

# THE ACRES QUARTERLY

Fall 2019 | Vol. 58 - No. 3



**ACRES**  
LANDTRUST

*ACRES Expands Protection of Quog Lake*

*Missing Plant Life Confounds at Eby Bog*

*Building for Growth*

*Fighting for the Forest*

*Imagine: Peace Farm*

## From the Executive Director

Dear Members,

As many of you know, trees are my primary draw to nature. But I'm also fascinated by many other aspects of nature, including bogs, some of which are highlighted in this issue. While my interest in trees continues to lead me to learn all I can about them, my interest in bogs takes me in a different direction: I like not knowing a lot about bogs. I like that bogs are still more mystery to me than facts.

I like wondering...how deep is the floating mat? How long has it been forming? Is the bottommost layer hundreds of years old—or thousands? I like not knowing exactly what causes some bogs to be more acidic than others. I like not knowing if I'll make it out of a bog unscathed. (Bogs tend to offer hazards [to humans] such as poison sumac, rattlesnakes and floating mats' thin spots you can fall through.)

While I like what I do know about bogs, I don't want too much information to interfere with my enjoyment of them. I often hear people say, "I wish I knew more about the plants and other things in the preserves." Loving their preserve visits, they feel that if they knew more, they'd love their visits even more. Perhaps...but perhaps not. I've learned to appreciate my ignorance of certain natural systems and things.

For me, some natural things are better enjoyed when not I'm not constrained by either names or in-depth understanding. I like that nature provides countless things that confuse me. When I know very little about a natural thing, I can directly appreciate what I observe: color, shape, what it's doing, where it is, etc. However, because such observations add to my knowledge, I never can stay completely ignorant. This helps explain what's so special when you or I see something new to us—it's the only time we'll ever experience it in that way.

So enjoy the discovery, enjoy your ignorance. It won't last! It's an ephemeral gift. Once you observe, you learn. Don't let lack of knowledge keep you out of the preserves. Ignorance can be bliss. I think it's a great asset to bring along.

Sincerely,



Jason Kissel

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

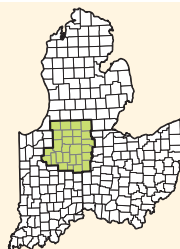
*P.S. Nature is complex and diverse, so the more you study and learn, there's always more mystery. Ignorance of nature. Knowledge of nature. Both can leave you delighted, perplexed and enthralled.*

Cover photo: *Trametes versicolor*, or turkey tail mushrooms, make for fabulous finds on a fall walk in the woods on the Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve in the Cedar Creek Corridor. Turkey tails aren't rare, threatened or endangered: they're wonderful.



ACRES Land Trust preserves, protects and manages 115 properties totaling 7,117 acres.

You can explore more than 50 trail systems to appreciate the value of preservation, dawn to dusk, thanks to your member support.



1802 Chapman Road  
PO Box 665  
Huntersville, IN 46748-0665  
260.637.ACRE (2273)  
email: acres@acreslandtrust.org  
[acreslandtrust.org](http://acreslandtrust.org)



## WELCOME 40newmembers!

Sherry Armentrout  
Dustyn and Kelly Arney  
Stephanie Bailey  
Beth Beer  
Nancy Bonardi  
Ruby Bultemeyer  
Cory Carico  
Kim and Jim Clarke  
Celia and Justin Elder  
Roberta Ellingwood  
Phil and Carolyn Ginder  
Timothy and Kathryn Goodman  
Kathy Goodwin  
Linda Gry  
Jessica Gumbert  
Charles R. Harvuot  
Patrick and Valerie Hunter  
Jeremy Kelker  
John Knott  
Lisa Koshnick

Bruce and Kathie Lash  
Melinda Lauer  
Jennifer Mains  
Belva and Sidney Meyer  
Bahram Moasser and Marcie Benjamin  
Robert Mullins and Lana Sanchez  
Marie Murdock  
Lisa Newell  
Paul Oberley  
Kent Park  
Patricia and Tony Rahrig  
Kathleen Ranly  
Matt Ruprecht  
Richard and Sarah Solano  
April and Kevin Steury  
Marvin and Quoda Troyer  
John Velasquez  
Dick Widdicombe  
Jim Winger  
Holly Wright  
from Phil and Marcia Wright

