the twig

Sycamore Land Trust

FALL 2016

For family

1822 farm protected PAGES 2-3

For bugs

Your backyard no-fear zone PAGES 10-11

For fun

Attend Sycamore's 26th Annual Celebration PAGE 5

Protecting land is a family effort

Photo by Katrina Folsom

Love of the land protects family farm

BY GARY CHAMBERS

I've lived on this farm since I was three years old. My ancestors purchased 60 acres in 1822. They bought land nearby and ended up owning about 1,000 acres, according to my mother.

I started farming with my dad when I was 15 or 16. Dad and I were buddies. We farmed together for 43 years. I enjoyed farming. It's like a disease and you can't ever get over it. I still miss it. I loved shelling corn in the fall. I just like what the dirt smells like. I learned over time to respect all that work and admire what my grandpa and great-grandpa had gone through.

This place is special. It's more than just dollars and cents. It's part of my life, my family's life, and it needs to be protected. I saw the property was going to fall into my hands, as part ownership with my sister. Multiple-hand ownership almost without fail ends in sale. It gets put on the auction block to the highest bidder, and that isn't gonna be a farmer.

I was at a land conservation party saying, "I sure wish there was some way I could get our family to protect our farm," and [Sycamore Board member] Terry Marbach came over and said, "We need to talk."

Gary Chambers is a mechanic, and a retired farmer and Cummins Engine employee. He is a Sycamore member whose family donated a conservation easement on their farm in Bartholomew County. Gary sat down with our staff at his family farm, where he told us this moving story about why he chose to become conservation partners with Sycamore Land Trust.

Things went on for several years in the discussion phase: what's the right thing to do? My mom and dad both thought it perhaps was a good idea. They discussed it over again and again with my aunt, who's half-owner of the farm. My dad passed away in 2003. My aunt and my mom signed the papers in 2004 to protect the farm through a conservation easement with Sycamore Land Trust.

I feel really, really good about what we did as a family. The steps that were taken to protect it worked. It's protected.

I like money as well as anybody else. But we are put on this earth, according to the Bible, as caretakers. I believe with all my heart there needs to be more concern about using natural resources, our land, with care.

I would have people who own farmland think seriously about protecting it. Everybody who would do something like this would do it for a different reason. Maybe their family wants different uses for the land, maybe they're the only two left, or perhaps they want their kids to be able to sell it but have it have more productive value than as a housing complex.

Above everything that led me to get this done, I honestly believe that my ancestors spiritually led me to pursue this. I think they just kind of picked on

"I feel really, really good about what we did as a family. The steps that were taken to protect it worked. It's protected."

me because of my interest in farming and because I've been here all this time. Spiritually, they led me to pursue this and not give up until something happened.

The thing I'll always remember: a few days before my mom died, she wanted to come down from the nursing home in Columbus and look at the farm one more time. She sat and looked out over the green wheat growing and the Sycamore sign for a while. "You know what, Gary? I think I did a good thing." I told her, "Yeah, you did the best possible thing for our family." And a few days later she passed away.

I can sit in my shop every day, look out over the farm, and watch the seasons change. It makes me happy. I can go to bed at night and rest easy that this place is going to stay the way it is.

Above left: Gary Chambers on the family farm where he grew up. A conservation easement on this Bartholomew County property was donated to Sycamore in 2004.

Abby Perfetti

My pledge:

To match the dedication of volunteers and staff

BY ABBY PERFETTI

I've been on the staff at Sycamore Land Trust only since June, but I already feel at home. Indiana is my home—I was raised in Indianapolis, and have degrees from Earlham College and Indiana University. Nonprofits are my home, having worked and volunteered for several important organizations in our community like Bloomington PRIDE and the Monroe County YMCA. But more importantly, I feel most at home when I'm immersed in the natural beauty of southern Indiana, working alongside the people who are committed to protecting it forever.

