



OAK HERITAGE

CONSERVANCY

Protecting Southeast Indiana's Natural Heritage

Spring 2017

Neighbors Join Forces, Protect Woods

Riverview Drive is a quiet road in Jefferson County that ends on a bluff overlooking the Ohio River. The drive is bordered by family homes and steep, wooded hillsides that head down into valleys.

Last Fall, a 3.5-acre parcel of that forest came up for auction and something impressive occurred: the neighbors joined forces to preserve the woods.

Bill McCubbin, one of the neighbors, led the effort. There were rumors that the land would be developed, either into house sites or into a site for dumping fill. Neither seemed appropriate for the steep site. Just as importantly, the neighbors thought of the woods on either side of their little road as a place to walk and enjoy nature. They wanted to protect the forest as a forest.

The property was up for auction that week, so the neighbors acted quickly. Bill and a few others invited everyone to talk together about what they could do. They walked door to door at lunchtime, handing out invitations for a 4pm gathering that same day.

Twenty-eight families live in the neighborhood. Forty people came to the gathering, and 16 families pledged funds to purchase the property. Happily, they bid successfully at the auction.

The neighbors wished to permanently protect the forest. Several of them had heard of OHC and what we do, and they contacted us.

While the parcel is smaller than most of our nature preserves, the forest offered a clear conservation benefit: it connects to the vast forests of Clifty Falls State Park. We prioritize conserving intact, contiguous habitat, and we are honored to now own and steward this forest.

We are impressed with the neighbors on Riverview Drive. Thank you for taking action to protect the natural heritage of southeast Indiana!



A wintertime view of our newest preserve.

President's Note

By Richard Dickie

First of all, I think we all owe a heartfelt vote of thanks to John Miller for the effort expended and the work accomplished over the fourteen years that he was President of Oak Heritage Conservancy.

Whatever we do from here on out will be built on the foundations that John prepared. Many thanks, John!

We honored John at our Annual Dinner in Madison in October, where some 60 people gathered to celebrate Oak Heritage Conservancy and land conservation.

This night was an impressive success, and we raised more friends and funds than at any Annual Dinner so far.

Shakespeare said it: some men are born great, some achieve greatness, and some have greatness thrust upon them. I belong to the third class, and it was the Board of OHC that did the thrusting.

I thank the members of the Board for their confidence in me, and I look to them and to all of you in OHC for your continuing support. Knowing that you are all behind me, together we can do good things for OHC and southeast Indiana.

Our most recent acquisition- 3.5 acres in Hanover- has an interesting story.

The land, a steep wooded tract, was put up for auction. The folks along Riverview Drive heard that a would-be buyer intended to do something unsuitable with the tract and these neighbors did something about it.

They banded together, raised money, and with those funds went to the auction and bid successfully. They conveyed the property to us and with gratitude we accepted.

This is an inspiring example of community action. We hope to make this property accessible to the neighborhood, and to be worthy of the trust that has been placed in us. Thank you, Riverview Drive!



Our President of 14 years, John Miller, and his wife, Velda, at last Fall's Annual Dinner. John retired from the Board in the Fall. He was recognized for his years of dedication and leadership. Thank you, John!

Stewardship Update

By Chrys Cook

Monarch butterflies and other threatened pollinators will soon be enjoying 13 acres of new habitat at Hilltop Farm, adjacent to our recent 8-acre tree planting.

We've entered into a partnership agreement with the USFWS. They will provide native wildflower and warm season grass seed for establishing this colorful haven.

After eliminating fescue and other unwelcome competition, our contractor will plant the wildflower and prairie seed via a no-till seed drill.

In providing native milkweed and native nectar plants, we will be helping to ensure the monarch butterfly's food sources during breeding and migration.

Our new prairie will also provide breeding stopover and wintering habitats for migratory grassland birds, such as the dickcissel, grasshopper sparrow, prairie warbler, blue grosbeak, meadow lark, indigo bunting, and eastern meadowlark, and other early succession wildlife.

Field preparation and planting should be complete by mid-June.

We're also in the process of securing funding for other projects at Hilltop. We hope to improve the small Hilltop Farm parking area, enhancing access to the walking path through the woods. Then, we plan to invite the community to explore this special place.

Stay tuned!



OAK HERITAGE CONSERVANCY

Our mission is to preserve, protect and conserve land and water resources that have special natural, agricultural, scenic, or cultural significance. Oak Heritage Conservancy will help landowners personally protect their land so future generations can enjoy the rural landscapes of southeast Indiana.

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Great Events in the Great Outdoors

Take time this Spring to join with other conservation-minded folks, to work for a better world with volunteer projects, to spread the word about OHC, and of course - to enjoy the great outdoors.

OHC-Sponsored Events

We're leading events that let you connect with other OHC members, enjoy the natural world, and help care for OHC land. Bring a friend!

March 25 – 10am - Frogs, Salamanders, and Fossils

DNR naturalist Jason Larson will lead a moderate hike to Falling Timbers Nature Preserve within Versailles State Park, looking for frogs and fossils.

Sat, April 15 – 9am – Work Day + Nature Walk at OHC's Webster Woods Preserve

Meet at the Pride Market in Hanover, caravan to the woods to help get the trail in shape for Spring and enjoy a nature hike with Paul Carmony. BYO picnic.

May 12 & 13 - Native Tree Give Away - Greensburg & Batesville Farmer's Markets

Swing by for a free native tree that will bring birds, butterflies, and beauty to your yard. Let us know if you're in the area and want to help give out trees.

Sat, May 20 – 9am – Explore OHC's Tribbett Woods Preserve

This lovely, old flatwoods exemplifies the forests of pre-settlement Indiana. Meet at the Post Office in Commiskey to carpool. Come ready to explore this trail-less forest.

