

HERON TRACKS

The Official Newsletter of the Chippewa Watershed Conservancy
Volume 22 Number 2 Summer 2015

20TH ANNUAL SPRING BANQUET RAISES FUNDS FOR CONSERVATION

Director Dan Wyant of the Michigan Department of Environmental Quality was this year's guest speaker at our 20th Annual Spring Banquet and Fundraiser. He laid out a brief history of the department and current priorities, then opened the floor for a question and answer period that was well-received.

The Robert (Bob) Ball Award was created in 1996 to honor someone who has made a significant contribution to the Chippewa Watershed Conservancy's purpose of protecting natural habitat and open space. The late Bob Ball was one of the founders of the CWC. He dedicated a large part of his life to promoting awareness and access to nature. This year's honoree was Carey Pauquette, Water Quality Specialist for the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe. In her position with the Tribe, Carey has been responsible for monitoring and reporting on the presence of E.coli in the Chippewa River, and for raising public awareness about the health issues associated with E. coli. She also put together all of the necessary documentation to make the Tribe eligible for Project 319 Clean Water funding and is currently working on securing funds for the implementation of best management practices to control or mitigate sedimentation and erosion issues within Tribal reservation boundaries. Carey has not only been a member of the Board of Directors of the CWC for the past two years, but she also serves on the Board of Directors of the Saginaw Basin Land Conservancy in Bay City.

A wide array of silent auction items this year included a new feature, as many members of the board of directors and others contributed custom-created



baskets for bid. A highlight of the evening was a live auction of several items conducted by well-known local auctioneer Norm Yoder.

We are especially grateful to the individuals, families and businesses who responded to our "20 for \$200" campaign, in recognition of the 20th anniversary of the banquet. We asked for 20 Patrons to contribute \$200 to help us cover a major portion of the banquet costs as sponsors, and 21 individuals and families plus six businesses answered the call.

With the help of our banquet Patrons and the generous guests and auction buyers, we raised more than \$19,000.00 for land protection.



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Executive Director's Corner

RANDOM NOTES

New Newsletter and New Editor

Those who attended the spring banquet know that Mike Brockman, our long-time editor of Heron Tracks has stepped down after more than 10 years. 10 years, I might add, of having to put my ramblings into some semblance of order. We are truly indebted to Mike for all the work he put into the newsletter during a time when we critically needed his help as a volunteer. Now, Louise Hammer has accepted the challenge to edit the newsletter in house.

This seemed like the perfect time to create a new format as well. We haven't made a change in the newsletter since switching to all-color a few years ago. We would welcome your feedback on the changes.

Why don't we allow dogs on the preserves?

Many people enjoy hiking with their dogs in natural areas. Dogs derive a lot of pleasure from sampling all the scents in such areas, as well as getting some great exercise. We like dogs, too, but to protect wildlife and sensitive natural fea-

tures of our preserves and as a courtesy to other visitors, pets are prohibited.

Dogs, even leashed, decrease the number and diversity of wildlife near the trails. Many people come to the preserves to see animals, so their enjoyment would be directly diminished.

Most dogs are easily controlled and have been properly trained, but not everyone pays attention to leash laws. The presence of dogs would inevitably result in a small number of bad encounters between dogs themselves and between dogs and visitors. Small children are especially at risk from loose dogs, ranging from simply being knocked down by an enthusiastic dog to being bitten or seriously harmed. Many non-dog owners are immensely bothered when a strange dog comes up to them and starts to smell them at close quarters, or worse, jumps up on them or barks at them. Many dog owners may not even be aware of this, since, after all, dog owners consider this close contact with their dog to be a pleasant experience, and may even think that everyone else enjoys this, too.

We understand how good it is for dogs to have freedom of movement and



be allowed to run, but consideration for the actual residents of the preserves (deer, rabbits, chipmunks, ground nesting birds, etc.) and other visitors must be a priority. So please, leave your dogs at home when coming to visit the preserves.

Check Out Our Facebook Page

Did you know you don't have to sign up for Facebook to see our page? All you have to do is click on the "F" symbol at the top right of the web site home page and you'll be taken straight to the Facebook page. You may not be able to post comments unless you are a registered Facebook user, but you can still follow us and see what others are saying. Give it a try. Not everything we are doing appears in the hard copy newsletter.

