

THE ACRES QUARTERLY

Winter 2023 | Vol. 62 - No. 4



ACRES
LANDTRUST

Stevens Family Land Protected Forever

Looking Back: Ross Run Creek Stomp

*Expanding Habitat for Rare, Threatened
and Endangered Species*

Stewardship During Winter

Retiring Trails: Ball Lake Preserve

ACRES Year in Review

From the Executive Director

On the page to your right, you'll find the names of 50 people who joined ACRES in the past three months. To you who are listed—welcome to ACRES, and thanks for protecting land!

On this same page, you'll find four people who joined ACRES 50 years ago—and have faithfully renewed year after year. These members joined in 1973 when a gallon of gas was 40 cents, a gallon of milk, \$1.31, and an ACRES membership, \$2.

Fifty years is a long-term commitment. Why do people stay long-term members of ACRES? For most, it comes down to relationships. On our website's "Your Stories" section, Angie O'Neill, one of our 50-year members, describes the many relationships that motivate her to remain a member.

Some of the relationships Angie fosters through ACRES include her relationship with the land itself: *"it feeds my soul"*; her relationship with other ACRES members: *"they tend to be my deepest friendships"*; her relationship with God: *"it's my job to steward His amazing creation"*; her relationship with those she doesn't know: *"I want to leave a legacy, I want kids to have places to experience nature"*; and her relationship with herself: *"nature feeds my curiosity, my need for adventure and discovery."*

One of ACRES best services is providing the opportunity to demonstrate our core beliefs in ways we can't on our own. Core beliefs don't tend to change over decades, so it makes sense that when you find an organization in line with who you are, you remain connected for a long time. It's so important that many of us commit to doing it our whole lives—and beyond, through our planned giving, and by inspiring the next generation to carry on the work.

I was born in 1973. (Angie was filling ACRES membership role while I was filling diapers!) Angie and others supported the organization before I was able to. And after we are unable, others will support ACRES.

I'm inspired that ACRES has members who joined 50 years ago, and others, just five days ago. Forever requires the stability provided by long-term members, along with the continuing support of new members. Whether you are five days or 50 years into supporting ACRES—thank you. We can't do this without you!

Sincerely,



Jason Kissel
jkissel@acreslandtrust.org
260-637-2273 ext. 102

Photo by Jerry McCoy: Cardinals have been known to team up and hunt for food together in the winter when food is less plentiful. Anywhere from five to 35 pairs have been spotted together. Keep your eyes out for this cooperative behavior on your next winter hike.

ACRES Land Trust owns and protects natural and working lands, inspiring people to value, appreciate and support these places for the benefit of all—today and forever. Today we protect and steward more than 7,700 acres in northeast Indiana and portions of southern Michigan and northwest Ohio. In addition to helping care for and restore our local land, your support also offers trail systems where you and others can explore thriving natural places, from dawn to dusk, at no charge. Thank you!

1802 Chapman Road, PO Box 665 | Huntertown, IN 46748-0665
260-637-ACRE (2273) | email: acres@acreslandtrust.org

acreslandtrust.org



WELCOME 50 new members!

Kathy Adams
Calli Beamam
from Judie Panoch
Michael & Maria Berg
Alyssa & Adam Blonde
Cathy Bryan
from Allison Bryan & Eric Spreng
John & Kaylan Buteyn
Jennifer Castleman
from Michelle Jennings
Carlena & Glenn Crawford
Christina & Sallie Dearth
Wendi Donahue
Mary Eckhardt
Mandy Felger
Sabrina Fickel
Kierra & Forrest France
Mary Gibson
Ramon & Eileen Gil

Christopher Glick & Pamela Creagh
Diane Gruber
Bob, Angie & Kate Gump
Saul Guzman
George Hanlin
Janet Hazelett
Christina Heflin
Kathy Hopper
from Michelle Jennings
Rebecca & Richard Karcher
Leah Kimm
Kaylee Kloer
Cheryl Kolb
Heather Krempel
from Amy Moser
Ann Livschiz
Erik & Anne Marie Long
Tavid Markarian
Barbara & Carl Maucione

