

THE ACRES QUARTERLY

Fall 2018 | Vol. 57 - No. 3



ACRES
LANDTRUST

*The Gift of Good Land: The Mackel Family
Adds to the Cedar Creek Legacy*

Wildwood Expands

Stewardship Updates

*Eagle Scout Supports Bicentennial Woods,
Builds Community*



From the Executive Director

Dear Member,

Nature is reliable. It reacts, but doesn't overreact or underreact. *ACRES strives to operate in the same way.*

ACRES also tries to reciprocate the reliability of nature by offering nature reliable places. Places that are forever protected.

ACRES is only as reliable as you and I are, because *as members, we are ACRES.*

Do you feel the weight of that responsibility? The weight should feel good in your hand, though; it's joyful and worthy work and as long as it's shared by many, it's not too heavy for any individual to bear.

We have a 58-year history of being reliable. Members join, renew, donate, volunteer and share ACRES with others. Our reliability ensures nature a place to remain reliable—that's a big deal.

Thank you for being reliable.

Sincerely,

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

Cover photo by Shane Perfect,
taken at Wing Haven near Angola.



ACRES Land Trust preserves, protects and manages 115 properties totaling 7,052 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

79newmembers!

Mechell and David Abbott
Jim and Audrey Almdale
Kristina Ash
Ted Badgley
Kelly Bawmann
Naomi Burke
Carol Burns
Don and Debi Chittick
Jim and Jean Cook
Becky Cordes
Robert Cripe
Andrews-Dallas Township
Public Library
Brian and Karen Daniels
Richard Dodge
Shari Durkin
Stacey Edwards
Dee Eiden
Larry and Carol Ewing
Roxanne Ewing
Elain Farren
Robert and Carol Fawley
Jim Fitzgerald
Nathan and Stephanie Gaier
Rebecca Gonzalez
Daniel Graly
Vince Hansen
Julie Harden

Jessica Henry
Larry L. Hicks
John and Jane Higgins
Sandra Hon
Christy Hull
Dessiree Hurst
Lori Huynh-Porter
Don Jensen
Sharon Jordan
Jeffrey D. Jordan
from Bill Shady
Sherri Knisely
Lloyd Leeka
Jackie and Don Lindsey
Jack Bob and Suzanne Lucas
Natasha Manor
Gary Marshall
Mary M. Marlow
Ryan Matthews
Kim McDonald and Ted Kucinsky
Fit and Rita Menbere
Joe Menchaca III
Meg Moss and Mark Mynhier
Jake and Sarah Myers
Linda and Steve Myers
Linda Thorne
Sarah Ogden and
Matthew Trentman

Holly Plasterer
Mary and Beau Prater
Jillian Price
Anita Proxmire
from Nancy and Craig Bobay
Linda and David Randall
Rodger A. Rang
Gary Royer and Donna Boeglin
Joe Sallott
Dave Sanders
Brock Scheumann
April Smith
John Snyder
Jean Sutton
David Torborg
Robert Veiga
Cathy A. Voors
Erminia Wamsley
from Donna Veiga
Theodore Wehrenberg
Dale Widman
William Wilcox
Valerie Wilson
Randy Wolf
Sandra Woodruff
life members
Thomas and Christina Essig
Eva Hurrle

tributes

Carol Bower
from Kolya Braun-Greiner
Angie O'Neill
from Alice Kopfer and Sue Libbing

Connie Haas Zuber, outgoing president
from Quest Club, Inc.

memorials

Lucille Feichter
from Jo Ann Abramow and William and
Cecelia Weakley
Pat and Ted Heemstra
from Don and Gretel Smith and Brad and
Judith Truax
Eileen Lee
from Dale Bender, Richard and Merle Miers
and Paula Neale Rice
Richard Lochner
from Michael Lochner
Terry and Sharon Marshall
from Gary Marshall
Daphne Mildred
from Alan and Linda Richards
John Charles Nichter
from Margie Blake, Sylvia and Mark Bringewatt,
Mark and Cindy Renshaw and Marilyn G. Salon
Rodger P. Rang
from Rodger A. Rang
Gene Werbiensky
from Dr. Karen Griggs

Flette Zerns
from the Fish family
Shawn Stiver
from Carol Augsburg, Jeff and Kathy Bassett,
Dale Bernard, George and Martha Bullion,
Daryl and Pat Butler, Janet Campbell, Rex and
Kelly Coomer, Janet and Dale Dean, Doug and
Lori Donaldson, Dan and Rowena Edquid,
Barb Kanning, Joan and Lyman Lewis, Carolyn
and Bob Lovell, Mark and Mary Ellen Maffey,
Maples Insurance Agency, Jim and Claudette
Minnear, Rod and Patty Peterson, Randy and
Terri Peterson, Jean and Don Schaffer,
Reg and Diana Shull, Charlene Stahl and Joyce,
Margaret, Raynell and Sharen, Rick and Sue
Stiver, Lance and Megan Stiver, Brian and Tara
Stiver, and Nik and Beth Burkhardt, Lance Stiver,
Loraine and Gerry Tilker, Terry and Janalee Ulm,
Susie and Mike Weisheit, Bob and Linda Wilder
and Diane Zehr
Jerry Stratman and his Curly-Coated Retrievers
Mac, Savannah, and Rivers
from Tim Gerardot



