QUARTERLY 1

Winter 2016 | Vol. 55 - No. 4





Rare Bog Acquisition

ACRES Protects Remnant Prairie
For The Birds

What's a Winter Finch?

Observations on Place



Photo by Chad Taylor

From the Executive Director

Dear Members.

I recently looked at what I wrote in my first letter as executive director in 2006: "In my experience, what gets measured gets done." I still believe that. It's important to measure things from an organizational standpoint such as budgets, number of members, acreage, finances, yearly and strategic plan goals. Over the last ten years, though, my appreciation has greatly increased for what gets done without being measured.

Ninety-nine percent of the activity that occurs because ACRES exists does not get measured: life in the preserves simply happens. No-that's not accurate. Life complexly happens. Like us, plants and animals must find space, water, food, a mate, and defend themselves from attack. Although tens of thousands of creatures perform these activities daily in the preserves, no one from ACRES measures them. Life thrives everywhere in our preserves. This past year, over 2.1 million trees added a growth ring and endangered species lived and reproduced there. Yet no one from ACRES was measuring this. And each day in the preserves, people find peace, enjoy time with each other, discover something new, gain insight, even get a bit healthier. Yet no one from ACRES measures.

The immeasurable value of what we do is much more evident to me after a decade with ACRES. While we still count and measure a lot, we know some things aren't easily translated into numbers: we enhance human life, we offer places for nature to live, we allow life to occur undisturbed.

I do get excited about the 1% of ACRES impact that we can and do measure, such as acquiring over 100 properties protecting over 6,000 acres. I also find inspiration in knowing that most of ACRES' impact is immeasurable—in a most wonderful way.

Thank you for your role in allowing immeasurable value—life—to occur in the preserves.

Take time to reflect on your feelings of pride, satisfaction and joy that preserving land brings you, knowing you're contributing to something much larger than you can do alone. Then multiply this times everyone who has supported, is now supporting, and will support ACRES in the future. No one from ACRES can measure that. But you can feel it - and that's better than any number.

Sincerely.



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

Cover photo of White-winged Crossbill by Dave Fox. Can you spot the bird in this issue? On a preserve this winter?



ACRES Land Trust preserves, protects and manages 104 properties totaling 6,050 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

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WELCOME

⊇Wmembers!

Abel Harman from Eric and Linda Anderson Kyah Harward Joseph and Barbara Barker Janet Heffley Vicki and Cem Basman from Fred and Jackie Wooley Jim and Deb Bloom from Kathryn Bloom

Bret Booher Family

Steve Burke

Megan Burton from Sandra Hall

Diana and Jeff Clausen

Eddie and Nan Coble from Michael Screeton

Andrea Cole

Kristine Connerly

Barb Deardorf

Dawn Doster Sue Emmert

Janice Eplett

Regina Evans

Christine Falcon

Thomas Gerig

Leonard Gillan Jon Gotz

Pardee Gunter

Jim and Bev Heierman

Sean and Kimberly Holsworth

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Joan Isaacs

Maimi and David Isaacs

Andrew and Janet Katz

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Tim and Lisa Koshnick

Flovd Lancia

Todd Land

Marsha McCroskev

Rachel and Roger McNett from Sherry McNett

Cathy Miller

from Gillian Harris and William Cowan

Susan Morgan Daniel Nowicki

Anthony O'Neil from Kelly O'Neil Cindy Ofallon from Mark Bish

Randy and Jen Pickard

Linda Reef

from Kathie Bishop

Ronald Reiling Lori Roberts

Michael Screeton

Lisa Ransom Smith

Sandra Slone

Joanna Stebing

Maren and Chris Stewart

Bob Stoppenhagen

Theresa Thieme

Anita Trick

Shelly Van Daele from Mary Gynn

Belinda and James Volz

Ben Wheeler

life members

Joe and Nancy Conrad Michael and Jean Findley Tedra Hemingway from Ted Hemingway

tributes

Jason Kissel 10 years-with-ACRES anniversary from Wayne and Linda Boyd Rachel and Roger McNett

