



FRIENDS OF  
NACHUSA  
GRASSLANDS

2011-2012 ANNUAL REPORT





“IT IS AMAZING TO STROLL THROUGH NACHUSA GRASSLANDS AND REALIZE I AM SEEING SWATHS OF PLANTS I HAVE NEVER SEEN BEFORE; THEIR COMMON NAMES BESTOWED BY OUR PIONEER ANCESTORS AS THEY CROSSED WHAT USED TO BE THE VAST EXPANSE OF NATIVE PRAIRIES: PASQUE FLOWER, RATTLESNAKE MASTER, BASTARD TOADFLAX, HOARY PUCCOON, CUP PLANT, KITTENTAILS, TICK SEED AND SHOOTING STARS. LIKE THE PLANT LIFE OF THE FLORIDA EVERGLADES, MOST OF THESE PLANTS EXIST ONLY IN OUR NATIVE PRAIRIE REMNANTS. WE HAVE PROPAGATED A FEW FOR OUR GARDENS, SOME OF THEIR RELATIVES WE HAVE MET; OTHERWISE, TO WALK THROUGH OUR AMERICAN PRAIRIE IS TO SEE GRASSES AND FORBS THAT EXIST ALMOST NO PLACE ELSE IN THIS WORLD. “

– Nancy Hotchkiss  
*(pictured with Bernie Buchholz) ✨*





BERNIE BUCHHOLZ 

## Message from the President

Nachusa is quite a story.... one that takes place in a parallel universe where the rules and values that govern are different ... dare I say better ... than our “regular lives.”

It is a story of ordinary people on a nearly invisible landscape determined to roll back the seemingly inevitable tide of nature’s degradation. Determined to protect native grasslands, an ecotype that helped make the Midwestern soils the envy of the world; soils aborning for 12,000 years that would feed and power a young nation.

Restoration is authentic, honest work. The landscape doesn’t lie, although the truth may take years to be revealed. We persevere. Call it stick-to-itiveness. We are optimistic in the face of overwhelming challenges. No quarterly returns here. If leadplant needs 10 years to mature, then we will take our pleasure deferred.

The Nachusa universe is a place where, for those of us who had forgotten, the dignity of physical labor is rediscovered. Where Nature is very much in charge, but receptive to our efforts.

This world values community, with all its rough edges. We display our strengths and weaknesses in a common effort. We are mainly modest, except for a bit of bragging about the world’s best restorations.

We are of this place. There is an unmistakable “hereness” that we’ve learned to inhale. We listen to this unique landscape so that we can mend it.

In the process of this great effort, we begin to reveal to and remind a forgetful nation of this landscape’s amazing beauty and complexity.

You are all a part of this special universe – this unusual community, each in your own way, whether it’s by educating children, repairing equipment, raising cash, giving tours, washing dishes after the Potluck, offering encouragement, picking up roadside trash or doing hands-in-the-soil restoration.

If you are not yet part of our universe, step behind the curtain. Try it out. There is plenty of room on the Prairie. Just remember that the rules here are a bit different.

*Your financial support reflects your passion. You are the flesh and bones, the community, the energy, the creativity and the passion that advances this noble work. In less than three years and way ahead of schedule, the Friends have exceeded the \$100,000 target to permanently establish the Nachusa Grasslands Stewardship Endowment, even as we continue to expand our support for science and stewardship.*

This is indeed a special place.

**Bernie Buchholz**

October 2012

President, Friends of Nachusa Grasslands

Friends of Nachusa Grasslands  
Board of Directors

Mike Adolph 2013  
Mike Carr 2014  
John Heneghan 2013

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### 2012-2013 Officers

PRESIDENT  
Bernie Buchholz

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Alan Meier  
Nancy Hotchkiss  
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TREASURER  
David Crites

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EUPHYDRYAS PHAETON  
(BALTIMORE CHECKERSPOT) 



## Friends of Nachusa Grasslands

Nachusa Grasslands is a leader in restoring one of the world's most endangered ecosystems.