### memorials

Jane Papsdorf  
from Christy and Jason Conrad, Dennis and Marilyn Doerr, Fred C. and Mary Anna Fétler, Suite Strings; Kathy Aldrich, Barbara Barnes, Barbra Frymier, Cheryl Glough, Donna Knight, Noreen Ward, Anne Wright; Frances Elliott Clark Music Club, Matt Giachetto, Procter & Gamble; M. Diane Murphy, Terry and Diann Murphy, Ricky and Sharon Recker and Rita Jean Smith.

Thomas Swank (on behalf of Stacy Lambright) Hunter Douglas  
Eugene and Margaret Winicker Christina Essig  
Thomas Essig  
from Christina Essig

### tributes

Heidi, Heather and Hilary Davis  
in honor of Duane and Dana Davis  
Jon Broderick  
Life membership in honor of Ray, Dorothy, Terry and Joan Garman

Dennis and Rhonda White  
in honor of Jean Ross

## ACQUISITION UPDATE

### ACRES expands protection of Quog Lake acquiring 12 acres and two historic schoolhouses

Photo by Rob Stone

Earlier this year, ACRES' LaGrange County Quog Lake Preserve grew by 12 acres, two historic buildings and an agreement with a congregation that has met on the site since the mid-1800s.

One of the newly-acquired buildings, a one-room wood-frame schoolhouse built in 1843, was simultaneously home to a local congregation since nearly that time. When a new red brick school was built in 1899, the United Methodist Church purchased the original wood-frame schoolhouse for \$30 and moved it down the hill.



Today, ACRES owns both historic schoolhouses, leasing them to the church in exchange for maintenance and utilities.

Current secretary Harvena Richards grew up in the church. She shares that before meeting in the schoolhouse, local Methodists met in homes, aided by circuit-riding preachers. At its height, a total of 30 to 40 congregation members filled the benches. "[Today] on a good Sunday, a

dozen or so attend services," says Richards. "This is up from where it was. Kids grow up and move away or go to different churches. But some come back to their roots."

ACRES Quog Lake 12-acre addition also features seven acres of forested wetland and about four acres of high, dry land offering useful, time-saving access to the southwest corner of the bog. Prior to this land addition, access was limited to sloggling through the bog.

ACRES' primary interest is not convenience but adding protection to this bog and conservation area. Jason Kissel, executive director, explains: "Quog Lake is part of a core conservation area. This land is a priority for ACRES,



both as a buffer to the quaking bog, and because it provides additional land within the conservation area."

The newly expanded 138-acre Quog Lake preserve is one of eight properties spanning an additional 681 acres in the immediate area collectively owned and managed by ACRES Land Trust, Indiana Department of Natural Resources and LaGrange County. The property is just west of Oliver Lake, south of the town of LaGrange. Quog Lake's protection contributes to a total of 819 acres of protected scenic and natural area in close proximity.

The name "Quog" combines quaking and bog. Quog Lake is one of only a few such bogs remaining in Indiana. A quaking bog is formed by a thin, floating mat of sphagnum moss along the shore of the lake. Quog Lake is surrounded by poison sumac and home to the Massasauga rattlesnake, a species endangered at the state level and threatened at the federal level.

Beyond the bog, the preserve protects a forested swamp, cattail marsh and small patches of open water. Dense vegetation encourages a secluded wildlife habitat; state-endangered Marsh Wrens are among its wild residents.

*This land is being conserved, in part, by funding made available as mitigation for habitat loss or forest fragmentation caused by the construction and maintenance of the NIPSCO Reynolds Topeka Electric System Improvement Project. The Conservation Fund and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service have partnered to manage these voluntary mitigation funds and provide grants to implement local conservation measures in Indiana to protect and restore critical habitat for migratory birds under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.*



© The Conservation Fund, Ivan LaBianca



Pitcher Plant by Joanna Stebing



© The Conservation Fund, Ivan LaBianca

## ACQUISITION UPDATE

### As Eby Bog protection expands Missing plant life confounds

Photo by Joanna Stebing

Earlier this year, ACRES acquired a 23-acre addition to Eby Bog in Elkhart County, north of Bristol and just south of the Michigan border. This acquisition adds to the 10 acres given to ACRES by The Nature Conservancy (a gift to TNC from the Harry Eby family), bringing a total of 33 acres—about 95 percent of the bog—under ACRES' permanent protection.