*"Smitten with the beauty of the place,
we called it wonderland."*

THE GIFT OF GOOD LAND: *The Mackel family adds to Cedar Creek legacy*

by Carol Roberts, board member and *Quarterly* editor

Driving north from Fort Wayne on Coldwater Road, you feel a change at the Cedar Canyon Road crossing. Coldwater begins a gentle descent to the bridges over Willow Creek and Cedar Creek, and you find yourself driving under a canopy of green.

A second Cedar Creek bridge adjoins 34 acres permanently protected by ACRES on the creek, Mackel Nature Preserve, which includes Dr. Frederick O. Mackel's recent addition of six acres plus the Mackel house and barn.

Dr. Jerry Mackel shares that his parents, Frederick and Alfrieda, were childhood sweethearts who married after college. She taught Latin and he became an orthopedic surgeon. They lived in Fort Wayne, "but Dad liked to hunt morel mushrooms in the woods, be outside in nature...he got the bug to move out in the country."

Attracted by a 2" x 3" advertisement of a "22-acre country estate overlooking Cedar Creek, with a big barn, tall pine trees and a dam," the Mackels left the city to move 10 miles north where their four children—Jerry, David, Susan, and Diane—could grow up exploring fields and creeks and woodlands. Jerry smiles: "Smitten with the beauty of the place, we called it wonderland."



Jerry and Fred Mackel at a 2005 event on the history of the mill that once stood on Fred's land.



Stoner's Mill
Pine tree still in front yard.
Highway 27 ran in front of home.
Mill across the road.

*Water-powered Stoner's Mill (1834-1910)
near confluence of Little Cedar and Cedar
Creeks on land Dr. Mackel gifted to ACRES*



He explains that in the 19th century, this wonderland's swamps, creeks and wetlands were considered unusable. "But the land did prove 'usable'! Back there, on Little Cedar Creek, I can still see where the old timber-framed Stoner's mill house stood, an undershot turbine mill for carding wool."

ACRES' founders Jim and Pat Barrett and Tom and Jane Dustin were Mackels' neighbors and friends. (Barretts' land is now the James M. and Patricia D. Barrett Oak Hill Nature Preserve; Dustins' land is Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve, their former home now ACRES' office overlooking Cedar Creek near Allen County's highest point.)

"As soon as we realized the Barretts and Dustins were about knowing and protecting land, we had a deep respect for them. We respected each other, our mutual love of the land.

With the wetlands, and Fort Wayne building out and out, gifting our land to ACRES was a no-brainer. We three families felt it vital to protect the land around us...the need seemed obvious, an important piece of the puzzle. I'm so glad about ACRES."

FAMILY VALUES: THE NEXT GENERATION PRESERVES LAND

Jerry eventually bought adjacent property and gave ACRES a conservation easement on it. He also helped ACRES acquire the

Little Cedar Creek Wildlife Sanctuary: 19 acres of stream meanders and wildflowers, a floodplain forest.

He built a timber frame house overlooking these wetlands. "Every New Year's Eve, we'd get together with Barretts. I'd play 'Old Lang Syne' on my trumpet and Patty [Barrett] would play her flute—out on the deck.

"When visitors step outside on this deck and look out over the wetlands, they see, and then they understand. I can always feel their energy. It's an experiential thing.

*We have to have both city and country.
We have to have intact rural areas, and for
people to see their value, they have to be
accessible. When people don't see their
value, these areas are filled over with asphalt
and shopping malls.*

Intact rural areas lead to a feeling of peace and contemplation. It's about quality of life. I like ACRES' network of preserves where I can go to a different preserve every week and recharge my batteries."

The Mackel Nature Preserve is closed.



Wildwood Expands

Neighbors ensure additional 19 acres, entire pond are protected

by Casey Jones, director of land management

I just got back from closing on the Wagoner tract that adds 19 acres to the Wildwood Nature Preserve in Kosciusko County. This pushes the total protected acreage at Wildwood past 250.