The Nature Conservancy (TNC) owns and operates Nachusa Grasslands. The Friends of Nachusa Grasslands (Friends) is a 501(c)(3) not for profit registered organization founded in 2008 by volunteers dedicated to providing for the long-term care and management of the project.

Over the past twenty-six years, hundreds of concerned people have invested thousands of hours protecting and restoring remnant prairie at Nachusa Grasslands. Although many more years of effort lie ahead, Nachusa is already one of the most successful restorations in the world. We have now begun to provide for its long-term survival.

## Mission

Because so little tallgrass prairie remains, our mission first and foremost is to preserve, protect, and share the precious endangered ecosystem – the rare grasses, wildflowers, birds, insects, amphibians, reptiles and insects – that is Nachusa Grasslands.

The Friends of Nachusa Grasslands strives to accomplish this mission by funding an endowment that will help defray the cost of natural areas management, staff and operating expenses; conducting and encouraging stewardship; and encouraging education and scientific activity at the preserve.

## Build an Endowment

Invested and managed by The Nature Conservancy (TNC) in accordance with its policies and procedures, the goal of the Nachusa Grasslands Stewardship Endowment is to support the conservation and preservation of native plants, animals and natural communities by providing funds for long-term stewardship.

**Accomplishment:** During the 2011-2012 fiscal year, donor support of the Endowment totaled \$58,200.00, up from \$35,530.28 the previous year. The Endowment balance as of June 30, 2012 was \$93,930.00.

**Need:** Our goal is to raise \$3 million in principal for the Nachusa Grasslands Stewardship Endowment. Friends has set an interim goal of raising \$250,000 for the Nachusa Grasslands Stewardship Endowment as a part of the TNC Bison Initiative.

**To include the Friends in your will,** we should be named as:

Friends of Nachusa Grasslands, a nonprofit corporation, organized and existing under laws of the State of Illinois, with address of 8772 S. Lowden Road, Franklin Grove, IL 61031; tax identification number: 26-3303031.

**To name the Friends as a beneficiary** of your life insurance or retirement account, use this information for the form:

NAME: Friends of Nachusa Grasslands  
ADDRESS: 8772 S. Lowden Road, Franklin Grove, IL 61031



MEINERS FAMILY PRESENTS A DONATION FROM  
CREST FOODS CO. INC. OF ASHTON, ILLINOIS

## How to Help

- ❖ Become a Voting Member of Friends by volunteering 40 hours annually and making a financial gift of your choosing.
- ❖ Inquire if your employer has a matching gift program.
- ❖ Sponsor a special event, such the annual Friends Prairie Potluck, or help underwrite our Annual Report expenses.
- ❖ Include Friends in your estate planning.
- ❖ Become a "Perennial" Donor by making a gift of your choice at a consistent or higher level each year.
- ❖ Donate to Friends as a:
  - Restoration Benefactor* – \$5,000 or more
  - Conservation Champion* – \$1,500 to \$1,499
  - Supporter* – \$1 to \$1,499



## Conduct & Encourage Stewardship at the Preserve

Stewards and other volunteers are the heart and soul of the prairie at Nachusa. Whether it's planting, harvesting, educating, monitoring, photographing, repairing, or advocating, we have a role that fits your passions and time.

**Accomplishments:** As of June 30, 2012, Friends had 41 Voting Members, up from 25 in 2010-2011, as well as 113 additional donors committed to conserving the 3,000+ acres of Nachusa Grasslands. Friends cares wisely for both the land and the resources entrusted to us to make sustainable preservation possible.

**Need:** Friends provide warm and welcoming opportunities throughout the year, inside or out, to work with flora and fauna. There is much to be done and it "takes a village" to ensure that stewardship, science, education and funding are all made possible, accessible and meaningful.



"I HAVE ALWAYS WANTED TO KNOW WHAT THE PRAIRIE LOOKED LIKE BEFORE SETTLERS ARRIVED AND CHANGED EVERYTHING. NACHUSA IS PROBABLY THE BEST CHANCE I WILL EVER HAVE TO SEE THAT."