49th wedding anniversary from Sherry Mcnett

Angie O'Neill from Jim Sack Troy King Sayers from Sandra Killila

memorials

Russell Hathaway from Eric Hathaway

Ted Heemstra from Janel Rogers

Ruth Kern from Noel and Patricia Holmgren, Shirley Needham, Bill Kern

Ruth Maffey from Tim and Diana Rupley Matthew Shumaker from Suzanne Dunn

Torrence (Tory) Smith from Joanne Weber

Kathryn Goble Stone from Karen Doty, Donna Goble, Richard and Janice Goble Caloia



Photos ©The Conservation Fund by Ivan LaBianca

Despite living on a nearby lake for about 20 years, ACRES board member Mark O'Shaughnessy had no idea of the treasure hidden in his LaGrange County "back yard" until he, Jason Kissel, and Heather Barth ventured into nearby wetlands in canoes last year to discover what was there.

The trio saw incredible plant life, including two carnivorous plants species in great abundance: pitcher plants and sundews. They dipped their oars in the muck, trying unsuccessfully to touch bottom.

Efforts to walk on the floating mat by grabbing any nearby vegetation to maintain balance proved to be a mistake ... they were hugging poison sumac.

Even though Mark's arms blistered for days, he is grateful to have glimpsed the bog's plant life and has happily lent himself to fundraising among his LaGrange County neighbors for the bog's preservation. "To keep this place natural is really important," Mark says. "It's spectacular!"

ACRES' commitment to acquiring this 126-acre property surrounding Quog Lake in LaGrange County ensures permanent protection of a rare quaking bog and its notable ecology.

A quaking bog—the origin of Quog Lake's name—describes the floating mat of sphagnum moss along the lake's shore. One of few remaining quaking bogs in Indiana, its connected wetlands drain into the North Branch Elkhart River.

"It's a significant natural area that needs to be preserved," said Mike Metz, LaGrange County's parks and recreation director. "It's great that ACRES has taken on doing that." LaGrange County's Comprehensive Plan for land use documents the need to ensure scenic areas are maintained as part of the county's character.

Quog Lake adds to seven parcels of land spanning 681 already-protected acres in the immediate vicinity collectively owned by ACRES, Indiana Department of Natural Resources, and LaGrange County. This corridor of protected scenic and natural area is located near Oliver Lake, south of the town of LaGrange.

In addition to the bog, Quog Lake preserve features a forested swamp, cattail marsh, and small patches of open water. Cranberry, highbush blueberry, water willow and tamarack form the dominant cover on the wetland area, while the swamp forest is dominated by burr oak, swamp white oak and shellbark hickory.

Quog Lake's dense vegetation provides secluded wildlife habitat for a variety

of creatures including state-endangered Massasauga rattlesnakes and Marsh Wrens, as well as a variety of forest birds and migratory waterfowl. Recent bird surveys documented 75 bird species within a two-mile radius of the property, species such as Veery, Northern Waterthrush, and a variety of warblers including a Cerulean Warbler. The wetland complex surrounding the area buffers this habitat, allowing it to flourish with very little disturbance.

Quog Lake has been on ACRES' radar since its recognition in Natural Areas in Indiana and Their Preservation, published by Purdue University in 1969. The authors, Alton Lindsay, Damian Schmelz, and Stanley Nichols, note significant natural areas throughout the state as a "guide for those who can save some of it." To date, ACRES Land Trust has protected 11 of the identified properties, including Quog Lake. ACRES has secured 98% of the funding for Quog Lake's purchase, with \$58,200 left to raise.

ACRES has received a \$25,000 grant from the LaGrange County Community Foundation. Of the foundation's higherthan-average gift, executive director Laura Lemings said, "We're very supportive of our parks system and natural areas, and [Quog Lake] fit right into that."

Additional partners and funding for Quog Lake include the Bicentennial Nature Trust, Indiana Heritage Trust, NIPSCO, the Conservation Fund, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Indiana DNR Division of Nature Preserves, and the Fort Wayne Children's Zoo.

