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Ridge View Mighty Acorns share stewardship experience



HOBART | Ridge View Elementary fifth graders are in the second stage of this school year's stewardship of preservation and restoration entitled Mighty Acorns.

This is Ridge View's fourth year of the Mighty Acorns program for fifth graders. Ridge View's stewardship aids Greiner Nature Preserve, located southwest of the intersection of Liverpool Road and Old Ridge Road in Hobart, behind Ridge View School. Greiner is a 73-acre property ecotone (transitional landscape) that ranges from black oak savanna, to wet prairie to swamp.

Fifth graders, with Shirley Heinze Land Trust, work at nursing Greiner back to health. Guide Jim Erdelac instructed students on an invasive species called Buckthorn. This species starts growing before native plants essentially out competing our native plants for space and resources. After instruction, students set out to clear the preserve from Buckthorn plants. The goal is to help and restore the natural area, making it less dependent on human to maintain it.

"I never realized how bad the Buckthorn problem was," said Benjamin McCain, fifth grader. "We need to get this plant out of here!"

Shirley Heinze offers educational programs to inform the public about our area's rich natural history and provides numerous volunteer opportunities.

For more information, visit www.heinzetrust.org