Shirley Heinze Land Trust

INSIGHTS

Spring 2020

• Sun Acre Nature Preserve
• Adapting to Changing Conditions
• Mother Nature ~ Louise Crumpacker
• Online Spring Benefit - May 19-30th

www.heinzetrust.org

Volume 23 Issue 1
Adaptability

At the end of 2019, we protected the tree on the cover, a 21-foot-circumference red oak, and its home, a 43-acre piece of glacial moraine! (see facing page) While admiring this tree for the first time, I asked myself: how did this gargantuan tree avoid succumbing to the plow, logging, lightning, development, invasive species, and climate change? Good luck and adaptability is what I concluded.

Maybe this tree is an appropriate analogy to Shirley Heinze Land Trust. We both have cohabitated well with our community, accumulated the necessary resources to grow, and continuously adapted to an ever-changing world over the years.

I feel a good strategic planning process has enabled us to adapt so well. It provides a clear roadmap for advancing goals. Last year we underwent this process by spending some time reflecting on our successes and asking tough questions. The final product (approved by the Board on January 25) resulted in a refined mission, new core values, strategies to address these questions, and the following five strategic goals.
- Implement Lydick and Meadowbrook Master Plans to be conservation destinations.
- Define and implement a rural/ag conservation strategy.
- Integrate water conservation and climate change tools.
- Develop programming and outreach to engage more people in rural and urban communities.
- Build awareness of Shirley Heinze Land Trust as a community resource.

You will see on the subsequent pages that good progress is already being made. Our adaptability serves us well as we face the challenges presented by the health pandemic. This year we are hosting our first ever online Spring Benefit! Your continued generosity and support are vital to our ongoing work. Thank you.

Sincerely,

Kristopher Krouse, Executive Director

Stepping Back 100 Years in LaPorte County: Sun Acre Nature Preserve

Viewed on a map, the Valparaiso Moraine arcs gracefully across LaPorte, Porter, and Lake Counties in northwest Indiana. It is an ancient glacial footprint that left behind beautiful rolling hills, ravines, lakes, streams, and a rich complex of habitat types. Preserving examples of this special landscape is an important goal for Shirley Heinze Land Trust. Thanks to a recent generous land donation, 43 acres of glacial moraine in Galena Township have now been permanently protected.

The property consists of mature deciduous forest, including upland and mesic forest, open-water features, seeps, and emergent marsh wetlands, along with seven acres of agricultural land. The donor is long-time owner Arthur Schuck. He and his late wife Frances operated the adjacent Sun Acre Fruit Farm for more than 50 years.

Schuck’s father bought the property in 1940, when Arthur was eight years old. His father worked for Todd and Brown, the firm that built and ran the Kingsbury Ordnance Plant during World War II. Arthur earned a degree in Agricultural Economics from Purdue University, and after two years in the Navy, he returned to the area in 1957. The Schuck family grew peaches and apples on the orchard, which was at one time 300 acres in size.

Arthur and his friend and neighbor Larry Cadwell, a retired US Department of Energy ecologist, each have a deep history and great love for this land. Arthur fondly recalls the peaceful feeling of walking the woods, where he found respite from the hard work of the orchard. Cadwell has an emotional connection to the land, which was once owned by his family. He says “walking the property is like stepping back 100 years.” The property has not been logged since it was acquired by Arthur, who wanted to avoid the damage such activity can cause. Cadwell notes that Arthur’s decision allowed the interior of the woods to escape the spread of invasive species.

One exceptionally large red oak that was spared from those early harvests still stands. Cadwell recently measured its circumference at 21 feet, and estimates the tree could be three or four hundred years old.

Sun Acre Nature Preserve represents a valuable addition to our Moraine Forest Conservation Area and provides significant habitat for warblers and other migratory and nesting bird species that prefer continuous forest. Shirley Heinze Land Trust is grateful to the Schuck Family for entrusting us with this land that honors their heritage and long history in LaPorte County.
Adapting to Changing Conditions

When it comes to land management planning, climate change is a complicated issue to address. So we asked for help. With financial support from the Land Trust Alliance Land and Climate Program, and assistance from the Northern Institute of Applied Climate Science (NIACS), we convened local conservation partners to assess the predicted impacts of climate change on the Little Calumet River Conservation Corridor and develop management strategies to improve climate resiliency.

Using information from our baseline habitat assessment study, we organized habitat types into three groups for evaluation. These habitats were upland forest, floodplain forest, and riparian wetlands.

