

## Celebrating and Preserving the Gift

Saturday, June 25, was the perfect summer evening to hold Shirley Heinze's 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Summer Benefit - "Celebrating and Preserving the Gift" - at Sand Creek Country Club in Chesterton. Honored guests enjoyed champagne and hors d'oeuvres and perused the many silent auction items. After a delightful social time, everyone gathered in the banquet room for an elegant dinner, and they were welcomed and thanked by President Dale Engquist. The Master of Ceremonies, Harry Porterfield, CBS Channel 2's news anchor and commentator, directed the rest of the evening's activities.

The highlight of the evening was the program presented by Executive Director Kris Krouse, who focused on the strength of the organization's work in advancing land conservation in Northwest Indiana. A video included testimonies to the wonder of nature and to the preservation and restoration of precious habitats owned by Shirley Heinze. Kris also spoke about this year's "Funding the Cause" to advance the Mighty Acorns Program, an outdoor environmental science program for school children. With auctioneer Jim Lestinsky leading the live auction and "Funding the Cause," the guests responded with utmost generosity, donating over \$100,000 that night, with \$50,000 going to the Mighty Acorns program. Everyone who worked on this event is very grateful to the loyal supporters of Shirley Heinze for the evening's huge success that exceeded expectations.

### NEWS BRIEFS

#### **Sustain Our Great Lakes Grant Program**

A \$450,870 grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation's Sustain Our Great Lakes grant program (SOGL) has been awarded to a bi-state collaboration of public and private conservation agencies headed by Friends of the Forest Preserves. The project will provide restoration work including invasive species removal and prescribed burns at sites throughout the Chicago lakeplain in both Indiana and Illinois. SHLT will receive \$24,000 to control woody vegetation invading the fens at Greiner Nature Preserve and to control non-native invasive species throughout the site.

SHLT has also received a \$34,900 SOGL grant for restoration at Ambler Flatwoods. This project will control invasive species, remove abandoned structures (a house and outbuildings) and establish native plants on the recently acquired Osysko, Werre and "40-acre" parcels of the preserve. The project will employ students from the Great Lakes Innovative Stewardship Through Education Network (GLISTEN) and include an outreach component aimed at fostering stewardship of neighboring forested lands under private ownership.



#### **Danny Robertson Joins Stewardship Staff**

Danny Robertson has been hired as a full-time Stewardship Assistant. Danny, a recent graduate of Purdue University, worked with SHLT on a part-time basis during summer 2010. He takes over responsibilities formerly held by Jim Erdelac, who now occupies the newly created position of Education & Volunteer Manager.

#### **Donnelley Grant Promotes Long-term Sustainability**

The Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation has awarded SHLT a grant of \$28,000 to support communications planning and major donor cultivation. The Board of Directors has established a new Communications and Marketing Committee to begin the work of developing a Communications Plan and laying the groundwork for a capital fundraising campaign. The Committee is currently entertaining proposals for a consultant to assist in the process.

#### **Ivy Tech Students Work in SHLT Preserves**

Two summer stewardship liaisons from Ivy Tech in Valparaiso worked at Shirley Heinze Land Trust nature preserves this summer under the auspices of the Great Lakes Innovative Stewardship through Education Network (GLISTEN). Jana Crum and Heather Dulaney, both biology majors, performed a variety of tasks at several properties. They collected information on deer browse damage, monitored rare plants, and participated in invasive species control. Both women plan to continue their studies at Valparaiso University after completing their programs at Ivy Tech.

#### **New Bridge and Trail Dedicated at Little Calumet Wetlands**

Some 100 persons attended our annual community hike at the Little Calumet Wetlands Preserve in Chesterton on August 27. The event featured a ribbon-cutting ceremony to formally open a new riverside trail that can be accessed via a unique eco-friendly bridge constructed at the site. SHLT hopes to promote the new preserve as an educational resource for the community and a hub for outdoor activities such as hiking, canoeing, fishing, and birding.



#### **New Stewardship Equipment**

A \$3,000 grant from the Norcross Wildlife Foundation has funded the purchase of a UTV fire pump skid unit with high pressure pump and 55-gallon tank. The new equipment will help us conduct controlled burns more efficiently and safely. We have also acquired a new snow plow and winch for our Polaris Ranger all-terrain vehicle, using funds provided by the NiSource Charitable Foundation.

### CALENDAR OF EVENTS

#### **Now through October 2**

**Shirley Heinze Land Trust 30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Exhibit at the Westchester Township History Museum, 700 W. Porter Avenue, Chesterton. Museum hours are Wednesday through Sunday, 1pm to 5pm.**

#### **Saturday, October 1, 9:30am-12 noon**

**Annual Donor Hike at Ambler Flatwoods, featuring the dedication of a new 150-acre addition as a state nature preserve. Free nature hikes will be followed by a luncheon at Tryon Farm. Consult the website for more information.**

#### **Friday, November 18, 11:30am-1:30pm**

**30<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Luncheon at Pottawattomie Country Club in Michigan City, featuring a presentation by Erin Heskett, National Services Director of the Land Trust Alliance. Consult the website for more information.**

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