Shirley Heinze Land Trust
INSIGHTS
Fall 2018

- Doing Something Transformative
- Volunteer Profile: Terry Bonace
- New Children's Book
- Fall Partnership Luncheon

www.heinzetrust.org
Every once in an organization’s lifetime, a transformative moment occurs that presents unanticipated opportunities for advancement to a higher level. One of these moments arrived for Shirley Heinze Land Trust on December 27, 2017, when we received our largest bequest ever. The generous gift came from the estate of J. Timothy Ritchie, who passed away last October.

Tim’s day-to-day relationship with Shirley Heinze Land Trust was casual. He was a regular sponsor of our spring benefit, and he enjoyed occasional hike outings. He did not seek a leadership position, nor concern himself in policy issues. But - it is now clear - he passionately supported our mission, and he admired the way we go about our business.

We have for some time been working to reach a $1 million goal that would allow us to access a $250,000 challenge gift to establish a permanent fund to generate income for operations. We leveraged a significant portion of Tim’s bequest toward this goal, and it is now within reach of fulfillment. The operating fund will guarantee that the work of Shirley Heinze Land Trust can continue at its highest level, even during economic downturns and periods when grant funding and donations become scarce. We think Tim would be pleased.

In remembrance of our esteemed friend, the Board of Directors recently renamed Sand Creek Nature Preserve, a 40-acre property in the Little Calumet River Conservation Area, in his honor. J. Timothy Ritchie Nature Preserve is a spectacular woodland/floodplain complex along a sparkling creek. In spring it’s covered with a white blanket of trilliums. It’s just the kind of place Tim would enjoy exploring on the frequent nature hikes that he loved.

Tim Ritchie’s legacy will live on in Shirley Heinze Land Trust’s continuing efforts to protect our precious natural lands... as well as in that special woodland that will forever bear his name. One person can truly make an incredible difference!

Best regards,

[Signature]

Photo: Susan Kirt Photography
Last spring, Shirley Heinze Land Trust participated in a Conservation Action Planning (CAP) process along with several partners, including the Calumet Collaborative, who administered the project.

Funded by the Indiana Department of Natural Resources Lake Michigan Coastal Program, the CAP process is a model developed by The Nature Conservancy to help guide conservation teams to develop focused strategies and measure success, determine boundaries, identify conservation targets, and evaluate threats. Ultimately the goal is to maximize our ability to advance land conservation within a particular geographic area, along with the stakeholders in that area.

We undertook the CAP process for three “gap areas” where conservation planning had not previously been done with a collective group of stakeholders in the Calumet Region. These areas include Oak Ridge County Park/Hoosier Prairie Nature Preserve in Lake County, Moraine Nature Preserve/Sunset Hill Farm County Park in Porter County, and Galena/Boreal Flatwoods in LaPorte County.

For us, the end result is a mapping tool and more clearly defined land protection priorities for our Moraine (Meadowbrook) and Flatwoods (Ambler Flatwoods) conservation areas.

Along with Calumet Collaborative, Indiana Department of Natural Resources and the Nature Conservancy, additional partners included: The Field Museum, Save the Dunes, Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission, Porter County Parks, Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore and ArcelorMittal Foundation.

We appreciated the Calumet Collaborative leadership on the project, as one of their organizational goals is developing integrated, comprehensive bi-state conservation strategies for the Calumet region. (See www.calumetcollaborative.org to learn more.)

Conservation Action Planning

A Truckload of Gratitude

As an employee at NIPSCO, Erin Steinhilber, a volunteer and valued Programs Committee member, was familiar with the longstanding partnership between her employer and Shirley Heinze Land Trust. When Erin heard that our stewardship team needed a truck, she reached out to NIPSCO’s Fleet Department. With help from Jake Upper, Michelle Mieras and Tim Anderson, they made it happen!

Shirley Heinze Land Trust is beyond grateful to NIPSCO for this most generous donation. The additional truck will enable us to transport stewardship staff and equipment to newly established conservation areas.

Thank you Erin, Jake, Michelle and Tim for helping to make this possible!

Summer Stewardship Staff and GLISTEN Interns

Our seasonal stewardship crew and GLISTEN student stewardship liaisons spent the summer working out in the field along with our regular staff. They’ve been battling invasive plants, planting plugs, mowing brush, removing trash, and performing a multitude of tasks necessary to keep our more than 2,400 acres of nature preserves healthy, beautiful, and accessible to the public. We’re grateful for their hard work and good spirits, and wish them well in their future endeavors.