The preserve is currently closed.

"To keep this place natural is really important. It's spectacular!"

- Mark O'Shaughnessy

Land Management Specialist Evan Hill explores Quog Lake, a rare quaking bog in LaGrange County, now permanently protected by you and your fellow ACRES members.





ACRES recently purchased an extremely rare and ecologically significant remnant of native prairie struggling to survive amid Warsaw's commercial and residential areas.

The 7-acre prairie found in the newly-acquired Wayne Township Property along U.S. 30 may be the largest easternmost example of original Midwest prairie grassland. Thanks to your support as a member, the prairie and 40 adjoining acres of wetland and swamp is preserved, forever.

"This prairie is unique. It has a high conservation value because of the species that flourish here," says Casey Jones, director of land management. For years, area botanists and prairie preservationists have collected seeds of the native tall prairie dock, goldenrod, and bush clover on the property.



Native cottonwood trees rim this prairie. Since acquisition, Jones continues to find more native plants on the property: upland rose, gray-headed coneflower, bee balm, and pale-spiked lobelia.

"There are lots of different native grasses here," says Jones. Particularly exciting is little bluestem.

Protecting the prairie and its treasured plants means fighting several highly invasive non-native species. Autumn olive and buckthorn stretch across the property.

'Everything woody here is an invasive species that has been left to grow and spread," Jones says.





From the prairie and a ridge, the property reaches down to swamp and marsh. "It's kind of cool to see how one habitat meshes with the other. When the invasives are gone, these native habitats will spread and flow more."

Prairies are rare in Indiana (and the world), says Nate Simons, executive director of the Angola-based nonprofit Blue Heron Ministries, which also preserves native growth. Years ago, he collected seed from this new ACRES prairie for a native seed nursery. "Now the genetics from this site are preserved and spread on prairie restoration sites in Indiana."

And just two years ago, Simons and Grace College students of Assistant Professor Nate Bosch collected from this prairie site the seeds of a half-dozen native plant species, seeds they scattered for a small prairie restoration on campus. Bosch noted that "maintaining what little remains as an example of what we once had in native landscapes and ecosystems is important for biological diversity."

The Kosciusko County Community Foundation, Zimmer Biomet, and a discount from the previous owner have funded more than 60% of the cost of the Wayne Township Property. ACRES needs \$34,000 to complete the project.

The Wayne Township Property is closed during restoration. You can help remove non-native invasive shrub from the property on Saturday, December 10, from 2-5 pm. See page 12 for details.



On the 26 Paulding County acres they call home and recently donated to ACRES for permanent protection as Dunakin Woods, Michelle (Micki) and Doug Dunakin have counted 200 bird species.

On this property, Micki has spotted the federally endangered Kirtland's Warbler and the Townsend's Warbler. "Warblers are one of my favorites. I've counted 38 warbler species here—pretty incredible for a property this size" (Ohio lists 41 or 42 species). Also seen: a Clay-colored Sparrow, Yellow-headed Blackbird, Blue Grosbeak, White-winged Crossbill, Bell's Vireo, a Golden Eagle. And number 200? A Long-eared Owl sheltering in a small spruce grove.

"Some just stop by," says Micki about conducting a bird count. She notes flyovers and landings, as well as inhabitants. "I've seen Pileated [woodpeckers] more and more. They've always nested nearby, and as their breeding has been more successful, juveniles are spreading out, seeking nesting sites."

Dunakin Woods protects 8 acres of woodland and 18 acres of former farm land, the latter now in succession. After purchasing their home and woods, the Dunakins were determined to create a bird sanctuary. They bought surrounding farmland from Micki's brother, enrolled the fields in the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP), and placed a conservation easement on part of their property through the Black Swamp Audubon Society to prevent future development of the land.

Most days, after feeding the birds, Micki strolls a half-mile loop through the woods, binoculars ready. She spends more time during spring and fall migration when flyovers increase.