The most remarkable asset I've noticed since joining Sycamore has been the selflessness of people involved at all levels. From the volunteers who power through bug bites and thought-provoking meetings, to the individuals and organizations who give generously of land or money, to my colleagues whose minds are always working day and night to tackle the next project. Their energy motivates me to work even harder to protect this beautiful region of the country.

And there is so much to protect. So many at-risk species need habitats restored—habitats that once covered this state. I owe it to these plants and animals, to the farmers who feed us, to my fellow Hoosiers, and to my descendants, that I will work toward a better future. A cleaner future, full of diverse natural landscapes, clear water, and fresh air.

As the Communications Director, I have the privilege to communicate Sycamore's mission and accomplishments to people who are impacted by what we do, whether they're aware of it yet or not. My goal is to encourage everyone to get involved with Sycamore, so they can have a lasting impact on protecting southern Indiana's natural beauty. You can help this effort by becoming a member, inviting a friend to join, joining in on a nature hike, and spreading the word about preserving our Indiana home.

If you have ideas about stories you would like to read or have suggestions on how more people can learn about Sycamore, please contact me at **abby@sycamorelandtrust.org.**

Abby Perfetti

Short-eared owl, state endangered in Indiana. *Photo by Steve Gifford*

Join us for our 26th Anniversary

ANNUAL CELEBRATION

Friday, October 21 | 6 – 9 pm

Monroe Convention Center

Dinner | Live Music | Silent Auction | Local Beer & Wine

Special Guest

Michael Homoya, Indiana State Botanist/Plant Ecologist

Tickets $75 | Table for 8 / $500

For sponsorship opportunities contact
ann@sycamorelandtrust.org

Important places merit special names

BY ANN CONNORS, DEVELOPMENT DIRECTOR

One thing is clear when you get involved with Sycamore Land Trust—we are all in this together. Sycamore's ability to protect the unique and valuable landscapes of southern Indiana depends on the generous support of those who are able to make contributions of funds, land, or time. Memberships at $40 per year are the bedrock of our support, while major gifts of $5,000 or more make the kind of lasting impact that merits further recognition. Over the past year, trees, benches, preserves, and endowments have been named in honor of these donors or their loved ones. It's one way that we can show our gratitude for the generosity that keeps us moving forward.

On August 5, we celebrated a very special occasion: the formal dedication of the Brunning-Gerster Prairie Garden at Sycamore's Cedar Crest headquarters in Bloomington, followed by a reception in honor of donor Darlene Gerster and her family and friends. We asked Darlene to tell us about her connection to Sycamore and what it means to have the Prairie Garden named after her and her late husband, Jerry Brunning.

> "No matter where I am, I will know that this prairie will bloom every year. It will bloom after I leave this life, just as Sycamore will always be here."

What appeals to you about Sycamore Land Trust?

"I feel so grateful to have grown up in rural Indiana, on a corner acre of my grandparents' farm. I was surrounded by open farmland and woodlands. What I love most about Sycamore is that you share the space. You protect, restore, educate, and you share. You share the space and you share all that you know about the natural world. You have created a community of stewardship by reaching out and inviting everyone in."

Why did you choose to donate your house to Sycamore?

"Two years after my husband died, I felt ready to move on. I wanted to live in Indianapolis nearer my family. But I hated the prospect of putting our home in town on the market and dealing with showings. I thought, I wish I could hand the key to someone and walk out the door. Sycamore was my first thought, so I called [Executive Director] Christian Freitag and we sat and talked for quite a while about the future of Sycamore. I thought that giving our house to Sycamore to sell and use the proceeds to support their mission, could be a win-win for Sycamore and for me."

Photos by John Lawrence

What does it mean to you that the Prairie Garden at Sycamore headquarters will be named for you and your late husband?

"It's hard to put this in words, but … I have very deep roots in Indiana. I have traced my family history, been the caretaker of many items that were passed down from those I never knew, and walked in some of the spaces they once did. Jerry and I spent the last six years of our life together in Bloomington. At the risk of overusing a metaphor, I have been able to grow new branches because of these roots. No matter where I am, I will know that this prairie will bloom every year. It will bloom after I leave this life, just as Sycamore will always be here. It is an honor to be invited to place our names here, to be a part of the community stewardship."

