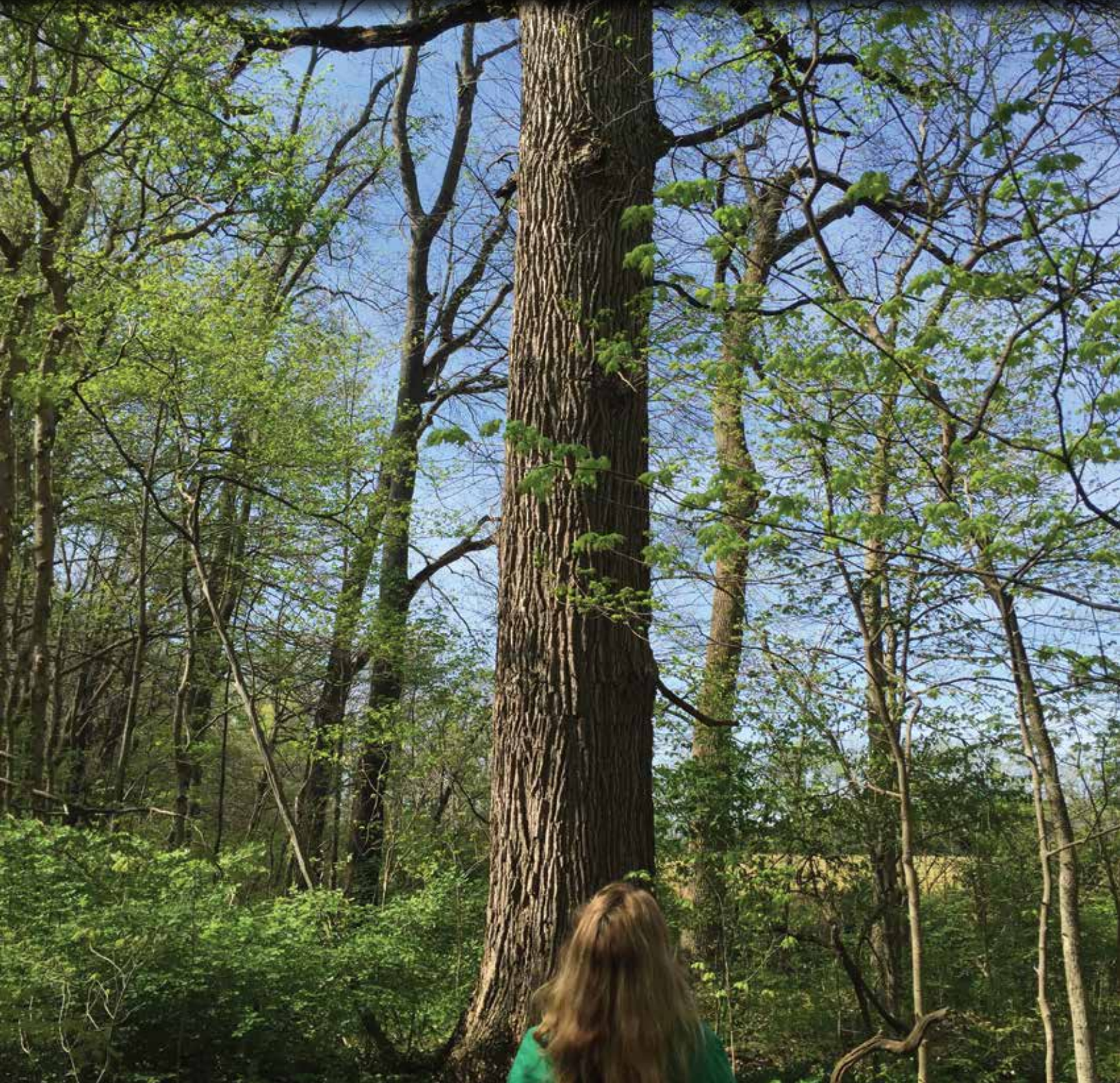




CENTRAL INDIANA LAND TRUST

Summer 2016



From the Leadership



Cliff Chapman

When my family travels through the United States, we often visit National Natural Landmarks in addition to, or instead of National Parks. National Natural Landmarks are smaller and less visited giving a more natural, quiet experience with nature. Being small, they have to have very special characteristics to receive the designation.