Her curiosity in feathered fliers began more than fifty years ago. "In the early 60's when my family lived in Antwerp along the Maumee, I began noticing birds in the brush and trees on the riverbank." Micki recalls that near that time she was introduced to 4-H. She laughs: "I was a girl, so my mom had me do sewing projects—

towels and aprons. But in 1966 I completed a birding program, and that was the end of the sewing projects."

Micki earned degrees in Natural Systems from Defiance College and in Biology from Purdue University, both through the GI Bill after her service in the Navy as a nurse. She applied her education to service on the Ohio Birds Record Committee and as co-founder of the Ohio Ornithological Society, and in the early 1980's, she led field trips for a then-vibrant Black Swamp Audubon Society. In fact, Micki and Doug Dunakin met at a Black Swamp meeting.

Over the years they shared their love of birding, holding offices in the local Audubon chapter, birding across the country and in Costa Rica. Years after their marriage, the Dunakins were delighted to discover their wedding day, April 26, 1985, marked the 200th anniversary of John James Audubon's birth.

Micki describes the understory of their bird-attracting woods as "some invasive brush, some wildflowers, a patch of Green Dragon, and Trillium I got started." She says the surrounding fields are "loved by bees and butterflies too." When the fields were glorious with late summer goldenrod, she noticed a startling number of insects swarming nearby plants. Raising her binoculars across the fields, she saw "hundreds, maybe thousands, of dragonflies hunting insects, all across the 11 acres" west of their home.

"We consider this an oasis," Micki says.

"Areas like these are diminishing all the time. I have always been an enthusiast of preservation. A conservation easement is not enough. I want this land preserved.

I am glad that ACRES will protect it."

To you, ACRES members, Micki gives thanks: "I'm so glad ACRES is here. It's heartening!"

Dunakin Woods is closed as a life estate. Micki will host a members-only birding hike in the spring.

Micki and Doug's story of preservation with ACRES continues. At this time, thanks to both their referral and your ongoing participation in preservation, ACRES is working with the Black Swamp Audubon Society to protect three properties the Society owns in western Ohio.

Center Spread by Chad Taylor photographed during a late-November morning walk through Ropchan Wildlife Refuge south of Fremont, Indiana. This 169-acre preserve surrounding Cemetery Lake offers more than three miles of trails through rolling hills carved by glaciers, once-cultivated fields in different stages of succession, wetlands and an oak/hickory forest. The variety of habitats provides refuge for diverse wildlife such as this buck.

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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. Wear long pants and long sleeves. Bring vour 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 HIKES

Saturday, December 3, 2 pm

WABASH COUNTY | Asherwood

7496 W. State Road 124, Wabash, IN 46992

Hosted by Jason Kissel and a Share the Trails volunteer.

Saturday, January 7, 2 pm

PAULDING COUNTY | Flat Rock Creek Nature Preserve 8654 SR 500, Paulding, OH 45879

Hosted by Share the Trails volunteers.

Saturday, February 4, 2 pm

WELLS COUNTY | Acres Along the Wabash

182 S.E. SR 116, Bluffton, IN 46714 Hosted by Share the Trails volunteers.



Flat Rock Creek Nature Preserve by Sarah Rood

PRESERVE WORKDAYS

You can help remove non-native invasive brush from this unique remnant prairie. Read about the new preserve on pages 6-7 and lend your hand restoring it. Hosted by Casey Jones.

Saturday, December 10, 2-5 pm

KOSCIUSKO COUNTY | Wayne Township Prairie

Just west of Eastlake Skating Center, 3010 Frontage Road, Warsaw, IN 46580

Invest in the land. Help remove non-native invasive vines and complete odd jobs on the preserves. Hosted by Kelly Shepherd.

