

THE ACRES QUARTERLY

Fall 2017 | Vol. 56 - No. 3



ACRES
LANDTRUST

***A Quarterly Full of Places You've
Recently Protected:***

Protected Forever: Victory Noll Acres

Emanuel M. Popp Nature Preserve Expands

Black Swamp Audubon Entrusts Three Ohio Lands

Fuller and Caprarotta Family Stories From the Land

Plus: *How Hoosiers Can Help Protect More Places*

From the Executive Director

Dear Members,

While most people view ACRES' work positively, they may also consider land preservation as optional. What would change if we understood natural lands as more important to us than electricity and cell phones, as crucial to us as clean water and air? I share the deep concern addressed by ACRES founder, James Barrett III, in his 1964 Quest Club paper, that we do not see as critical to our wellbeing the land we rely on for our very lives. Barrett asks us probing questions, then offers an ethical response inextricably linking our own health to the health of Earth:

"We once feared nature because we could not protect ourselves from her. Do we now fear her because of what she tells us? Are we afraid to admit we are not self-sufficient, that we live together on this earth with all of life and are bound to observe the conditions under which life exists? Do we fear to acknowledge that, despite our immense differences... we are still more like, than different from, any other form of life we know...?"

Barrett urges us to *"temper our power with our respect for the life we do not understand and did not create, but with which we share this earth...that on its health rests our own. Our own numbers and power...demand we expand our ethical conscience to include the land and the life it supports."*

"By the moral act of preserving the remnants of wilderness with which we are still blessed... we may yet become persuaded to respect the living communities of the earth to which we belong, and ourselves as an integral part of them. Then we will seek the principles of an ethic...for living with all nature—and will cherish the privilege of doing so."

I believe when we understand our relationship with and crucial reliance on natural lands, we will discover great joy in their proper care. For Jim's full paper visit acreslandtrust.org/conservationtoday and join the discussion September 28. See details on page 13.

Sincerely,



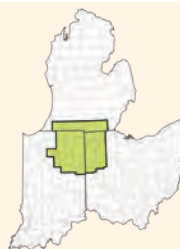
Jason Kissel
jkissel@acreslandtrust.org
260-637-2273 ext. 2

Cover photo by Jerry McCoy. Don't miss your chance to watch the preserves change this fall. See pages 12–13 for hikes and events you can join—or get out on your own. You protect these places—please enjoy! acreslandtrust.org/preserves



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

98newmembers!

Bob Field and Teresa Anderson
Brittnee Anderson
Emma Anger
David and Sheryl Avery
Tony Bean
Justin Beard
Wade and Diane Boggs
from Sam and Jill Boggs
Hon. Thomas and Mrs. Nancy Boyer
Teresa Branning
Anna Brinegar
Veronica Brocher
Jessica Burkett
Jacalyn Butler
Carol Cavell
Sue Christman
Carol Conley
Adam and Wendy Connelly
Brian Cox
Murray Cox
Dorothy Cusick
Mike and Fran Dager
Philip Davich
Cathy Davis
Tim Deimling
Karen DeForest
Amy and Keith Derickson
Carolyn DeVoe
Robert and Marian Downing
Nancy Eagle
Sandy Flack
Patrick Frain
Carol and Thomas Frane
Jeffrey and Bobbi French
Bridget Ammond Frey
Kristine Friend
Marcia Fritz

Adrienne Funderburg and
Riley Newsome
Marcia Futter
Tom and Beth Gardner
Arlene Georgi
Lynne Gilmore
Joan and Don Goldner
Patricia Griest
Max Halberstadt
Mary Ann Hardy
Terry Haver
from Lettie Haver
Neil and Rita Hayes
Patricia Hays and Peter Hanley
Glenn Helser
Kevin and Jennifer Hunter
Heather Hursey
Malinda Henning
Paula Ibach
Karen Johnson
Kelli Kensill
Dennis and Barbara Knoblauch
John Kohl
Scott Krause
Dr. Joseph and Mrs. Ann Ladowski
Cindy Lonergan
Jessica Marquart
Timothy McDonough
gift from Maire O'Neil
Cyndi and Rick Malecki
Tim and Tammy Miller
Curt Mirwaldt
Steve Morehead and
Maureen Maple
Carol Nole and Barbara Sanderson
Marie O'Neil
Alishya Pena