While we value the intrinsic and distinct worth of every place we protect, ACRES does love protecting bogs! That these systems are intact when we acquire them means that bogs are some of the most undisturbed and fascinating places we protect, places still actively (though painstakingly slowly) forming after thousands of years in progress.

#### What's a bog?

A bog is typically an acidic wetland type formed as a nutrient-poor lake approaches the end of its life cycle. The lake slowly fills in with accumulating plant materials such as sphagnum moss. The moss and other decomposing organic matter gradually create rich peat, a process taking place over millennia.

"Under ACRES' ownership, Eby Bog is saved from the potential harm of future land owners scooping it out, reversing this long, slow, natural process of lake succession," says Jason Kissel, executive director.

#### Notable—and notably unaccounted for—plant life in Eby Bog

Eby Bog is surrounded by a natural moat. Scott Namestnik, consulting botanist for the bog's series of botanical inventories, confirms that it is home to at least one state-endangered plant: wild calla, as well as the state-watch-listed mountain holly.

Highbush blueberry, leatherleaf, and mountain holly dominate the bog's acidic interior. Its outer edges are home to a variety of plants such as bladderwort. On its sandier upland soil, lupine blooms.

For reasons yet unknown, Eby Bog does not seem to be home to a few common bog-loving plants: cranberry, pitcher plants and sundew are nowhere to be found, even though they were emerging on nearby Elkhart Bog at the time of our first species inventory. "But we've conducted only two of three visits," says Casey Jones, director of land management for ACRES. "We'll keep looking!"

#### ACRES' work at Eby Bog has just begun

Over the next several years, the ACRES land management crew will spend time eradicating buckthorn, cattails and phragmites. Although manageable now, if not removed, these invasive plants could easily spread, taking over the property.

ACRES took a leap of faith to save Eby Bog, purchasing this place at auction with reserve funds established by anonymous donors for the purpose of quickly acquiring such at-risk lands.

ACRES also used such reserve funds in December 2018 to purchase at auction a 25-acre addition to the Elkhart Bog, on behalf of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources, a state agency with a lengthy purchasing approval process. We anticipate a DNR reimbursement within the year.

"We're confident people will see the value in permanently protecting Eby Bog," says Kissel. "It's essential that we replenish the reserve fund to save the next at-risk places."

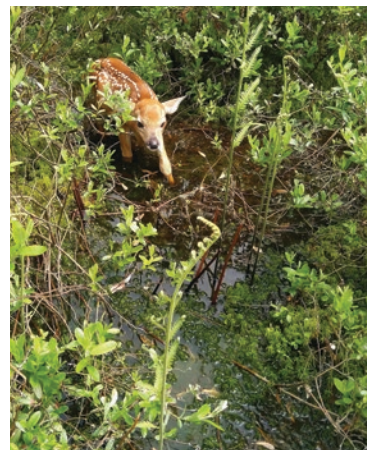
*ACRES needs \$93,500 to replenish the fund for this project. Will you help? Mail your gift to ACRES, attn: Heather Barth or call Heather at 260-637-2273, ext. 5 to talk about how you'd like to support Eby Bog.*



Bladderwort



Lupine



#### ACRES BOGS

In addition to Eby Bog, ACRES protects three bog systems:

- In western Kosciusko County, Glennwood Nature Preserve's bog is visible from the trail.
- In northwest Allen County, the bog in Spring Lake Woods and Bog is not accessible by the trail system for the bog's protection.
- In LaGrange County, Quog Lake is closed.

## BIG NEWS IN PROTECTING LAND

### Building for growth: ACRES invests in first-ever new infrastructure

Photo by Thomas Sprunger

For the first time in our 60-year history, ACRES will invest in office improvements and a new utility barn to back up our promise of forever protecting our growing acreage.

