Membership offer: Through December 31, you can give the gift of membership and a Preserve Guide for only \$25. Send in your gift recipient's name and address along with your name, address and phone number, to *ACRES Land Trust*, PO Box 665, Chapman Road, Huntertown, IN 46748 or call 260-637-2273.

ACRES Merchandise make great gifts:

Preserve Guides at acreslandtrust.org for \$13 or \$10 in the office
New, limited-edition, hand-screened tees, featuring Bicentennial Woods, from Yonder Clothing Company make an excellent gift. All proceeds support ACRES. \$22 at yonderclothing.com/product/acres-bicentennial-woods or \$20 in the ACRES office
More goods in the office: Vacuum-sealed hot/cold stainless steel beverage bottles, bottle holder slings, beanie caps and more.

Office hours: ACRES is open M-F, 9-4. Due to the nature of our work, we may be in the field. Please call on your way to be sure we can help you. Office closed 12/25, 12/26 and 1/1/2018.



Volunteer Opportunities: Can you help?

HOME & GARDEN SHOW, March 1-4

You can help at our booth by sharing your excitement about ACRES, greeting guests and selling memberships and gear. Volunteers receive a free pass to the show.

Training for show will be 10 am, Saturday, February 17 at the ACRES Office, 1802 Chapman Road, Huntertown, IN 46748. *If you are interested, please contact Tina Puitz at 260-637-2273, ext. 4 or tpuitz@acreslandtrust.org.*

SAVE THE DATE

ASHERWOOD MAPLE SYRUP MAKING & PANCAKE BREAKFAST FOR MEMBERS
Saturday, March 10, 9 am - noon

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

Volunteers are needed for parking, cooking, greeting, check-in and syrup sales.
To volunteer, contact Jason Kissel at jkissel@acreslandtrust.org or 260-637-2273, ext. 2

SPECIAL thanks

Autumn Olive Project volunteers
Preserve stewards, caretakers and trails monitors
Quarterly distributors and stuffers
Glen and Chris Bickel: 2-wheeled hand cart and tarp
Larry Biggerstaff and Keith and Louise Pomeroy: Hosting Popp Open House
Britton Marketing & Design, Bushey's Windows, Doors and Sunrooms, Carson Boxberger, Centier Bank, Data Print Initiatives, Dekko Investment Services, Earthsource Inc./Heartland Restoration Services, First Merchants Private Wealth Advisors, Lake City Bank, Lawn and Turf Landscaping, Inc., More Farm Stores, McNamara Sand Point, Orbis Environmental Consulting, John D. Rice Family, Van Gilder & Trzynka, P.C.: Blue Jean Gala sponsors

Dave Brumm, Laura Colpitts, Al & Rosemary McSweeney, Dawn Ritchie, Angie Roberts, Sue Will: Blue Jean Gala event volunteers
Ralph and Mary Campbell: Books
The Canino family, the Schoegler family and Dana and Duane Davis: Sharing stories in a new ACRES video
Nancy Chiavetta: Office supplies
Chris Connerly, Joe and Nancy Conrad, Charles Enea, Pam George, Jim Haddock, Deb Leinker, Angie Roberts: Annual Meeting & Picnic volunteers

Dick Blick Art Materials: Gift certificate
Taylor Frecker: Assembling a mailing, writing
Carol Gaham, Pam George, Russ Voorhees, Fred Wooley: Guiding hikes
Pam George: Annual Meeting & Picnic chair
Terri Habig, Andy and Janet Katz, Kirk Swaidner, David Van Gilder and Darrell Will: Blue Jean Gala committee members
Lewis Lifetime Tools: Bulb planter discount
Keith and Louise Pomeroy: Stamps
John Rice, Rice Ford-Lincoln: Discount on ACRES truck repair
Carol Roberts: Editing and revising the *Quarterly*
Roberts Signs and Apparel: Discount on graphics on ACRES car and truck
Taffy Taulbee, Darex: Sharpening supplies

wish list

Video camera
Video editing software
Golf cart
In-kind
Forever stamps
Postcard stamps



*ACRES Merchandise and memberships will also be available at the **Local Maker Pop-up** event at the Glenbrook Square Mall, noon - 7 pm, Friday, December 29. Look for ACRES inside the Grand Main Entrance, near Barnes & Noble. Clip this note out and bring it with you for a free ACRES Retro logo decal. Thank you!*

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, Angie O'Neill, Mark O'Shaughnessy, Angie Quinn, Dawn Ritchie, David Van Gilder, Michelle Briggs Wedaman.
Membership Secretary: Mary Anna Feitler; **Recording Secretary:** Sue Diefenbach.

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.

ACRES Quarterly: Carol Roberts, Editor; Published by ACRES, Inc., at 1802 Chapman Road, PO Box 665, Huntertown, Indiana, for the interest of its members, friends, and others similarly dedicated to the preservation of natural areas. ACRES, Inc., is a non-profit, charitable corporation, incorporated under the laws of Indiana. Contributions are deductible for tax purposes.

MEMBERSHIP: Life Member, \$1,500; Sustaining, \$500; Corporate, \$500; Club/Organization, \$50; Family, \$40; Individual, \$25; Senior or Student, \$15. Dues payable annually.



PRINTED ON RECYCLED PAPER

ACRES Land Trust 19

BIRCH BOOTS

Net my hair with moonbeams

Quilt my cape of snow

Slipper my feet in white birch boots

And I will waltz with Winter.

– Dana Wichern, ACRES member

photo by Jerry McCoy