To learn more about Sycamore Naming Opportunities, please contact me, Ann Connors, at 812-336-6193 x104 or ann@sycamorelandtrust.org. You can also find our **Naming Opportunities brochure** online at www.sycamore-landtrust.org/leadership-society.

Above left: This group of Sycamore supporters gathered on August 5 to celebrate the dedication of the Brunning-Gerster Prairie Garden at Cedar Crest.

Above right: Darlene Gerster (right) stands with Executive Director Christian Freitag at the sign marking the Brunning-Gerster Prairie Garden at Sycamore's Cedar Crest headquarters, named in honor of Darlene and her late husband, Jerry Brunning. Darlene donated her house to Sycamore after Jerry's passing.

Photos by Abby Perfetti

Hoosier Hikers Council builds trails for Sycamore

BY ABBY PERFETTI, COMMUNICATIONS DIRECTOR

On a sweltering summer morning at the end of July, while the rest of us were soaking up all the air conditioning we could, three men were outside volunteering their time in the Indiana heat.

Pete Banta, James Shearn, Tom Connor, and Sara Mercado are volunteers for the Hoosier Hikers Council (HHC), an all-volunteer nonprofit that builds and maintains trails across Indiana. Along with others, these four volunteers have been coming every Monday morning to Sycamore Land Trust properties to add on to hiking trails.

One such trail is a four-mile loop at the Laura Hare Nature Preserve at Downey Hill, a 600-acre Sycamore property near Nashville, where Jim Ferguson and his wife Andrea volunteer as property stewards for Sycamore. The north half of the trail is already open to the public, and can be accessed from the parking lot on Valley Branch Road. This Preserve is known for its steep hills, brilliant fall colors, and seasonal ponds.

Pete Banta, a retired systems analyst for a manufacturing company, has been part of the HHC for 20 years. It started when he went on a service trip with the Sierra Club and fell in love with trail building, which provided a nice break from his office job. He heard about HHC and got involved right away.

As you can imagine, building a trail is tough work. From the careful planning stages through breaking ground and the countless whacks of tools into the earth, this is not a project to be undertaken without determination. But seeing it through to the end is a reward in itself.

"When a trail is completed, you have something other people can walk on and enjoy," explains Banta. "It gives people an opportunity to see things they wouldn't otherwise see."

Anyone with any level of experience is welcome to join these projects. It's a great way to get exercise, contribute to the future of our community, and meet some really interesting folks. See the events listing in this issue for details.

This dedicated service is the reason we have chosen to honor the Hoosier Hikers Council with this year's Volunteer of the Year award, which will be given at our 26th Anniversary Annual Celebration on Friday, October 21. For details, see pages 5 and 14.

We are always grateful for the work the HHC does for Sycamore and across the state, and look forward to future collaborations with them. For more information, visit www.hoosierhikerscouncil.org.

Above left: HHC volunteers hard at work on a trail at Cedar Crest, Sycamore's headquarters in Bloomington.

Above right: HHC members (l – r) Tom Connor, Pete Banta, and James Shearn, take a break and pose with their tools. The Hoosier Hikers Council will be awarded Sycamore's Volunteer of the Year Award at the Annual Celebration on October 21.

On the Cover

"The Very Air," a painting by Indiana artist Bill Whorrall, evokes the ethereal joy of the natural world. Mr. Whorrall, a long-time Sycamore supporter, is a teacher and an artist who works in paint, collage, sculpture, and photography. For more about him and his work, go to www.billwhorrallart.com.

Positive attitudes to nature form early

Photo by Rachel Hartley-Smith

BY SHANE GIBSON, ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION DIRECTOR

"Don't go to Uncle Shane's backyard! Bugs are back there!"

These were the words my brother used to keep his two young children in my front yard and in sight. It might have seemed harmless at the time. But the more I teach people of all ages in the outdoors, the more I see a fear of nature, negative attitudes that were likely formed at an early age.