Sun, May 21 – 10am – Canoe Trip to Dedicate Leblane Woods Preserve

Join us for a six-hour float downstream on the East Fork of the White River. We'll stop and dedicate our new preserve, a floodplain forest that sits along the river. BYO picnic. \$15/person. Must RSVP to (317) 258-5217 by May 12.

Sat, June 3 – 9am – Hike Our New Trail at Hall-Carmer Wetlands

National Trail Day is a great excuse to explore our new trail through the wetlands and woods! Hike led by Paul Carmony. Meet at the Dupont Post Office.

For event details, call (317) 258-5217 or go to our calendar: www.oakheritageconservancy.org/events

Help OHC “Friend-Raise” at Our Collaborative Events

We’re co-hosting several events this Spring. These events offer a unique chance to spread the word about OHC while you enjoy the hikes, bike rides, and other fun activities. We hope you’ll come and help OHC “friend-raise.”

Sat, April 22 – 11am – Earth Day Pedal & Picnic at Clifty Falls State Park

A leisurely four mile ride and a group picnic (BYO picnic).

Sun, April 23 – Noon - Earth Day Clean Up at Versailles State Park

Clean up litter by foot or by kayak.

Weds, May 3 – 5:30pm – Next Indiana Campfire at Hanover College

Moderately rugged hike in Happy Valley led by a humanities scholar and a naturalist. Ticket (\$15) includes meal around a campfire and a beer. Must RSVP to Liz at (317) 258-5217. Space is limited to 25 people.

June 3 – Trail Clean-up at Versailles State Park

Join other nature enthusiasts for a trail clean-up day.

Thurs, July 6 – 10am – Outdoor Kids’ Sensory Day at the Greensburg Library

Bring your little ones for hands-on learning, outside.



Other Great Events Hosted by Our Partners

March 22: Frog Day – Big Oaks NWR / Jefferson County’s Krueger Lake

March 25: Fossils Rock! Workshops & Exploration – Clifty Falls SP

April 1: Caring for the Birds (Birdhouse building in Madison) – Heritage Trail

April 1: Stargazing – Versailles SP

April 21: Birding Tour – Big Oaks NWR, \$3, 7am-1pm, BYO lunch

April 29: People’s Climate March in Indianapolis – Sustainable Indiana

May 6: Spring Wildflower Walk – Versailles SP

June 9-11: Tales of Scales (hands-on with reptiles) – Clifty Falls SP

June 10: Women in the Outdoors – Big Oaks NWR

July 8: Take a Kid Fishing – Big Oaks NWR, Free

Help Select a Grand Prize Winner

Time is running out, but you can still help select a Grand Prize Winner for our “Capturing the Beauty of Working Farmland” photo contest.

Last Fall, amateur photographers entered over 120 photos. When they entered, photographers completed a short survey about their views on land conservation. Almost unanimously, they said that natural areas and working farmland are important parts of the character of southern Indiana’s communities.

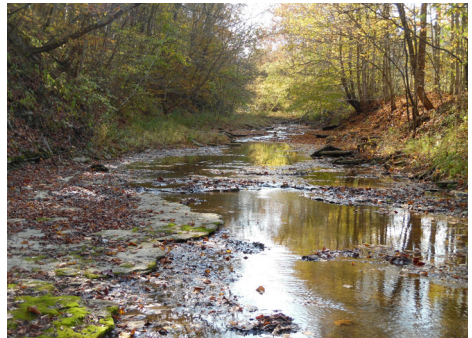
We wanted to share this message with landowners: their neighbors and peers care about conserving land. We also wanted to inform landowners that if they are interested in conserving their land, we are here to help.

Thanks to a grant from the Indiana Arts Commission and collaboration from our partners at George Rogers Clark Land Trust, we were able to print and mount the 14 Best of Show

photos for our travelling exhibit.

This winter, we’ve displayed the exhibit at community events where landowners gather, including five Soil and Water Conservation District meetings and three farming and conservation conferences.

We also created an online exhibit where you can view the photos and vote for a Grand Prize winner at oakheritageconservancy.org/photoexhibit. Everyone who votes by March 15 will be entered to receive a large mounted photo of a farm or natural area in Indiana.



Three of the Best of Show photographs we exhibited this Winter. Clockwise from top, photographers are: Dan O. Mowery, Haylee P. McEvoy, and Angela Eveslage.

Welcome Our New Members...

John Burris
Travis Cohron
Eric Dodge
Hope Elliot
Emily Engelking
Jim Jackson
Marcia Monroe
Jim & Margo Olson
Nancy Rogers

Dawn Simmons
Jill Simmons
Lara Simmons
Steve & Mary Ann Simmons
William Smith
Becky Staab & Joe Colussi
B & E Winters
Peggy & Michael Winters
Jim & Liz Wood

...and Our New Board Members

Chrys Cook is a software engineer who has a deep love for monarch conservation projects. She is leading stewardship efforts at Hilltop Farm, including a pollinator planting.

Andy Kain is a recent Hanover College graduate and the new environmental specialist for Arvin Sango. He is helping OHC create new maps and site assessments of our preserves.

Join OHC and Engage Your Passion

Together, we can protect southeast Indiana's natural heritage for the generations to come.

You can now join, renew membership, and donate online, or complete this page and mail it, along with your payment, to Oak Heritage Conservancy, P.O. Box 335, Hanover, Indiana 47243.

- ☐ Student - \$10
- ☐ Individual - \$25
- ☐ Organization - \$25
- ☐ Family - \$40
- ☐ Cornerstone - \$100-\$499
- ☐ Sponsor - \$500 - \$999
- ☐ Benefactor - \$1000+

Name(s):

Address:

City, State, Zip:

Phone:

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