The Great Lakes Innovative Stewardship Through Education Network program (GLISTEN) began in 2009 as an initiative of the National Center for Science and Engagement to promote stewardship within the Great Lakes ecosystem. The program enables local college students to gain real-world experience in a variety of research and stewardship projects in the Southern Lake Michigan Watershed. As participants in the program, student stewardship liaisons Hunter Moldenhauer and Patrick Snook have been mapping invasive species in the Beverly Shores/Great Marsh Conservation Area, in addition to their other tasks.

The local Calumet Cluster of the GLISTEN program is funded by a grant from the Flora Richardson Foundation, a local organization whose goals include the promotion of the study of natural history in the area of southern Lake Michigan. Dr. Erin Argyilan, Associate Professor of Geosciences at Indiana University Northwest, administers the Calumet Cluster.
When we think of Northwest Indiana, we often associate natural communities with the Indiana Dunes. Often times we forget about the ecological importance and indescribable beauty of our rivers and floodplains.

Orbis Environmental Consulting has the privilege to be working with Shirley Heinze Land Trust to inventory and describe the plant communities throughout the east branch of the Little Calumet River Conservation Corridor.

Fellow Orbis botanist Scott Namestnik and I have teamed up with staff from Shirley Heinze to visit and document the vascular flora at five of its sites on the corridor, including Dale B. Engquist, Wykes-Plampin, J. Timothy Ritchie, and Keith Richard Walner Nature Preserves.

By working together on these visits, Heinze Trust staff members have a unique opportunity to see these places through the eyes of professional botanists, and we also benefit from their shared knowledge of these places.

We are beyond thrilled to see such an incredible diversity of species at every site. The final report will be finished at the end of the year. This report will allow land managers along the east branch to better understand and manage their properties.

These properties are very special not only because of the flora, but also the fauna associated with it. On one occasion, a great horned owl flew down a dozen feet away and stared at us, curious about what we were doing. Northern water snakes slither around us as we walk through the knee deep water. They often hiss to remind us that we are only visiting!

Funding for the study is provided by a grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation’s Chi-Cal Rivers Fund, in partnership with ArcelorMittal.

In August, the installation of two much-anticipated kayak launches began on the Little Calumet River at Wykes-Plampin and Keith Richard Walner Nature Preserves in Chesterton. By the time this reaches you, we anticipate that the installation of both launches will be complete and they will be fully open to the public.

Many thanks to our partners: the Northwest Indiana Paddling Association; Save the Dunes; Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore; and funding from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Chi-Cal Rivers Fund grant; Christopher B. Burke Engineering; and Deaton’s Waterfront Services, who installed the launches.
Terry points out a ghost plant on a guided hike at Ambler Flatwoods involved with the Chicago Botanic Garden’s Plants of Concern program, and he volunteers in the fresh water mollusk collection at the Field Museum.

Terry’s interest in nature “came about gradually while playing in the woods, ponds, and streams of central Ohio,” he says. “A week-long outdoor natural history class in 6th grade was pivotal. I discovered salamanders, having had no previous idea of their existence, and other hidden pond and stream life.” One day he and a friend were in a row boat at a nearby reservoir and were overwhelmed to see a great blue heron. “I’d always loved birds, but I only knew the usual backyard species. I never imagined that such a magnificent creature as the heron could exist in the state of Ohio.”

These seemingly casual childhood experiences had a great impact on Terry’s life. He went on to receive a Master’s Degree in Zoology from Southern Illinois University, and he had a long working career with the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency. Terry is now retired.

Hiking is Terry’s favorite way to enjoy nature. “I never tire of walking around the wetland environs of Beverly Shores, seeing what’s in bloom and what birds are in the neighborhood,” he says. Other favorite spots are Ambler Flatwoods and John Merle Coulter Nature Preserve, both Shirley Heinze properties.

Volunteer Profile: Terry Bonace

If you have attended one of our educational guided hikes over the last ten years or so, you have likely met a tall, congenial man in a crisp checkered shirt and ever-present hat, holding a clipboard or notebook, assorted guidebooks in hand, binoculars around his neck, and a big welcoming smile. This is Terry Bonace.