Facilitators from NIACS provided us with model predictions of future climate change, climate vulnerability assessment tools, and group exercises to think critically about how climate change will impact the corridor in the short and long term. Some species and habitats have been predicted to do poorly in future climate scenarios, while others may benefit, at least in some ways. Did we mention it is complicated?

The group identified adaptive management strategies for the corridor as outlined in the USDA Forest Service publication “Forest Adaptation Resources: Climate Change Tools and Approaches for Land Managers, 2nd edition.” Fortunately, we have already been implementing many of these strategies with our land and stewardship programs. These include preserving and connecting natural areas, preserving unique and biologically diverse systems, and reducing invasive species. Additional strategies are guided by models that predict which individual species are expected to do well in future climate conditions. We also identified the need to adjust our approach to routine management tasks. Reduced ice, snow, and frozen ground conditions in the winter and increased flooding in the spring and fall could limit physical access and the feasibility of routine management tactics in the corridor.

At the end of the workshop, we used the information learned and strategies identified to update our Little Calumet River Conservation Corridor Management Plan, and are working to incorporate this local climate change information into the management plans for our other conservation areas.

You can read more about the project at https://forestadaptation.org/adapt/demonstration-projects/shirley-heinze-land-trust-east-branch-little-calumet-river.

Welcome Doug!

We’re pleased to welcome Doug Botka as our newest permanent staff member. Doug has been conducting restoration and ecological management in Northwest Indiana for over a decade. He was Resource Manager at the Indiana Dunes State Park since 2011 and has worked various stewardship positions with Save the Dunes, Wildlife Habitat Council, and Shirley Heinze. Doug is a South Bend native and has been instrumental in the restoration and public access improvements at Lydick Bog Nature Preserve. He has a passion for the native flora of our region and is an unstoppable force when it comes to preserving and restoring habitat. Doug will be leading restoration and management activities at our eastern preserves including Lydick Bog, Ambler Flatwoods, and Barker Woods. He has a wonderful personality and is a pleasure to talk with. Please join us in welcoming Doug and thanking him for his commitment to these wonderful natural areas.
O

ver the past year, volunteers and staff have been working on a trail im

provement project at Barker Woods Nature Preserve, a 30-acre old-growth

forest nestled in the heart of Michigan City. Barker Woods, despite its

proximity to neighborhoods and beautiful forested landscape, has been underuti

lized compared to other Shirley Heinze trails. Feedback we received pointed to the

lack of signage on Barker Road and clear markers for visitors to follow when they

entered the driveway.

We worked together with Save the Dunes, whose headquarters is at Barker

House, to design a sign and frame that would mirror the style of the home

and invite visitors to their office, the historical site of Barker House, and the

nature preserve. We added signage to show visitors where to park and replaced
deteriorating directional signs on the trail.

An old fence that serves as the gateway to the preserve was restored by salvaging

as much of the old material as possible and giving it a fresh coat of paint, and

rebuidling the rest. It would have been easy to just take the fence down, but

we wanted to preserve as much of the historical character of the homestead as

possible.

The biggest challenge was to restore the gate on the fence, as the pieces used

aren’t the standard used today, and the curved frame is what gives it so much

character. So, the gates were transported to Westville High School where students

in the AgriScience Program used a blend of traditional woodworking tools and

techniques (such as chisels to create mortise and tenon joinery) and modern-day

technologies like drum and belt sanders, and routers. WHS teacher and FFA advisor,

Bill Smith, incorporated the restoration project into the students’ curriculum and

taught them the process for recreating the architectural shapes and piecing.

A Passage Through History at

Barker Woods Nature Preserve

We also updated the self-guided tour of the trail that was created when Shirley

Heinze’s office was still at Barker House. Numbered posts highlight various trees,

plants, or other features of the preserve, and an accompanying brochure provides

information at each location.

Volunteers and staff worked on these projects about twice a month, and while

we worked, we saw other opportunities for site improvement and partnership with

our friends at Save the Dunes. A solar greenhouse built in 2009 was given a few

repairs and will be used starting this spring to grow plants to be used for student

educational activities, given away at events, and planted on preserves.

We invite you to visit the historic Barker House and Barker Woods Nature

Preserve. When you turn into the driveway at 444 Barker Road, imagine what it

would have looked like at the turn of the 20th century, a grand home in the country

with reflecting ponds, a dance hall, a brick-paved driveway and a windmill pumping

water. When passing through the fence gates, imagine a time a century before the

Barkers moved here, when this was part of a vast wilderness.