The first house that my wife and I owned was a small, 1965 ranch on a dead-end street. It had a half-acre wooded lot with many neighbors. Even so, here I first tapped maple trees and called in owls with my six-year-old niece. I experimented with my first prairie planting. My two-year-old son experienced the 2004 cicada hatch. My boys ate the raspberries that grew from a nook at the base of a large oak. Bumblebees sat atop coneflowers as our front door brushed against them each time our family went in and out. The boys weren't scared. Nor should they have been. Nature was present in the heart of Indianapolis.

How my boys responded to nature at that early age was dependent on the experiences and opportunities we provided. Their attitudes would be shaped by the words and behaviors of my wife and me.

"Hey, let's go to the backyard! There are bugs back there!"

I said this and offered many similar invitations countless times to my toddlers, at the same time that my brother's words kept his kids on the driveway. This distinct difference will influence attitudes about being outdoors.

Recently, a second-grade student visited the Sycamore office. I had been working often with his class and we had just gone on a field trip. In class, I emphasized the identification of poison ivy and Virginia creeper. Shortly after he got out of the car, we started looking at plants growing nearby. His parents, still at the car, shouted, "Don't touch anything. It could be poison ivy!" But this young fellow already knew what he could touch and what to avoid. Together we counted the five leaves of Virginia creeper. He's had positive experiences in nature, and he's learning how to be safe while having fun.

On another field trip to Beanblossom Bottoms Nature Preserve, our gorgeous wetland property in northern Monroe County, a camp counselor asked persistently if there were snakes. It was obvious that the counselor had a fear of snakes. As I gathered the dozen or so campers and adults, I tried to dispel any worries. "What is going to happen if a wild animal hears or feels this many people coming?" "They're going to run!" shouted some of the campers. "Why?" I asked, always trying to help my students think for themselves. "Because they think we're predators," was the answer.

The pep talk didn't help. The adult counselor decided not to go on the hike and allowed a handful of young campers to opt out, too. That was the most disheartening part. I know some fears are hard to overcome, and the counselor was probably trying to do the kids a favor, but I see it differently.

Young and old benefit from positive experiences in nature. The ones who participated in the hike caught spiders, salamanders, dragonfly nymphs, a frog, and more. One girl said, as we walked on the boardwalk, "Nature is so beautiful." I agreed, but I couldn't shake the thought that some were being deprived of that beauty. Maybe the counselor did not have good experiences in nature as a child, but it's never too late.

This reminded me of the saying we often quoted to campers and staff when I taught environmental education at Bradford Woods: "Attitudes are contagious; make yours worth catching!"

Enjoy yourself. Enjoy nature.

Photo by Rachel Hartley-Smith

Photo by Jaime Sweany

Above left: EE Director Shane Gibson (standing) at Yellowwood Farm with a group from Harmony School.

Right top: Up close and personal: a nature student fearlessly views a salamander temporarily placed in a bug viewer.

Right bottom: Scary no more: spider hike leader Leslie Bishop points out a big web during this nighttime adventure.

What it wants to be

Land stewardship vital to Sycamore's preserves

BY JOHN LAWRENCE, ASSISTANT DIRECTOR

Sycamore Land Trust has grown tremendously over the past few years as we have focused on buying land while continuing to work with landowners to either donate their properties or enter into conservation easements. We now protect more than 9,000 acres in over 90 properties, and are investors in an additional 10,000 acres of nature preserves. Last year, we added land worth over $2.2 million. Sycamore protects more land than any of Indiana's other regional land trusts.

But what do we mean when we say that we protect land? Acquiring new land parcels is hugely important, but another component of conservation is taking care of the land that we own. We've been entrusted with caring for the land, and that care we call stewardship.

With input from the science advisors and natural resource professionals on our Stewardship Committee, we try to determine what the land "wants" to be and how to help get it there. We try to help nature take its course and to ensure success based on how the land would have looked if it had never been altered by humans. This is one of the reasons we do not allow commercial timbering on the land we own. Ongoing activities often include planting trees, eliminating invasive plants, and removing structures or refuse. On land for which we hold conservation easements but do not own, we visit and monitor the properties to ensure that the conservation easement requirements are enforced.