Saturday, January 28, 10 - noon

ALLEN COUNTY | Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve

1802 Chapman Road, Huntertown, IN 46748

Saturday, February 25, 10 - noon

WABASH COUNTY | Kokiwanee

5825 E. 50 S, Lagro, IN 46941

HOLIDAY COOKIE EXCHANGE FOR MEMBERS

Wednesday, December 14, 6-7:30 pm

ALLEN COUNTY | Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve

1802 Chapman Road, Huntertown, IN 46748

Come early to hike on your own, then head indoors to warm up around the Dustin fireplace with a reading and refreshments. Bring 4-dozen homemade cookies to swap and containers to take cookies home. Hosted by Heather Barth and Kelly Shepherd. RSVP to outreach@acreslandtrust.org or 260-637-2273.

RESTORATIVE YOGA FOR MEMBERS

Wednesday, December 28, 6-7:30 pm

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

Unwind with a gentle, all-levels restorative yoga session. Hosted by Kelly Shepherd, yoga instructor and ACRES outreach specialist. RSVP by 12/27 to outreach@acreslandtrust.org or 260-637-2273.

"LAY OF THE LAND" CONVERSATION & BRUNCH

Saturday, January 21, 10 am

ALLEN COUNTY | Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve

1802 Chapman Road, Huntertown, IN 46748

You value our work together and you want to know more. Be part of our ongoing dialogue in the place members, donors and supporters have engaged for decades. Share brunch around ACRES' fireplace with folks who think about land a lot. Hosted by Jason Kissel. Space is limited. RSVP to ikissel@acreslandtrust.org or 260-637-2273.

ORIENTEERING, A WAYFINDING WORKSHOP AND SCAVENGER HUNT

Saturday, January 28, 1 pm

KOSCIUSKO COUNTY | Wildwood

409 E. SR 14, Silver Lake, IN 46982

Can you find your way through the forest with a compass when trails are covered with snow and leaves? Hosted by Casey Jones.

BOOK DISCUSSION FOR MEMBERS

Pilgrim at Tinker Creek by Annie Dillard

Friday, February 10, 6 pm

ALLEN COUNTY | Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve

1802 Chapman Road, Huntertown, IN 46748

Gather 'round a roaring fireplace with fellow ACRES members to discuss Dillard's first-person nonfiction narrative on place and how it informs your enjoyment of the preserves. Refreshments provided. Hosted by Jason Kissel.

CREEK STOMP-2ND WINTER EDITION

Saturday, February 11, 2 pm

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

The creek is active all year, revealing a whole new batch of discoveries during the winter months - 20 foot icicles, frozen waterfalls, and fossils. Come see what you've been missing! Hosted by the Kissel Family.

HEINZERLING FAMILY FIVE POINTS NATURE PRESERVE HIKE FOR MEMBERS

Sunday, February 19, 2 pm

DEKALB COUNTY | Heinzerling Family Five Points Nature Preserve Garrett, IN 46738 RSVP for address

ACRES members, you can share a sneak peek of Heinzerling Family Five Points Nature Preserve. Members of the Heinzerling family will be there to share stories and their love of the land. Space is limited. Hosted by Heather Barth. RSVP to hbarth@acreslandtrust.org or 260-637-2273, ext. 5.

Watch for more events online: acreslandtrust.org. See page 18 for Volunteer Events and Opportunities.

EXPLORING THE PRESERVES



Early September, I saw my first-of-the-season Red-breasted Nuthatch, one of my favorite birds.

Diminutive compared to our more common year-round White-breasted Nuthatch, the Red-breasted is also set apart by its rusty-red chest and distinctive eye stripe and the fact that it spends a bit more time on branches than the trunk-clinging White-breasted.

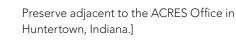
As fall moves into winter, local bird enthusiasts (especially those who bundle and keep birding) smile at the Red-breasted Nuthatch's perky penchant for poking and probing bark crevices while giving a high-pitched "beent, beent," But the question for birders is "Will this be a good winter finch year?" [And the question for the rest of us is "What is a winter finch?"

Because of similarities in size, behavior, and range movement, Crossbills, Redpolls, Goldfinches, and Pine Siskins may be lumped together with Red-breasted Nuthatches and Purple Finches in the "winter finch" category. Most eat buds, seeds, and tiny insects and tend to travel in groups nomadically, with populations varying from year to year.



