Shirley Heinze Land Trust invites the public to join us on the path toward long-term financial security. Our first-ever capital campaign aims to raise $3.5 million to advance our important mission. The money will permit us to protect an additional 500 acres of environmentally significant land. It will support efforts to restore and maintain the 1,600 acres we already manage. It will promote conservation awareness through educational programs and increased access to natural areas.

Over the past two years we have quietly been accepting donations and pledges from our longtime supporters, conservation partners, foundations, and landowners. We are proud to announce that this effort has netted nearly $2.75 million, about seventy-eight percent of our objective.

We are now expanding the effort to include all of you who live, work, and play in Northwest Indiana, all those who appreciate the natural wonders of our area and support the work Shirley Heinze Land Trust does to protect them. Campaign committees have been set up in all three counties, and they will sponsor events throughout the region, including guided walks in the nature preserves, presentations by speakers at a variety of venues, and informal social get-togethers.

Shirley Heinze Land Trust has been protecting natural land in Northwest Indiana for almost thirty-five years. You've all benefited in many ways: increased green space, expanded recreational opportunities, cleaner air and water, floodwater relief, habitat for native plants and wildlife, outdoor educational programs for students of all ages.

Now is the time for you to join the growing number of your neighbors and friends who are showing their appreciation by contributing to our campaign. We cannot fulfill our mission without the support of people like you.

Why don’t you “Take a Walk with Shirley?” It’s the best way to demonstrate your commitment to a brighter natural future for our region.

Watch your mail boxes and the press for news about events in your area. Follow the progress of our campaign at www.heinzetrust.org.

Show your support by sending a donation in the envelope provided with this newsletter.

Please support the work of Shirley Heinze Land Trust by making a generous donation to this campaign. It could be one of the greatest gifts you will ever give to your children and grandchildren.” - Bill Kurtis, acclaimed journalist and documentarian

“Northwest Indiana needs a strong Shirley Heinze Land Trust to safeguard its natural treasures.” - John Swanson, former Executive Director, Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission

“We are proud to give our support to Shirley Heinze Land Trust, one of the leading voices for land conservation in the Midwest.” - Kelly Carmichael, Director of Environmental Policy, Northern Indiana Public Service Company

“What Shirley Heinze has to offer is all about quality of life. It is making our area a better place to live.” - Nancy Johnson, past President, Legacy Foundation, Lake County’s Community Foundation
Steven Cohen & Michael Godnick

Looking toward the future

It was the beautiful natural setting that attracted Steven Cohen and Michael Godnick to the Indiana Dunes, but it was Shirley Heinze Land Trust that triggered their active involvement in land conservation.

Steven grew up on the north side of Chicago; Michael is a native of New Jersey. The two met in Boston thirty-three years ago; then they moved to Chicago. Steven taught special education at a suburban high school and later managed real estate for the City of Chicago’s Department of Aviation. Michael was a consultant to nonprofit organizations, assisting them on fundraising and governance issues.

The couple became part-time residents of Beverly Shores in 1998; they moved there full-time ten years later. Although both enjoyed hiking and vacationing at national parks, neither was particularly nature-oriented. That changed quickly. Steven organized a local chapter for the International Coastal Cleanup Day. The two began hearing about the work of the Heinze Trust in local natural areas, and they started participating in its hikes and other events.

“Shirley Heinze has come to mean a lot to us,” Steven says. “It’s a great organization to be involved with. We’ve been impressed from the beginning by how committed the staff and board are to fulfilling the organization’s mission.”

Steven joined the Board of Directors in 2007 and served two three-year terms. He was chair of the Fundraising Committee and participated in the ad hoc committee to find a new organizational home. After the Heinze Trust moved to its new Meadowbrook headquarters, Steven joined the Building and Grounds Committee. Michael was less formal in his involvement, but he volunteered in many ways and provided good counsel based on his long history of advising other nonprofits.

Steven and Michael have always been generous with their time and financial donations, and when it came time to do estate planning, they demonstrated their commitment to Shirley Heinze Land Trust by becoming members of the Legacy Circle.

“That decision came easily,” Michael notes. “The organization is extremely well-run, with strong leadership. It’s innovative and not afraid to push the envelope on new projects and try new ways of doing things. But at the same time, the board and staff think strategically and have a carefully formulated plan for moving forward. Shirley Heinze will be doing good work for many years to come, and we wanted to support that.”