Another part of land management is deciding which properties should be made into public preserves so they can be enjoyed for healthy recreation and educational purposes. We have 48 nature preserves, of which 15 have trails and parking areas. Sixteen are less accessible but still have visitors. At selected preserves, we also build viewing platforms and install interpretive signage, in order to encourage responsible use without damaging the conservation value of the land.

> Connecting people to the beauty of nature is paramount to achieving our mission.

Each year, thousands of people visit our preserves, often on Sycamore-led hikes and environmental education programs we host for children and adults. Connecting people to the beauty of nature is paramount to achieving our mission, because as more people grasp the value of this land, the more land we can save.

Helping the land become what it wants to be has been the goal at the Touch the Earth Natural Area (TTE) just west of Columbus near SR 46. At 98 acres, it is larger than any park in Bartholomew County and is one of Sycamore's first properties, purchased in 1995 and 1998. Two miles of mowed trails, bridges, benches, and an observation deck, along with a parking area, have made TTE an inviting place to enjoy nature for its neighbors and for many visitors from the surrounding area. Most of the Preserve is former farm land, which was cleared from native forest. Sycamore has planted hundreds of trees and has made a concerted effort to remove the invasive shrubs, such as autumn olive, that had taken over much of the preserve.

Encouraging healthy habitat development, providing environmental education, and preserving natural spaces is critical to conserving the land we've been entrusted to protect. It takes the work of many people to make this possible, and we are so grateful to the donors and volunteers who share our vision of a cleaner, healthier environment in southern Indiana and beyond. You are the reason we can set our sights high!

Above left: Assistant Director John Lawrence, at right, stands with Dan McGuckin, owner of Habitat Solutions, beside a large autumn olive that was treated with an herbicide. Sycamore received funding from the Natural Resource Conservation Service, along with an in-kind donation from Habitat Solutions (HS), for HS to do three years of invasives eradication at TTE.

Upcoming Activities & Volunteer Opportunities

Join us for an event! Hikes are free for members; suggested donation for non-members is $5/person or $10/family, unless otherwise specified. See **www.sycamorelandtrust.org** for more details and directions. **To RSVP,** visit the event page online and fill out the form, or email **info@sycamorelandtrust.org**, or call **812-336-5382 x100**. Provide your address, phone number, and names and ages of any children participating.

NATURE ENTHUSIAST: Guided hikes for people of all ages and experience levels. Learn something new, come for a refresher, or check out a new preserve!

LITTLE HIKERS: Family outings geared toward children up to age 12. A snack will be provided.

WEEKDAY WALKERS: Naturalist-led strolls on special topics. Your input and questions are encouraged!

13 OCT — *SECOND* THURSDAY PRESERVE-A-PRESERVE DAY

Sam Shine Foundation Preserve (northern Monroe Co.)

Thursday, October 13, 12:30 – 4 p.m.

Get a special look at one of our newest and largest preserves, a week early due to our upcoming Annual Celebration. We'll work on the Preserve's hillside to control the Asian bush honeysuckle that threatens to invade the Beanblossom Creek floodplain, and also clean up an old trash pile. Wear long pants and sturdy shoes or boots, and bring work gloves and water. Bring loppers and handsaws if you have them. Meet at the north-side Marsh on Kinser Pike (near Subway) at 12:30 p.m. to carpool. RSVP by October 11. Snacks included!

21 OCT — ANNUAL CELEBRATION 2016

Monroe Convention Center

Friday, October 21, 6 – 9 p.m.

State Botanist Michael Homoya will be the keynote speaker at our 26th Anniversary Annual Celebration. Enjoy live jazz music, a silent auction, an excellent dinner, and drinks from Oliver Winery and Upland Brewing Co. Tickets are $75 per person, or $500 for a table of 8. Purchase at sycamorelandtrust.org or call 812-336-5382. See page 5 for more information.