Info from the Intern



We have just said goodbye for the summer to our student intern, Jonathan Breithaupt, who is off to North Manitou Island to work for the National Park Service. But before he left, he penned one more article. Here it is:

Leave No Trace Ethics

Recently I had the privilege of spending a weekend at nearby Deerfield Nature Park. While it was entrilling to backpack along the beautiful Chippewa River, the real purpose of this escapade was to become a certified **Leave No Trace** ethics trainer. **Leave No Trace** Center for Outdoor Ethics is a nonprofit organization dedicated to educating people about their recreational impacts and how to mitigate them. There are seven **Leave No Trace** principles that anybody who

ventures into the natural environment should abide by: plan ahead and prepare, travel and camp on durable surfaces, dispose of waste properly, leave what you find, minimize campfire impacts, respect wildlife, and be considerate of other visitors. These seven principles have been adapted to different activities, ecosystems and environments.

While any amount of outdoor recreation inherently creates unwanted impacts, following these seven concepts is a surefire way to reduce adverse effects on nature that are within human control. The next time you explore one of our preserves, or paddle the Chippewa River, try and consciously think about the aforementioned principles. Whether it be planning ahead by learning the rules of a parkland or traveling on designated and maintained trails, following Leave No Trace guidelines can help us conserve our natural world in a healthier state.

President's Statement



whichever song is theirs to sing. Frogs croaking their designated notes. Grass growing. Leaves manufacturing food for a long winter. Whether I like it or not I am as much a part of the ecosystem that is that meadow as are any of the other creatures. And so are you.

Some make their presence known, like the boisterous Jay. While others too numerous to mention go unnoticed deep in the grass. It wouldn't be a meadow without all of them. This wouldn't be the strong, vibrant, successful CWC that it is without all of you. We wouldn't have protected more than six and half square miles. We wouldn't . . . well, you know that litany.

That was 2013. What's new in 2015? Nothing. And everything. The good news is that thanks to you and all the

other CWC members the meadow is still there bursting forth with a thousand life forms.

But the even better news is that we can do this again, and again, and again. And when we do it will need a name. Perhaps you have a loved one whom you would like remembered with a meadow, or a forest, a lake or a stream. Naming opportunities come in all sizes. A call to the CWC office will alert us to your wishes. We'll watch for that perfect place. You can always change your mind later, but it helps us know what we have a chance to protect.

And that's what it's all about.

John Mitchell, President, CWC

Warning: This column contains 85% Recycled Content

Originally penned in 2013, this is almost exactly what I want to say today.

['As I Walked a Meadow Fair' or 'What's in a Name?'](#)

Out monitoring easements. Enjoying a summer morning. Birds singing

QR CODE TRAIL

We have just installed a new seven-point QR code trail at Sylvan Solace. Simply scan the QR code on the sign using a smart phone to play a short audio clip and learn about various topics relative to the preserve! You can download free QR code scanners from both the Apple App Store and Google Play Store.



Samantha Carey and Jonathon Breithaupt installing the new QR Code trail



The Messenger Easement is Conservancy's Newest

With a smile on her face and a twinkle in her eye, Anne Messinger became the newest donor of a conservation easement with the Chippewa Watershed Conservancy (CWC).

"I'm so happy to know that this land my late husband and I have loved will be permanently protected," she said.

"When we bought the property in 1973, it was a hayfield with about four acres of forest. We allowed it to go as natural as possible and improved it for wildlife habitat. We loved letting nature take over and minimizing negative human impact. Our small piece of the Earth and caring for it with love and respect became our lifetime passion."

The 19-acre property is about ¼ mile from the Chippewa River, and 1 mile from Sylvan Solace Preserve in Isabella County. Anne has planted wildflowers on part of the property and a local beekeeper maintains beehives. Needless to say, butterflies and native bees, not just honeybees, love it.

CWC Executive Director Stan Lilley remarked, "It is such a pleasure to watch a landowner like Anne go through the decision making process, and then light up with joy on signing day. I've been through this many times now, and I have a deep respect for the people who so unselfishly give of themselves for the benefit of future generations."