Steven and Michael are both retired now, and a few years ago they purchased a winter home in Tucson. It will eventually become their full-time residence. “But our hearts will always be in the Dunes,” says Steven. “We’ll come back often, and our commitment to Shirley Heinze will remain strong.”

This new home in the desert is an exciting change for them, but there’s even more reason for celebration in their lives. After more than three decades as a couple, Michael and Steven were married on October 6, 2014. We wish them well, and we’re glad to have them as part of our team!

JOIN THE LEGACY CIRCLE

There is no better or more painless way to demonstrate your support for the work of Shirley Heinze Land Trust than by including us in your estate plan.

• Make a charitable bequest in your will. This can be a fixed dollar amount, a percentage of your estate, or specific designated property, such as real estate or securities.

• Designate SHLT as beneficiary of your IRA, 401(k), or other retirement plan.

• Name SHLT as beneficiary of your insurance policy.

Heinze Sights is published twice a year by Shirley Heinze Land Trust, Inc. 109 West 700 North Valparaiso, IN 46385 Tel: 219-242-8558 E-Mail: info@heinzetrust.org Website: www.heinzetrust.org Ron Trigg, Editor Janet Kaminiski, Design & Layout
Grant will fund restoration in Hobart Marsh

The Sustain our Great Lakes (SOGL) Program has awarded Shirley Heinze Land Trust a grant of $100,000 to control invasive plants and re-establish the native plant community on 140 acres of habitat in the Hobart Marsh complex. We will focus our work on Bur Oak Woods, Hidden Prairie, Ivory Wetland, and small properties adjacent to McCloskey Savanna Nature Preserve.

The Heinze Trust owns and manages more than 300 acres of natural land at Hobart Marsh. Other conservation landowners in the complex include Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore, Indiana Department of Natural Resources, Save the Dunes, and Lake County Parks Department.

SOGL is a public-private partnership which sustains, restores, and protects fish, wildlife, and habitat in the Great Lakes basin by leveraging funding, building conservation capacity, and focusing partners and resources toward key ecological issues. Administered by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the program receives funding and other support from ArcelorMittal, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S.D.A. Forest Service, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, and U.S.D.A. Natural Resources Conservation Service.

Since 2006, SOGL has awarded 226 grants worth over $49 million in federal and corporate partner funding to non-profit organizations; state, tribal, and local governments; and educational institutions. Shirley Heinze has received previous SOGL funding to support restoration projects at Bur Oak Woods, John Merle Coulter Preserve, Meadowbrook, and the Great Marsh.

Ambler Flatwoods cited for restoration excellence

The Chicago Wilderness consortium’s Commission on Excellence in Ecological Restoration has placed Ambler Flatwoods in the Silver Tier of Chicago-area nature preserves in ecological restoration.

In its notice of award, the Commission wrote that the honor “recognizes the achievement and commitments of the Shirley Heinze Land Trust. (We have) been impressed with your knowledgeable staff and their work. Equally impressive is the support and organizational commitment of the Shirley Heinze Land Trust to protect and restore the high quality natural areas under your jurisdiction to their fullest potential.”

Ambler Flatwoods is a 353-acre state-dedicated nature preserve. It supports diverse natural communities, with 434 species of plants and over 441 species of animals documented, many of which are considered rare or endangered. The dominant community of the site, northern flatwoods, is "extremely rare and considered globally imperiled" according to the Chicago Wilderness Biodiversity Recovery Plan. The preserve harbors species that typically occur much farther north and appear here at the southern extent of their range.

The award was presented at a ceremony held December 11, 2014, at Loyola University in Chicago. Stewardship Operations Manager Daniel Robertson, who prepared the application for the recognition, and Executive Director Kristopher Krouse accepted the award on behalf of Shirley Heinze Land Trust. Ambler Flatwoods was the only Indiana property cited in this category.

Recent land acquisitions

Donations of eight and one-half wetland lots in our Great Marsh project area in Beverly Shores were received in late 2014. We are grateful to the Ilekis, Pizzo, Mudd, and Wicks families. Our project area at Beverly Shores now encompasses nearly eighty acres.

Save the Dunes deeded ownership of five properties to Shirley Heinze Land Trust in January 2015. Totaling some 200 acres, they include a small addition to Seidner Dune & Swale, three properties that provide buffer to Ambler Flatwoods, and the Father Basil Moreau Nature Preserve in Porter County.

