



WAWASEE AREA CONSERVANCY FOUNDATION

CONSERVANCY VIEWS

Fall 2021

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for 30 Years**

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Have Strong Season**



Photo by Larry Baumgardt with special thanks to Bob and Nancy Fanning for allowing us to capture his beautiful boat, "Eleanor."

Message from the Chairman:



John Bearss
WACF Chairman

This is a special year for WACF as we are nearing the end of our 30-year anniversary. The founding members created the mission "to protect and enhance the watershed for present and future generations." They charted a course to anticipate threats to our watershed and search out ways to solve those threats and prevent new ones. To do so they focused on land acquisition, watershed projects, education and funding.

How have we performed?

The land acquisitions, deed restrictions and conservation easements have culminated in 996 acres of nutrient-filtering land. This is accomplished through 53 wetlands and over 10 miles of protected shoreland.

We have completed 39 water-enhancing projects. Those projects include the creation of settling ponds, two stage ditches, wetland restorations, invasive plant removal, reforestation by planting approximately 15,000 trees and more. Most recently, our undertaking of the Wawasee Inlets Nutrient Study (WINS), a comprehensive sampling and analysis of what enters Lake Wawasee and exits Syracuse Lake.

WACF educational programs have had a positive effect on our community. Through Lake Talk & Eats, Wetland Adventure, Bug Catch, Lilly Pad Lecture cruises, canoe trips, presentations to school and community organizations and more, we have brought our message to thousands of participants.

To accomplish these feats, we have developed relationships with many governmental entities and foundations which has resulted in project partnering and over \$2 million in grants. None of our successes could have been realized without the dedicated staff and many volunteers, for whom we are grateful. However the majority of our support is from you, the generous friends of WACF, without whom it would not have been possible. Thank You!

The next 30 years promise to be a continuation of what contributed to our past successes. The information from the WINS project will help chart a course for future projects. Our work is not done and we look forward to the next 30 years and the future generations of support.

Memorials & Honorariums

Memorial and honorarium gifts have a lasting impact, like the lives and achievements they recognize. All memorial and honorarium gifts are directed to the WACF Endowment Fund establishing a layer of stability under the Conservancy and ensuring it's strong and lasting future. Interest income from the WACF Endowment fund is used for ongoing Conservancy expenses, operating costs and programs.

2020 - October 1, 2021 WACF Memorials & Honorariums

In Memory of:

Helen Alderfer
Helen Alfrey
and her 100th Birthday
Truman Arnold
Jane Atkins
Dawn Baker
Paul Beck
William Beemer
Marianne Beesley
Tim Borne
Mary Lou Brewer
Wayne and Alice Brockett
Annet Lou Carroll
Mary Agnes Carter
David Cates
Beverly Chambers
Judy Christofolis
John Connolly
Kim Conrad
Steve Cunningham
Bill Currise
Dottie and Bob Dickinson
Ven Endsley
Larry Farver
Marilyn and John Feighner
Bernice Fiechter
Edgar Filby
Cynthia Forgey
Jeanne Gabrielsen
Annie Gallaban
Shirley Hope Gehl
Neanne Gerber
Ronald J. Gerling
Kay Gibson
Edward William Gingrich
Grace Michael Gingrich
Benjamin William Gingrich
Agnes Clyde Gingrich
Dorothy Gitlin
Richard (Dick) Green
Larry and Rosie Griffith
Danny Griffith
James C. Haddon, Jr.
Dr. Lloyd Hagedorn
Rosemary and John Hague
Patrick Hanlin
Andrew and Laurie Hardie
John Heidt III
Dorothy Hite

Kyle Hollon

Tom and Judy Hughes
Dr. Robert Hirschman
Jerry Holland
Needham Hurst
Bill Hurst
Dr. George W. Irmscher
Carole Jacquay
Robert and Rosalyn Jones
Patrick W. Kennedy
Mike and Carol Kiley
Phil Keim
Mary Koehlinger
Albert Kramer
Charles and Dorothy Lehman
Clara 'Nanny' Lopez
Dr. Vance Lopp
Eric Longenecker
Maurice and Lucille Lung
Debbie Macomber
Bob McCallum
James D. McCully
Bill McNagny
Larry Michael
Parents of Tom and Marilyn Michael
Lonnie and Thelma Meriwether
Walt Miller
Walter (Walt E.) Miller
Clay Moody
Deceased Morrison Island Members
Phyllis Ann Myers
Robert and Nancy Myers
Shirley Myers
John Naab
E.S. and Virginia Needler
Mark Nill
Patty Norman
Father Glenn O'Connor
Eleanor Organ
Don Osbourne
PADOROMA
Dr. William and Mary Patterson
Carolyn Parmerlee
Chris Peterson
Tom and Carol Peterson
Kathleen Kiley Phillips
Tom Prickett
Wanda Quinn Isenbarger
Priscilla Rhode
Jerry Riffle