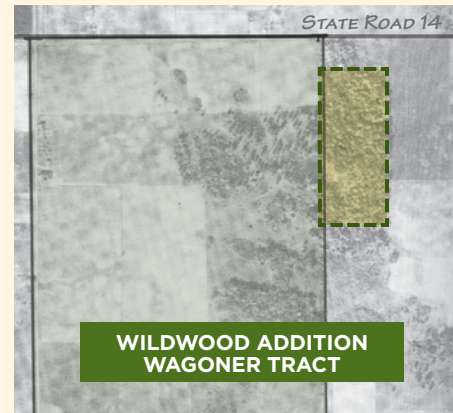
ACRES' conservation success relies heavily on contributions from private landowners and partner organizations. Thanks also to conservation-minded neighbors who protected a little more than 80 additional acres next to the preserve through the state's Classified Forest and Wildlands program. Thanks most to The Conservation Fund for their funding support for this project.

This addition to Wildwood has a lot of history wrapped up in it, history predating

me by decades. Before its owners Bob and Alice Frantz sold to ACRES, Bob Frantz, wrote—a lot—about Wildwood. And while I've yet to read Bob's entire collection of *Wildwood Musings and Other Thoughts* (a two-volume set), I occasionally reference it for the history there.

I was hoping to find first-hand accounts to back up stories I've heard about the bickering between two opinionated neighbors who split ownership of one pond, and how their land ethics differed. Instead, I found this: "We cannot honestly say the pond is the most important part of Wildwood, but it would be high on our list, if we had a list." wrote Bob

The desire to control management of the pond and its surrounding land predates ACRES. Although the pond is artificially constructed (man-made), it has been established long enough now to exhibit its own fairly stable ecologic functions.



A recent fear was that someone could negatively impact its ecosystem by developing the other end of the pond.

Now management of this pond and its 19 surrounding acres are under one ownership.

The "parent" Wildwood tract includes about 100 acres of tillable ground, with Roger Wagoner as its tenant farmer. He and his wife Carla recently purchased about 80 acres on the east side of Wildwood, which include the 19-acre woods he knew both Bob Frantz and ACRES were interested in. Although Roger and Carla probably could have made more money by carving this woods into many small building lots, they instead chose to offer it to ACRES.

It could be easy to overlook this kind of generous consideration for both ACRES and the land itself. ACRES intends to credit all people who make land available to us.



There are several high-quality natural areas that ACRES never gets the first shot at: once these properties are listed with a real estate agent or put up for auction, they can fetch far more than appraised value. (To keep conservation land use in check, ACRES never exceeds the appraised value.) So I thank Roger and Carla for generously offering ACRES first dibs on the 19 acres.

I used quotation marks to refer to the original Wildwood (state-dedicated nature preserve) land as a "parent" tract because this acreage has suffered more disturbance than the more recent 19-acre addition. Aerial imagery shows these additional 19 acres have been in a state of natural vegetative cover since 1938. Prior to that year, there are no aerial imagery records.

In other words, it seems fair to say that because the more recent, 19-acre tract has been covered with native vegetation for 80 years, it is the true "parent" tract of the conservation area at and around Wildwood.

These lands are being conserved, in part, by funding and technical assistance made available as mitigation for impacts caused by the construction and maintenance of the Reynolds Topeka Electric System Improvement Project in partnership with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

To enjoy the pond being unified under one ownership and protected in perpetuity, we invite you to visit the new floating dock that's been installed! Thanks to the Arrowhead RC&D (Resource Conservation and Development) Council and the Kosciusko County SWCD (Soil and Water Conservation District) for their financial support for the dock.

We are excited to provide better access to area school groups who for a long time have conducted pond studies here.

MANAGING LAND

STEWARDSHIP UPDATE:

Director of Land Management Casey Jones and crew on non-native invasive species work and new equipment

By Lettie Haver, Outreach Manager

NON-NATIVE INVASIVE SPECIES: SUCCESSES-IN-PROGRESS

Japanese stiltgrass | Cedar Creek Corridor, Allen County

ACRES has invested in eradicating Japanese stiltgrass, a non-native invasive plant newly identified in northern Indiana in late 2015. In 2016, we closed Little Cedar Creek Wildlife Sanctuary (LCCWS) to prevent the plant's spread, and we've been fighting it since.

"This year we've seen no Japanese stiltgrass along the trails of LCCWS," reports Evan Hill, land management specialist. "It's mostly coming back only on the perimeter."

"Chapman Road looks good too, thanks to a willing partnership with Robb Biggs, foreman, Allen County Highway Department," adds Jones. A variety of land managers joined efforts to suppress the invasion, attending

training and a workday. For example: Ray Burns, right of way foreman with REMC of Noble County, met with ACRES on an easement adjoining Mackel Nature Preserve to learn how to win the fight (pictured above, left, with Evan Hill, ACRES land management specialist).

Jones' research, and his partnership with non-native invasive plant specialists, led the team and partners to carefully time the spraying of clethodim, a grass specific herbicide, with mowing and growing schedules. For efficiency, ACRES interns carry ipods synced to global positioning software (GPS). Their tracks are monitored, so as they return to a site, they cover new ground.