Terry has been involved with Shirley Heinze Land Trust since 2002, when he joined the board of what was then the Shirley Heinze Environmental Fund. He first learned about us on a Morton Arboretum field trip to Howes Prairie, where he met Barbara Plampin and Myrna Newgent, both now life board members. “They were wonderful ambassadors for the organization,” he says. “I was thrilled to learn about Shirley Heinze’s work from them.” He credits the pair as inspirations and mentors. “They know everything about what rare plant grows in what property in Northwest Indiana.”

Terry is passionate about preserving our disappearing natural heritage and providing stewardship for that protected land. No longer a member of the board, he still serves on the Programs Committee, which oversees stewardship, education, and outreach. Terry has managed the annual hike program for a decade, and, along with his good friend, Susan Perdomo Blankenship, he maintains the large native plant garden at Meadowbrook. He is also an unofficial steward of a small Heinze Trust “demonstration property” in Beverly Shores, “where we are starting a woodland wildflower garden.”

Terry and his husband Larry Boehlke, who is also a Heinze Trust volunteer, have homes in Chicago and Beverly Shores. Terry volunteers for other organizations as well. He serves on the board and coordinates workdays for the Beverly Shores Environmental Restoration Group, he’s Terry was recently honored as the 2018 Shirley Heinze Land Trust Volunteer of the Year. He encourages others to consider volunteering. “In this time of habitat loss and climate change, the Heinze Trust’s mission has never been more important.”

We feel extremely fortunate to have volunteers like Terry. Make sure to thank him the next time you see him out walking!

“I never tire of walking around the wetland environs of Beverly Shores, seeing what’s in bloom and what birds are in the neighborhood,”
Children’s Book Set in Shirley Heinze Land Trust Nature Preserves

We’re excited about the publication of a new children’s book, entitled Red’s Nature Adventure, written in collaboration with board member James B. Dworkin, with illustrations by Munster artist Michael Chelich. The story is set in several of Shirley Heinze’s Nature Preserves.

Readers will follow along with an Irish setter named Red, as he and his human friends head out for a day of exploration in nature. Along the way, adventurous Red meets other animal friends who offer him guidance and teach him about the natural habitats in which they live.

The book’s detailed illustrations, characters, and educational content make it suitable for people of all ages. Richly illustrated scenes depict actual Heinze Trust nature preserves located in Gary, Hammond, Hobart, Portage, Chesterton, Valparaiso, Michigan City, and South Bend.

An appendix explains what a nature preserve is, why protecting these places is important, and how readers can visit them.

Proceeds from sales of the book benefit the land conservation work of Shirley Heinze Land Trust.

To schedule a book reading or signing, contact Jim Dworkin at dworkinjim@gmail.com, or call 219-363-2970.

To learn more, visit www.heinzetrust.org/reds-nature-adventure.html.

The book is available for purchase on Amazon.

Fall Bus Tour

Date: Saturday, October 20, 2018
Time: 9am-3:30 pm EASTERN
Departure/Return Location: Spicer Lake Nature Preserve

Join us for our popular educational bus tour of our nature preserves in northwestern Indiana. This time around we’ll tour our preserves in Porter, LaPorte, and St. Joseph Counties. Shirley Heinze Land Trust staff, board members and guest speakers will provide insights on land conservation and the ecology, geology, and history of the region.

The bus will depart promptly at 9:00 a.m. EDT from Spicer Lake Nature Preserve located at 50840 County Line Road in New Carlisle, IN.

The $40 ticket includes lunch provided by Third Coast Spice Cafe at Meadowbrook Nature Preserve. The bus is restroom equipped.

Payment is required in advance. Please call us at 219-242-8558 to reserve seats. Early registration is advised.

Advance registration is required for most events. For full details and to sign up for events, call 219-242-8558 or visit our website at www.heinzetrust.org/events. Schedule is subject to change.
1st Source Bank's $10,000 Donation Leverages Lydick Bog Nature Preserve Challenge Grant

As the Chair of Shirley Heinze Land Trust's St. Joseph County Advisory Council, I'd like to extend a sincere thank you to our partner, 1st Source Bank, for donating $10,000 towards Shirley Heinze Land Trust's Lydick Bog Nature Preserve Project.

1st Source Bank's generous gift helped Shirley Heinze Land Trust meet a challenge grant awarded by the Community Foundation of St. Joseph County to Shirley Heinze Land Trust in November 2017. This gift, and all funds raised towards this project, will be used to bring public access and amenities to Lydick Bog Nature Preserve in St. Joseph County.