Brenda Rinehart

Elizabeth Robertson
Quinn Robison
Sophia C. Salin
William 'Bill' Nathan Salin
Edward L. Sandman, Sr.
Carol Schloss
Douglas A. Schmahl
Bob and Lucille Searfoss
Bob Seger
Dr. Alan E. (Bud) Sheline
Joanne Spurgeon
Terry E. Smith
Eloy C. Stevens
Mary Kay Stanley
Dr. Mark Stinson
Michael Surso
Linda Heckaman Swank
James Thompson
Dick Tillman
Tom Tuttle, Sr.
Charles Walker
Dr. John Wallace
David Warshauer
Joyce Williams
Jack Wirick
Ken and Barbara Woodruff
Matthew Wuebker
Leonard Ziskie

In Honor of:

Donn Baird
John and Linda Earnest,
50th wedding anniversary
Bob and Jane Wildman
Bob Fanning
John and Becky Marler
John S.A. Maxon
Larry Michael
Mr. & Mrs. Bob Loose
Dave and Cindy Newcomer
Pete Nicholas for his 80th birthday
Pete and Ginny Nicholas
Pamela Juday Schumm
Lee and Sue Theis,
50th wedding anniversary
Celia Ristow

From the Executive Director



Heather Harwood
WACF
Executive Director

Dear WACF Friends –

Thank you for your support of WACF this year. Your help allows us to complete important projects upstream controlling sediment and nutrients flowing into the lake. We have a few projects – and their expected results – to share with you today.

Dillon Creek Erosion Control

We have a new project starting soon in partnership with the Indiana Department of Natural Resources Lake and River Enhancement (LARE) program and our neighbors upstream: erosion control at Dillon Creek Branch upstream of Enchanted Hills. The Dillon Creek Branch was featured in the 'Critical Areas Study', by S&L Environmental Group, and after completion is estimated to save:

- . 63 tons of sediment per year
- . 183 lbs. of Phosphorus per year

Turkey Creek Tributary Erosion Control and Stream Restoration

The Turkey Creek Tributary erosion control and stream restoration project is now complete. Turkey Creek is critical as it is Wawasee's major water supply stream. With this work, reports by S&L Environmental Group show estimated savings of:

- 470 tons of sediment per year
- 404 lbs. of Phosphorus per year
- 808 lbs. of Nitrogen per year

WACF Center Lakefront Planting Restoration

And, in partnership with the US Fish and Wildlife Service, we are starting a restoration of the prairie planting at the WACF Center Lakefront property. The project will include control of invasive plants and seeding native wildflowers and grasses.

Farmer Grants

Our Ecology Committee continued the Farmer Grants program in partnership with our ag partners funding two grants. We aim to keep these grant opportunities going, working directly with our ag partners keeping sediment and nutrients out of our lakes and streams.



Jeff Herdrich, WACF Land Management Officer, on the banks of Turkey Creek Tributary

WACF has now completed a total of 39 projects including wetland restoration, habitat enhancement, sediment control, in-stream grade control, shoreline stabilization and invasive plant removal, and Conservation Reserve Program (CRP) projects including planting over 15,000 trees.

Thank you for your support, together we are making a positive impact on our watershed!

Heather

Wrapping Up for the Season



By Pam Schumm
Education Officer

It almost feels like we are back to normal at WACF as far as education is concerned. We were able to host three Wetland Adventures in July plus Fishing with the DNR; our June was filled with activities for both adults and children with the Pollinator workshop and Play Dates; all three of our Lake Talk and Eats programs were well attended; the canoe trip was a roaring success this year; and this fall we are busy hosting elementary grades school field trips. Each field trip is based on state standards and teaches students about water quality and nature. Our volunteers are doing a wonderful job teaching each activity. Usually there are 5 or 6 different "centers" groups of students rotate through to learn their specific grade level topic. Come out and join us next year. We not only teach the young students, but their parent chaperones as well.