When Tom and Jane Dustin left their home and land to ACRES in 2005, three acres were given restriction-free, intentionally unprotected for their personal and future ACRES use. Thanks again to the Dustins' vision, your support and our shared phenomenal progress, and after careful review, ACRES is ready to take action toward adding a barn and updating the former Dustin home.

As we've grown in the last few years, we've been encountering challenges with utilities (such as internet outages) and swiftly filling in space in the former Dustin home. ACRES debated moving its office to Fort Wayne. After a two-year deliberation, we chose to stay in Huntertown.

Here, perched 80 feet over Cedar Creek in a nature preserve in the midst of a thousand-acre conservation corridor, ACRES can truly welcome people to our work. Here, ACRES demonstrates its purpose, success and rich personal history while offering each visitor incredible topography and an immersive, breathtaking natural experience.

In 2006, ACRES' four staff members moved from an office on the former YWCA campus on Wells Street in Fort Wayne to begin

working from the Dustins' unique rustic-modern home. As we have rapidly grown, ACRES has added four new staff members to care for our increasing acreage, supporters and business needs in 27 counties.

ACRES also has welcomed increasing numbers of members, volunteers, donors, preserve visitors, vendors and partners. Because of your support, we continue making headlines, thereby engaging more people than ever. The former Dustin living room is used for meetings and projects; there is no room to share our story with groups larger than 25.

Although ACRES has installed a ramp to increase accessibility, we need to do more, including making our restrooms and exterior entryway accessible.



In short, ACRES has outgrown the residential layout of this home to meet all our needs. We need to take action to best carry out our mission. ACRES member George Morrison, a retired and locally renowned architect, created an initial draft plan honoring the home's original footprint and architecture, with as few modifications as possible:

- Create new office space in the Dustin family's former dining area
- Make restrooms and entryway accessible
- Remove an interior wall so guests are greeted by a smiling staff member
- Divert water flow around home
- Widen and strengthen access lane, allowing cars to pass and preventing erosion
- Improve existing/add accessible parking spaces

ACRES also will build a modern barn to provide much-needed headquarters for the land management crew and their tools and projects, allowing them to more effectively restore, enhance and manage land.

Managing 7,000 acres on 100 properties requires room for a variety of purposes,

*Fundraising for the project will begin with the sale of one of ACRES' investment properties donated by an individual whose intent was that ACRES sell it to raise capital.*

including space to plan, track, and tackle projects. Today, land management operates out of multiple locations, requiring time and effort to coordinate moving heavy equipment, tools and projects across counties. Logistic delays can often translate into land management being unable to care for property needs when the weather allows.

Our intention is that the new barn will protect our investment in heavy equipment, vehicles and tools. Half of its structure will work double duty, as needed, for event and meeting space. In this part of the barn, with restroom access and typical accommodations, we'll be able to offer indoor volunteer and land management training, host presentations to active senior, church and other groups, and more.

In keeping with our values and mission, ACRES will work with a landscape architect to respect the character of this natural place in site location, and to limit development to the three acres designated by the Dustins. At this time, we're seeking bids and requesting permits; if this work is approved, we will update you as construction moves forward in this new era for ACRES.

Center spread by Thomas Sprunger. This iconic view of Willow Creek, a tributary of Cedar Creek flowing through Bicentennial Woods, highlights the Corridor's natural appeal. Here, ACRES' most popular preserve trails connect visitors to the land that members like you protect. Visit [cedarcreek.acreslandtrust.org](http://cedarcreek.acreslandtrust.org) to learn more about the Corridor.



## **JAVA JAUNT EASTLAKE** (Formerly called Wayne Township Property)

**Thursday, September 12, 9–11 am**

WARSAW COUNTY | Eastlake

3010 Frontage Rd, Warsaw, IN 46580

Join ACRES Land Management Director Casey Jones for a one-hour hike through Eastlake, followed by a “treat yourself” stop at Light Rail Cafe. Hike will begin at Hansen Skating Center where parking is available.