We will continue to hold regular workdays at the preserve to grow native plants

in the greenhouse, remove invasive species on the preserve, and more. Check out

our website or Facebook for upcoming events and join in!

This project was made possible through a grant awarded by the Barker Welfare

Foundation.

If you are interested in getting involved as a volunteer, or want to learn more, please contact Volunteer Coordinator Christine Maloney at volunteer@heinzetrust.org or call (219) 242-8558.
A Gift for Meadowbrook from Mother Nature

Meadowbrook Nature Preserve has a rich background story. The preserve sits on the Valparaiso Moraine, its landscape of lovely hills, ravines and streams are the result of ancient glacial processes.

A more recent chapter in its story is a family farm that once was here, evident in the old silo that still stands, as well as former agricultural fields on the east side of the property. Those fields now bear witness to a slowly emerging future forest, planted only a handful of years ago, thousands of trees already lifting their crowns above the grasses, reaching for the sun.

After the farm, came the Girl Scout camp. The camp experience was educational, fun, and inspiring, deeply imprinting countless young minds through a shared experience of hours spent outdoors, witnessing and learning about the living things that find haven here - plants, trees, birds, and other wildlife.

One exceptional woman has been an influential part of the camp chapter since it began in 1963. She is Louise Behlen Crumpacker, now 92 years young, who has been a Girl Scout for 83 years! She was born in New York City and grew up in Westchester County, where she spent nearly every summer of her childhood at camps. There, her passion for the natural world took hold.

Louise attended Antioch College in Ohio, an institution that embraced community service as part of the curriculum. While there, she continued in scouting as a volunteer in the community. She also met her future husband, W.P. (William Peter) Crumpacker, who was from Chesterton, Indiana.

They married, and the free-spirited couple moved to Indiana and embraced a variety of entrepreneurial opportunities that would take them to Florida and back again as their family grew. She raised her children, all six of whom were scouts at some point, to be “secure, responsible, service-oriented human beings,” and instilled in them her deep love of nature.

The family eventually purchased land in Jackson Township. Louise was particularly enticed by the fact that it had “six varieties of violets” and many other wildflowers. They built a home, and she continued to volunteer in scouting at Red Mill and Meadowbrook Girl Scout Camps, supporting an awareness of the ecology, biology, and conservation of the surroundings, as well as teaching outdoor cooking, water safety and canoeing, and selling lots of cookies. The girls gave her a fitting camp name, “Mother Nature.”

Louise recalls when the farm was purchased by the Girl Scouts to become Meadowbrook Camp. She spent a lot of time here with her children and grandchildren. She recalls planting trees and wildflowers on the property to help restore a natural plant community on the former farm, including tulip poplars, paw paws, pines, and “trillions” of trilliums and jacks-in-the-pulpit.

Her favorite spot on the preserve is a large tulip tree along trail 1 that was planted in memory of her daughter Donna, who passed away at the age of thirty two. A memorial plaque and inspirational sign are still in place.

“Meadowbrook is my sanctuary,” Louise says, “the creek and the trees are my cathedral. I feel grounded by nature.” Louise continues to volunteer her time and knowledge with others, both locally and in Florida where she winters. Her energy and passion are as vibrant as ever.

Louise and her family reached out to Shirley Heinze Land Trust staff in the fall of 2018 to learn more about our conservation work at Meadowbrook. Following a warm reception and several interesting and insightful nature lessons from Louise, Shirley Heinze received a generous contribution from Louise and her family. The gift will serve as a lead contribution to advance Shirley Heinze’s vision to restore and transform Meadowbrook’s main campus, lodges, and preserve into a community conservation destination for all to enjoy and be inspired.
Explore the beauty of the Calumet Region and beyond and support Shirley Heinze Land Trust in working to preserve natural lands in northwestern Indiana by attending our educational hikes. Groups are led by expert naturalists and are limited in size to fifteen or fewer hikers. Hikes are held at outstanding nature preserves located across the region.

There is a $25 fee per person for each hike. Registration and payment must be made in advance. You may register online at heinze.ejoinme.org/hikeandtourtickets, or call us at 219-242-8558 or send an email to Sarah Barnes at sbarnes@heinzetrust.org.