Bernadette Pikel
Molly Plank
Mark Pomeroy
John Rice
Paula Neale Rice
Christine Riley
Susan Ryan
Weldon Schaefer
Alex and Sarah Schreiber
Steve and Jody Shine
Ellen Simmons
Marlene and Gary Sloat
Gregory and Carey Smith
Phyllis Tackett
Buck and Julianne Toenges
Doug and Suzie Ulmer
Matthew Vanderpool
from Ken and Rebecca Vanderpool
Marcia and John Van Eden
Donna and Robert Veiga
Sue Verstynen
Jim and Laura Walker
Robert Wartenbe
Cynthia and Robert Wilson
Marsha and Doug Worthington
Linda Wurm
Charlotte Zawadzke

life members

Craig Carpenter
Brian and Greta Ivanovic
Scott and Donna Mattson

tributes

Brian and Mary Ann Becker's marriage
from James and Dale Becher, Barry and Patricia
Becker, Ronna Bleekman, Joe and Suzanne Milledge
Nicole Funk
from Keller Williams/Antrim Group

Harvey Hathaway
from Eric Hathaway, Wendy, Mark, Matt and
Lauren Eisse
Angie O'Neill
from Alice Kopfer

memorials

Pat Barrett
from Fred and Mary Anna Feitler, Kathy Gordon,
Nancy Green, Karen Griggs, Angie O'Neill, Rosie
Stier, Ken and Susan Till, Deborah Zumbrun

Bill Byanski
from Marge and Tim Aquino, Tom, TJ and Lori
Byanski, Carrie Custer and Ted Kirschner, Katrina
Custer family, Fred and Mary Anna Feitler, Brad
and Kathy Johnson, Johanna Gordon-Byanski,
Steve and Elaine Screeton

The Fogwells
from Jerry Krick
Jim Haw
from Louise Larsen

Betty Kephart
from Kathleen Fuller
Fred Mackel
from Isa and Elizabeth Canavati, Sally Jones-
Evans, Marvel Munro, Martha Kabisch, Robert
and Elizabeth Wuthrich, Charlene Holly, Brent and
Janet Lantz, Margaret Zumwalt, Leslie and John
Wilson, William and Camille Pond, Diane Mape
and Shirley Kessler, Fort Wayne Medical Society
Beth McCurley
from Rebecca Orr and Sarah Wall
Ruth Kern
from Noel and Patricia Holmgren, Shirley
Needham and Bill Kern

PROTECTING LAND

Victory Noll Acres:

Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters convey their land ethic, protect 107 acres

by Dan Stockman, ACRES member and volunteer writer

ACRES Land Trust and the Our Lady of Victory Missionary Sisters announced they have closed on the sale of 107 acres of prairie and forest at the Motherhouse in Huntington, Indiana, forever preserving the land from development.

This land, which will be known as Victory Noll Acres, features oaks, maples, and sycamores, as well as steep ravines and rolling prairie areas. The property is on top of a bluff overlooking the Wabash River valley, the bluff's edge formed by the ancient bank of the river carved out by a melting glacier's rushing waters.

ACRES Land Trust Executive Director Jason Kissel said the acquisition is especially significant because of other preserves in the area along the Wabash River. It is hoped that eventually the separate preserves will be connected to protect the area's unique ecology.

"This land has significance on its own, so if it never connects to other preserves in the area, that's OK, but we believe it's a piece of the puzzle toward protecting the entire river bank," Kissel said.

"Over the years this land has been a place of recreation and enjoyment, as well as solace and prayer, not only for the sisters but for many others who have come to visit."

– Sr. Ginger Downey

"This land has been very significant to the Victory Noll Sisters since 1925 when they moved into their motherhouse, Victory Noll," said Sr. Ginger Downey, the Victory Noll sisters' general secretary.

"Over the years this land has been a place of recreation and enjoyment, as well as solace and prayer, not only for the sisters but for many others who have come to visit."

Kissel said it was especially gratifying to work with the Victory Noll Sisters because both groups' goals and beliefs about the environment overlap so well.

"A lot of people have a hard time articulating why they want to preserve land. We've never before worked with an organization that has been so specific that they were able to hand us a document where they've written down why they care for the land," Kissel said. "When we compared with them ACRES' views, they matched ours almost perfectly, aside from some wording. So this is a way for them to continue the ministry of the land, even without a religious organization owning it."

The Victory Noll Sisters' land ethic: "We cherish this land as a sacrament of God's love for us." ACRES values "the intrinsic and diverse benefits of natural places and the life they sustain."



Sr. Ginger Downey explained: "Victory Noll Acres, which is what the new parcel will be called, blends the two entities in a way that honors both and illustrates both of our commitments to providing green space for generations to come where all can experience nature, wildlife and the blessings of God."

Kissel said the purchase is a perfect example of how ACRES Land Trust helps people meet their objectives: "ACRES is a way for the Victory Noll Sisters to realize their dreams for the land. Whether it's Catholic sisters who own the land or a member who donates \$25, none of us can permanently protect land on our own, but it's possible with ACRES."