Rachel & Shane Munk
William & Amy Marie Music
Andrew Norman
Lauren Richwine
Janet & Michael Riley
Carol & Michael Rolfs
Dennis & Debbie Russell
Amy & Joseph Sordelet
Elijah & Jolene Stewart
Jessica Sutton
Stacey & Danny Thomas
Kristy & Troy Thompson
Karen Torrez
Jason Villarreal
Drew Wallace
Kristin & Jack Westfall
Kyle Zanker

50-YEAR MEMBERSHIP

We want to say a special "Thank You" to members who hit a huge milestone this year by supporting ACRES for 50 years:

Diane Humphrey

Dan & Judy Kaufman

Angie O'Neill

We greatly appreciate all the ways you have invested in ACRES mission over the years!

In Memory of

Juliette Anthony
from Jennifer & Bryan Ballinger
John Arnold
from Kathleen Baker, Terry & Thomas Dunbar, Bob & Carijane Farmer, Paul & Sarah Gridler, Rosemary Johnson, Michael & Patricia Nolan, Kendallville Lions Club
Michael Blair
from Ronald & Cathy Duchovic
Allen & Gloria Collins
from Amy & David Sites
Harvey Hathaway
from Dave Hathaway
John McCorry
from Ellamae McCorry
Keith Schrimshaw
from Joseph & Nancy Conrad
Matthew Shumaker
from Suzanne K. Dunn

Ellsworth Smith
from James R. Crouse & Jane Porter Gresham; Louise A. Larsen; Wendy Levine, Susan Harmeyer & Jen Mears; Keith & Louise Pomeroy; Tina Puitz; Doug & Kathy Rogers; Sweetwater Sound; Devin & Brenda Willis; Elma & Gary Chapman; Susan & Michael Worstell; Elizabeth & David Meyers; Betsy & John King
Carol Summers
from Diana Harris
Jeanne A. Woods
from Joan Songco

In Honor of

Mary Dustin & Carroll High School
Class of 1973
from Debora Meek



Stevens Family Land Protected Forever

Photos by Jarrod Spicer

The farm and 1863 home outside of Angola, Indiana, where Virginia “Ginny” Stevens was raised, and where she returned to call home the last ten years, has been in her family since the 1930s. When it was time to plan for the future of the land, she wanted to make sure this special place remained intact and preserved forever.

Stevens’ grandfather and his two single, young, adult sons farmed together near the town of Pioneer in Williams County in northwest Ohio. Like many other farmers, they, too, were impacted by the Great Depression. When the lender who held the mortgage to their home and farm demanded immediate payment, in full, they sold everything they could to satisfy the note, but they were \$110 short, and the bank took it all.

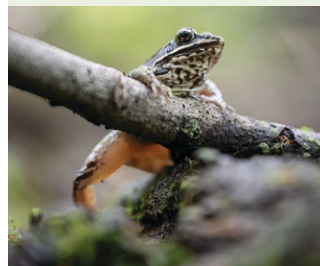
They started over by moving across the Ohio-Indiana line to Steuben County, and the family rented a home. A landowner was willing to rent farm ground to them. That 120-acre farm would be their new beginning. The next year, the owner sold them that farm, including the barns and other out-buildings, plus the 1863 farmhouse for \$3,800.

Growing up on the farm provided Stevens and her brother, John, with a remarkable childhood. They lived just down the road from their six cousins, whose fathers farmed together their entire lives. There were three other cousins whose parents also farmed across the fields. Many of the rambunctious bunch of cousins spent time outside exploring the woods, building forts and playing make-believe until their mother’s ringing of the dinner bell called them home.

Decades later, Stevens returned to her childhood home after inheriting her half of the original farm from her late parents. She has taken great care to restore the 1863 farmhouse where she was raised and still has the dinner bell that called her home as a child. One of her favorite projects has been rebuilding the 130-foot porch that spans all four sides of the home. “Every single day, I walk out on my porch and proclaim, ‘Thank you, Mom and Dad,’” she said.

