

NWI Post-Tribune Sunday, April 7, 2013

New Porter County nature preserve named after California attorney

by Amy Lavalley Post-Tribune correspondent



CHESTERTON — The Shirley Heinze Land Trust has expanded its holdings with the recent donation of 38 acres of land along the Little Calumet River.

The land, which will be managed as a nature preserve and a resource for outdoor recreation, was donated by a trust managed by Chicagoans David N. Rosner, Harvey Walner and Jack Rosner

It will be named the Keith Richard Walner Nature Preserve in memory of the late son of Harvey and Barbara Walner. Keith Walner was a California attorney who died in 2012.

The trust now has 16 project areas in Lake, Porter and LaPorte counties. The newest parcel is between the Little Calumet River and Interstate 94, and is near existing property of 42 acres the trust owns along the river at Brummitt Road.

The trust's goal is to protect the flood plain corridor along the Little Calumet River, said Kristopher Krouse, the trust's executive director.

"There are a lot of implications when it comes to managing invasive species and water quality," he said. "A lot of that corridor is still natural, and by us acquiring the property, it puts us in a position to preserve and restore it for everyone in Northwest Indiana."

The property also has positive implications for those using the waterway, Krouse said, adding the trust will be working on a public access site.

The land donation was formally completed at the end of last year. The donors acquired the property in 1968 and developed the Deer Run apartment complex on a portion of it. The family sold the apartment building in 1994.

The property includes a half-mile frontage on the north bank of the Little Calumet River, as well as old oxbow wetlands, extensive flood plain and an upland forest community.

Learn more:

For more on the Shirley Heinze Land Trust, call (219) 242-8558, or go to www.heinzetrust.org.