This year we began a Volunteer of the Month Award given to a person or group who just goes beyond the expected and is someone we can count on to be able to help at the drop of a hat! Our recipients this summer were: Nancy Nelson, Diana Castell, Ana Richardson, the Canoe Team of John Bearss, Doug Yoder, Dan & Marilyn Berkey, Jim Silcox, Al Campbell and Julie Mark and the Center's mowing crew: Doug Yoder, Scott Fetters, Bob Green, Denny Dailey, and Rob Suedhoff. Congratulations to these very important people and a HUGE thank you for all you do for WACF!



Also new this year is our partnership with Wawasee High School. The Education Committee has welcomed students from Wawasee High School to Wetland Adventures in July to assist with the Canoe Scavenger Hunt and grade level elementary field trips in the fall. Freshmen, sophomores and juniors at the high school can choose among project-based learning, service-based learning or work-based learning experiences to fulfill graduation pathway options. WACF offers the service-based learning option, that allows these students to shadow a lead educator, and then when ready, take over teaching that particular learning station. So far we've had nearly a dozen student volunteers and we are expecting more before our field trips end. It's a win-win for everyone and we can always use more volunteers at WACF!

Our Falltastic Trail Walk returned too. Held on October 9 and 10, from noon to 4 p.m. each day. Families walked the decorated trails alongside their dogs, enjoying nature and refreshments.

Looking ahead to next spring (because we know you want to get this on your calendar) when we will have our Earth Day Festival on April 30, 2022!



Using Data to Drive Action



By Beth Morris
Ecology
Committee Chair

Like gold, water quality is a precious commodity, and good water quality is often taken for granted. At WACF, we are dedicated to preserving the water quality in our lakes for future generations by taking action within our watershed. WACF is the only local organization doing this kind of work, having completed 39 projects over the last 30 years in our watershed.

The data from our WINS study, the 3-year intensive sampling of the inflows to Lake Wawasee and the outflow from Syracuse Lake, provides us with an accurate measure of the amount of phosphorus, nitrogen, and sediments that come into our lakes. That's important because for the first time since WACF was founded, we can understand the year-to-year variability and set targets for reducing nutrient and sediment inflow in the future. And we can prioritize work in those areas that contribute the greatest amounts of nutrients and sediment.

In the last two years, Dr. Jerry Sweeten and his colleagues at Ecosystems Connections Institute have used their state-of-the-art samplers to take over 15,000 samples, chemically analyzed them and provided us with extensive data analysis in each of the 160+ page reports for WINS Years 1 and 2. They contain valuable information about water quality, you could say nuggets of gold. To reap their full value we must use them as living documents to drive action and not let them sit on a shelf.

To that end, Dr. Sweeten is helping us understand how the WINS data can be used to build bridges and create conservation partnerships with the local agricultural community. With his guidance and assistance, WACF has applied for several federal grants that leverage the WINS data. These grants will support completion of a watershed assessment that will identify projects, partners and funding needed for implementing additional "best management practices" in the watershed. "Best management practices" are methods of maintaining farm productivity while conserving soil and water during farming activities, and their aim is to protect water quality and encourage soil conservation. Such an assessment will enable WACF to apply for additional grant money to complete these projects by providing cost-sharing money for our partners in the watershed.

We believe that partnerships with all stakeholders in our watershed - landowners on our channels, lakes and upstream tributaries and our partners at Department of Natural Resources, National Resources



Dr. Sweeten shared our WINS data at several WACF events this summer, including our annual meeting and the "Lake Talk and Eats" Lilly Pad Cruise.

Foundation, Soil & Water Conservation District, US Fish and Wildlife Service, The Kosciusko County Community Foundation, and others - is the key to keeping our precious water - our gold - clean and healthy for our children and our children's children.

It Takes All of Us



By Priscilla Brown
Development
Officer

A bus full of local kindergarten students, their parents, and teachers just rolled out of the Levinson-LaBrosse Lakes and Wetlands Education Center. During their time here I chatted with a grandmother, who requested more information about our educational programs and a five-year-old boy, who told me his favorite part of the school field trip was “running outside.” He’s onto something, especially after this past school year.