Lydick Bog Nature Preserve is a spectacular place, and public access to the preserve will create the opportunity for residents and visitors to learn about, explore, and enjoy the woods, fields and wetlands of this unique site – a part of our region's signature natural history. We are grateful to 1st Source Bank and 1st Source Foundation for their commitment and support of Shirley Heinze Land Trust and this significant project. Thank you for making a difference to our community and our region.

Gratefully,
Evie Kirkwood, Director of St. Joseph County Parks

Please Join Us!

Friday, November 2, 2018
Sand Creek Country Club
1001 Sand Creek Drive South  Chesterton, IN  46304
11:30 am - Registration    Noon - Program

Keynote Speaker:
Sarah Coulter
Executive Director, Calumet Collaborative

Register online at www.heinzetrust.org.
You may also fill out both sides of this page, clip along the dotted line above and mail this portion along with payment to:
Shirley Heinze Land Trust   109 W 700 N   Valparaiso, IN 46385

TICKET OPTIONS
____ Table Sponsor (includes 10 admissions) - $1,000
____ Half Table Sponsor (includes 5 admissions) - $500
____ Individual Ticket(s) - $40/each
____ I cannot attend, please accept my gift in support of Shirley Heinze Land Trust.

RSVPs are requested no later than Wednesday, October 31st.
Please contact Bonnie Hawksworth for more information at bhawksworth@heinzetrust.org or 219-242-8558

CONTACT INFORMATION
Name_______________________________________________
Address_____________________________________________
City__________________________________ St___ Zip____________
Email__________________________________________ Phone ______

Aerial View of Lydick Bog Nature Preserve
PARTNERSHIP LUNCHEON REGISTRATION FORM, CONTINUED

Register online at www.heinzetrust.org.
You may also fill out both sides of this page, clip along the dotted line above and mail this portion along with payment to:
Shirley Heinze Land Trust  109 W 700 N  Valparaiso, IN 46385

PAYMENT INFORMATION

Total Amount Enclosed $ ______________________

☐ Enclosed is my check payable to Shirley Heinze Land Trust

☐ Please charge my: ☐ VISA  ☐ MC  ☐ DISC  ☐ AMEX

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A welcome rite of spring in our area is the annual migration of sandhill cranes every March. The magnificent birds, with a wingspan as great as seven feet, pass through the Indiana Dunes region on their way to summer nesting grounds in the Canadian sub-arctic. Squadrons of cranes pass high overhead in successive V-shaped waves that continue for days and include thousands of birds. Their deep, rattling cries are easily audible even when the birds are so high they can barely be seen by the naked eye.

The migrating birds rarely set foot on the ground here, except for small numbers making brief foraging stopovers. But that pattern is changing. Indeed, in a most exciting development, sandhill cranes have begun nesting in our area. The first evidence of such activity, according to Indiana Dunes birding expert Ken Brock, occurred in 2007 in a marsh south of Mt. Baldy. Breeding observations have increased since then, with confirmed activity every year since 2011.

The vast majority of reports are from the Great Marsh, a formerly enormous wetland that once paralleled the Lake Michigan shoreline from Gary to Michigan City. Breeding pairs have been observed in Great Marsh remnants at Long Lake in the West Beach unit of Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore (IDNL), at Cowles Bog (another IDNL property near Dune Acres), and at Beverly Shores, where as many as three pairs may have nested this year.

The birds are apparently expanding their area of operation. A downy chick was observed at Reynolds Creek Game Bird Habitat Area in 2016, and local birder Matt Kalwasinski verified breeding pairs in 2016 and 2018 at wetland sites in Gary. All these places are several miles south of the Great Marsh, near the Little Calumet River. Another pair has raised a chick this year at the Westchester Migration Bird Sanctuary in Chesterton.

Most nesting activity has occurred in areas subject to large-scale habitat restoration projects undertaken by federal, state, and private conservation entities. Shirley Heinze Land Trust is actively involved in these efforts. The Town of Beverly Shores offers the most easily accessible places to see the big birds: along the entire length of Beverly Drive and on the IDNL’s Great Marsh Trail.

Spring and summer crane sightings are numerous, but there have also been scattered reports in December-February. It’s not clear if any birds are actually overwintering in our area. Wouldn’t that be a good project for someone to investigate this year?

Ron Trigg is a past Executive Director and former board member of Shirley Heinze Land Trust. An author, photographer, and naturalist, he volunteers his photography and wordsmithing talents.