## **VOLUNTEER APPRECIATION BRUNCH**

**Saturday, September 28, 11 am–1 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)

Volunteers, let ACRES staff serve you! In gratitude for your service, share brunch, get to know other volunteers and learn how your combined contributions make ACRES run. Your time and talent protect land. We want to thank you! *RSVP to Natasha Manor by Wednesday, September 18th by emailing [nmanor@acreslandtrust.org](mailto:nmanor@acreslandtrust.org) or calling 260-637-2273 ext. 4.*

## **LEAF DAMAGE**

**Sunday, September 29, 2 pm**

WABASH COUNTY | Mary Thornton Nature Preserve

1541 E. 300 N., Wabash, IN 46992

Hanging on a tree since spring, each leaf has faced countless attacks from weather, insects, disease and animals. We'll wander the woods focusing on leaf damage, guessing the culprit and searching for the elusive undamaged leaf. *Presented by the Kissel family.*

## **SHARE THE TRAILS HIKE AND TRAILBLAZERS**

**Saturday, October 5, 10 am**

ALLEN COUNTY | Blue Cast Springs

21412 Bluecast Road, Woodburn, IN 4679

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

## **GOVERNANCE GATHERING**

**Thursday, October 10, 6 pm**

ALLEN COUNTY | ACRES Office

1802 Chapman Road, Huntertown, IN 46748

David Van Gilder, ACRES Governance Committee Chair, and Jason Kissel will explain the proposed governance changes introduced on page 18, listen to feedback and answer questions. Proposed governance changes can be reviewed at

[acreslandtrust.org/governance](https://www.acreslandtrust.org/governance).

## **ACRES ANNUAL MEMBER PICNIC**

**Sunday, October 20, 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 and cornhole. Food by Feders Meats and beer by Upland Brewing. Meal and meeting at 1 pm, activities to follow.

Tickets for the meal are \$10/person, children 10 and under free. To purchase tickets, call 260-637-2273 or buy online: [acreslandtrust.org/annualpicnic](https://www.acreslandtrust.org/annualpicnic). *RSVP by Wednesday, October 9.*

*As a responsibility of membership, you can vote to approve or reject Board of Director nominees: Our 2019 returning nominee is Joe Conrad. New nominees are John Caffray, Mark Maffey and Julie Wall. View nominee biographies at the picnic or online: [acreslandtrust.org/vote](https://www.acreslandtrust.org/vote)*



## **MEMBERS ONLY CAMPING AT ASHERWOOD**

**Friday Evening, October 25 – Sunday Morning, October 27**

WABASH COUNTY | Asherwood

7496 W. SR 124, Wabash, IN 46992

Enjoy this rare opportunity to tent camp in an ACRES preserve!

Registration required and a \$20 fee per campsite (two tents). Registration will close after 10 campsites have been reserved, so sign up early at [acreslandtrust.org/camp](https://www.acreslandtrust.org/camp).

**What's provided?** Campsite, water, a shared fire, unlimited hot dogs and buns, pancake & sausage breakfasts both days. Restrooms, electricity and shelter, if needed, available in the Asherwood Environmental Center. No showers.

## **POPP OPEN HOUSE FOR MEMBERS**

**Saturday, October 26, 1–4 pm**

ALLEN COUNTY | Emanuel M. Popp Nature Preserve

12129 Tonkel Road, Fort Wayne, IN 46845

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



## **AUTUMN OLIVE WORKDAY**

**Saturday, November 2, 10:30 am–12 pm**

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.

## **NATIONAL TAKE-A-HIKE-DAY: PLAY DAY**

**Sunday, November 17, 1–4 pm**

STEUBEN COUNTY | Wing Haven

180 W. 400 N, Angola, IN 46703

Calling kids of all ages! Working with local artist Jerrod Tobias, make a nature-themed creation; assemble a make-your-own trail mix, and explore this beautiful preserve on a guided hike at 3 pm. Enclosed outhouse-style restroom available.

## **NATIONAL TAKE-A-HIKE-DAY: SWIFT GRAND TOUR**

**Sunday, November 17, 12–5 pm**

HUNTINGTON & WABASH COUNTIES — RSVP for starting location

ACRES volunteers Janelle and Larry will keep the hiking pace swift! Fuel up your vehicle and join in this fast-walking six-mile grand tour with built-in breaks as you are caravanning from preserve to preserve. Restrooms available at Asherwood.