Tree of Heaven | Walter H. and E. Marie Myers Nature Preserve on Flowers Creek, Miami County (a closed preserve)

United States Department of Agriculture (USDA) Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) funding helped fight Ailanthus, or Tree of Heaven, on this preserve. The fight is so successful that the place is now an "unnatural disaster" with downed trees piled up. The land management team will bring in heavy equipment to remove the dead trees, making space for native plant growth and upcoming restoration work.



New equipment | With generous support from multiple donors, ACRES is putting two new vehicles to work:

- A skid steer purchased with NiSource mitigation funds* tackles big projects, like removing those dead trees from the Flowers Creek in Miami County.



- A utility vehicle purchased with funds raised at the 2017 Blue Jean Gala helps cover far more ground, more efficiently, when applying herbicide and lugging tools, the team and more.

Mitigation is recompense for detrimental human impact to natural areas. When ACRES uses mitigation funds, those dollars go farther by expanding and/or enhancing existing conservation efforts rather than creating isolated 'islands' that have historically been the result of mitigations.

Mitigation funds are currently helping ACRES re-establish natural functions and habitat at Pehkokia Woods in Huntington. Recently, nearly \$1 million in NiSource mitigation funding helped purchased 97 acres in Wabash County and will fund restoration work and equipment both there, and on the Myers Flowers Creek Preserve. These lands are being conserved, in part, by funding and technical assistance made available as mitigation for habitat impacts anticipated to arise through construction for the Greentown Reynolds Transmission Line in partnership with the ACRES Land Trust and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

UP NEXT: A NEW FORESTRY MULCHER AND BARN!?

ACRES will soon purchase a forestry mulcher, pictured right, to "chew" or shred through dense patches of nonnative invasive shrubs and brush, instead of using hand tools. See a forestry mulcher in action: visit acreslandtrust.org/mulch to watch an independent contractor mulch dense patches of overgrown Autumn Olive on the Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve.

All of our new equipment requires reliable storage. Today, the land management crew parks gear in the ACRES Barn on the Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve—a space that doubles as a gathering spots for events. Soon, we'll be out of room. It's time for a new structure—a new ACRES barn is on the way.



Center Spread by Thomas Sprunger, of Cedar Creek, taken from the Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve. Today, your membership helps protect more than 1,000 acres in the Cedar Creek corridor—and growing. See this remarkable place for yourself at our October 21 Annual Member Meeting & Picnic. Details on page 13.



FALL HIKES & events

ACRES events are held rain or shine. Preserve maps available online at [acreslandtrust.org/preserves](https://www.acreslandtrust.org/preserves)



SHARE THE TRAILS HIKES

Free to the public, donations encouraged. Casual, easy-going social walks, led by volunteers to welcome new folks to ACRES.

Saturday, September 8, 10 am

KOSCIUSKO COUNTY | Bock Nature Preserve
11630 S. SR 14, Akron, IN 46910

Saturday, October 6, 10 am

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

Saturday, November 3, 10 am

STEBEN COUNTY | Ropchan Memorial
6830 N. 750 W, Orland, IN 46776



Photo of Bock Nature Preserve
by Shane Perfect

SWIFT AUTUMN HIKES

Free to the public, donations encouraged. Fast-paced, multi-preserve hikes, caravanning with ACRES volunteer, Janelle.

Sunday, September 16, 1 pm

JAY/ADAMS COUNTIES | Bibler Nature Preserve
5504 S. 400 E. Portland, IN 47371

From Bibler, caravan to Madison Township School Nature Preserve, then 40 minutes north to Munro Nature Preserve. End your afternoon at the Gene Stratton Porter site in Geneva for the last-half of their (free) Bluegrass Jamboree.

Sunday, October 28, 1 pm

HUNTINGTON COUNTY | Pehkokia Woods
1570 Flaxmill Road Huntington, IN 46750

From Pehkokia, caravan to Tel-Hy, then to Victory Noll Acres, a closed preserve.

IT'S NATIONAL TAKE-A-HIKE-DAY!

Saturday, November 17, 10 am-4 pm

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

It's a seven-preserve swift grand tour trail celebration! From Dustin, caravan to Bicentennial Woods, Robb Hidden Canyon, Wing Haven, Ropchan Memorial, Fawn River Nature Preserve and Lonidaw.

Fuel up your vehicle for this extended caravan! Pack a sack lunch for a stopover in the cabin at Wing Haven. Participants will make a caravan/carpool plan at Dustin. If you choose to carpool for the full grand tour, you'll return to Dustin after 4 pm. Otherwise, the day concludes by 4 pm at Lonidaw. Happy hiking!

NEW: JAVA JAUNTS

Join Kelly Shepherd, Outreach team member, for 1-hour walks followed by "treat yourself" stops at local coffee, pie or soda shops. Tour the region's finest with good company.