Stevens reached out to ACRES to learn more about protecting this parcel which includes a 42-acre agricultural property plus a 13-acre woods, which is part of the Indiana Department of Natural Resources Division of Forestry’s “Classified Forest” program.

Having grown up near several ACRES preserves, Stevens was familiar with ACRES Land Trust’s track record for protecting local land. Once ACRES protects a property, it guarantees never to develop or sell it.



Over the next several years, Stevens has worked with ACRES to donate the land to forever protect it. The land donation is scheduled to be finalized by the end of 2023. While the preserve has yet to be named, Stevens intends to name it in memory of her parents, Charles E. and Mary L. Stevens.

“I had to do what was right for me, for our son, and what was right for eternity,” explained Stevens. “ACRES perfectly fit that bill.”

Her gift is in the form of a life estate meaning she will retain certain rights for the rest of her life such as income from the cash rent of the farm ground and the carefully managed timber sales from the wooded parcels. After her passing, those same rights will pass on to her son for his life. Beyond their lifetimes, ACRES promises to steward the property in perpetuity with plans to restore the land to natural systems.

Stevens, who has planted hundreds of trees, said Thomas Fuller’s words have always resonated with her, “He who plants trees loves others besides himself.” While she may not get to see her saplings become towering giants, it gives her satisfaction to know they will benefit future generations.

It is in this same spirit, she is donating the enduring gift of the land that has been in her family for generations. “This has been Heaven on Earth. I want to share this, even long-after I am gone.”

ACRES appreciates and needs your support raising funds to cover costs associated with the transfer of this property. To make a one-time donation, please visit acreslandtrust.org/donate.



LOOKING BACK



by ACRES Executive Director Jason Kissel

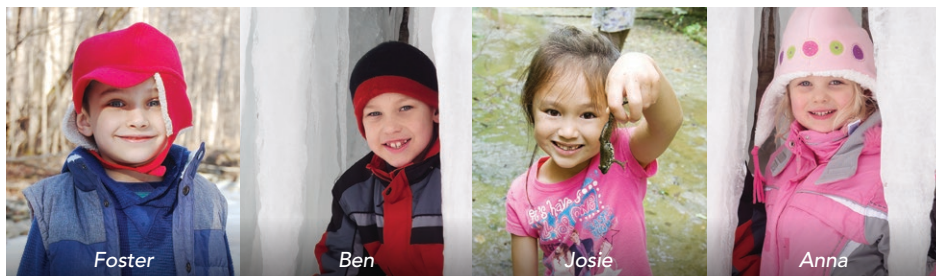
This announcement originally ran in the summer 2009 Quarterly:

Ross Run Fun!

We're going to have some old-fashioned fun in the creek during this event. Come prepared to get wet, dirty, tired (maybe even a little scratched up) as we explore the magnificent gorge at this preserve while learning about geology and habitat. We'll be turning over rocks, playing in the water, and sifting through mud. If you're brave enough to join us, wear your old tennis shoes and grubby clothes.

Summer 2009, the first Creek Stomp was announced in the **Quarterly**. This widely popular Ross Run Creek event has been annual ever since. Each year, participants get up close and personal with minnows, snakes, frogs, leeches, crayfish, salamanders, insects, fossils and waterfalls.

In 2010, the event was renamed Creek Stomp. Since the event has occurred for 15 years, I've enjoyed seeing creek stompers grow up. Foster, whose hand I held onto during years when the water was raging (and whose boots I repeatedly dumped out as they filled with water) is now a 13-year-old young man. Ben and Josie are now juniors at Ball State. Anna is a senior in high school.



The goal of all ACRES events is connecting people with nature. Creek Stomps are unique opportunities to deepen our connection with nature through direct contact.