EMANUEL M. POPP NATURE PRESERVE EXPANDS ONCE AGAIN!

by Jason Kissel, executive director

Jeannette (Popp) Kent remembers weekend and week-long retreats to the deep undeveloped countryside in her childhood, traveling to her family's land in northern Allen County—far from Fort Wayne at the time. A small cabin was basecamp for hikes through the towering forest, fishing in the pond, catching fireflies, painting, reading another good book, meals made over the fire, reliving memories with family while making new ones.

Over time, development from Fort Wayne kept creeping nearer and nearer to the family's country retreat. So in 1996, to ensure the 39-acre property (#1 on map) remained undeveloped, Jeannette and her family decided to sell it to ACRES at a bargain price. *The Kents wanted the property to continue providing the same respite for nature and people that they had enjoyed for decades.*

Taking note of the Kent family's decision to preserve their land, the property's neighbors began talking to ACRES about their own properties. In 2008 John and Marcella Ellenwood, who joined ACRES in 1965 and have been faithful members and donors since, donated four acres of their land (#2) hoping their four-acre woodlot would someday be part of a larger forest.

Then in 2015, Dr. Albert & Jeanne Emilian donated to ACRES 12 acres of their land (#3 on map). Their family also had memories of their land being “way out in the country,” and they too enjoyed knowing ACRES could preserve a portion of their land. *The Emilian property joined together the Popp and Ellenwood properties—thus fulfilling the hopes of the Ellenwoods.*

Ever since 1996, when the Popp Nature Preserve was established, ACRES has been in contact with the owner of the forest just south of the preserve. In 2016, the owner decided it was time to sell. Jeannette Kent (104 years young) and her family once again sprang into action to preserve land. The Kent Family Foundation, along with the President Benjamin Harrison

Conservation Trust Fund, provided the funding needed to purchase the 21-acre forest (#4 on map). *With this acquisition, what once was 39 acres of protected land has grown to 76 acres!*

And the story is not yet over. Even though development is closing in quickly on the property, there are still a few opportunities to expand the preserved area even more. Earlier this year John Ellenwood decided to donate his home and associated 3 acres (#5 on map) to ACRES as an investment property (Marcella had passed away in 2015). John gave ACRES the option to sell the property, convert the land to a nature preserve, or otherwise use the property as ACRES sees fit.



Preserving this cluster of properties provides a striking example of what can be accomplished over time by a small group of people who care for land.

The Pops, Kents, Emilians, Ellenwoods, and every ACRES member can be proud of this and the more than 100 other examples of preserved properties that prove what we can accomplish together. *We preserve land forever—one acre, one day at a time.*

The Emanuel M. Popp Nature Preserve is closed to the public and open only to members, only once a year. The annual Popp Open House for members is Sunday, October 22. See page 13 for details— and join us to celebrate your investment in protecting land.

Below: You can see how the now-urban preserve has expanded, piece by piece, with newer parcels connecting the puzzle to protect more forest.

Below, inset: From this view, you can see both the heavy-development pressure surrounding the preserve and the potential to further expand.

Left: Watercolor of Popp cabin by Jeannette (Popp) Kent.

As a member, you can see this incredible place once a year during the annual Popp Open House for members on Sunday, October 22. See page 13 for more.



PROTECTING LAND



Black Swamp Audubon Sanctuary photo by Shane Perfect

Building a Bird Sanctuary Legacy: Black Swamp Audubon Society protects Ohio lands

by Kim Miser, ACRES member, volunteer and Outreach committee member

Back in the 1990s, Black Swamp Audubon Society demonstrated outstanding initiative. Instead of taking birding field trips, the members decided the birds should come to them. What was known as The Sanctuary is now ACRES' newest property.

Black Swamp Audubon Society (BSAS) shares the same heart for stewardship as ACRES. In fact, Jay and Judi Snook, founding members of BSAS, were ACRES members from the get-go. For years, the Snooks drove from their home in northwest Ohio to attend annual dinners and meetings, some at Tom and Jane Dustin's home.

Enjoying the community and purpose ACRES embodied in those early years, the Snooks felt the same actions could strengthen bonds amongst fellow Ohio birders. In 1975, the Snooks joined the newly formed Black Swamp Audubon chapter. *One of the chapter's original goals: establish a nature preserve near home where members can share their love of birding.*

It took the group nearly a decade to fully develop the 73 acres of land they named The Sanctuary. The group purchased a portion of Jay and Judi's farmland in Paulding County, Ohio, with money earned through fundraising efforts. Judi explained: "We sold bird seed. You'd be amazed at how much money we raised with those seed sales!"



photo by Shane Perfect

Farmland was converted to a native grass prairie and a basin was constructed to create a seasonal wetland. "We learned from that one," Judi said. "We diverted river water to fill the basin, but the water drained out of it almost immediately." In the beginning, Jay and Judi collected seed from plants found in prairie remnants. "My husband and I gathered bluestem along railroad tracks, and catchfly inside old pioneer cemeteries," Judi said. The couple once spied a hard-to-find plant in an unlikely setting. "We found Ohio goldenrod in a parking lot. You better believe we gathered those seeds!"