29 OCT — TREE ID HIKE

Touch the Earth Natural Area

Saturday, October 29, 1 – 3 p.m.

Join Indiana DNR District Forester Rob McGriff to enhance your tree identification knowledge. This is a great opportunity to learn from an expert in forestry and to enjoy beautiful fall weather and color.

15 OCT — HOOSIER HIKERS COUNCIL WORKDAYS

Laura Hare Nature Preserve at Downey Hill

Third Saturdays, 9 a.m. – 3 p.m. (Oct. 15, Nov. 19, Dec. 17)

We're thankful that the current project of the Hoosier Hikers Council (HHC) is to complete a trail at our Laura Hare Nature Preserve at Downey Hill. Many Sycamore members have helped with this exciting project. HHC workdays welcome people of all ages and abilities. Tools and lunch are provided. Meet at 9 a.m. at Country Gospel Music Church, 5181 E. SR 46, Nashville. Learn more at **hoosierhikerscouncil.org**.

3 NOV — WEEKDAY WALKERS: EXPLORE A CONSERVATION EASEMENT

Yellowwood Farm

Thursday, November 3, 10 a.m. – noon

Nestled next to state forest land on the Monroe-Brown County line, Yellowwood Farm is a private property that provides a lovely mix of meadow, creek, and upland habitats. Enjoy the beauty of these diverse habitats while learning what a conservation easement is and how Sycamore Land Trust works with private land owners to protect their property. Meet at the parking lot directly south and across the road from the eastside Bloomingfoods at 9:30am.

5 NOV — GRANT-MATCH INVASIVE PLANT WORKDAY

Porter West Preserve (western Monroe Co.)

Saturday, November 5, 1 p.m. – 4 p.m.

Help us keep non-native bushes from invading the lovely forest interior of this preserve, and your volunteer time will also count as a match toward a grant from the Monroe County Soil and Water Conservation District! Wear long pants and sturdy shoes or boots, and bring work gloves and water. Bring loppers and handsaws if you have them. Meet at the Preserve entrance on Vernal Pike near SR 48. RSVP by November 3. Snacks included!

17 NOV — THIRD THURSDAY PRESERVE-A-PRESERVE DAY

Touch the Earth Natural Area (Bartholomew County)

Thursday, November 17, 1 p.m. – 4 p.m.

We'll continue working on invasive bushes such as privet and Asian bush honeysuckle, keeping them from regaining a foothold here. Wear long pants and sturdy shoes or boots, and bring work gloves and water. Bring loppers and handsaws if you have them. Meet at Cedar Crest (Sycamore's office, 4898 E. Heritage Woods Rd., Bloomington) at 12:30 p.m. to carpool, or at the Preserve at 1 p.m. RSVP by November 15. Snacks included!

2 DEC — HOLIDAY OPEN HOUSE

SAVE the date

Cedar Crest, 4898 E. Heritage Woods Rd., Bloomington

Friday, December 2, 5 – 8 p.m.

Members and friends are invited to Sycamore's headquarters for merrymaking. Come as you are; stay for a few minutes or a few hours. Light refreshments and drinks will be served. No RSVP necessary.

4 JAN — WEEKDAY WALKERS: NEW YEAR'S RESOLUTION HIKE

Trevlac Bluffs Nature Preserve

Wednesday, January 4, 10 a.m. – noon

Get your new year off to a healthy start with a hike at Trevlac Bluffs. Rejuvenate the mind, body, and spirit while taking in the views of the 200-foot high bluffs that overlook Beanblossom Creek. Your guide will also have a warm "spring tonic" tea to share. This hike will be brisk and includes a fairly steep incline.

7 JAN — LITTLE HIKERS: WHO'S BEEN HERE? ANIMALS IN WINTER

Beanblossom Bottoms Nature Preserve

Saturday, January 7, noon – 2 p.m.