Winter Creek Stomps leave you with icy feet and hands that make you wonder how minnows survive swimming in the frigid water. Summer Creek Stomps provide answers to "I wonder how bad a crayfish pinch feels?" When standing under a waterfall, you begin to realize the amount of water flowing through Ross Run, and then—you wonder where it all comes from.

Creek Stomps provide unscripted access to nature. You learn that (along with some sources of discomfort for humans), nature provides endless wonder and excitement. And the Stomps may lead you to ask questions leading to a better understanding of the natural world which, in turn, often leads to a love of the natural world.

The creek is normally off limits as visitors are required to stay on designated trails. ACRES holds this special member-only event two times per year. Sign up for the next Creek Stomp for members, held January 13—and bring your child or grandchild. They'll experience minutes of amazement, hours of being cold, and perhaps a lifetime of respect for and awe of nature.

Not an ACRES member yet? It takes two minutes to join at [acreslandtrust.org](https://www.acreslandtrust.org). Join to help ACRES protect local land and enjoy benefits like members-only events.

The Creek Stomper Today



Foster
by Emily Monticue



Ben
by Macy Baker



Josie
by MelissaAnn Photography



Anna
by Amy Kissel

Expanding Habitat for Rare, Threatened and Endangered Species

by ACRES Stewardship Director Evan Hill

It's a great feeling knowing that ACRES protects and stewards many areas that rare, threatened and endangered species call home. However, the number of plants and animals listed as rare is unsettling.

Between 2016 and 2023, two species were removed from the list of federally protected species present in Indiana as a result of recovery efforts. However, during that same time frame, seven species were added to the list due to a sharp decline in their populations. As the list grows, it's becoming easier to find species classified as Rare, Threatened or Endangered.

Rare, Threatened and Endangered (RTE) species are referred to as such primarily due to habitat loss. It makes sense that most RTEs occupy the least common plant communities—often those significantly reduced or degraded through development and other landscape alterations such as tiling and ditching. Another way of thinking about it is that most of Indiana's RTE species inhabit a tiny percentage of the available area. This translates into many relatively isolated, high-quality regions where these species are found. Historically, these areas would have been more prominent, and in many cases, would have had some connection with neighboring high-quality areas.

For all these reasons, ACRES prioritizes acquisitions in predetermined conservation areas that offer high levels of biodiversity and acquisitions that expand existing preserves with rare plant communities. To maximize our impact, stewardship activities are also prioritized within these areas.

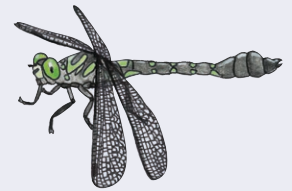
Each year, ACRES learns more about these unique areas by completing botanical inventories that help paint a picture of the landscape while often uncovering RTE plants unnoticed for years or decades. By uncovering RTE plants, our inventories play a vital role in shaping our preserve management plans for years to come.

Since critters tend to be a bit more mobile, finding RTE animals can be a little trickier than finding RTE plants. However, these critters also tend to inhabit our more unique plant communities, making it a little easier to know where to look. ACRES is quick to help whenever we can partner with a university that aims to learn more about specific species. A great example of what happens when looking for RTE species can be seen when diving into the recent work that Dr. Scott Bergeson (Assistant Professor of Animal Biology—Purdue FW) conducted within the Cedar

Creek corridor. Bergeson set out to determine which species of bats were inhabiting the area surrounding an ACRES property in the corridor. These surveys aimed to locate a population of little brown bats. Although no little brown bats were found, Bergeson, along with a handful of students and ACRES interns, turned up both the federally endangered Indiana bat and the federally endangered northern long-eared bat.

Bergeson explained: "Both species were already suffering from habitat loss when white-nose syndrome (a fungal disease that can't hurt humans) started causing massive numbers of bat mortality. These bat species, especially the northern long-eared bat, are now rarely captured in Indiana. The fact that these two endangered species were found in the Cedar Creek corridor suggests that the area is prime habitat. The bats likely rely on standing dead trees (snags) along the creek to provide them with day-time roosts."