— Hank Hartman



"WHO CAN SAY WHETHER IT'S SNOWY WOODS, OR SUMMER'S DAY. CREAM WILD INDIGO, OR VARIEGATED FRITILLARY. HARRIER OVERHEAD, OR WAVING LITTLE BLUE INSTEAD. THE VIEW FROM KNOB FIVE: IT'S GOOD TO BE ALIVE."

— Mike Adolph



"I HAVE HAD A LIFE LONG DREAM OF RESTORING A PIECE OF 'BROKEN LAND'. I HAVE BEEN FORTUNATE TO MEET AND WORK WITH THE STAFF AND STEWARDS OF NACHUSA GRASSLAND. THEY HAVE GREATLY HELPED ME FULFILL THIS DREAM. THANK YOU FRIENDS OF NACHUSA."

— Paul Soderholm

## Encourage Education & Science at the Preserve

In 2011-2012, Friends awarded a \$2,000 Scientific Research Project Grant to Kim Schmidt, a Master's Degree student at Southern Illinois University. Kim is studying the population, characteristics, and habitat use of the ornate box turtles (*Terrapene ornata ornata*) in Nachusa's restored tallgrass prairie, remnant prairie and oak savanna. The methodology employed includes presence/absence surveys, mark-recapture and radio-telemetry surveys.

For 2012-2013, Friends may award grants of up to \$4,000 to qualified candidates conducting scientific research significant to Nachusa Grasslands. Details on the application process can be found at [http://www.nachusagrasslands.org/Science/Science\\_TOC.html](http://www.nachusagrasslands.org/Science/Science_TOC.html).



KIM SCHMIDT INSPECTS AN ORNATE BOX TURTLE



RECORDING TURTLE DATA

## How to Help in this Diverse Ecosystem:

- ☘ **Volunteer for "Stewardship Saturdays":** Every Saturday morning from 9 a.m. to noon, a workday is hosted by Stewards of units across the preserve. Meet fellow prairie enthusiasts who will guide and mentor you along the way. Spring and fall also afford special training and opportunities to serve on a prescribed fire crew.
- ☘ **Share YOUR knowledge and talents:** Volunteer to lead a youth or community group tour. Whether it's with elementary, high school, college or various environmental organizations, people of all ages come from far and wide to visit Nachusa and enjoy and learn from the prairie.
- ☘ **Capture the Essence of Nachusa Grasslands:** Volunteer for the Nachusa Photography Corps.
- ☘ **Be a Citizen Scientist:** Monitor birds, dragonflies, butterflies frogs or other native flora and fauna.
- ☘ **Transform a Cornfield into a Native Landscape:** Volunteer to be a Steward of your very own unit and participate in this leading-edge experiment in the new science of restoration ecology!

Several of the activities described above including workdays, prescribed burns, and youth education are offered and overseen by TNC. Except for specific Friends-sponsored events such as the Prairie Potluck, all Nachusa volunteers are under the auspices of TNC. Friends provide this information about programs and opportunities to help fulfill our goals of encouraging stewardship, science and education, but Friends is not responsible for these activities.



# What We Do at Nachusa Grasslands...

# Harvesting

Seed collection usually begins in May and ends in November. Staff and volunteers harvest native species to re-create prairies or overseed existing grasslands. With scissors and snips, buckets and bags, they hand collect about 230 different types of seeds, dry and mill them, and then store everything until planting season.

Deciding if a particular species is ready for harvest is a complex task, so the stewards and staff confer frequently on when and where to begin collecting. Each season presents new challenges, which keeps the process interesting and rewarding.

COLLECTING ▲



JAY STACY ★



AL & MARY MEIER ★



SPIDERWORT SEED HEADS ▲



SEED DRYING OCTOPUS ★





# Tending & Removing

CLEARING BRUSH ★



CHAINSAWING ★



DAVID CRITES ON FIRECREW ★



SALLY CLEARING QUEEN ANNE'S LACE ★



TREATING THE INVASIVES ★

Brush clearing takes place from December to May, and weeding is most intense from May to August. Invasive and non-native species are removed to allow prairie and savanna plants to flourish.