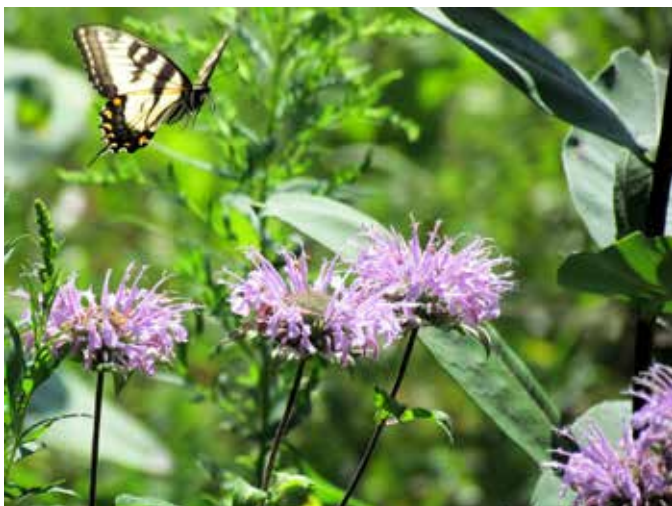
John Mitchell, CWC President, who signed the easement on behalf of the Conservancy, said, "We are honored that



we could help Anne make her dream come true."

"I am infinitely grateful to the Chippewa Watershed Conservancy for making it possible for me to fulfill a long-time dream of my late husband and

myself. Knowing that the environmental value of our little piece of the earth will be preserved and protected forever is priceless. I encourage others who care about the earth to also consider a conservation easement," said Anne.



HUSTLE AT HALL'S LAKE

We had a great time with our Hall's Lake Hustle 5k run and 1 mile fun walk. The event introduced a new group of people to the beautiful Hall's Lake Natural Area, created new friends of the CWC, and raised important funds to support conservation.



Top 5 finishers, L to R, Jon Dent, Lorien Peer, Michael Seaman, Ryan Johns, Liisa Low



A chipmunk popped up to greet the fun walk participants



Michael Seaman, the overall winner of the Hall's Lake Hustle.

Grant Awarded for Second Pine River Map

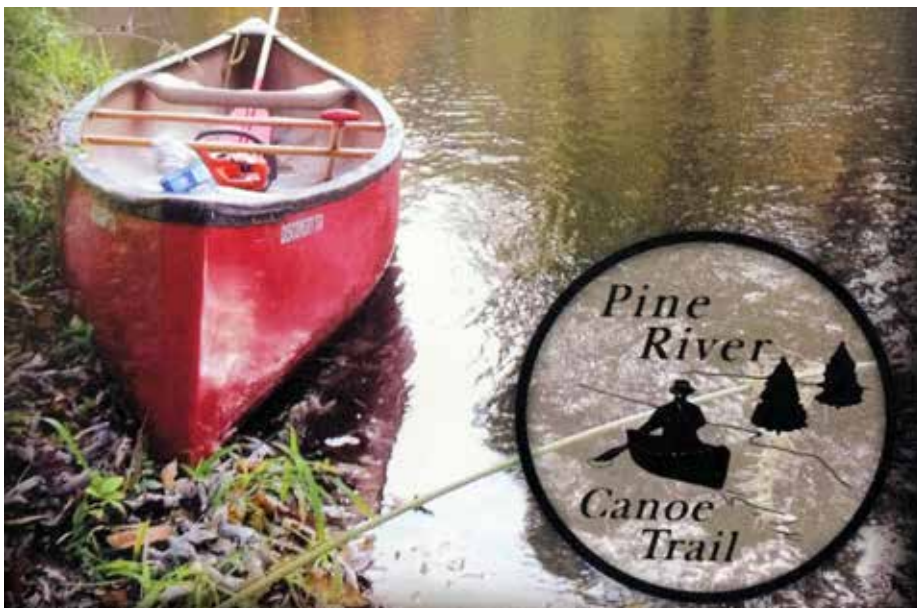
A new \$1,400.00 grant from the Midland Area Community Foundation to the Chippewa Watershed Conservancy on behalf of the Friends of the Pine River (FPR) will fund the design and print ready copy preparation costs for a new map of the Pine River in Gratiot and Midland County. This map will include

the original Lumberjack Park to Alma Canoe Trail map on one side, and a brand new Alma to Chippewa Nature Center map on the other.