Wednesday, September 12, 9 am

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

Followed by coffee and a slice of pie at Bob's Restaurant in Woodburn

Wednesday, October 10, 9 am

ALLEN COUNTY | Fogwell Forest
9630 Whippoorwill Drive, Fort Wayne, IN 46809

Followed by a coffee stop at Mocha Lounge on Covington Road, Fort Wayne

Wednesday, November 14, 9 am

DEKALB COUNTY | James P. Covell Nature Preserve
Approximately 2727 County Road 52, Auburn IN, 46706

Followed by a coffee stop at Jeremiah's Brewed Awakenings in Auburn

WORK DAY

Thursday, September 13, 6 pm

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

Spend an evening fighting autumn olive in the young forest of the front field. Tools will be available, but feel free to bring along your gloves, favorite (unmotorized) tool of destruction, and anything else you find useful when cutting brush. *Presented by Jason Kissel.*

TRAIL STORIES AND S'MORES! A TYKE HIKE

Saturday, October 13, 6 pm

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

Stroll through an autumn forest, stopping for nature-themed story books. Make your own s'mores at a campfire after your hike. All ages welcome; geared toward young children. *Presented by the Kissel Family.*

MEMBERS ONLY POPP OPEN HOUSE

Saturday, October 13, 1-4 pm

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

Campfire hotdogs, refreshments, cabin tours and hiking in this old-growth forest open only once a year. *Presented by Larry Biggerstaff, Popp caretaker.*

SHARE THE TRAILS HIKE LEADER SEMINAR

Saturday, October 13, 3-4:30 pm

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

ACRES hike leader volunteers, let's hit the trails of this closed to the public preserve to practice simple photography skills and share tips and tricks for leading hikes. New volunteers welcome. *RSVP to Kelly Shepherd at outreach@acreslandtrust.org.*



ANNUAL MEMBER MEETING & PICNIC

SUNDAY, OCTOBER 21, 1-4 PM

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

Parking and activities at the Dustin Barn, located east of the main drive

Fun for all ages! Members gather once a year for a state-of-the-organization update and to celebrate protecting local land. Enjoy a meal and activities including hikes, Cornhole and a nature-themed craft. Music by Ken Jehle. Food by Feders Meats, beer by LaOtto Brewing, ice cream by Sweet Sanity. Meal and meeting at 1 pm, activities to follow. *For tickets (\$10/person, children 10 and under free), call 260-637-2273 or buy online at [acreslandtrust.org/annualpicnic](https://www.acreslandtrust.org/annualpicnic).*

As a benefit of membership, you can vote at the Annual Meeting for Board of Director nominees and to amend the Articles of Incorporation. 2018 Nominees returning are: Steve Hammer, Ashley Motia, Dawn Ritchie and David Schnepf; new are Wayne Shive and Jerry Sweeten. Complete nominee bios and details regarding the Articles of Incorporation amendments are online at [acreslandtrust.org/vote](https://www.acreslandtrust.org/vote)

WORK DAY

Saturday, November 3, 10 am

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

Invest some sweat equity on the land you love: help fight Autumn Olive. Tools and gloves will be available, but feel free to bring your own.

ALL AGES PRESERVE PLAY DAY | NATIONAL TAKE-A-HIKE-DAY

Saturday, November 17, 1-4 pm

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

Create a "Take a Hike" pennant and trail mix, then hit the trails! Guided hikes at 2 pm and 3 pm. Happy trails! *Hosted by Kelly Shepherd.*

IN YOUR WORDS: A Member Profile

Janet Canino on protecting land as a family: “How can we afford to wait any longer?”

by Janet Canino, life member

J. Canino

Have you seen ACRES' new video on protecting land? If so, then you've "met" a couple members of the Canino family and discovered their passion for the preserves. Janet Canino shares more about what protecting places with ACRES means—they are now life members.

Why do you protect land with ACRES?

"If not now, when? If not us, who?" encapsulates why ACRES' mission "to protect land—forever" is of utmost importance to my family. When it is estimated that at least 85 percent of our native Hoosier wetlands have already been destroyed, how can we afford to wait any longer?"

Do you have a favorite preserve?

After leaving a recent guided hike at Lloyd W. Bender Memorial Forest, I cheerfully announced, "I think this ACRES preserve is my new favorite." Without missing a beat, my 8-year-old quipped, "*Oh, Mom. You say that about every ACRES preserve.*" She is right. Beauty and nature are soul-filling, so how do you choose just one? Each preserve fills a different spiritual and emotional need that we have to feel the connectedness and interdependence of our place on Earth.

However, our most visited ACRES preserve is Vandolah because it's an easy trip from

our house. It is the one preserve where we can easily recognize the subtle signs of the blending of one season into the next. We consider it to be our "home" preserve, the one we happily return to again and again just to prove to ourselves that not all is wrong with the world.