Nachusa's prescribed fire season is usually October/November and March/April and requires a highly trained fire crew. Burning helps to promote species diversity by controlling invasive weeds, shrubs, and trees. Fire also stimulates new plant growth and returns nutrients to the soil.

Without clearing, weeding, and burning all of our restoration efforts would soon be undone.





# Planting

SEEDING ★

Returning former cropland to prairie and overseeding established areas are accomplished through various planting methods. Most of the sowing is done in late November or early December after the area has been burned. Snow provides an ideal surface, as it helps us see what we have already covered.

After mixing our seeds according to the soil conditions and hydrology of the target area, we pull pendulum or drop seeders behind tractors or trucks. We also plant many seeds by hand.



BERNIE WITH SEED BARRELS IN THE FIELD \*



AL WITH PENDULUM SEEDER \*



HAND PLANTING ★





KIM AND LOVONNE MONITOR ORNATES ★

Nachusa Grasslands is a living laboratory for students from elementary through graduate schools. Tours, field trips, and research projects – some supported by grants from Friends – provide insights into prairie and savanna land management practices as well as native flora and fauna.

Celebrations occur throughout the year, most notably at the Friends Annual Prairie Potluck on the fourth Saturday in June along with numerous TNC-sponsored events and get-togethers. Fellowship and fun are always part of our days (and nights) at Nachusa Grasslands.



READY FOR A TOUR ★



PETER MEASURES A TURTLE ★



BILL, LISA, JAN & RON ON A HIKE ♣



JIM KANAS ENTERTAINS AT THE PRAIRIE POTLUCK ♣



# Thank You!

## Friends of Nachusa Grasslands Donors July 1, 2011, to June 30, 2012

### SUPPORTERS (\$1 TO \$1,499)

Cindy and Fred Acker  
*(in memory of Richard Acker)*  
Mike Adolph\*  
Keith Anderson\*  
Michael Annin  
James Armstrong  
Ellen Baker\*  
John and Jane Balaban  
Sally and Max Baumgardner\*



### FRIENDS 2012 ❖

Todd and Tonya Bittner\*  
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*(in honor of Hank and Becky Hartman)*  
Bernie and Cindy Buchholz\*  
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*(in honor of Jim and Nancy Hotchkiss)*  
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The Hamill Family Foundation\*  
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*(in memory of Roxana Huck)*  
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*(in memory of Jack and Doris Jordan)*  
Kevin Kaltenbach  
Nancy Bingham and David Kanzler  
*(in memory of James Hotchkiss)*  
Robert and Marilyn Katrein  
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Mickey Collins and Aki Knezevic  
John Ayres and Lisa Marie Lanz\*  
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Jeannie and Tom Lawson  
*(in memory of Annette, Russell,  
and James Lawson)*

Patrick Lessner\*  
Dennis and Charlene Loescher\*  
Tricia Lowery\*  
Clark and Pamela Lumsden  
Alan and Mary Meier\*  
Tom and Jenny Mitchell  
Diane Moore\*  
The Morrison Family Foundation\*  
*(on Behalf of Bruce and Beth Boyd)*  
Lisa Murphy  
Oregon Healthcare Pharmacy Services,  
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Josh Price  
Albert Pyott  
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Kathleen Saxton  
*(in memory of Thomas "McGee" Maher)*  
Bruce and Ellen Scherger  
Cindy and John Schmadeke  
Juergen and Meredith Schroeer  
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Evelyn Young  
Tawani Enterprises Inc.  
Anonymous

### CONSERVATION CHAMPIONS (\$1,500 TO \$4,999)

Alan Carpenter\*  
Dave Crossett and Mary Walsh\*  
Jan Grainger\*  
Jeff and Joan Meiners\*  
Steve and Mary Meiners\*  
Paul and Carol Soderholm\*

### RESTORATION BENEFACTORS (\$5,000+)

The Bobolink Foundation\*  
*(c/o Wendy Paulson)*  
John Santucci  
Jay Stacy\*  
Crest Foods  
Anonymous