I’ve been thinking about what it takes for an organization to welcome, entertain, and educate a large group of the smallest members of its community... and to do it well. **It takes everyone.**

It takes people like Tom Yoder, who for years build relationships with folks in the community to acquire the property needed to preserve and protect the watershed—the same property where kids can scurry from activity to activity, learning about the watershed where they live and why it matters to keep it clean. It takes volunteers like Tom Kelley, Jay Jorgensen, Bill McCully and Dr. Joan Szydal who collaborate to raise funds to pay for the necessary work of our WINS research—the **only research of its kind** in our community—and then, under the expert direction of our Ecology Committee, use the data from that research to develop a strategic plan that guides the actions of the organization moving forward.

It takes the dream team of Linda Earnest and Pam Schumm and their amazing group of volunteers to plan, set up, run, and clean up every single educational event WACF hosts from spring through autumn. These programs introduce kids to environmental processes, and what part we humans play in them. It takes our volunteer mowers: Bob Green, Denny Dailey, Rob Suedhoff, and Doug Yoder showing up throughout the seasons and taking care of our property with little to no fanfare. It takes our

remarkable Canoe Team, setting up and guiding our weekly summer canoe trips that meet with rave reviews from participants who always comment, “It was so fun! I learned so much I didn’t know about our watershed.” It takes our volunteer board and numerous committee members not only attending meetings, but also following through with commitments the organization has made to fund, oversee, or manage environmental projects within the watershed and to do so in a systematic, fiscally responsible, and transparent manner.

It takes financial support from our donors. **WACF is a public charitable organization that receives its funding solely through grants and donations. We rely on the generosity of people like you, who take the time to read our newsletters, stop in and talk**



Tom Yoder at the Rick's Property – a vital piece of wetlands now protected by WACF.

to us to learn more about ongoing projects, and call or email us with your concerns about environmental issues that may directly affect our watershed. We are grateful for the support from major donors that fund land acquisitions and research, and we are equally indebted to every person who has taken the time to write and mail us a check in memory of a friend or loved one. **No matter the amount given or the motivation behind the gift, you can be sure the money you entrust to WACF goes directly back into our own community in support of our mission;** the same goes for your gift of time. If you’d like to offer your talents – whether its teaching kids outdoor education classes, helping maintain our properties, joining our dynamic Canoe Team, or taking part in our Snapshot Testing water quality surveys—we can help connect you with a program that can best use your talents. Email info@wacf for more information.

One final way to support the WACF is to spread the word about our work.

- Tell your friends and neighbors at the lake why you give to WACF and encourage them to do the same.
- Stop in to see us at the Center. We’d love to meet you, and we have plenty of informational materials that explain everyday actions you can take to do your part in keeping the watershed clean and healthy.
- Plan to attend some of our many social and educational events next summer like our Lilly Pad Cruise or Annual Meeting.

We have one more week of field trips, and then we’re done... until next spring. What does it take to pass on the lessons of environmental stewardship to the next generation? It takes all of us doing our part today to ensure our lakes remain healthy, vital, and pristine tomorrow. Please join us in preserving and protecting our watershed for generations to come. Give to WACF.



Recognition of the hard work of many to secure initial funding for our Wawasee Inlets Nutrient Study (WINS). From left to right: Bill McCully, Doug Yoder, Tom Kelley, Heather Harwood, Jay Jorgensen, Jody Kress NRF Executive Director, Dr. Jerry Sweeten, Dan Kiley, Herb Manifold, Bob Fanning.



11586 N. SR 13
 PO Box 548
 Syracuse, IN 46567
 Phone: 574.457.4549
 Email: info@wacf.com

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 and Directors**

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Wawasee Area Conservancy Foundation
 11586 N. SR 13, PO Box 548
 Syracuse, IN 46567

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*Celebrating the 2021 Eli Lilly Lifetime Founders
 Society at our annual recognition dinner*



From left to right are Keith Busse, Barry and Laurie Ward in honor of the Tillmans, Barbara and Dr. Bill Couch (seated), Linda and Donn Baird and their children. Not shown: Randy Tobias

Established in 1991, The Wawasee Area Conservancy Foundation (WACF) is a 501(c)(3) tax-exempt, non-profit organization. Contributions to the WACF are tax-deductible to the extent current tax law allows. Please check with your tax advisor.

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