While members' work continued through the 1990s, the bird-viewing payoff was instantaneous. "We had the regular cast of woodland birds, but then we started seeing bitterns, herons, and ducks." Today, The Sanctuary supports diverse wildlife including least weasels, stilts, and Blackburnian warblers. Nesting pairs of yellow breasted chat and green heron also frequent the property.

Over the years, the Black Swamp group received two more properties: a 14-acre woodlot in Williams County, Ohio, and an unusual island property encircled by the Maumee River near downtown Defiance, Ohio. Known to the locals as Preston Island, and to Black Swamp members as "poison-ivy island," it holds historical significance as a popular amusement park in the early 20th century. When a 1913 flood destroyed the park, nature was



allowed to reclaim this sliver of land. The land currently is accessible only by boat.

ACRES acquired all three properties earlier this year. With BSAS membership down to about a dozen members all older than 60, the group began to brainstorm ways to preserve what they had worked so hard to develop.

"When we were younger, we were more ambitious. Now, we've run out of steam," Judi says. Remembering the inspiration she drew from Tom and Jane Dustin and their conservation efforts, Judi knew ACRES was the right organization to continue Black Swamp's legacy.

Now, in partnership with ACRES, The Sanctuary and the Black Swamp's other two Ohio properties will continue to serve as sanctuary for both birds and people.

The Black Swamp lands are closed. Members-only hikes will be held at The Sanctuary in the future.

"We had the regular cast of woodland birds, but then we started seeing bitterns, herons, and ducks."

— Jay and Judi Snook

Center Spread by Shane Perfect at Founders Forest, a closed preserve in the Cedar Creek Corridor. Closed preserves offer added protection to the land and the natural features that members like you help protect. You can explore this unique corridor from many open preserves: Bicentennial Woods, Heinzerling Family Five Points Nature Preserve, James P. Covell Nature Preserve, Robert C. and Rosella C. Johnson Nature Preserve, Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve and Vandolah Nature Preserve. Trek any of these trails on the day after Thanksgiving, then stop by the ACRES Office for a treat and special discounts. See page 13 for "Opt Out" details.



SHARE THE TRAILS HIKES - Free to the public, donations encouraged

Saturday, September 2, 10 am - noon
HUNTINGTON COUNTY | Tel-Hy
1429 N. 300 W, Huntington, IN 46750

Saturday, October 7, 10 am - noon
ALLEN COUNTY | Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve
1802 Chapman Road, Huntertown, IN 46748

Saturday, November 4, 2 - 4:30 pm
STEBEN COUNTY | Ropchan Memorial
6830 N. 750 W, Orland, IN 46776

16TH ANNUAL WING HAVEN CANOE TRIP FOR MEMBERS

Saturday, September 9, 2 - 5 pm

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

Relax as you paddle Seven Sisters Lakes, then enjoy a light meal and social time with other ACRES members. Bring your own canoe or kayak - we'll provide the meal. *RSVP to Heather Barth by September 1 at 260-637-2273, ext 5 or hbarth@acreslandtrust.org*



Photo by Miranda Davies

ANNUAL MEMBER MEETING & PICNIC

Sunday, September 17, 1 - 4 pm

ALLEN COUNTY | Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve, Dustin Barn and ACRES Office
1802 Chapman Road, Huntertown, IN 46748
Parking is at the Dustin Barn, located east of the main drive

ACRES' Annual Meeting is a picnic. Come and go as you please, join a guided hike, chat with your fellow members and relax with simple food and great music. Hear a brief Annual Report in the Dustin Barn at 1:30, repeated at 2:30. All members welcome at no charge. *Buy tickets (\$10/person) for picnic by September 8, call 260-637-2273 or buy online at [acreslandtrust.org/annualpicnic](https://www.acreslandtrust.org/annualpicnic)*

BEHIND THE SCENES: ACRES HOME OFFICE TOUR & TALK

Thursday, September 14, 5:30 pm

ALLEN COUNTY | ACRES Office
1802 Chapman Road, Huntertown, IN 46748

Come tour the ACRES office after hours with the executive director. You'll learn the history of the house, gain a better understanding of the daily operations, peek into all the nooks and crannies, and get answers to any questions you have about how the organization operates. *Hosted by Jason Kissel.*