Concludes with sunset views of the Seven Pillars of the Mississinewa Landmark. Other preserve visits: Kokiwanee, Hathaway Preserve at Ross Run, Asherwood and Pehkokia Woods.

*Space is limited. For starting location, RSVP to [outreach@acreslandtrust.org](mailto:outreach@acreslandtrust.org) by November 13.*

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

Watch for more events online: [acreslandtrust.org](https://www.acreslandtrust.org).

### FIGHTING FOR THE FOREST:

## Volunteers battle autumn olive on the Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve

*Snider High School students help fight autumn olive*

Did you know that autumn olive was once planted by many conservationists, including Tom and Jane, to provide wildlife habitat? Today, this invasive shrub is a prime target for removal on ACRES preserves and on managed land across the U.S.

Why? Because its beautiful brush (with sweet-smelling spring blooms, signature silver-backed leaves and red berries) reaches heights of 20 feet, densely crowding out other plant life and taking over. And as a non-native, autumn olive benefits from a longer growing season, still thriving in late fall, giving it an advantage over native plants.

For a time, ACRES' land management philosophy was far more hands-off in relation to plants like autumn olive: "Let nature take care of it," was the motto, based on direct observation of formerly fallow fields reforesting naturally without help. Over time, land managers observed otherwise as non-native plants increasingly came on the scene. Now we know that if we don't fight for the native trees that we plant, we'll lose them to these faster-growing non-native invasives.

Roughly 10 years ago, ACRES planted native saplings on the Tom and Jane Dustin Nature Preserve. Since then, each growing season we have battled to save these trees.



*Girl Scouts lend a hand*

To welcome you to the cause, ACRES launched the Autumn Olive Project on the Dustin Preserve in 2017. We're seeing positive results.

### TAKING IT DOWN — AND KEEPING IT DOWN

As part of our seasonal outing, ACRES staff launched the project on the 2017 summer solstice. Using chainsaws, hacksaws and loppers, we tackled the thorny brush, clearing this tenacious plant from the southeastern quadrant of the reforested meadow. Knee-deep in poison ivy patches, accompanied by angry bees, hungry mosquitoes, high humidity and hot summer sun, we held some ground for the native trees.

Following our efforts, volunteers soon picked up the loppers and the pace: the project has moved four times to different locations on the preserve.

Charles Enea, now preserve steward, describes tackling two "walls" of the brush, roughly 20 feet high, 12 feet deep, 50 feet wide and 75 feet long. Working two-hour shifts in the heat of July, Enea returned over many weeks until he achieved victory.

**"Before it was pointed out, autumn olive was not something I was paying attention to," says Enea.**

Today, after 2 years, six private and public workdays and many hours of labor by some extremely motivated drop-in volunteers, we can report that we're winning the battle in many places on the preserve. But victory is temporary and incomplete as autumn olive is still thick in many other places on the preserve.

**Autumn olive thrives in our region and is spread by wildlife. We must be vigilant. It will keep coming back.**

### *Are you looking for a rewarding and challenging service project on the land?*

Removing autumn olive is both tough and satisfying work. If you're up for defending the forest with your own hands, join us for a workday. November tends to be more welcoming than summer with its blazing heat (but we make no promises of ease!). See workday details on page 13.

## Imagine: Peace Farm, Jann Prince's story

by Carol Roberts, board member, *Quarterly* editor; Photos by Thomas Sprunger

**“Places are...defined less by unique locations, landscapes, and communities than by the focusing of experiences and intentions onto a particular setting.”**

— E. C. Relp, “Place and Placelessness,” *The Natural Heritage of Indiana*

Jann Prince has focused her challenging life experiences, intentions, efforts and strong will on a particular place: Peace Farm in Wells County.