A handful of "winter finch" species breed in summer primarily up north in coniferous and mixed forests, flying south in late fall and winter to find winter homes here. Some say the Purple Finch is the true winter finch since it summers only in southern Canada, lives year-round in northern Michigan, and comes to our area only in winter. While the House Finch's head and chest are covered in pinky red, you can identify the Purple Finch by its heavier, deep burgundy color on its head, chest, sides and back.





Other winter finches that are not as

particular for conifers often accompany Goldfinches. One of these is the Common Redpoll, tinier than other finches, heavily streaked on the side, cherry wash on the chest, black chin, a tiny red-maroon cap what a delight when these show up! [As you notice Goldfinches on most preserves over the winter, be on the lookout, too, for its showy companion.]

Pine Siskins are similar to Goldfinches but more slender, sporting light streaks and a yellow wash on wings and tail, with a wheezy distinctive "zzzzzziiiiiiiiiiiip!" Pine Siskin like pine seeds, and in winter, thistle is tempting.

So what kind of winter finch year is 2016-17?

[Well-known ornithologist Roger Tory Peterson says it looks like it was "dipped upside down in raspberry juice."]

Kenn Kaufman's Birds of North America identifies "winter finches" as the two species of Crossbills (White-winged and Red), two species of Redpolls (Common and Hoary), and the Pine Grosbeak. White-winged Crossbill and Common Redpoll are our more likely winter visitors.

Crossbills' bills-that-cross facilitate prying for seeds held beneath the scales of pine and spruce cones, their main food. Look for them in ACRES preserves featuring coniferous trees, especially spruce. I like to check out the tall evergreens in Fremont's Lakeside Cemetery, completely surrounded by the Ropchan Wildlife Refuge. [You can look for them in the conifers on the Robert C. and Rosella C. Johnson Nature

Will you watch for birds in the preserves? Whether you consider yourself a birdwatcher or you occasionally notice a few species, you can help support ACRES by reporting your sitings. As an indicator species, birds and their population numbers reflect the health of our natural areas. You can use Cornell's Lab of Ornithology eBird website to document bird sitings on the preserves. Submit your observations from our preserves at ebird.org, noting the date, species, count and location: "January 4, 2017, Blue Grosbeak, 2 count, ACRES' Wing Haven nature preserve."

We look forward to learning about your observations from our preserves. Thank you and happy trails!



by Lettie Haver

Observations on place: Member and local artist Jason Swisher

"I have explored just about every river in Northern Indiana. The Wabash, Eel, Maumee, Mississinewa."

This past summer, ACRES member and local artist. photographer, and designer Jason Swisher participated in "Dirt in Our Hands," an exhibit curated by local artists/friends Julie Wall and Daniel Dienelt. The show explored connections between people, plants and animals. Swisher's artistic statement read like a welldeveloped treatise on local preservation.

How does a self-proclaimed "product of concrete—a city kid," come to value protecting natural areas? Swisher's voyage began with the Mongo River. When friends invited him kayaking, his eyes were opened to unexpected wildness in his own backyard. He wanted more.

"We'd get out on the rivers and lose track of time. With each journey, I started realizing there is so much more to Indiana, so much more here. I started paying attention to trees, plants, elevation, how the land was made by glaciation."

"As my interest in wildflowers grew, I began gaining a direct understanding of the seasons—what sprouts when and where, and an understanding of the importance of native plants, of biodiversity. I reached out to a dear biologist friend who helped me see differently."

"Back then, my friend Daniel [Dienelt] told me that he missed hiking and exploring the outdoors like he once had. I told him, 'I can take you to places you've never seen.' And off we went on trails. Photography became our connection to exploring these places together. We'd load up our gear and wander off."

"I joined ACRES because I support what I'm into. ArtLink, the Fort Wayne Museum of Art—all affordable, part of who Lam. Lused ACRES' Preserve Guide to find preserves I could rough it in, climb through, get dirty. There's a notion of Indiana as flat. When I hear this from friends, I take 'em to Kokiwanee. That preserve blew my mind ... an almost spiritual experience."