Sometimes we find RTE critters unexpectedly while documenting plants. This was the case earlier this summer when Nathanael Pilla of Midwest Biological Consulting was conducting a botanical inventory at ACRES Fawn River Nature Preserve. While documenting plants, we found ourselves following and snapping pictures of unfamiliar dragonflies! One turned out to be the Green-faced clubtail, rare in Indiana and documented in only 3 counties in the state (and not in LaGrange County) since the 1930s.



*Green-faced Clubtail
by Reena Rawos*



On the same visit, Pilla and the ACRES crew were also accompanied by Dr. Marc Milne (Associate Professor of Biology at the University of Indianapolis), our regional spider expert. Within a few hours, Milne had collected nearly 100 spiders that would need to be more closely examined under a microscope to identify. Milne identified four new state records by identifying four species of spiders not previously known to be present in Indiana. Within just a few hours of searching, several rare critters had been documented, not to mention the hundreds of plants being jotted down along the way.

With ACRES history of acquiring and protecting high-quality natural areas, we usually find RTE species when we take time to look for them. In coming years, we hope to see the rate at which new species are added to the list of Indiana's Rare, Threatened and Endangered species slow as we and our partners provide permanent protection to more large contiguous natural areas.

Photo spread on pages 10–11 by Thomas Sprunger: The sun shines through a snow-covered canopy at Acres Along the Wabash in Wells County, Indiana. The 86-acre preserve protects nearly a mile of forest along the Wabash River.





WINTER HIKES & events

ACRES events are held sleet or snow. Preserve maps available online at acreslandtrust.org/preserves



TAPS AND TREKS

SUNDAY, DECEMBER 10, 2 pm

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

Take a frosty hike along the forested banks of the Wabash River. Join us afterwards for a “treat yourself” stop at The Parlor Brewing Company.



ACRES HOLIDAY POP-UP SHOP

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 16, 9 am – noon

ALLEN COUNTY | ACRES Land Trust Office
1802 Chapman Road, Hometown, IN 46748

Looking for holiday gifts for land lovers? ACRES has you covered! We are hosting special weekend hours at our office. Stop by to shop ACRES gear or gift a membership.

FIRST HIKES

MONDAY, JANUARY 1

Ring in the New Year with invigoration! We'll explore trails across the region, welcoming 2024 with movement and camaraderie.

10 am ALLEN COUNTY | McNabb-Walter Nature Preserve
16138 Davis Road, Spencer, IN 46788

2 pm KOSCIUSKO COUNTY | Wildwood
409 E. State Road 14, Silver Lake, IN 46982



JAVA JAUNT

SATURDAY, JANUARY 6, 9 am

DEKALB COUNTY | Heinzerling Family Five Points Nature Preserve
Approx. 6800 CR 7A, Garrett, IN 46738

Bundle up and take a stroll through the ravines along Black Creek. Join us afterwards for a “treat yourself” stop at The Grind Coffee House.

WINTER CREEK STOMP FOR ACRES MEMBERS

SATURDAY, JANUARY 13, 2 pm

WABASH COUNTY | Hathaway Preserve at Ross Run
1866 E. Baumbauer Road, Wabash, IN 46792

Ross Run in winter is spectacular! 20' icicles, frozen waterfalls and fossils. Depending on the weather, we'll be walking either through frigid water or on ice. Choose appropriate footwear and consider bringing dry shoes and socks for after.

Space is limited. To register, email outreach@acreslandtrust.org or call 260-637-2273 by January 11. Presented by preserve steward Kirk Swaidner and the Kissel Family.



NEW MEMBER OPEN HOUSE

SATURDAY, JANUARY 20, 1 – 2:30 pm

ALLEN COUNTY | ACRES Land Trust Office
1802 Chapman Road, Hometown, IN 46748

Are you new to ACRES? This open-house-style event allows you to meet and mingle with other members, volunteers, staff and board members while learning how your support helps protect local land. Come when you can, leave when you must. Refreshments provided.