You often hike as a family. Tell us about what makes this time special.

It's the walk into the unknown. What will you see? What will you hear? What will we notice this time that we never noticed before? Spending time on the preserves beckons us to learn and experience wildlife in ways that are both familiar and novel. It is an outdoor classroom that welcomes us in and helps us feel restored. Moreover, being on an ACRES property recharges us in ways that no smartphone or tech gadget can: being there calls us to fall in love with Indiana's natural beauty over and over again. It's one call that is hard to ignore!



Photos by Janet Canino



After all, ACRES Land Trust summarizes many of our own values in what it does and what it strives to teach others about—"the intrinsic and diverse benefits of natural places" and our place within that niche.

After "test-driving" the ACRES preserves for a couple of years, we finally felt the need to put our money where our hearts already were—we knew it was time to become ACRES members." Although that was months ago, when I think back to that donation, I still feel an overwhelming sense of pride and satisfaction about our decision and encourage others to do the same. After all, ACRES Land Trust summarizes many of our own values in what it does and what it strives to teach others about—"the intrinsic

and diverse benefits of natural places" and our place within that niche.

Additionally, ACRES has become a wonderful default gift that we give. No one needs to find space in their house for it, and it's not going to sit empty on a shelf somewhere, or unused in the back of a closet. The educational activities and social gatherings make it a well-received and much appreciated gift, one that feels at least as good to give as to receive!

If you've not yet seen ACRES new video, or if you'd like to see it again, go to acreslandtrust.org/watch (and share it with your friends!).

Building A Bridge:

Eagle Scout Graham Seiler supports Bicentennial Woods, connects community

By Lettie Haver, outreach manager with Graham Seiler, Eagle Scout and ACRES volunteer



Graham Seiler took the path less traveled. Given options for volunteer work toward earning Eagle Scout status, Seiler chose to replace a slippery, weathered bridge at Bicentennial Woods near Huntertown.

Wanting something that would last—that his grandchildren might see—Graham, now a senior at Eastside Junior-Senior High School in Butler, chose steel rather than simply re-using some of the older bridge's wood.

Eagle Scout projects require scouts to demonstrate the leadership skills they have developed over many years of scouting, including securing their own resources. ACRES' bridge project proved worthy.

After selecting structural materials, Seiler headed to Vulcraft to secure his first major corporate donation. This St. Joe steel company not only supplied joists and all steel materials, but also connected employee Kendall Clyde, an Eagle Scout, with Seiler to revise his design. The two opted to make the bridge's trusses double as handrails and settled on concrete decking for endurance and traction.

A troop member then introduced Seiler to Chris Harmon of Hagerman Construction Corporation who provided tools and a crew for concrete work, demonstrating the process to the troop before and during the process. Harmon also brought in Cris Mabbitt of Irving Materials Inc (IMI).

Upon review, Seiler's father, an engineer, advised against pouring concrete and suggested two-ton concrete blocks as an alternative. New challenges emerged: during the project, Seiler would adjust the concrete block size (at one point using a tape measure to ensure the blocks could be delivered to the site), and he'd need heavy equipment to deliver the blocks.

Steel proved a similar challenge: how to move 700-pound trusses to the site from a parking lot and down a trail without eroding soils or damaging trees? Seiler's staff liaison, ACRES land management specialist Evan Hill, suggested an access route straight from the road. Road access and parking on a blind curve on a busy road provided additional challenges.

More partners jumped in: Southeastern Equipment Rental Co. provided an excavator small enough to maneuver between trees in order to dig the holes

for the concrete blocks. Seiler Excavating, owned by Graham's uncle, lent an excavator for removing the old bridge, and hauling in the steel frame and blocks. Three Rivers Barricade offered safety signage for the blind curve on Shoaff Road.

After several rainy days delayed the big installation work, Seiler's vision began taking shape in the preserve. Heavy equipment carried in significant structural pieces for the new bridge and hauled out the sagging former bridge. With the bridge structure in place, a volunteer crew from Hagerman, 10 troop members and a handful of parents helped pour and finish the concrete decking.

When Hagerman suggested stone as an erosion-prevention transition to the bridge, Hanson Aggregates came through with enough stone for this, plus a bit left over to repair the parking lot. They connected Seiler

with Bailey Trucking who donated stone delivery.

With his family pitching in as they had all year, Seiler helped with finishing touches: installing the stone, and painting with Sherwin Williams-supplied paint. Home Depot on Lima Road gave tools for various uses. Seiler added a sign thanking his supporters. As the project neared completion, Seiler planned a celebratory ice cream social. As you can guess, he handled all the details.

After graduation, Graham Seiler plans to pursue study in math or science.

ACRES hopes you plan to trek the bridge he built, connecting community to the woods you help protect. Three cheers for Graham, the Seiler family, the myriad corporate donors and you, ACRES members.