Wish List

You can help Shirley Heinze Land Trust by donating equipment that will assist in fulfilling our mission. If you have any of the items below – or are able to finance their purchase – we’d be very grateful. All items are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

¾-ton truck
Small generator
Folding chairs

Sustain Our Great Lakes

You can help Shirley Heinze Land Trust by donating equipment that will assist in fulfilling our mission. If you have any of the items below – or are able to finance their purchase – we’d be very grateful. All items are tax deductible to the extent allowed by law.

¾-ton truck
Small generator
Folding chairs

Recent Land Acquisitions

Donations of eight and one-half wetland lots in our Great Marsh project area in Beverly Shores were received in late 2014. We are grateful to the Ilekis, Pizzo, Mudd, and Wicks families. Our project area at Beverly Shores now encompasses nearly eighty acres.

Save the Dunes deeded ownership of five properties to Shirley Heinze Land Trust in January 2015. Totaling some 200 acres, they include a small addition to Seidner Dune & Swale, three properties that provide buffer to Ambler Flatwoods, and the Father Basil Moreau Nature Preserve in Porter County.
Join us for Shirley Heinze Land Trust’s 12th Annual Spring Benefit to be held on Saturday, May 16, at 5:30 p.m. at Sand Creek Country Club in Chesterton, Indiana.

Finding Connections is the theme of this year’s Spring Benefit, which will draw 300 of our friends and supporters who share our connection with the wonderfully diverse natural areas we preserve and protect here in Northwest Indiana. This special evening will help Shirley Heinze Land Trust connect land parcels along the Little Calumet River, protect their riparian habitat, and develop outdoor recreation opportunities for paddlers, anglers, hikers, birders, and all who enjoy nature.

The evening will begin with a champagne reception, including a variety of hors d’oeuvres, followed by an elegant sit-down dinner. Beer and wine will be served, and a cash bar will be available.

The evening includes both live and silent auctions with many unique and diverse items and a Funding the Cause program.

The highlight of our live auction is a one-week stay in a fairy tale villa on the French Riviera overlooking Monaco. An exquisite selection of fine wines and our ever-popular “Mystery Dinner” will also be featured.

Prompt reservations are encouraged as tables fill quickly and we have limited seating. Individual tickets and sponsorships may be purchased on our website at www.heinzetrust.org. Please RSVP no later than April 24, 2015. We look forward to seeing you there!

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TICKET OPTIONS</th>
<th>CONTACT INFORMATION</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Benefactor - $10,000 (includes 20 tickets)</td>
<td>Name ____________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Karner Blue Butterfly Sponsor - $5,000 (includes 10 tickets)</td>
<td>Address __________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Green Heron Sponsor - $2,700 (includes 10 tickets)</td>
<td>City __________________ State _______ Zip _______</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yellow Lady’s Slipper Sponsor - $1,700 (includes 10 tickets)</td>
<td>Email ____________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Blanding’s Turtle Sponsor - $750 (includes 4 tickets)</td>
<td>Phone No. _________________________</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Big Bluestem Sponsor - $500 (includes 2 tickets)</td>
<td>#1 Grilled Sirloin and Atlantic Salmon - Six ounce sirloin grilled medium topped with a red wine demi-glace accompanied by a four ounce Atlantic salmon fillet, served with roasted potato hash and seasonal vegetables.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fern Sponsor - $499 and under</td>
<td>#2 Grilled Roasted Vegetables - Roasted vegetable raviolis topped with a roasted red pepper sauce and parmesan cheese. (Vegan would have no cheese)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Ticket - $150 ($75 is tax-deductible)</td>
<td>Please contact Bonnie Hawksworth at <a href="mailto:bhawksworth@heinzetrust.org">bhawksworth@heinzetrust.org</a> or 219-242-8558 with meal options and guest names by April 24, 2015.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>PAYMENT INFORMATION</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Amount Enclosed $ _____________</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Enclosed is my check payable to Shirley Heinze Land Trust</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>☐ Please charge my: ☐ DISC ☐ VISA ☐ MC ☐ AMEX</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Card Number Exp. Date</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cardholder Signature Date</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

I cannot attend, but please accept my gift in support of Shirley Heinze Land Trust.

Please contact Bonnie Hawksworth at bhawksworth@heinzetrust.org or 219-242-8558 with meal options and guest names by April 24, 2015.

RSVP online at www.heinzetrust.org, or return this form with payment to:

Shirley Heinze Land Trust
109 West 700 North
Valparaiso, IN 46385

Please RSVP by April 24, 2015.