Upcoming Hikes and Events

Sat, May 2 — Guided Hike at Bendix Woods – Spring Wildflowers
Sat, May 9 — Birding at Meadowbrook
Thu, May 14 — Dunes Birding Festival at Ambler Flatwoods
Fri, May 15 — Dunes Birding Festival at Ambler Flatwoods
Fri, May 19 - Sat, May 30 — Annual Spring Benefit
Sat, Jun 6 — Guided Hike at Lydick Bog — Reptiles and Amphibians
Sat, Jun 13 — Spring Bus Tour of Nature Preserves
Wed, Jul 1 — Dig the Dunes Beer Run at Ambler Flatwoods
Mon. Jul 20 — Application Deadline for Bringing Nature Home Recognition Program
Wed, Aug 5 — Dig the Dunes Beer Run at Meadowbrook
Sat, Aug 8 — Tour of North Liberty Property with Pokagon Band of Potawatomi Indians
Sat, Aug 22 — Summer Bus Tour of Nature Preserves
Sat, Aug 29 — Guided Hike at Jasper Pulaski — Botany
Sat, Sep 19 — Birding Big Day at Shirley Heinze Preserves
Sat, Sep 19 — Monarch Festival in East Chicago
Sat, Sep 26 — Forest Festival at Meadowbrook
Sat, Oct 3 — Annual Appreciation Hike at Meadowbrook
Sat, Oct 3 — Campout at Meadowbrook
Oct 8–10 — LTA Rally / National Land Conservation Conference in Portland, Oregon
Oct 16 – November 22 — Northern Saw-whet Owl Banding at Meadowbrook

Advance registration is required for most events. For the latest schedule, full details, and to sign up for events, call 219-242-8558 or visit our website at heinzetrust.org/events or facebook.com/heinzetrust. Schedule is subject to change.

Bringing Nature Home ~
Season Ten!

Our “Bringing Nature Home” native plant gardening recognition program enters its 10th season this year! Since it began, sixty-six individuals and organizations have been awarded recognitions for using native plants in their gardens and landscaping. Gardens that are recognized receive this beautiful yard sign that tells friends and neighbors why gardening with native plants is so important.

Now is the time for tending your garden or planning to install one this year to serve as important habitat for pollinators, and a bridge between natural areas. In the United States, it is estimated that there is four times more turf grass than cornfields. If private landowners convert even a quarter of their lawn to native plants, there would be 10 million more acres of habitat for insects, pollinators, and birds.

To learn more about the program and to find resources about native plants and where to buy them, visit heinzetrust.org/bringingnaturehome.
Online Spring Benefit
May 19th-30th, 2020

Your health and well-being are among our top priorities. Therefore, due to recent developments, this year’s event will be conducted online.

For thirty-nine years, friends and supporters like you have safeguarded the future of land conservation in northwestern Indiana by supporting the work of Shirley Heinze Land Trust.

We ask you to join us online mid-May where we will highlight our work and what we strive to accomplish in the future.

Although we are strong and have the resilience to face uncertain times, your continued generosity and support are vital to our ongoing work.

How It Will Work
Beginning mid-May, we’ll introduce our program via email and social media. We’ll share video testimonials on our website, and present updates about our important land conservation work.

ONLINE SPONSORSHIP OPPORTUNITIES

[ ] BENEFACCTOR - $10,000
[ ] KARNER BLUE BUTTERFLY SPONSOR - $5,000
[ ] GREEN HERON SPONSOR - $2,500
[ ] YELLOW LADY’S SLIPPER SPONSOR - $1,500
[ ] BLANDING’S TURTLE SPONSOR - $750
[ ] BIG BLUESTEM SPONSOR - $500
[ ] INDIVIDUAL SPONSOR - $150
[ ] OTHER AMOUNT $ ________

CONTACT INFORMATION
Name ____________________________________________________________
Address _________________________________________________________________________
City ___________________________ State ___ Zip __________________
Email ___________________________ Phone ___________________

PAYMENT INFORMATION
Total Amount Enclosed $ ____________________________
Enclosed is my check payable to Shirley Heinze Land Trust
Please charge my: [ ] DISC   [ ] VISA   [ ] MC   [ ] AMEX
Card Number ___________________________ Exp Date ________
Cardholder Signature ___________________________ Security Code ________

For more information, please contact Bonnie Hawksworth at bhawksworth@heinzetrust.org or call 219-242-8558

Please visit our website at heinzetrust.org to contribute now, or return this form with payment by Friday, May 15 to
Shirley Heinze Land Trust
109 W 700 N, Valparaiso, IN 46385

Host Committee

Brenda Ashley and Gary Johnson ~ Ann and Dave Bochnowski
Chuck and Sharon Nelson ~ Dale and Nancy Nichols
Violet and Sam Sistovaris ~ Stu and Megan Summers
Suzy Vance and Tim Griffin ~ Anne and Tim Walsh
Paul and Susan Zucker
Leave Your Legacy...  
Join Our Legacy Circle

The Legacy Circle is a group of individuals who share a commitment to safeguarding our most precious natural lands and waters in northwestern Indiana. Legacy Circle members touch the future by including Shirley Heinze Land Trust in their estate plans.