Welcome Natasha Manor, ACRES office and volunteer manager



My appreciation and passion for natural places did not take hold until adulthood. I was not an outdoorsy child or adolescent! I think my love of nature began with plants, indoors. My mother has always been a collector and committed caretaker of houseplants. She shared that hobby with my sister and me and to this day, when we get together, we talk about plants—especially flowers. We have all since become avid gardeners and enjoy sharing bulbs, seeds and advice.

In my early twenties, I moved from northeastern Indiana to Washington state. It was then that I began hiking. I was wild about the enormous ferns and moss-drenched forests of the Pacific Northwest. I would seek out new city, state and national parks to visit and hit the trails. I found that spending time in natural places filled me with a deep sense of awe and joy that I did not experience elsewhere.

When I moved back to Indiana a few years later, I began seeking out parks and nature preserves to continue hiking and developed a deeper appreciation for Midwestern forests. I later found out about ACRES sites. ACRES preserves have provided me with unique areas to hike and practice some amateur plant identification. I love to take enough time on a hike to find a wildflower or fungus and snap some photos. I especially enjoy the wildflower show at Bicentennial Woods each spring!

My professional background is in accounting and human resources and I have worked in the industries of construction and higher education. I am committed to using my skills and experience to help keep ACRES Land Trust operating smoothly and efficiently to protect land, forever.

— *Natasha Manor*

Reduce Your Tax Bill and Protect Local Land

A Qualified Charitable Distribution (QCD) is a direct transfer of funds from your IRA custodian, payable to a qualified charity (you must be 70 ½ or older to be eligible). With the end of the year just around the corner, now is the time to consider how a charitable contribution to ACRES Land Trust might help reduce your tax bill while protecting local land at the same time. Please consult your professional financial advisor to begin the process of making a gift.

Questions for us? Call Heather Barth at 260-637-2273, extension 5.

ACRES preserve stewards and caretakers
ACRES *Quarterly* delivery
Emma Barth and Katlynn Mork, Brandon Terry, Russ Voorhees

Kokiwane Spring Celebration volunteers
David Brumm, Ralph and Mary Campbell, Laura Colpitts, Nancy Conrad, Mark Maffey, Judith Schroff and Janelle Windsor
Collating summer *Quarterly*

Kristine Connerly, Dani Faurote, Deb Leinker, Kalley Nicely, Dan Shepherd, Maureen Voors and Crystal Jones
Fort Wayne Children's Zoo Play Day volunteers

Nancy and Joe Conrad
hosting the ACRES barn concert and video premier

Richard Coslow and son, Mark Maffey, Richard (or Joyce) Pacer, Bill Smith, Maureen Voors and Crystal Jones
Great American Cleanup at Mengerson Reserve

Tony Fleming and John J. Smith
leading the wildflower and geology hike at Lloyd W. Bender Memorial Forest

Dave Hicks
leading wildflower hike at Kokiwane

Mississenewa Audubon Club, Robert Cooper Audubon Society, South Bend-Elkhart Audubon Society, Tippecanoe Audubon Society, Riverview Native Nursery

2018 Bird Blitz workshops and sponsors
Plant Identification Workshop supporters

Louise Pomeroy
summer *Quarterly* mailing

Theresa Ransbottom
hosting Pots and Potluck

John Salb, Kirk Swaidner, Naomi Venderleest, Larry Watson and guests
Asherwood work day

Carol Spallone
Bird Blitz community presentations



Many thanks to the anonymous donors who contributed this bounty of items from our wish list.