We've hiked around Amboy Crater in California. Looked for exotic birds at Ramsey Canyon in Arizona. Climbed red rocks at Garden of the Gods in Colorado. Were awed by the formations at Valley of Fire in Nevada.

Last month, I strapped the kiddo pack on my back and hiked a National Natural Landmark with my wife and son. It was a short drive. We visited Meltzer Woods Nature Preserve in Shelby County. Although I've been visiting the property since 1999 while working for the DNR and CILTI, my wife had never been there. She was taken aback by the huge trees. We brought binoculars to see the leaves on trees to identify them. A little nervous waiting for her reaction, I was relieved when she told me it deserved the same designation as Valley of Fire, one of her favorite places we've ever hiked together.

So I'd like to thank you, the members of the Central Indiana Land Trust, for making this possible. It's hard to imagine what it was like forty or more years ago when many of these special places were protected. But I hope you feel a sense of pride that you helped secure the last unprotected old growth forest in Indiana. You helped preserve a National Natural Landmark and open it to the public to enjoy. This is your forest now, to be shared with anyone who needs a place of inspiration, a place to let go, a place to get lost in the wonder of nature.

I hope to see you on the trail.

Cliff Chapman
Executive Director

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317-631-5263

On the Cover:



Exploring
Meltzer
Woods



Welcome New Members!

Renee Buening
Therese Burkhard
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Tim and Judy King
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Roger and Cindy Woodruff
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Where there's a will there's a way...

to make a gift that lasts for conservation in Central Indiana. By including the Central Indiana Land Trust in your will, your passion for nature serves as a legacy for generations to come. The Burr Oak Society was established in recognition of CILTI's donors who have created such a legacy. If you have made a provision for the Central Indiana Land Trust in your will or trust, please let us know so we can include you as a member of the Burr Oak Society and thank you during your lifetime.

Members of the Burr Oak Society

Anonymous (4)
Christine Carlson
Joe Collins
Oliver Daugherty*
Aron DiBacco
Rebecca and Thomas Dolan

Van Eller*
Sharon Horvath and Andy Pike
Tom Hougham and Ann Deutch
Marjorie Jones
Eleanor Krauss*
Cheri O'Neill

John* and Mary* Pelton
Ruth Ratcliff*
Reta and Rob Rutledge
Deb Smith

*deceased

If you would like more information about including the Land Trust in your plans and becoming a member of the Burr Oak Society, please contact Rachel at reble@conservingindiana.org or 317-631-5263.

A Conservation Story 150 Years in the Making

- 1857** John Frederick Meltzer purchases 160 acres near Shelbyville, IN
- 1920** John's son, Philip, and grandson, Brady, had expanded the holding to 280 acres
- 1928** 48 acres of never cleared land are enrolled in Indiana's Classified Forest Program by Charles Deam
- 1945** Carl Keller publishes a study that first makes Meltzer Woods known to the scientific community
- 1969** Published in Alton Lindsey's book, *Natural Areas of Indiana*, as one of the top priorities for protection in the state
- 1973** National Park Service recognizes Meltzer Woods as a National Natural Landmark
- 1979** Enrolled as one of state's first natural areas registry sites
- 1970s -1990s** Various universities and conservation groups visit the property to tour the woods and to help work to control invasive species, including IDNR regional ecologist Cliff Chapman beginning in the late 1990s
- 2008** Central Indiana Land Trust begins a management agreement with the Meltzer Family to help care for the woods and control for invasive winter creeper and garlic mustard
- 2015** Central Indiana Land Trust purchases the 48 acres old growth forest from the Meltzer Family at 50% cost of the fair market value – a tremendous gift from the family

On a crystal-clear day in May, members of the Meltzer Family gathered at the new trailhead to the Meltzer Woods Nature Preserve to cut the ribbon on a trail opening their woods to the public.

Permanently protecting a site like Meltzer Woods and opening it to the public isn't an everyday occurrence in Indiana and the family was joined at the trailhead by the Governor of Indiana, the Director of Indiana Department of Natural Resources and Cliff Chapman, CILTI Executive Director.

After the ribbon cutting, a group explored the new trail and bridges that intersect this National Natural Landmark – mesmerized by the magnitude of the trees and the beauty of the woods. When walking through this forest, it's almost impossible not to think about all the places like Meltzer Woods that have been lost and with them a great deal of our Hoosier heritage. What's remarkable about this woods is that it's still there.