CONSERVATION TODAY REVIEW

Thursday, September 28, 6 pm

ALLEN COUNTY | ACRES Office
1802 Chapman Road, Huntertown, IN 46748

Jim Barrett III, a founder of ACRES, wrote a paper for a 1964 Quest Club presentation. The paper, "*Conservation Today*," provides a thoughtful and compelling case for land conservation that is very relevant today. Download the paper at [acreslandtrust.org/conservationtoday](https://www.acreslandtrust.org/conservationtoday), read it, then join the discussion! *Hosted by Jason Kissel.*

BLUE JEAN GALA: AN ELEGANT, EVENING FUNDRAISER

Friday, October 6, 6 pm

ALLEN COUNTY | Green Oak Farm

Please join us for this elegant, evening fundraising dinner for the land. Farm-to-table meal by Junk Ditch Brewing Company; music by the RoundUps, one of Indiana's favorite Western swing and rockabilly bands. Tickets are \$75 each for food and entertainment. *Tickets available at [acreslandtrust.org/bluejeangala](https://www.acreslandtrust.org/bluejeangala) or by calling 260-637-2273.*

NEXT INDIANA CAMPFIRE TREK & TALK

Hosted by Indiana Humanities Council

Thursday, October 12, 6 - 9 pm

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

Trek the trails with a humanities scholar, pausing along the way to hear pieces of environmental literature, and learn about this place. Then, gather around a campfire for beers, food and conversation, connecting nature, literature and the future of Indiana. Event for ages 12 and up. Upland Brewing Co. beer available to those 21 and older. Space is limited. *Tickets: \$15 available at [allencountycampfire.eventbrite.com](https://www.allencountycampfire.eventbrite.com)*



POPP OPEN HOUSE FOR MEMBERS

Sunday, October 22, 1 - 4 pm

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

Caretaker cottage tours, campfire hotdogs, refreshments, and hiking in this old-growth forest open only once a year, only for ACRES members. Presented by Larry Biggerstaff, Popp caretaker. *No RSVP required. See pages 6 - 7 for news on expanding this place.*



CLOSE ENCOUNTERS: WATERFOWL FOR MEMBERS

Saturday, November 11, 6 am

LAGRANGE COUNTY | Quog Lake

RSVP for address and to inquire about a caravan

Visit a closed property and see wildlife up close! Evan Hill, land management specialist, will call in Quog Lake's diverse waterfowl. Ducks are early risers, so this outing starts before sunrise. Be on time and wear earth tones or camouflage to prevent scaring off the wildlife. Bring your camera and sense of adventure! Space is limited. *RSVP to outreach@acreslandtrust.org.*

OPT OUTSIDE: EXPLORE THE CEDAR CREEK CORRIDOR PRESERVES

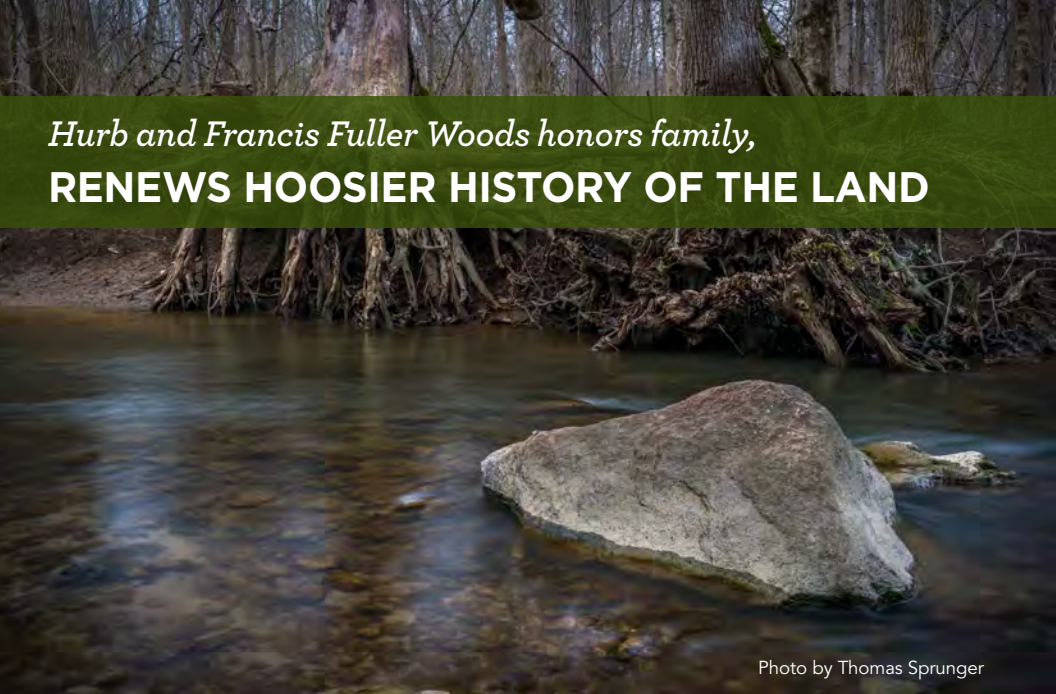
Friday, November 24

After your hike(s), check in at the ACRES office from 10 am - 2 pm

DEKALB COUNTY: James P. Covell Nature Preserve,
Heinzerling Family Five Points Nature Preserve