wish list

Order from ACRES' Amazon Wish List: <http://a.co/jgnUxaT>

bird seed
coffee
dust buster or other mini vacuum
gas cards

paper towels
plastic forks
small paper plates
12- oz to-go coffee cups

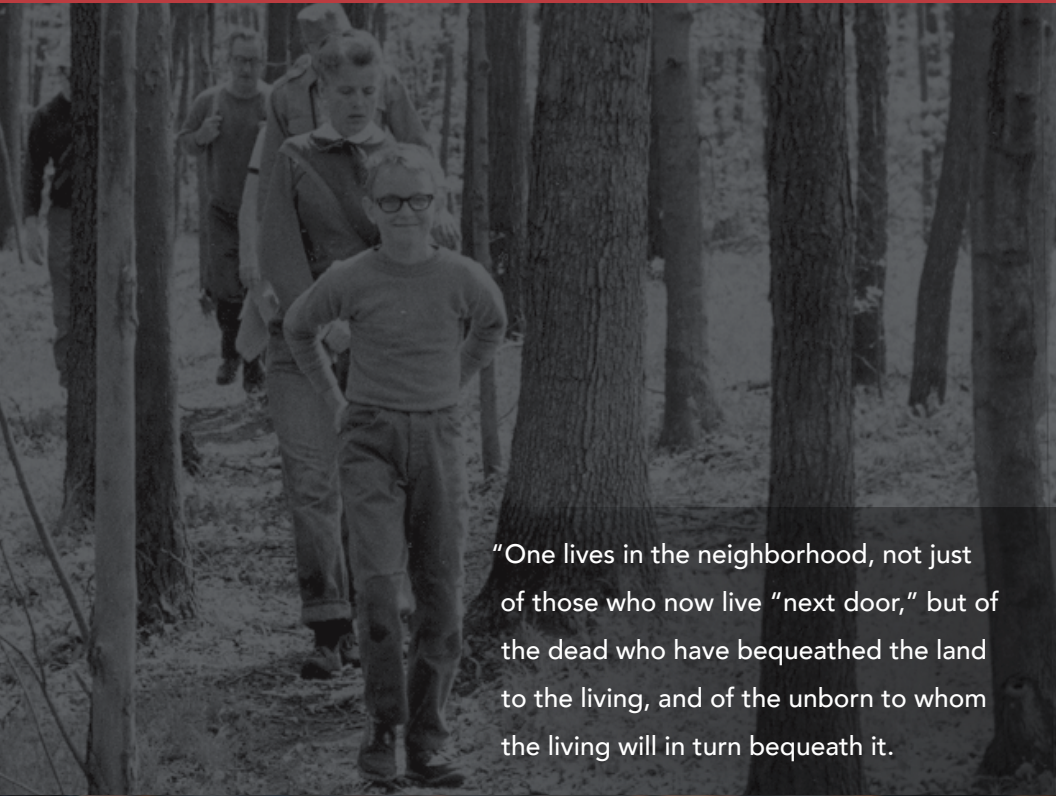
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STAFF: Jason Kissel, Executive Director; Heather Barth, Director of Fund Development; Matt Dunno, Land Management Specialist; Lettie Haver, Outreach Manager; Evan Hill, Land Management Specialist; Casey Jones, Director of Land Management and Natasha Manor, Office and Volunteer Manager.

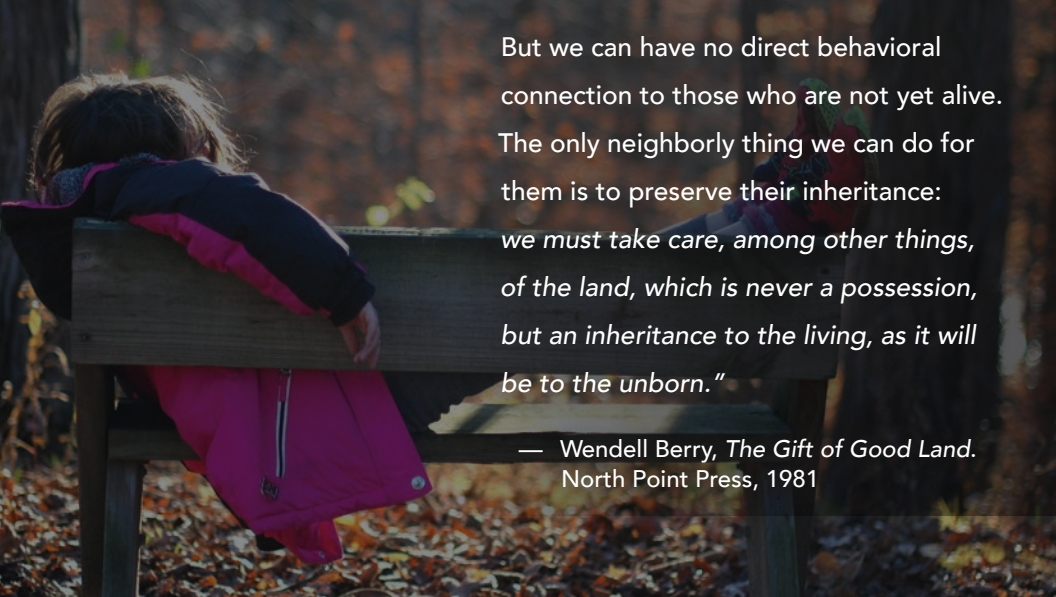
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MEMBERSHIP: Life Member, \$1,500; Sustaining, \$500; Corporate, \$500; Club/Organization, \$50; Family, \$40; Individual, \$25; Senior or Student, \$15. Dues payable annually.





"One lives in the neighborhood, not just of those who now live "next door," but of the dead who have bequeathed the land to the living, and of the unborn to whom the living will in turn bequeath it.



But we can have no direct behavioral connection to those who are not yet alive. The only neighborly thing we can do for them is to preserve their inheritance: *we must take care, among other things, of the land, which is never a possession, but an inheritance to the living, as it will be to the unborn."*

— Wendell Berry, *The Gift of Good Land*.
North Point Press, 1981