Meltzer Woods Ribbon Cutting

It's rare to meet a family like the Meltzers in Central Indiana – a family that for over 150 years has left a portion of their Indiana farm, located just outside Shelbyville, untouched. A few hundred years ago, much of Indiana mirrored the

old growth found at Meltzer Woods. As settlers moved to Indiana, almost all of the timber was cleared, including the areas surrounding Meltzer Woods. An old growth forest is generally described as a forest containing trees that are at least 150 years of age and has been mostly undisturbed during that time period as well. As Brady Meltzer told Carl Keller in the 1940s, “There is some valuable timber in this woods, and it would make a nice piece of farmland if cleared, but I’m going to leave it alone.” And for multiple generations that’s just what the family did, they left it alone.



Meltzer Woods Trail



The protection of Meltzer Woods was made possible by the donors named here.

In 2008, the Central Indiana Land Trust and the Meltzer family entered into a management agreement on the woods in order to assist the family in controlling for invasive winter creeper and garlic mustard – two plants that threatened the health of the forest. After years of working together to manage the woods and discussing its protection, the family decided to sell the land at a significant bargain sale. Part of the negotiation was that CILTI would open this living museum to the public as part of the state’s Bicentennial celebrations in 2016. A visit to Meltzer Woods leaves one captivated by the size of the trees and the magnificence of the forest and now, the Meltzer family has ensured countless generations of Hoosiers will share in its remarkable beauty and deepen their understanding of its ecological importance.



So, what is a National Natural Landmark?

The National Natural Landmark (NNL) program was developed in 1962 to encourage and support the conservation of sites that illustrate the nation’s geological and biological history, and to strengthen the public’s appreciation of America’s natural heritage. National Natural Landmarks are selected for their outstanding condition, illustrative value, rarity, diversity, and value to science and education. Sites are designated by the Secretary of the Interior, with landowner concurrence, and to-date, nearly 600 landmarks have received the NNL designation within the United States, American Samoa, Guam, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

In 1973, the National Park Service recognized Meltzer Woods for its outstanding biological characteristics and important natural heritage by designating it a National Natural Landmark. At the beginning of the trail you can see the historic National Natural Landmark marker made in 1974 and set in stone this May.

Volunteer Spotlight

Mike and Barb Homoya have been members of the Central Indiana Land Trust for several years and we are lucky to have this couple as our site stewards for Burnett Woods Nature Preserve located in Avon. As residents of Brownsburg, IN, Mike and Barb are happy to assist in the maintenance of a natural area close to their own home. Mike recalls visiting Burnett Woods years before it was owned by CILTI and he knew this was a special place the Burnett Family wanted to see protected. Now, he can see that mission through. Mike and Barb are helping partake in the management and forever protection of this woods.

During their college years at the University of Southern Illinois, Mike and Barb took an ecology class located in southwestern Montana. The class was focused on Ecology of the Rocky Mountains. Ever since, they have been a duo, taking in the beauty and studying the ecology of the Midwest together.

As the DNR Botanist/Ecologist for Indiana for the past 34 years, Mike has an immense knowledge of the flora across the state of Indiana. He is a great asset to CILTI, offering years of expertise in the field of conservation. After seeing his first natural area in the 1970s in Jackson Hollow, located in Southern Illinois, Mike developed his passion for botany. His enthusiasm and understanding for the natural world is very evident as you walk through a wooded area, like

Burnett Woods, with him.

Barb also shares a love for nature that was developed in her early years, taking trips with her family to national parks across the country. Barb is now a Research Nurse at Roudebush VA Medical Center in Indianapolis. Although Barb may not be immersed in the conservation field every day, she shares and understands the importance of preserving natural areas and enjoys spending time within these special areas.

Thank you Mike and Barb for your dedication to the Central Indiana Land Trust! We appreciate you!



Mike and Barb in the Boundary Waters

Thank you for the following tributes

In honor of...

Priscilla Johnson

Anonymous
Joan Carr
Lynne Coverdale
Ann and Terry Daniel
Karl and Margret Gossweiler
Marcia Jay and family
Chris and Cindy Johnson
Susan Johnson
Sarah Payton and family
Theta Ladies Night/Day Bridge Group

Tom Maurath

Jim Swinford

Meltzer Woods

Kathy Nolting

In memory of...