"Now I want to share this with my son. I want to take him out in a canoe, expose

him to these places. This is Indiana! You don't have to go far. It's all right here!"

"Sometimes I like just standing, watching leaves, light, shadows, how things interact. I see things I don't normally see—the ephemera. Seeking it out. Getting to this very specific spot to see this or get to hear this. I'm so grateful."

Last spring, Swisher's journey led him to Shanghai on assignment for Nike. "In China, I discovered a different approach to living with nature. People don't mind wildness. It's not tamed. The vines and growth around power lines are meticulously trimmed with care. There's a wanting to be part of it—nature isn't kept out, or put 'over there.'"

When Swisher returned, his experiences, his perspective on preservation, and the "Dirt in Our Hands" show came together. "I joined the show's collaborators who were hiking together weekly. Listening to other artists, you hear new perspectives, have new conversations. A printmaker, photographer, mixed media artist, a painter. All different ways of seeing shadow, color, light, texture."

"When I'm out in nature, I'm happy to be part of the landscape. It's humbling. I need to search these places out. The city is chaotic, not in a negative way, but out here, when you listen, you're really in it. It's like taking a big drink of water, humbling, therapeutic. I'm glad it's here. Glad I found it."

"ACRES gets that. ACRES understands the significance of the woods, trees, natural places in Indiana. ACRES helps to keep it around."



A Wise Man Once Told Me If They Want It, They Will Take It No. 1



A Wise Man Once Told Me If They Want It, They Will Take It No. 2



A Wise Man Once Told Me If They Want It, They Will Take It No. 4

promotions/announcements

What gifts shall I give our grandchildren for the holidays?

I want to walk in the woods with my children and grandchildren when the snow is knee-deep. Place bare palms on boulders over frozen creeks. Breathe tree-cleaned air, feel wind in our faces. Hear a barred owl's who-who-whoo-ing in daylight, and a kingfisher's raspy cry. Spot curious tracks criss-crossing the trail... a rabbit? A fox? An otter?

I'll be giving gifts that facilitate discovery of Nature's mysterious and wondrous gifts, gifts that are ever-changing and life-sustaining.

- Carol Roberts, Quarterly editor

Share Your Joy: Give The Gift of Acres

Nuts about ACRES (and our tee)? Act quickly. The limited-edition, hand-screened tees from Yonder Clothing Company are nearly sold out. All proceeds support ACRES. \$22 at

yonderclothing.com/product/acres-land-trust

Purchase your gift memberships and Preserve Guides online at acreslandtrust.org Thank you!



Volunteer Events and Opportunities

SHARE THE TRAILS HIKE LEADER ROUND TABLE Saturday, February 18, 10 am

ACRES Office, 1802 Chapman Road, Huntertown, IN 46748

ACRES volunteer hike leaders are invited to share tips, tricks and experiences from the trails. Refreshments provided. Hosted by Kelly Shepherd.

RSVP by 2/21 to outreach@acreslandtrust.org

Would you like to volunteer to lead hikes guided by your enthusiasm for the preserves? Contact Tina Puitz with questions and for a volunteer application at tpuitz@acreslandtrust.org

HOME & GARDEN SHOW

March 2-5, 2017

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 11 am, Saturday, February 18 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 - MAPLE SYRUP MAKING & PANCAKES

Saturday, March 11, 9-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 206-637-2273, ext. 2

SPECIAL thanks

Pam George

for coordinating the Annual Meeting & Picnic

Ben Hess, Jordan Marshall, Bill Smith, Thomas Sprunger, Laura Colpitts, Russ Voorhees, Debby Vincent, and Darrell Will

for leading hikes during our Annual Meeting & Picnic

Charles Enea, Dave Brumm, Debby Vincent, Jim Haddock, Debra Leinker and Kristine Connerly for helping with our Annual Meeting Picnic