#1 Grilled Sirloin and Atlantic Salmon - Six ounce sirloin grilled medium topped with a red wine demi-glace accompanied by a four ounce Atlantic salmon fillet, served with roasted potato hash and seasonal vegetables.

#2 Grilled Roasted Vegetables - Roasted vegetable raviolis topped with a roasted red pepper sauce and parmesan cheese. (Vegan would have no cheese)
GOOD NEWS FOR LAND CONSERVATION ON THE LITTLE CAL

The Indiana Bicentennial Commission has identified the Little Calumet River Corridor as a special conservation area for land acquisition funding under the Bicentennial Nature Trust (BNT). The area encompasses more than ten miles of riverfront and offers the opportunity to connect already existing protected areas. Conservation landowners in the corridor include Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore, Indiana Department of Natural Resources, LaPorte County Parks, Porter County Izaak Walton League, Shirley Heinze Land Trust, Town of Porter Parks Department, and Coffee Creek Watershed Conservancy.

The designation will give priority treatment to BNT grant applications within the corridor and sets aside funds to support them. All land conservation entities desiring to acquire land in the corridor – nonprofits, state agencies, county and local parks departments – can benefit from the program.

Shirley Heinze Land Trust Executive Director Kris Krouse argued the case for the special designation for the Little Calumet River before the BNT Project Committee in December 2014, and the Commission gave its approval shortly thereafter. In his presentation, Krouse noted the many benefits of protecting land in the riparian corridor: wildlife and bird habitat, reduction of flood impacts for adjacent landowners, increased public access for recreation and education, improved air and water quality.

The Little Cal Corridor is the fifth special BNT conservation area and the first in Northwest Indiana, according to program director Mark Becker. “These focused areas of conservation build on and connect already protected properties, thus opening up opportunities for BNT to leave an even bigger legacy for the people of Indiana.”

MAJOR EXPANSION FOR MIGHTY ACorns

The Northwest Indiana Mighty Acorns Partnership has expanded its coverage to include schools in all three counties in our region. The program was introduced in the 2014-2015 academic year to students in the Gary, Hammond, and Michigan City schools. Other participants are the Hobart, Portage, and East Chicago public school systems, the Discovery Charter School in Porter, and the Charter School of the Dunes in Gary. More than 3,500 children in 140 classrooms benefited during the first semester of this school year.

Created around the idea of connecting urban youth with nature, Mighty Acorns is a conservation education program that engages third- through sixth-grade students and teachers through classroom lessons in environmental science and hands-on stewardship activities. Dunes Learning Center, the Field Museum of Chicago, and Shirley Heinze Land Trust comprise the local partnership. The Northwest Indiana Mighty Acorns Partnership has grown to become the largest provider of the program in the Chicago region.

Major funding for the Northwest Indiana Mighty Acorns Partnership is provided by ArcelorMittal. Additional financial support has come from generous grants from the Indiana Lake Michigan Coastal Program, the Legacy Foundation of Lake County, the Porter County Community Foundation, and Foundations of East Chicago.

Two other environmental education programs have been introduced to Northwest Indiana this year: Calumet Is My Backyard (CIMBY) for high school students and Earth Force for middle schoolers.

2015 VOLUNTEER REPORT

Volunteers once again gave an impressive helping hand to support our important mission this past year. Eighty-two individuals donated 512 hours at our monthly volunteer workdays and on special projects. They performed a variety of tasks: removing tree tubes at the Ambler Flatwoods reforestation site, controlling exotic species, preparing for and participating in prescribed burns.

Mike Nieckula, Meadowbrook’s jack of all trades, was our 2014 Volunteer of the Year. Mike built and installed owl and chickadee boxes, painted the lodge, and remodeled the mud room at the headquarters building. We can count on him always being there when we need assistance!

Valparaiso Cub Scout Pack 902 helped plant almost 1,000 trees at Meadowbrook. Tim Griffin did an awesome job keeping the lawns around the headquarters buildings manicured. The Friends of Shirley Heinze maintained the native garden. Volunteers monitored frog calling and plants of concern at several sites.

Many thanks to all!

WANT TO BECOME A VOLUNTEER?

If you’d like to get out of the house and do some field work for Shirley Heinze Land Trust, we’d be happy to have your help. A volunteer workday is scheduled one Saturday a month (typically 10am-3pm, CST) at one of our nature preserves. You don’t need any special skills; we’ll provide equipment and training. We can also arrange individual volunteer opportunities to suit your schedule. You’ll receive regular notification of volunteer workdays by email. For information, call 219-242-8558 or visit www.heinzetrust.org.
Partnerships celebrated at community luncheon

Shirley Heinze Land Trust used its annual Community Luncheon in November as an opportunity to recognize several of the partners whose contributions have helped us fulfill our mission.