KIDS ART WORKSHOP

SATURDAY, JANUARY 27, 10 am

ALLEN COUNTY | ACRES Land Trust Office
1802 Chapman Road, Hometown, IN 46748

At this art workshop, designed for children ages 5-11 years old, participants will create a winter-inspired piece with ACRES volunteer Erin McKeever. All supplies provided.

Space is limited. Registration is required for all attendees: children, parents and caregivers. To register, email outreach@acreslandtrust.org or call 260-637-2273 by January 25.



WORLD WETLANDS DAY HIKE

FRIDAY, FEBRUARY 2, 10 – 11:30 am

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

Celebrate World Wetlands Day on the trails with ACRES Stewardship crew. Learn about the unique wetlands ACRES protects forever, and take a selfie with the bog at Ropchan Memorial! *Space is limited. RSVP to outreach@acreslandtrust.org or 260-637-2273 by January 31.*

POETRY WORKSHOP FOR ACRES MEMBERS

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 10, 2 – 4 pm

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

Get creative with local poet Erica Anderson-Senter, author of *Midwestern Poet's Incomplete Guide to Symbolism* and the 2023 commission artist of ACRES 200-Year Ecological Reflection. Learn simple poetry techniques, chat with fellow members and craft your own rhythmical composition. Open to all experience levels. Supplies provided. *Space is limited. To register, email outreach@acreslandtrust.org or call 260-637-2273 by February 8.*



KOKIWAÑEE 20TH ANNIVERSARY HIKE

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 11, 2 pm

WABASH COUNTY | Kokiwanee
5825 E. 50 S, Lagro, IN 46941

Celebrate 20 years of permanent protection at Kokiwanee! This 139.5 acre preserve was acquired on February 11, 2004 and features bluffs along the Salamonie River, cascading waterfalls and many unique plants and animals. Join us for a hike and stay afterwards for a snack and hot drink.

SWIFT HIKE & BALD EAGLE WATCH

SATURDAY, FEBRUARY 24, 1 pm

WABASH & MIAMI COUNTIES | Addresses available with RSVP

Caravan along with us to several ACRES preserves. Take a quick hike at each preserve to watch for bald eagles soaring along the ravines and waterways. *Space is limited. To register, email outreach@acreslandtrust.org or call 260-637-2273 by February 22.*



(Continued on page 18)

Watch for more events online: acreslandtrust.org.

Stewardship During Winter

As weather cools and deciduous trees become bare, ACRES stewardship crew still has very important work to do. From invasive species management through the cut-stump method, prairie plantings, forest stand improvements, boundary inspections and access enhancements, ACRES “stew crew” work is never done.

Cut-stump is the primary management practice of combating non-native invasive species in winter. This method involves cutting the invasive down to its stump and applying herbicides to the stump’s outer rings. Why in winter? Because in colder seasons, rather than feeding the nutrients up to the leaves, plants redirect their nutrients down to store them in the roots. Cut-stump ensures the treatment reaches the roots.

Using herbicides is essential because leaving stumps untreated can lead to vigorous regrowth, resulting in multiple stems sprouting from an untreated stump. The stewardship team employs the cut-stump method to reduce invasive species including honeysuckle, autumn olive and multiflora rose.

When asked if invasive species management has had a visible impact on the preserves, Evan Hill, ACRES stewardship director, responded enthusiastically: “One of the highlights of my job is seeing the results of our work. For example, when you visited Vandolah five years ago, you would step onto the trail to find yourself surrounded by a wall of invasive honeysuckle and autumn olive. After three years of intensive management, we have removed the invasive shrubs. With sunlight now unobstructed, we see abundant native herbaceous plants!”

Along with combating invasive plants, the stew crew is also busy planting seeds for future prairies. Although winter may seem an odd time to plant seeds, it is the optimal time for most prairie plants because they require an extended cold period to germinate successfully as soon as spring arrives. Using a tractor with a seed drill, or an RTV equipped with a seed spreader, the stew crew is nesting these native prairie seeds now for winter.