Marti Berry, Dave Brumm, Mary Campbell, Laura Colpitts, Joe Conrad, Nancy Conrad, Larry Eubank, Tedra Hemingway, Judy Schroff for collating the Fall *Quarterly*

Joe Conrad, Nancy Conrad, Laura Colpitts for helping package the *Quarterly* for distribution

Our Quarterly distributors

Dave Brumm

for repairing the office deck and contributing supplies

Mike Findley

for bird seed and postage stamps

Steve Doud

for apple cider for fall events

Linda and Leonard Gaff for a John Deere lawn tractor cart

Julie Wall at Hedgehog press for design discount for Soltré concert posters

Jeri Kornegay and Lyn Winchell for writing press releases, and for coffee, snacks and office supplies

Lakeland Nursery for plants at the office entrance sign

Kurt and Lisa Benson for donating pumpkins for Barn Series

Ron Nofzinger

for improvements to the landscape bed at the office entrance

Richard Loney

for paint, pole trimmer, linear measure wheel, and wildlife book

More Farm Store for lending equipment for a member experience Jim Haddock

for leading hikes

Angie O'Neill

for labels and help purchasing supplies for annual meeting

Angie Quinn

for refreshments for member gathering

Keith and Louise Pomeroy

for stainless steel serving spoons

Tom and Cindy Reed

for 2 packs of Duracell batteries

Mark and Anne Shure for postage stamps

Tres Beaux Gardens

for landscaping goods and services for entrance landscape bed

Carol Roberts

for editing and revising the Quarterly

Russ Voorhees, Pam George, Laura Colpitts, Darrell Will

for leading Share the Trails and Trek & Talk hikes

Mary Ibe and Pam George for training Share the Trails volunteers

Allen County Public Library, Southside Kiwanis, Covington Commons, Deep Listening Fort Wayne, Summit Nursing Home, Area Home Schoolers, Parkview YMCA Active Older Adults, Central Noble Middle School

for requesting ACRES presentations and guided hikes

Helen Frost

for reading from Salt and Applesauce Weather at our Campfire Trek & Talk

Craig Bobay and Deb Leinker for volunteering at Soltré Concert

wish list

Gift cards for program refreshments

Postage stamps

Invitations to speak about ACRES to your group

GoPro Hero4 Silver or Hero+ LCD

DIRECTORS: Steven Hammer, President; Carol Roberts, Vice President; Joe Conrad, Vice President; David Schnepp, 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.

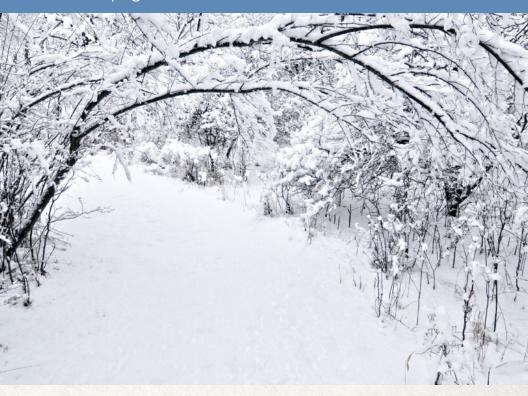
STAFF: Jason Kissel, Executive Director; Heather Barth, Director of Fund Development; Lettie Haver, Outreach Manager; Evan Hill, Land Management Specialist; Casey Jones, Director of Land Management; and Tina Puitz, Office and Volunteer Manager.

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"I think this is the throne room," whispers my seven-year-old companion, peering into a small clump of trees. She's keeping a sharp eye out for the snow queen.

Tree limbs droop under the weight of sparkling snow, bowing gracefully into rooms and bowers suitable for sovereigns. A muffled silence lends to the aura of enchantment.

We're exploring Beechwood Nature Preserve on a stolen morning. Snow has delayed our regularly scheduled lives, so we're taking advantage of this beautiful white wonderland.

Children are delighted by snow, even when you might have forgotten the magic. Snow conceals autumn's mundane leftovers, brightens the landscape and creates magical places where — you never know — you just might find a snow queen.

- Jill Noyes, ACRES member