### DONATIONS IN MEMORY OF NACHUSA STEWARD MARY SCOTT

Bernie and Cindy Buchholz  
Clark and Pamela Lumsden  
Mary and Alan Meier  
Tom and Jenny Mitchell  
John and Cindy Schmadeke  
Jay Stacy  
Mary and Jim Vieregg

### IN-KIND DONORS

Bowron/Komerska Graphics, Ltd.  
Belvidere Central Middle School  
*National Junior Honor Society*  
Nancy Hotchkiss

\* **Perennial Donors** – Donors who have given in consecutive years at the same or a higher level

❖ **Deceased Donor**



## 2012 FINANCIAL RESULTS

	7/1/11 - 6/30/12 2012 RESULTS	7/1/10 - 6/30/11 2011 RESULTS
<b>BEGINNING BALANCE</b>	<b>\$ 5,712.15</b>	<b>\$ 3,882.50</b>
<b>REVENUES</b>		
Cash Donations	\$ 66,931.90	\$ 37,208.68
CRP Income	\$ 13,633.00	\$ 11,864.00
<b>Total Revenues</b>	<b>\$ 80,564.90</b>	<b>\$ 49,072.68</b>
<b>DISBURSEMENTS</b>		
Gifts to TNC Endowment	\$ 57,000.00	\$ 31,096.00
Government Fees	\$ 25.00	\$ 82.50
Insurance	\$ 1,143.00	\$ 297.00
Banking Fees	\$ 26.34	\$ 6.36
Development	\$ 2,445.36	\$ 1,409.93
Science Grants	\$ 2,000.00	\$ 1,000.00
Miscellaneous	\$ 506.45	\$ 00.00
CRP Herbicide	\$ 00.00	\$ 3,351.25
<b>Total</b>	<b>\$ 63,146.15</b>	<b>\$ 47,243.04</b>
<b>ENDING CASH BALANCE</b>	<b>\$ 23,130.90</b>	<b>\$ 5,712.15</b>

## BALANCE SHEET 6/30/12

<b>ASSETS</b>	
Cash	\$ 23,130.90
Certificate of Deposit	\$ 10,000.00
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$ 33,130.90</b>

<b>LIABILITIES</b>	
Liabilities	\$ 0.00
Funds Balance	\$ 33,130.90
<b>Total Assets</b>	<b>\$ 33,130.90</b>



"TENDING OUR PRAIRIE  
REMNANTS AND RESTORATIONS  
IS CHALLENGING, BUT EVEN  
WEEDING CAN BE GRATIFYING  
WHEN WE SURVEY AN AREA FREE  
OF INVASIVES AFTER A LONG DAY  
OF CUTTING AND CLEARING.  
OUR BEST REWARD,  
HOWEVER, COMES FROM SEEING AN  
ABUNDANCE OF PRAIRIE SPECIES  
FLOURISHING UNDER OUR CARE."

~ Mary and Al Meier



REGAL FRITILLARY ♡





"WE LOVE THE SUBTLE, EVER-CHANGING DIVERSITY OF LIFE AT NACHUSA, IN ALL SEASONS. WE LOVE BEING ABLE TO IMAGINE AND ACTUALLY SEE HOW THIS PART OF THE COUNTRY LOOKED FOR THOUSANDS OF YEARS, AND TO KNOW THAT GENERATIONS TO COME WILL BE ABLE TO DO THE SAME."

~ Charles Larry and Emmylou Studier

## To Learn More

### Save the Dates

Science Grant applications due November 30, 2012  
 Science grant recipients announced February 1, 2013

Prairie Potluck June 22, 2013

Friends Annual Meeting July 20, 2013

Nachusa Photography Exhibit Watch for Date in October of 2013

### Recommended Reading

*A Sand County Almanac* by Aldo Leopold

*Miracle under the Oaks, The Revival of Nature in America*  
 by William K. Stevens

*Nature's Second Chance: Restoring the Ecology of Stone Prairie Farm*  
 by Steven Apfelbaum