A lush green forest divides a patchwork of hay fields, wildflower meadows, pasture for her horses and “a seasonal creek that’s deep in spring rush water.” On a nearby pond, in this valley south of a continental divide, she watches blue-spotted salamanders, leopard frogs and a beaver. “The raccoons, coyotes, deer, Red-tail Hawks, Great Horned Owls, Barred Owls, Screech Owls, Eastern Bluebirds, Indigo Buntings and woodpeckers bring me real joy!”

Jann’s inspiration to protect land in Indiana came from a life-changing trip to California where she “stumbled upon” Muir Woods:

**“Entering Muir Woods was an eye-opening, unearthly and spiritual experience that brought me to my knees. And when I read that one person could do something, and have so much influence, I could see what a new way forward might look like for me.”**

(Muir Woods’ primeval redwood forest was protected as our first National Monument because of a land donation from one congressman who then insisted it be named and dedicated to John Muir.)

Back home in Indiana, Jann sought land to buy,\* which she named Peace Farm. Her decision and ability to protect land was enabled by a mental, emotional and physical strength developed through powerlifting. A winning competitor, she turned the sport into a successful business, Jann’s Power Gym, providing her the financial resources to purchase land.

John Muir’s affirmation of connectedness (“When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the universe”) was a catalyst in Jann’s decision:

**“I love the idea that all is connected, trees, people, creatures, air, water...this idea is somewhat personal for me. If only everyone could understand how everything is connected...how one touch of nature makes the whole world kin’.”**

She remembered Muir’s “Nature’s peace will flow into you as sunshine flows into trees,” and the words of St. Francis she learned long ago from her sister (a Franciscan nun whose order follows St. Francis of Assisi): “Let me be an instrument of your peace. Where there is hatred, let me sow love...” Jann says that for her, Peace Farm is “a safe haven, a refuge, a sliver of heaven.”

And she remembers another inspiration from her past: John Lennon’s music. “In 1965, I wanted to be a surfer girl...become a working hippie with John Lennon’s *Imagine* as my guide to a peaceful lifestyle. If I could have one word on a rock, it would be *Imagine*.”

Jann appreciates ACRES’ long-range vision to imagine how our area’s land can return to a natural state.



“I can’t think of anything that means more to me than having this land forever protected by ACRES,” she says. “After a hundred years, this land will still be here—because of ACRES.”

*\*Jann later added acreage to her original purchase*



## Welcome Reena Ramos to ACRES Advancement Team!



Thanks to the commitment and support of many, ACRES continues to grow at a phenomenal pace. To support our work advancing our mission to protect land, ACRES has created a new position. Our new Advancement Coordinator, Reena Ramos, will welcome new donors, thank our members and support our marketing and communications outreach. You may recognize Ramos from her previous three summers as a land management intern on our crew. Welcome back, Reena!

"My name is Reena Ramos and I live in DeKalb County. Most of my childhood was spent outdoors exploring. I became very interested in the natural world, which led me to major in environmental science at Goshen College. While there, I had many opportunities to observe ecosystems in Indiana, and I began to place a higher value on our local lands. This led me to find the land management internship offered by ACRES, and I became even more motivated as I observed ACRES' commitment to preserving land forever. I often feel like land in the Midwest is overlooked and undervalued, and organizations like ACRES are taking steps not only to preserve and restore that land, but also to educate communities about the importance of their local land. I am very excited to be a part of a team that has the same values as I do, and I hope to make a difference in our local region!"

## GOVERNANCE RESPONSIBILITY UPDATE

Following decades of declining participation in ACRES member voting and observation of nonprofit governance trends, the ACRES Board of Directors plans to amend our bylaws and articles of incorporation switching from a member-governed organization to a board-governed organization.

ACRES will host a listening session on Thursday, October 10 to hear feedback and questions, then vote in October to amend the bylaws and the articles of incorporation.

**Questions?** Please join our **Governance Gathering**, hosted by Board Member and Governance Committee Chair David Van Gilder, Thursday, October 10, 6 pm, ACRES Office, 1802 Chapman Road, Hometown, IN 46748.

If you cannot attend the gathering and would like to ask questions or offer feedback, please contact Jason Kissel: [jkissel@acreslandtrust.org](mailto:jkissel@acreslandtrust.org) or 260-637-2273, ext 2.