Other projects our fantastic stewardship team completes during the colder season include improving our visitor amenities by installing new signs, expanding parking lots, and maintaining stairs and bridges on trails.

We thank our committed stewards for their expertise and diligent work restoring native habitats. If you see them on the trails this winter, be sure to send them warm wishes!

From a Chinese Proverb: A good neighbor is a found treasure

By Chris Fairfield, ACRES Volunteer

ACRES has numerous neighbors in Indiana, Ohio and Michigan. ACRES neighboring parcels come in many shapes, sizes and conditions including farmland, industrial lands, resort areas, university lands and public parks. There are partnering properties, egress areas, private fishing and hunting lands, and single and multi-family residential areas. Each of these neighbors has individual interests and concerns for their adjoining lands and for ACRES adjoining lands and waters.

If ACRES neighbors do not already know (through intentional staff greetings and correspondence), they soon find out that the land trust takes great pride in its care of the land and water. ACRES pays allegiance to donors’ forever care requests. ACRES also partners with other caring agencies, groups and volunteers as it tends to the immediate needs of the land, waters, residents and migrators.

Ball Lake Preserve is one such property. A neighboring owners’ association learned about ACRES strong land ethic. Upon learning of ACRES forever care intention at Robb Hidden Canyon Preserve on the other side of the lake, the Ball Lake Association decided to gift to ACRES its 26 acres of land as a wildlife refuge.

Prior to the 1995 acquisition, although the owners’ association had been aware of a contaminated dump site on its Ball Lake property, remediation was too costly for members to finance. So upon accepting this gifted property, ACRES agreed to clean up the dump site, remediate and care for the land. Several ACRES donors aided in collecting the thousands of dollars needed. ACRES also entered into a partnership with an adjacent farmland on the north end of the property, a partnership that continues today as that tip of the parcel remains agriculturally productive.

Currently, Ball Lake Preserve (named for Gideon Ball, an early landowner) includes a small forest and short public trail. The land serves as a buffer helping keep the water quality high for Ball Lake residents. It supports Fish Creek and wildlife needs. Each spring, its beautiful ravine yields numerous wildflowers such as blue flag iris and marsh marigolds. ACRES is a good neighbor.

As part of ACRES comprehensive plan to update visitor amenities at our nature preserves, the Ball Lake trail system will close to the public December 31, 2023. Learn more at acreslandtrust.org/raisingourstandards.

ACRES YEAR IN REVIEW

Looking Back at ACRES in 2023



STEWARDSHIP



22,000

Trees planted across
30 acres

100+ acres

Habitat enhanced through mowing, mulching
and selective thinning of trees

520 acres

Invasive species
managed

12

Rare, Threatened and
Endangered Species
found

VOLUNTEERISM

1,912 🍀

Volunteer hours
reported

\$55,912

Value of hours
reported

589

Hours of stewardship
work alone

COMMUNICATIONS

16.6K+ 👁️

Views of Wes Anderson-style "Happy Mother's Day
to Mother Earth" reel contributed to record-breaking
year for social media engagement

10K+ 👍

Facebook followers

PROTECTING MORE LAND

250+ acres

Newly protected land

ACRES was able to achieve so much in 2023 thanks to you!

NEW MERCH

ACRES
Embroidered
Ballcap
\$15

Beanie Caps
\$25

Crewneck
Acorn
Sweatshirt
\$30

Zip-Up
Acorn
Hoodie
\$35

Protect
Local Land
T-shirt
\$20



ACRES Patch **\$5**

Purchase at the office or online
at acreslandtrust.org/shop

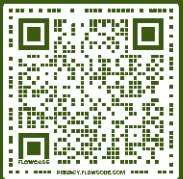
WILL YOU MAKE AN END-OF-YEAR DONATION?

As 2023 draws to an end, we're setting a target: \$150,000.

Achieving this goal will replenish our land acquisition reserves
so we can start working on two new projects: one located within
an ACRES conservation priority area and one with public access.