Evelyn Bergdoll

Loree Everette

Elizabeth "Betsy" Wade Freiburger

Thomas and Priscilla Johnson

Nancy Trimble Habig

Thomas and Priscilla Johnson

Murrill Lowry

David Daniell

Harold McReynold

Jim Gammon

Donovan Miller

Shawndra Miller

Naomi Ruth Paddock

Thomas and Priscilla Johnson

Mary Lou Rice

Carol Rice Kortman
Daniel and Janice Rice

Judy Runnebohm

Nick Runnebohm

Jordan Diedrich Minnigan

Elena Baez
Lori Barrett
Therese Burkhard
David A Diedrich
Kristen Foland
Karen and Greg Jacobs
Jonathan Kirschner
Teresa Audetat and Morgan Kramer
Kevin Lemme
Mary Mills
Steve and Elizabeth Mueller
Denise Ostendorf
Jacqueline Perry
Bonnie Singh
Nancy and George Tikijian
Donna Videan
Elizabeth Weinstein
Ingrid Barbro Wiebke
Sara Zeckel
Diane and Dan Zimmerman

Species Spotlight: American plum

Trees can be gigantic - California redwoods and giant sequoias can tower well over 250 feet tall. They can be small too, like redbuds and flowering dogwoods that sprinkle color in the mid-canopy of Indiana forests. Because of their beautiful floral displays in spring, these smaller trees are often used in landscaping.

A great example of a spring blooming tree is the American plum. And yes, they do have fruits that are indeed plums. Sized more like cherries you might buy at the store, their red fruits are about one inch across. They are edible, but sour so best used in a jam.

Their lovely displays of white flowers in late April are particularly visible when a tree is at mature height - around 20 feet. These attributes made it an excellent choice for the restoration work at Oliver's Woods Nature Preserve. When looking for trees to utilize in our restoration work there, we knew we'd like to include a healthy dose of American plum as a part of the over 2200 flowering trees we've planted at the site in Indianapolis. We've also planted shrubs like ninebark and pasture rose to go along with the redbuds, choke cherry, dogwoods and serviceberry trees as we restore and expand on what was a degraded forest.



Planting Plum Trees

Plums were a good choice for this area as they not only provide beauty every spring, but the fruits and its growth habit are valuable for wildlife. American plums often root-sprout creating small thickets or clusters of trees. Habitat like this is becoming increasingly rare but attractive for bird species like woodcock (aka timberdoodle) as well as others that need thick cover for protection.

The new trees at Oliver's Woods will need a few years to grow before bursting in annual flower shows. By that time, we hope it will be open to the public and will serve as an example of just how pretty native trees like American plums can be – hopefully encouraging many to plant one at home.

Climate Change and What We're Doing to Prepare

Climate change is an issue of concern all across the globe and also right here in our own backyards of Central Indiana.

Climate change is impacting and will continue to impact the overall health of the ecosystem which encompasses every natural area CILTI works to protect. With ranging precipitation, temperature extremes, and air quality change that we can expect with climate change, there will be impacts on our land and water resources. Forested areas, like many of the natural areas owned by CILTI, will be closely monitored as some species may take the brunt of the impact.

Through active management for each CILTI property, there are plans in place for the future of each parcel of land we

own. With flora and fauna unique to each property, each site brings a new dimension to the way it should be managed. With increasing effects of climate change, species will be impacted in variable ways. Managing for certain plant and tree species is one way in which CILTI is preparing. As temperatures increase across our state, many tree species will be expected to gradually shift their ranges of habitat.

Keeping this in mind, CILTI's approach is to be consistent with the natural occurrence of changes that will take place. Although some species of plants may be able to thrive and compete with the change in climate, many species will be unable to adapt. Keeping updated with scientific research and climate models will be imperative moving forward.

Omissions from 2015 donor listing in the spring newsletter: Bill and Jane DuMond

We work to ensure our newsletters are as accurate as possible, in the event you notice an omission or mistake, please notify Rachel at reble@conservingindiana.org to report any changes or corrections.



**CENTRAL
INDIANA
LAND TRUST**

Preserving the Heartland

Central Indiana Land Trust, Inc.
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Indianapolis, IN 46202

Please visit our website:
www.conservingindiana.org