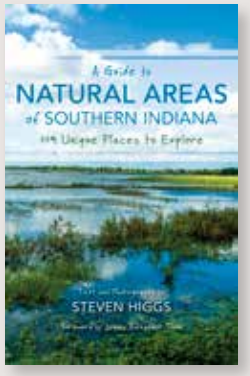
What animals are active in winter? How do we know they have been here? What about the animals we didn't see? Use your observation skills and senses to investigate the winter wonderland of Beanblossom Bottoms Nature Preserve. Just like author Lindsey Barrett George in her "Who's Been Here?" series, we will find and use clues to answer our questions about animals in winter.

16 FEB — THIRD THURSDAY PRESERVE-A-PRESERVE DAY

Location to be determined (Details will be posted on our website)

Afternoon of Thursday, February 16

Save the date for the kick-off to the 2017 Preserve-a-Preserve Day season! Snacks included!



New hiking guidebook for southern Indiana supports Sycamore

Environmentalist and writer Steven Higgs has seen a lot of Indiana, and his commitment to covering stories that matter has led to achievements that impact us all. In fact, he wrote the first article ever published about Sycamore Land Trust in the Herald-Times.

Lately, Higgs has been traveling across southern Indiana to document its beauty and write a new guidebook, "A Guide to Natural Areas of Southern Indiana: 119 Unique Places to Explore." It's a photo-packed, handy resource that will take you all around this beautiful part of the country. If you buy the book through Higgs's site, he'll donate 20 percent of the proceeds to Sycamore! What a perfect gift for a nature-loving friend– or for yourself.

To buy the book, visit **naturalbloomington.com**. You can also read more about Steven on our blog at **www.sycamorelandtrust.org/blog**.

Photos by Abby Perfetti

Land acquisition adds migratory songbird habitat to Scarlet Oak Woods

Sycamore Land Trust recently added 60 acres of forested land to Scarlet Oak Woods, a nature preserve in Monroe Co., northeast of Bloomington near New Unionville.. Three families—Bill and Lorraine Hanna, George Bull and Faye Mark, and an anonymous couple—sold the adjoining land to Sycamore through bargain sales that included partial donations. This Scarlet Oak Woods enlargement adds to an uninterrupted hardwood forest block. Sizable tracts like this provide valuable habitat for migratory songbirds, sensitive species like box turtles, and other wildlife such as barred owls and wood thrushes. The Scarlet Oak Woods preserve features a half-mile trail, a beautiful ridgeline, and a creek valley. Sycamore hopes to expand the existing trail with the addition of the new parcels.

The Hannas' farm sits on forested hills amid Yellowwood State Forest and Scarlet Oak Woods. They heard about the opportunity to protect their land when an article about a land donation from Bill and Kathleen Oliver, their friends, was printed in the "Herald-Times."

"This is land that we really didn't use, and so it just seemed like the right thing to do," explained Bill Hanna. Working with Sycamore "was a very simple process. John [Lawrence, Assistant Director,] and Christian [Freitag, Executive Director,] laid everything out for us. It was basically no work on our part."

Partial funding for the purchase was provided by the Bicentennial Nature Trust, a project developed by former Indiana Governor Mitch Daniels and supported by Indiana taxpayers.

"It's something that we're proud of, knowing that someday, however this land would have ended up, it won't be destroyed," Bill Hanna said standing amid the trees on the property they donated. "That's what we wanted, and Sycamore was the answer."

Above left: Bill Hanna with the sign designating that the property he and his wife Lorraine sold to Sycamore is an addition to Scarlet Oak Woods.

Above right: Bill and Lorraine Hanna stand on the edge of their property overlooking the land they sold to Sycamore.

Together,

we can protect the land we love forever

A planned gift to Sycamore Land Trust creates a lasting conservation legacy for you and your family.

For more information, call us at 812-336-5382.

Make a gift through your will, trust, retirement accounts, or life insurance and enjoy peace of mind knowing that you will pass on your values and that your wishes will be honored.

Thank You

This list includes donations received from 4/1/2016 through 7/31/2016. If you believe we have omitted your name in error, please contact us at 812-336-5382.

WELCOME, 26 NEW MEMBERS!

