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Shirley Heinze Land Trust celebrates ‘The Season for Growing’ at annual benefit



Guests look over the items at the auction table at the Shirley Heinze Land Trust Spring Benefit.

CHESTERTON | Shirley Heinze Land Trust welcomed nearly 300 supporters and guests to its 11th annual Spring Benefit on May 31.

Shirley Heinze Land Trust Board President Margaret Williford welcomed the attendees, thanking the event's benefactor sponsor, Northern Indiana Public Service Company. Other sponsors included BP Products North America, MonoSol, ArcelorMittal and Cardno JFNew. Williford noted that "Shirley Heinze Land Trust is a vehicle by which each of us can have a direct impact in making our community a better place to live by joining with other donors and volunteers in a common effort to preserve and restore unique and diverse natural treasures we have in Northwest Indiana."

Kris Krouse, executive director of Shirley Heinze Land Trust, also addressed the gathering. "Just a little more than one year after we purchased Meadowbrook Girl Scout Camp, we were able to acquire the adjoining 80 acres. This was made possible largely by the generous assistance of our partners, NIPSCO and the Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation, which allowed us to qualify for a grant from Indiana's Bicentennial Nature Trust, a program that enables organizations like Shirley Heinze Land Trust to preserve land within the state."

This year the organization's Funding the Cause program focused on raising funds for the Meadowbrook project area. "It will allow us to restore this area back to its past glory of being a mature forest and make it a place where public access is encouraged, with trails and interpretive signs. The end result will be a

place where people of Northwest Indiana can see their investment in land conservation in action — a place that will benefit the area for years to come,” Krouse said.



Pictured from left, board Secretary Anne Walsh, Executive Director Kris Krouse, board member Irene Herlocker-Meyer, board President Margaret Williford and board Treasurer Lance Werner of the Shirley Heinze Land Trust gathered recently at the organization's Spring Benefit.

Shirley Heinze Land Trust manages approximately 1,400 acres of natural land in LaPorte, Lake, and Porter Counties. Five of its properties — Cressmoor Prairie, Seidner Dune & Swale, John Merle Coulter Preserve, Barker Woods, and Ambler Flatwoods — have been dedicated to the people of Indiana as State Nature Preserves. Included in the Heinze Trust's holdings are examples of the entire spectrum of natural communities in this area: tallgrass prairie, high dune, oak savanna, boreal flatwoods, dune and swale, woodlands, marshes, swamps, ponds, fens, and riparian habitat.

To learn more about Shirley Heinze Land Trust and how to become involved, visit the website at www.heinzetrust.org or call (219) 242-8558.