Proposal changes can be viewed at: [acreslandtrust.org/governance](http://acreslandtrust.org/governance)

## SPECIAL thanks



**Many thanks to our summer interns!** This year, interns helped plant trees, aid in trail maintenance, fight invasive species and assist with biological surveys. They also had the opportunity to be mentored by professionals in their field of interest. Thanks, too, to the Olive B. Cole Foundation and mentors for supporting our internship program.

Volunteer preserve stewards and trail monitors

Quarterly distributors and assemblers

Stephanie Bailey, Laura Colpitts, Kris Connerly, Nancy Conrad and Charles Enea  
Tending ACRES' native plant garden

Bonnie Bloom, Miranda Rahn and Callie Stewart  
Painting project

Brammall Nature Preserve tire clean up volunteers

Dave Brumm  
Office maintenance

Laura Colpitts, Charles Enea, Danielle Faurote, Pam George, Janelle and Larry Hicks, Charles Lake, Mark Maffey, Angie O'Neill, Kelly Shepherd, Bill Smith and Russ Voorhees  
Leading hikes

Dustin Nature Preserve autumn olive workday  
Girl Scout volunteers

Tedra Hemingway  
Leading an ACRES activity for Eckhart Public Library

Ford Hudson  
Coffee donation

Mengerson Nature Reserve Great American Cleanup volunteers

Louise Pomeroy  
Sand bag project

Ed and Cynthia Powers and John Velasquez  
Leading Bird Blitz outings

Carol Spallone  
Leading a Bird Blitz presentation for the Allen County Public Library; scanning ACRES archive

## wish list

**Order from ACRES' Amazon Wish List:** Under "Find a List or Registry," search for "ACRES Land Trust" or request a link at [acres@acreslandtrust.org](mailto:acres@acreslandtrust.org).

Bottled water	Copy paper	Trash bags
Chainsaw backpack(s)	Grill cover	
Coffee	Husqavarna 550 SP chainsaw(s)	

*Will your church, youth, senior or civic groups benefit from knowing about ACRES?  
Contact us for a presentation: [outreach@acreslandtrust.org](mailto:outreach@acreslandtrust.org)*

**DIRECTORS:** Steven Hammer, President; Dawn Ritchie, Vice President; Joe Conrad, Vice President; David Schnepf, Treasurer; Angie Quinn, Secretary; Norm Cox, Connie Haas Zuber, Bob Hake, Ashley Motia, Marc Levy, Stan Moore, Carol Roberts, Janel Rogers, Wayne Shive, Jerry Sweeten and David Van Gilder. Chris Fairfield, Recording Secretary.

**STAFF:** Jason Kissel, Executive Director; Heather Barth, Advancement Director; Matt Dunno, Land Management Specialist; Lettie Haver, Advancement Manager; Evan Hill, Land Management Specialist; Casey Jones, Land Management Director; Natasha Manor, Office and Volunteer Manager; and Reena Ramos, Advancement Coordinator.

**ACRES Quarterly:** Carol Roberts, Editor; Published by ACRES, Inc., at 1802 Chapman Road, PO Box 665, Hometown, Indiana, for the interest of its members, friends and others similarly dedicated to the preservation of natural areas. ACRES, Inc., is a nonprofit, 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.

## Cedar Creek Corridor: *Changes in the Land*

by local author Ryan Schnurr

*Have you received your complimentary copy?*

In recognition of achieving 1,000 acres permanently protected in the Cedar Creek Corridor and to show what's possible in other conservation areas over time, ACRES created the booklet, videos and a website: [cedarcreek.acreslandtrust.org](http://cedarcreek.acreslandtrust.org)

Our goal for this storytelling project is to inspire more participation in our work and to raise awareness that places here at home are worth protecting. ACRES

members make it possible to ensure that special places thrive, forever. Thank you for your role in protecting special places, forever.

See our video, read Cedar Creek stories and purchase additional copies of the booklet for \$5 at [cedarcreek.acreslandtrust.org](http://cedarcreek.acreslandtrust.org)—and tell your friends. ACRES wants the region to know the value of this protected place.



[acreslandtrust.org](http://acreslandtrust.org)

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