The Lumberjack Park to Alma map was produced in 2012 and reprinted in 2014, based on a similar 1970's era map. Both maps are intended to promote the

Pine River as a recreation and tourism resource.

The FPR is an ad hoc group of federal, state and county government, nonprofit organizations, including the Chippewa Watershed Conservancy, and private landowners that meets monthly to address topics of mutual interest involving the Pine River.



The Pine River Canoe Trail map gives paddlers accurate distances and times along with current information on canoe launches, access sites, parking and amenities.

Deer Exclosure is Going Up

A deer exclosure demonstration project must be built to last. We expect that it will take years to see a truly dramatic return of the forest understory in the area we are protecting from deer browsing. The exclosure must withstand a deer attempting to run through the fencing, be high enough to prevent jumping over it, and able to handle all but the largest trees falling on it.

Dr. Doug Valek has already put many, many hours into the project, and with the help of other volunteers, the posts, 4" x 4" and 4" x 6" for stability, and 8 feet high, have now been installed and the concrete footings are curing. The actual fencing material will come.

This long-term project, partially funded by a Community Action Mini-grant from the Saginaw Bay Watershed

Initiative (WIN), and partially supported by individual contributors, is intended to show how the native seed bank will come back when protected from deer, so we are not planting anything within the protected area. We will continue to provide updates.



Thank You!

Volunteers

Preserve Stewardship

Jon Breithaupt, Jacob Pollack, Cathy Murray, Larry & Judy Schaftenaar, Eric Torgersen, Mike LeValley, Hammer Family

Easement Monitoring

John Mitchell

Hall's Lake Trail Maintenance

Jonathan Breithaupt and CMU Earth Week student volunteers, Adam Hammer and Mt. Pleasant LDS volunteers

Hall's Lake Geocaches

Adam Hammer and Mt. Pleasant LDS volunteers

Hall's Lake Hustle

Jon and Julie Breithaupt, Mikisha Drogowski, Kathy Johns, Adam and Louise Hammer

Deer Exclusion Construction

Doug Valek, Jacob Pollack, Larry Schaftenaar, Don & Karen Stearns, Eric Torgersen, CMU Earth Week student volunteers

Sylvan Solace QR Code Trail

Jon Breithaupt, Samantha Carey, Mikisha Drogowski, Faisal Almo

Outreach and Stewardship

Jonathan Breithaupt

A special THANK YOU! to Jonathon Russell for his help in redesigning our newsletter.

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John & Betty Kabana by John Kabana
Bill Theunissen by Stan & Pat Lilley
Christopher Ehren Hay Sandara by Michael & Jean Claus, Charles & Barbara Patten, Robert & Catherine Janson, and Alan, Kathy, Ashley & Ryan Johns

Donations in Honor of

Tom Mitchell, in honor of his birthday by Wes & Annmarie Freeland

New Donors

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Cindy Kaliszewski
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Connie Hildebrand
Theresa Turner
Daniel & Jasmine Eichinger
Steve & Wendy Shugert

CWG LAND PROTECTION SUCCESS

County	Acres
Clare	1,966
Gratiot	149
Isabella	839
Mecosta	491
Montcalm	816
Midland	8

32 Easements	3,756 Acres
19 Preserves	511 Acres
1 Government Transfer	(2 Acres)
TOTAL	4,269 Acres

We get so much more done because our volunteers give their time and energy

6 2/3
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permanently protected
by the CWG

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Protecting Central Michigan's
Valuable Natural Resources

Here is my tax deductible contribution to help sustain operations:

- \$25 (Regular) \$50 (Supporter) \$100 (Defender) \$250 (Guardian)
- \$500 (Sustainer) \$1,000 (Benefactor) Other \$ _____
- I wish to remain anonymous
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Su-15



CWC Wishlist

We can always use your help with these items:

First Class stamps • Business-size envelopes • Gas cards • Newsletter print sponsorship
Call us at (989) 772-5777 or send an email to info@chippewawatershedconservancy.org to discuss ways you can help.