Every donation of every size helps ACRES continue to purchase,
protect and restore places for us and future generations.
Make your gift online at acreslandtrust.org/year-end-giving.
Thank you!

DONATE NOW





Hello, ACRES family!

I'm thrilled to join ACRES as its new Communications Manager! For the past 10 years, I have been the communication director for a nonprofit in my hometown, Columbia City. I look forward to bringing these years of experience to ACRES to continue its mission of protecting land forever.

What drew me to ACRES?

I grew up spending summers outdoors in the woods behind our house. (Admittedly, much of my time as a young boy was probably spent disturbing rather than preserving nature—but we all grow.)

While I spent many years in those woods, it wasn't until 2020 that I was truly moved by nature. A canceled trip to Ireland left my wife and me and some friends scrambling to salvage our vacation. Through luck, we found ourselves nestled in a lodge in the High Sierras. There, my soul was stirred, and my love for the outdoors took root.

This past spring, my family and I ventured to beautiful Kokiwanee for the first time. We spent the day hiking to the waterfalls and marveling at the thousands of tadpoles swimming in the shallow pools on the banks of the Salamonie River. "This has been the best day ever!" one of our girls exclaimed.

So, why ACRES? Because it was on an ACRES property that my girls discovered their love of the outdoors. And I can't wait to help others uncover that passion as well.



(Hikes & Events continued from page 13)

SAVE THE DATE

FORT WAYNE HOME AND GARDEN SHOW FEBRUARY 29 - MARCH 3

ALLEN COUNTY | Allen County War Memorial Coliseum
4000 Parnell Ave, Fort Wayne, IN 46805

Visit the ACRES booth at the Home and Garden Show! Learn more about ACRES mission, renew your membership and purchase gear. For more information, visit home-gardenshow.com.



ASHERWOOD MAPLE SYRUP BREAKFAST FOR ACRES MEMBERS

SATURDAY, MARCH 16, 9-11 am

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

Join ACRES for a guided tour of the maple sugaring operation and a chance to enjoy some of the sweet stuff for yourself. *Volunteers needed. To help, contact Jason Kissel at jkissel@acreslandtrust.org or 260-637-2273, ext. 102.*

ACRES Board of Directors and Committee Members

Archive project volunteers

Chris Fairfield, Mary Anna Feitler, Carol Spallone, Jannice Rasor Hubbard, Julie Samek

Tim Brauch

Leading a kids hike

Community booth volunteers

Kris Connerly, Katia Cook, Steve Etheridge, Lisa Seiler

John Laatsch

Leading a field flower hike

Jeri Kornegay & Lyn Winchell

Donating paper, cleaning supplies and snacks

Mark Maffey & Dawn Ritchie

New Member Open House volunteer

Erin McKeever

Leading kids summer art workshop

The Montessori School at WPC, Donald

Franzen, Grady Stout, Sam Weitzel

Funding, design and construction of new bridge at Asherwood

Native Garden Workday volunteers

Office support volunteers

Quarterly assembly and distribution volunteers

AJ Rambo

Leading Boots and Brews hikes

Phyllis Robb

Donating Richard Sloan signed lithographs

Seed Collection Workday volunteers

Joanna Stebing

Preserve research presentation

Kirk Swaidner

Summer Creek Stomp volunteer

Totem Interiors

Donating kitchen sink

Volunteer preserve stewards, caretakers and trail monitors

Larry & Delilah Watson

Donating parts for mower repair

Wildflower hike leaders

wish list

To order from ACRES Amazon Wish List, visit acreslandtrust.org/wishlist

Bottled water

Coffee

Paper towels

Postage stamps

Toilet paper

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ACRES Land Trust
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Winter Poems by ACRES Members

Deer tracks in new snow
calling cards of late-night friends
tell me Winter's here.

– DANA WICHERN

The mountain wears a cap of white
and borrows a coat of gold
while it waits for the fine white cloak
it will wear in the coming cold.

– HELEN FROST



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