Matt Bleth
Andy Cobine and Linda Manus
Cook Inc. and CFC Properties LLC
Canyon Coy and Patricia Kaler
Mike Edgeworth
Gail Feagans
Michael Ginda
Bill and Lorraine Hanna
Connie and William Hegarty
Janice Henderson
Chris and Tony Herring
INPAWS
Jarvis Enterprises
Tanya and Neal Larson-Cheeke
Bruce Lilly
Nick Marsh
Kate Mulligan
Sandra Rampley
John Scully
Tom Seeber
Gregory and Erika Strock
Jeff and Terri Vicenzi
Bonnie and Phil Wilcoxson
Judy Winkel
Loren and Lindsay Wood
Landon Yoder

LEADERSHIP SOCIETY

8/1/2015 – 7/31/2016

Visionary ($15,000+)
Anonymous
Climate Ride
Indiana Department of Natural Resources
James F. Fielder Trust
George and Cathy Korinek
Laura Hare Charitable Trust
Namaste Foundation
Raymond Foundation
Barbara Restle
Raymond Foundation
Ropchan Foundation
Sam Shine Foundation, Inc.
Smithville Charitable Foundation
Vectren Foundation, Inc.
Larry and Carol Weingartner

Trail Blazer ($5,000 - $14,999)
Anonymous (2)
Mike and Bev Baker
John and Eric Branigin
David and Kathy Dilcher
Tim and Mary Ann Dunfee
Ove W. Jorgensen Foundation
Phyllis Little
Bill and Kathleen Oliver
Sam and Gerry Ooley
Scott and Ruth Sanders
Jonathan Stafford
Larry Stanger
Wylie Foundation, Inc

Naturalist ($1,000 - $4,999)
Matt and Eva Allen
Anonymous (2)
Heather Blair and Craig Coley
Community Foundation of Bloomington and Monroe County
Dan and Debbi Conkle
Dorothy Danak
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IN MEMORIAM

With sadness, Sycamore notes the passing of David Paul Welch, 44, on July 4, 2016, in Chapel Hill, NC. David served on Sycamore's Board of Directors from 2000 through 2006 and was chair of the Stewardship Committee. David helped to establish Sycamore's land stewardship policies and practices.

Join Sycamore Land Trust and become a member for only $40 a year.

It just might be the simplest thing you can do to make a difference for the environment.

SYCAMORE SIGHTINGS

This worm-eating warbler fledgling was spotted at nightfall on our Scarlet Oak Woods Preserve by wildlife photographer extraordinaire Vern Wilkins.

Sycamore staff and Board members took a field trip to a new Sycamore property in July. Board secretary and "The Twig" editor Joan ten Hoor admires an eastern box turtle (*Terrapene carolina carolina*) encountered during the hike.

Photo by Abby Perfetti

Photo by Christian Freitag

Sycamore staff enjoyed observing the many mushrooms that flourished on Sycamore properties during this wet summer.

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INTRODUCING OUR NEW BOARD MEMBERS!

Sycamore Land Trust is pleased to welcome two new members to our Board of Directors:

Sarah Baumgart retired from the development department at the IU School of Education in 2010. When asked why she wanted to join Sycamore's Board, she was quick to reply: "I feel strongly about SLT's mission. As someone who cares deeply about the environment, protecting green space for all living creatures is imperative."

Bob Costello is the owner of Soma Coffeehouse, The Village Deli, and Laughing Planet in Bloomington. He says the reason he joined the Sycamore Board can be expressed by this simple concept, voiced by the great conservationist Aldo Leopold: "Conservation is a state of harmony between men and land."

Read more about all our Board members at **sycamorelandtrust.org**

Short-eared owl, state endangered in Indiana. *Photo by Steve Gifford*

26th Anniversary

Annual Celebration

Friday, October 21 | 6 – 9 pm

Monroe Convention Center

Dinner | Live Music | Silent Auction | Local Beer & Wine

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Owned	63	5,026
Easements	36	3,974
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Total	**107**	**19,010**
Wills (known)	*12*	*2,405*

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