Five easy ways you can make a gift that will protect lands for future generations

- **IRA or 401(k) Plan**
  - Name Shirley Heinze Land Trust as a beneficiary of your IRA, 401(k), or other retirement plan.

- **Will or Trust**
  - Include Shirley Heinze Land Trust in your will or trust as a beneficiary with either a percentage or a dollar amount of your estate.

- **Life Insurance Policy**
  - Name Shirley Heinze Land Trust as a beneficiary of your life insurance policy.

- **Donor Advised Fund**
  - Call your plan’s administrator with your request to name Shirley Heinze Land Trust as a beneficiary.

- **Bank or Brokerage Accounts**
  - Name Shirley Heinze Land Trust as a beneficiary of your bank or brokerage accounts by contacting your bank.

You may need to provide the following information:
- **Legal Name:** Shirley Heinze Land Trust, Inc.
- **Address:** 109 W 700 North, Valparaiso, IN 46385
- **Tax ID:** #35-2153969

If you have already included Shirley Heinze Land Trust in your estate plans, please let us know so we can thank you and welcome you into the Legacy Circle. This information is not meant as tax or legal advice. Please contact your financial advisor to determine if one of these gift plans is right for you.

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**Board of Directors, Advisory Council and Staff**

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**2019 SNAPSHOT**

- **109** Acres Acquired
- **2,570** Total Acres Permanently Protected
- **207** Uplands
- **238** Wetlands
- **685** Outreach Event Attendance
- **13,215** Education Hours Delivered
- **4,050** Volunteer Hours Delivered
- **$1,647,667** Revenue
- **$1,231,625** Expenditures
- **$416,038** Net Revenue

*Includes income and value of land acquisitions

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*Revenue generated for land purchases and land donations are a transfer of assets and therefore cannot be reflected as an expenditure. Note: The financial figures presented in this snapshot are preliminary and will be adjusted after an audit later in 2020.*
What plant could possibly be more out of place in an Indiana setting than a cactus? As unlikely as it seems, the eastern prickly pear (Opuntia humifusa) is a common inhabitant of the foredunes and dry savannas along the southern shore of Lake Michigan. The abundance of sunshine and well-drained sandy soil makes these places the perfect habitat for this denizen of the desert, a member of a genus of cacti native to the southwestern U.S., Mexico, and Central America.

Many visitors to Dunes beaches carry an unpleasant memory of their first encounter with prickly pear. Little more than one foot tall, the plant is easily concealed among other vegetation, lying in wait for the unwary beachgoer who treads barefoot onto its territory. The long thorny spines can cause painful injury. The smaller bristles (glochids), needle sharp and barely visible, are annoyingly difficult to remove once they’ve penetrated the skin.

But prickly pear more than compensates for its malicious side with a great natural beauty. In late spring, buds develop along the edges of the plant’s fleshy paddles. In June they explode into large showy yellow flowers, two to three inches across, sometimes with a fiery orange-red center. Individual plants spread out along the ground, often clustering into colonies which create a spectacular flowering display that can last for weeks.

Prickly pear is an edible plant, particularly the larger Opuntia species that live in the Mexican deserts. The succulent paddles (nopales) are eaten as vegetables. The fruits are about the size and shape of supermarket pears (hence the plant’s common name). They can be eaten raw (after removing the skin) or transformed into jellies and candy. Our smaller local species produces fruits that are red and barrel-shaped, only about 1½ inch long.

John Merle Coulter Nature Preserve, a Shirley Heinze property in Portage, is a fine place to look for prickly pear cactus. The West Beach trails at Indiana Dunes National Park and the Marquette Trail bike path in Gary are other good spots. Walk these places in the spring to locate the plants; then return in June to enjoy them at the peak of their blooming glory. A bit of advice: admire the plants from above as much as you like, but it’s best not to touch them!

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.