ALLEN COUNTY: Bicentennial Woods, Tom and Jane Dustin,
Robert C. and Rosella C. Johnson Nature Preserves, Vandolah Nature Preserve

Snap a selfie at a Cedar Creek preserve sign, then stop in the ACRES Office on the Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve to look around, say hello and grab a snack. Show us your preserve photo and save 50% on ACRES gear and membership.



Hurb and Francis Fuller Woods honors family, **RENEWS HOOSIER HISTORY OF THE LAND**

Photo by Thomas Sprunger

by Lettie Haver, *outreach manager*

Kristie Fuller's recently donated 56-acre Wells County farm and forest, named for her father, Francis Fuller, and her grandfather, Hurb Fuller, tells her family's story on the land. Fuller's tale is a firsthand account of a larger narrative of Hoosier land use history in the 200 years since European settlement.

By 1910 when her grandfather purchased the property, much of the land beyond and including it had been clearcut—almost completely logged—and sent to Grand Rapids to make Victorian oak and walnut furniture. All that remained were saplings, “half as big as your wrist,” says Fuller.

At the time, Indiana led the hardwood industry nationally. The land showed it. When European settlers, pioneers, arrived only a century before, Indiana was 85.4% forested. By 1900, less than 10% of this forest remained—cleared for resources: farmland, communities and income.

“My grandfather, whose parents lived near here, remembered as a boy, trees so big on this land that three to four men together couldn't put their arms around them.”

In her own lifetime, Kristie Fuller's seen loss on the land: “The area's lost a lotta little things—yellow violets, ginseng, mushrooms. As a child in about 1960, I could wade into patches of yellow and white trillium. Now they're gone. Wild pink roses were so common in fence rows.”



Photo by Thomas Sprunger

“Every year things just disappear, are cleared out. Wild geraniums. Disappearing because they like wet soil and it gets drained.”

The last three generations of Fullers have farmed, each generation also planting their share of trees, some reaching 2 ½ feet in diameter in the last 80–90 years. Under protection by ACRES members like you, these “new” trees will continue to grow, living out their natural lives in place.

Fuller's grandfather farmed his land with a horse-drawn plow led by wild broncos he tamed, naming them Bing and Bang.

He knew and respected naturalist Gene Stratton Porter, famed champion of wetlands and his Adams County neighbor. Before purchasing his Wells County land, Fuller's grandfather had owned land and an oil well near Loblolly Marsh (before it was drained).

When walking to pump his oil well, he'd wave or stop to chat with “The Bird Lady,” as Stratton Porter was known. Kristie Fuller reminisced: “Of course, when I came along, my grandfather bought me all her books—you know, Freckles, A Girl of the Limberlost—and told me, ‘You're gonna like her.’”

Fuller explained: “I don't have children. I'm the last one on my line. I think my family would have thought this was a good thing to do, to keep the place taken care of in perpetuity, with their names on it.”

Her thoughts for ACRES members about protecting land? “You need to protect corridors along creeks for wildlife. To connect patches of land. I remember when some community members platted out suggested strips for protection along the river here. You need more people, more donors to help you do that.”



Koch Forest protects 25 acres near cluster of ACRES preserves

ACRES Land Trust received 25 acres of forest and forested wetland as a bequest from Dianne Koch. Koch's land, near our Ball Lake Nature Preserve, Robb Hidden Canyon, and Lee Family Perfect Lake Nature Preserve, was under significant development pressure. In her will, Koch expressed her wish that the land “shall remain in its natural ecological state in perpetuity.” As an ACRES member, you make it possible to guarantee that it will.

Would you like to provide a lasting community legacy by making a planned or deferred gift to ACRES?

Please contact Heather Barth, director of fund development: hbarth@acreslandtrust.org, 260-637-2273, ext. 5. Thank you!

Photo by Shane Perfect

ACRES Land Trust 15



For love of land and family: **Velma Caprarotta protects Caprarotta Family Natural Area**

by Heather Barth, director of fund development
Preserve photos by Shane Perfect

Velma Caprarotta has a long history with and a deep-seated love of the Elkhart County land she recently donated to ACRES Land Trust. Born in 1924, she grew up in the farmhouse just across the road from her recently protected property. Her late husband, Francis, and his family emigrated from Italy to Chicago in 1925 and purchased the land across the road, now known as Caprarotta Family Natural Area, as a weekend retreat from the city.