Paul Labovitz, newly installed superintendent of Indiana Dunes National Lakeshore, served as keynote speaker at the event. He lauded the spirit of cooperation among the business, government, and nonprofit sectors that characterizes our area. Shirley Heinze and the National Lakeshore have worked together on restoration, land acquisition, stewardship, and education projects for more than thirty years.

The Northern Indiana Public Service Company (NIPSCO) was cited for its long history of support for Heinze Trust programs. They include financial assistance in the purchase of key parcels in the Little Calumet River corridor and at Meadowbrook Nature Preserve, numerous grants for restoration projects, book publishing, and many hours of volunteer labor by NIPSCO employees.

ArcelorMittal was recognized for its contributions to the Sustain Our Great Lakes Program, a public-private partnership that has directly benefited restoration projects at many Shirley Heinze nature preserves. ArcelorMittal USA Foundation is also a major funder for the Northwest Indiana Mighty Acorns Partnership. Arcelor and the Heinze Trust have collaborated on a fitness trail and habitat restoration project at the steelmaker’s Burns Harbor facility.

Indiana Dunes Tourism received a Bringing Nature Home award from the Friends of Shirley Heinze in honor of the native-plant garden installed at the Dorothy Buell Memorial Visitor Center in Porter. The project celebrates local flora and contributes to Lake Michigan water quality by absorbing stormwater runoff and pollutants.

Shirley Heinze Land Trust hosts the annual Community Luncheon every fall in order to engage local business and the general public with Northwest Indiana’s conservation community. The 2014 event was held at Long Beach Country Club.

In Memoriam
Irene Herlocker-Meyer
(March 19, 1921 – September 21, 2014)

Northwest Indiana lost a conservation legend with the death of Irene Herlocker-Meyer last fall. Irene was most famous for her ten-year campaign to save Hoosier Prairie, the largest intact example of original tallgrass prairie in Indiana. She mustered the support of politicians, scientists, and ordinary citizens in a struggle that saw her testify before committees in Congress and the Indiana General Assembly. On January 14, 1977, the State of Indiana purchased the 300-acre tract (using half federal and half state funds) for permanent protection as Hoosier Prairie Nature Preserve. The property has subsequently more than doubled in size.

Irene Herlocker-Meyer was a life board member of Shirley Heinze Land Trust and the Indiana Chapter of The Nature Conservancy. She received the Paul H. Douglas Award from Save the Dunes and was inducted into the Indiana Conservation Hall of Fame. Irene never neglected her duties as a board member of Shirley Heinze Land Trust, and we will forever remember her contributions to our work.
Officers & New Directors Named

The Board of Directors has elected the following slate of officers for 2015.

President – Margaret Williford
Vice President – Kelly Carmichael
Secretary – Pat McKinlay
Treasurer – Lance Werner

We welcome the following new members, who began service on the Board of Directors in January 2015.

Rick Knoll owns a construction business and is a former member of the LaPorte County Council. He lives in unincorporated LaPorte County.

Robert Long recently retired from a position as a biology professor at Grand Rapids (MI) Community College. He has homes in Chicago and LaPorte County.

Judge Sheila M. Moss has presided over the Lake County Superior Court, County Division, since 1993. She resides in the Miller section of Gary.

Rita A. McLennon is the Director of Development for the Merit School of Music in Chicago. She lives in Chicago.

Ken Schoon is Professor Emeritus of Education at Indiana University Northwest and the author of books on the Calumet Region. He lives in Munster.

We say farewell to Anne Walsh, who has completed her tour on the Board after two terms. She was Secretary, 2012-2014, and active on the Fundraising, Board Development, Education & Outreach, and Communications Committees. Anne continues as chair of the Spring Benefit Committee.

News Briefs

2014 Bringing Nature Home Awards

The 4th annual Bringing Nature Home (BNH) awards were presented last year by the Friends of Shirley Heinze to recognize local gardeners and institutions who incorporate native plants in their landscaping.

Individual winners were Joanne Keilman of Portage, Jan Koss and Barbara Merten of rural LaPorte County, and Alexia Trzyna of Ogden Dunes.