*Of Prairie, Woods & Water* edited by Joel Greenberg

*Plants of the Chicago Region* by Floyd Swink & Gerould Wilhelm

*Prairie Restoration Handbook* by Packard & Mutel

*Prairie, A Natural History* by Candace Savage

*Tallgrass Prairie Wildflowers 2: A Field Guide to Common Wildflowers and Plants of the Prairie Midwest* by Doug Ladd

*Where the Sky Began* by John Madsen

### How to Contact Us

Friends of Nachusa Grasslands  
 8772 S. Lowden Road  
 Franklin Grove, Illinois 61031  
 708-406-9894  
[nachusagrasslands@gmail.com](mailto:nachusagrasslands@gmail.com)



"IT GIVES ME GREAT SATISFACTION AND PRIDE TO PLAY EVEN A SMALL PART IN THE EFFORT TO RESTORE NACHUSA GRASSLANDS TO ITS NATIVE STATE. LOOKING OUT ON ITS TRANQUIL BEAUTY GIVES ME A FEELING OF PEACE. BUT, ONLY RECENTLY HAVE I GROWN TO APPRECIATE THE TREMENDOUS IMPACT OF NACHUSA'S PLANT DIVERSITY ON THE WHOLE HOST OF INSECTS, INVERTEBRATES, REPTILES, BIRDS, AND MAMMALS WHO CALL NACHUSA GRASSLANDS HOME."

~ Ron Cress

**SPECIAL THANKS TO OUR PHOTOGRAPHERS** who contributed to this annual report by capturing the beauty of Nachusa Grasslands and the mission of Friends. Each copyrighted photo is marked with a symbol indicating the photographer's name.

- ♣ John Ayres
- \* Cindy and Bernie Buchholz
- ❖ Ron Cress
- ♣ Ann Haverstock
- ★ Kirk Hallowell
- ♥ Hank and Becky Hartman
- ★ Bill Kleiman
- ♣ Lisa Lanz
- ♣ Charles Larry
- ♣ Heather B. Marshall
- ▲ Sandy Phillips
- ♣ Kim Schmidt

Front Cover:  
**MONARDA FISTULOSA** ▲

Inside Cover:  
**GOBBLER RIDGE** ★

Back Cover:  
**EAST OFF OF DOT'S KNOB** ★

The mission collage on the following page is a testament of the committed work of the photography corps, stewards and volunteers of Nachusa Grasslands: Thank you!

Friends annual report creation by Betsy Bowron-Komerska, graphic designer and Lisa Marie Lanz, volunteer.

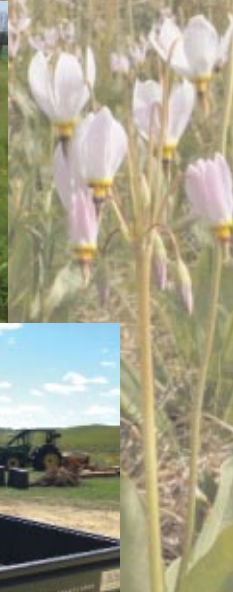
Editing provided by Bernie Buchholz, Mary Meier and David Crites.





“EVERY DAY I SPEND ON THE PRAIRIE IS A DAY OF JOY. THE MOMENT I SET FOOT ON THAT GROUND, MY THOUGHTS MOVE ONLY TO THE PRESENT, MY BODY RELAXES, AND I MOVE FORWARD ONLY GUIDED BY MY INTUITION. THIS PEACE IS ONLY INCREASED BY THE TIME I SHARE WITH WISE AND FUNNY PEOPLE WITH WHOM I SHARE MY LOVE OF THE GRASSLANDS.”

~Kirk Hallowell







**"A WORLD OF GRASS AND FLOWERS STRETCHED AROUND ME,  
RISING AND FALLING IN GENTLE UNDULATIONS,  
AS IF AN ENCHANTER HAD STRUCK THE OCEAN SWELL,  
AND IT WAS AT REST FOREVER...."**

- (JOURNAL OF ELIZA STEELE, 1840, SUMMER JOURNEYS IN THE WEST)  
SUBMITTED BY MARY VIEREGG

[nachusagrasslands.org](http://nachusagrasslands.org)