Velma shares that as a child, she didn't pay too much attention to Frank. She was much more interested in the birds and other wildlife in the area. *One of her fondest memories is looking out her bedroom window at the land across the road, listening to the birds sing, hearing the water drip in the well just below.*

After WWII, she and Frank married and raised a family of five sons while living in Velma's childhood home. In 1959, as a way to keep the family name on the land across the road, they purchased it from her in-laws. They have owned it ever since.

Velma has since moved out of the area, but as time goes on, she's realized how important it is to her that the land be protected permanently. She and her son, Gary, decided to donate the property to a conservation organization that would not only hold the deed but also preserve the land in perpetuity for its own sake. Looking high and low for a group that could help accomplish these goals, they "found ACRES to be the right people."

Velma tells us, *"I like what you do and that it's forever."*

The family will always see the old farm as home, and although it's bittersweet to see the name change on the deed, they know that ACRES and its members protecting the land is the best thing that could happen to it. *"I love the land and wanted to keep the Caprarotta family name on it, and I feel great about protecting it with ACRES members."*

So do we, Velma. So do we.



**Want to help turn your \$40 into \$4 million
in ACRES' protected land?
*Invest in the Hoosier state's blue Environmental License Plate***

Purchasing a license plate for your new vehicle? Or renewing your plates? How can your \$40 Environmental License Plate help ACRES? You may be surprised to learn that since 1992, the Indiana Heritage Trust has awarded ACRES Land Trust \$3,859,650 to protect land—funded entirely by sales of Indiana's blue Environmental License Plate. *How's that for a return on your annual investment? It's the "blue plate special" of conservation.*



About Indiana's blue Environmental License Plate*

Statewide, sales of the Environmental Plate have saved more than 62,000 acres of Indiana's natural heritage.

What's in a name?

FROM THE INDIANA HERITAGE TRUST to THE PRESIDENT BENJAMIN HARRISON CONSERVATION TRUST.

Launched in 1992 as Indiana's first specialty license plate, the Environmental Plate originally generated funding for the Indiana Heritage Trust. In 2016, the General Assembly re-named the Indiana Heritage Trust to honor President Benjamin Harrison's efforts in conservation.

Elected 23rd president in 1888, serving from 1889-1893, President Benjamin Harrison remains the only United States president elected from the State of Indiana. As president, Harrison set aside more than 13 million acres of land for National Forest Reserves and opened to all people our second, third, and fourth national parks: Sequoia, General Grant, and Yosemite.

HOW MUCH DOES THE PLATE COST, AND WHERE DO THE FEES GO?

The Environmental Plate costs \$40, which includes a \$15 Bureau of Motor Vehicles processing fee. The remaining \$25 goes directly toward protection of Indiana's land, waters and wildlife.

Over time, your blue plate fees add up, providing significant support in protecting land. By publicly declaring your support with the plate, you're also encouraging other people to do the same and raising awareness of the value of natural places. Thank you for considering all the ways you can help protect land here at home in the Hoosier state.

*adapted from Indiana's Division of Natural Resources' Environmental License Plate web page

NEW VOLUNTEER PROJECT: You can help fight Autumn Olive on the Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve

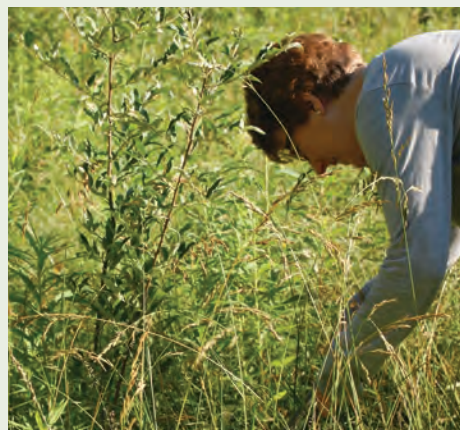
Are you looking for a rewarding service project on the land? Want to play your part in a long-term effort with visible, sustained results for future generations? Want to do it on your own time? How do you feel about poison ivy, mosquitoes, bees and thorns?

If you're still reading, this new ACRES project may be for you. Can you help completely remove Autumn Olive from the Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve? Beating this plant will make room for native plants, reforesting this place. With a little training, you can set your own hours.

WHAT IS AUTUMN OLIVE? A non-native, invasive deciduous shrub that grows as tall as 20 feet. Once planted to control erosion and provide wildlife habitat, it out-competes and displaces native plants that need lots of sun.

WHAT'S THE EASIEST WAY TO IDENTIFY AUTUMN OLIVE?

Look for the bright silver underneath side of the leaf. This plant has taken over parts of the preserve! Can you help? Contact Tina Puitz, office and volunteer manager, at 260-637-2273, ext 4 to set up a short training session. Thank you!