Indiana Dunes Tourism was cited in the organizational category for the native-plant garden at the Dorothy Buell Memorial Visitor Center. Assistant Director Christine Livingston and Director Lorelei Weimer were recognized for their work on the project.

Barbara Plampin Honored by Save the Dunes

Life Board Member Barbara Plampin received the 2014 Paul H. Douglas Award at a ceremony at Barker House in December. Save the Dunes annually bestows this honor on an individual who has demonstrated outstanding service to the cause of preserving and protecting the Indiana Dunes; it is the organization’s highest honor. Barbara was recognized for her advocacy for natural land preservation, her botanic expertise, and her commitment to education.

Peg’s Garden

The native-plant garden at Meadowbrook Conservation Center has been named “Peg’s Garden” in honor of Peg Mohar. As co-chair of Friends of Shirley Heinze, Peg was the driving force behind the garden, which was installed soon after we acquired the property in 2013. After more than two decades of service to our organization, Peg and husband Don are in the process of re-locating to Virginia. The garden will be maintained as her legacy, ready to greet her on what we hope will be frequent trips back home.

New Advisory Council Members Named

Eleven new members have been named to the Advisory Council. The Council comprises individuals who have talents and expertise they are willing to share with Heinze Trust staff and the Board of Directors.

Among the new advisors are former Board members Marty Balogh, Kathy Dennis, Tim Griffin, and Anne Walsh. Also named were Mark Bouman, associate director of the Science Action Center at the Field Museum; Nancy Johnson, former president of the Legacy Foundation of Lake County; Chris Kline, director of sustainability at the Culver Academies; Kathy Luther, director of environmental programs for the Northwestern Indiana Regional Planning Commission; Sergio Mendoza, city planner for the City of Hobart; Marge Riemenschneider, retired school teacher from South Bend; and Laurel Ross, former co-chair of

Mark Your Calendars

Sat, Apr 11 Friends of Indiana Dunes Native Plant Sale at Dunes State Park
Sat, Apr 18 Northwest Indiana Earth Day Celebration at Porter County Expo Center
May 12-13 Calumet Summit
Sat, May 16 12th Annual Spring Benefit at Sand Creek Country Club
Sat, Jun 6 Community Hike at Seidner Dune & Swale Appreciation Hike & Luncheon at Amber Flatwoods
Sat, Sep 19 Land Trust Alliance National Rally at Sacramento, CA
Oct 7-10 Bus Tour of Shirley Heinze Nature Preserves
WHAT a Great Idea!

In his final State of the State Address in 2012, former Governor Mitch Daniels announced the Indiana Bicentennial Nature Trust (BNT) as a new statewide effort to honor Indiana’s 200th anniversary in 2016. The act mirrored the State of Indiana’s gift to its citizens for the Centennial celebration a century earlier, when it created our state park system at a time when the concept of public conservation and recreational lands was still relatively new.

The state has obligated $20 million in state funding to support the BNT, and the Lilly Endowment contributed an additional $10 million. The program’s goal is to preserve and protect land that will become part of the public trust by providing grants to match local donations of land or money. As of January 2015, the BNT had supported 119 projects in 54 counties with grants totaling $22.4 million.

Shirley Heinze Land Trust is grateful to have received two BNT grants which allowed us to acquire Meadowbrook Nature Preserve and Conservation Center in 2013 and 2014. With the recent designation of the Little Calumet River Corridor as a BNT special conservation area, chances are good that our region will benefit from even more of the Trust’s generosity.

The hidden story of the BNT, at least from the Shirley Heinze Land Trust point of view, is the opportunity that the grant process has provided to rally support from the community for land conservation. Our two grant applications were accompanied by letters of support from more than twenty entities. They included county government departments, community foundations, state and federal agencies, our fellow nonprofits, and educational institutions. The Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation provided integral support for both acquisitions. NIPSCO and the Porter County Community Foundation contributed to the local match needed.

This upwelling of support is proof positive that Northwest Indiana is serious about land conservation. We’re feeling proud to be Hoosiers!

Sincerely,
Kris Krouse

WANTED:
FACEBOOK 'LIKES'

We have a goal this year to double our Facebook Page ‘Likes’. Help us achieve that goal by inviting your friends to ‘like’ our facebook page and share our posts!

WHAT a Great Idea!

From the Director's desk:

Can’t wait until the next newsletter? Keep up-to-date with the latest Shirley Heinze Land Trust news by following us on www.heinzetrust.org — www.facebook.com/heinzetrust — twitter.com/HeinzeTrust.