Tina Puitz, office and volunteer manager, attacks Autumn Olive as part of ACRES' Summer Solstice Staff Day. You can help. Learn more about fighting this non-native invasive plant at acreslandtrust.org/autumnolive

FALL HIKES & EVENTS *continued from page 13*

SHARE THE TRAILS VOLUNTEER OUTING Saturday, October 21, 10 - noon

ALLEN COUNTY | Orion Woods, a closed Cedar Creek Corridor preserve

Share the trails with your fellow volunteer hike leaders on a beautiful closed preserve on Cedar Creek. Ask questions about guiding hikes, share your experiences and enjoy this special place together. Snacks provided. Meet at the ACRES Office on the Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve, 1802 Chapman Road, Huntertown, IN 46748. *RSVP to Kelly Shepherd: outreach@acreslandtrust.org*



SPECIAL thanks

Autumn Olive project volunteers
Preserve stewards, caretakers and trails monitors

Quarterly distributors and stuffers

Glen and Chris Bickel
two 2-wheeled wheelbarrows

Brett Bloom
hosting Deep Listening events

Craig and Nancy Bobay, John and Barb Clark,
and David and Faith Van Gilder
hosting Wine Tasting

Dave Brumm
office maintenance and supplies

Bully Tools
bulb planters and dibble bars

Nancy Chiavetta
SDHC card

Laura Colpitts, Joe and Nancy Conrad, Carol Gaham, Pam George, Charles Enea, Chuck Lake, Pam Morton, Kirk Swaidner, Russ Voorhees
leading public and private Share the Trails hikes

Katia Cook and Carol Spallone
helping at Peddle, Paddle and Play booth

Joe and Nancy Conrad
hosting Summer Barn Concert

Bonnie Fortune, Libby Gamez, Georgeann Johnson-Coffey, Greta Sirois, Carol Spallone,
leading our May Play Day

Julie Henricks, Ed and Cynthia Powers,
and Deb Kaiser
helping with Bird Blitz after party

Deb Kaiser
Bushnell binoculars

Jeri Kornegay and Lyn Winchell
event and office supplies

Ashley Motia
Volunteer Fair at Turnstone

Kim Miser and Dan Stockman
writing ACRES stories

More Farm Store
labor and rental for work at Wayne Township Prairie

Brad and Jill Noyes
ground coffee

Papa's Place
discount on pizza for Bird Blitz gathering

Pembroke Bakery & Café
snacks for member-hosted gathering

Riverview Native Nursery
Bird Blitz door prize

Carol Roberts
editing and revising the *Quarterly*

Wild Birds Unlimited
Bird Blitz door prize

John Stanley
preserve work and photography

Trees Indiana
300 native hardwood trees

wish list

3 Big Boot "Scrusher" Boot Cleaners
Forever stamps

Big thanks to ACRES interns



Many thanks to our summer interns for their work installing a new floating dock at Wing Haven, removing rotting outhouses from Tel-Hy, fighting non-native invasive species, marking boundaries and more. Thanks, too, to the Olive B. Cole Foundation for supporting our internship program. Photos left by Shane Perfect; right by John Stanley

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

ACRES Quarterly: Carol Roberts, Editor; Published by ACRES, Inc., at 1802 Chapman Rd., 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.

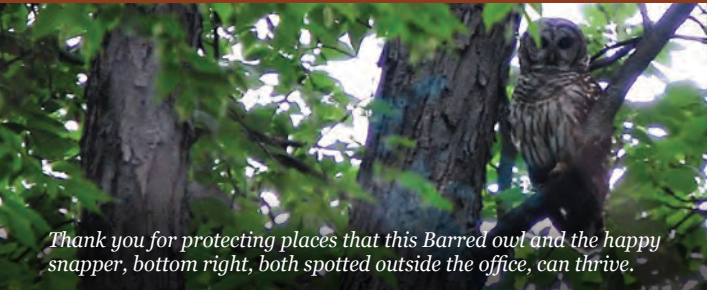
MEMBERSHIP: Life Member, \$1,500; Sustaining, \$500; Corporate, \$500; Club/Organization, \$50; Family, \$40; Individual, \$25; Senior or Student, \$15. Dues payable annually.



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the **BACK**page: **ACRES is active**



Thank you for protecting places that this Barred owl and the happy snapper, bottom right, both spotted outside the office, can thrive.



Forest Bathing ACRES members take the invitation to play, engage their senses and reflect.



ACRES interns planted little blue stem plugs, restoring our native prairie in Warsaw.



Manchester High School students Bird Blitzed Wildwood. More: [acreslandtrust.org/bbtally](https://www.acreslandtrust.org/bbtally)

