



FRIENDS OF
NACHUSA
GRASSLANDS

2014-2015 ANNUAL REPORT

Simple Pleasures



*Think
big thoughts
but relish
small
pleasures.*

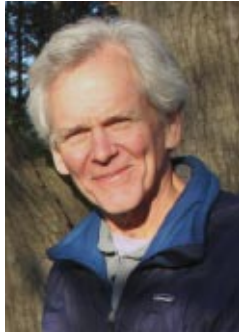
—H. JACKSON BROWN, JR.,
AUTHOR OF *LIFE'S LITTLE INSTRUCTION BOOK*

“I AM DRAWN TO THE REMNANTS AS THEY ARE THE MOST PRECIOUS TREASURE. THE REMNANTS HOLD THE HISTORY, THE MAGIC, AND THE COURAGE.”

— GWEN DETERS



Message from the President



BERNIE BUCHHOLZ ★

“SIMPLE PLEASURES... THAT HELP MAKE OUR TIME ON THE PRAIRIE WORTH THE EFFORT.”

For 29 years, we’ve been creating the prairie of our imagination. It is an immensely complicated and long-term effort.

We draw from botany, ornithology, entomology, fire and soils science, and most recently — animal husbandry — to unravel the mystery of restoration. We build fences, fix equipment, raise funds, acquire land, and develop interpretation to advance the effort. And like any endeavor, we deal with our unique human natures. The effort is complex and demands endurance measured in decades.

Our challenge could be overwhelming. However, it’s not, because Nachusa offers everyday small joys — simple pleasures — that help make our time on the prairie worth the effort.

In this annual report, volunteers and staff share their personal simple pleasures. These moments of peace and joy balance the challenges that could otherwise be too hard, too dirty, too exhausting, or too frustrating.

Why should you care about these simple pleasures? They help explain what motivates us. They account for why the prairie holds joy for so many people in such different ways. These simple pleasures are a window into a unique world of great natural beauty and herculean human effort.

I hope these simple pleasures lead you to join us in protecting this threatened ecosystem. Help us by working on the land, helping in the shop, or building the financial support that the grasslands require. Then notice the smile on your face and the calmness in your spirit that comes from making a difference in the world.

See you on the prairie!

Bernie Buchholz
President, Friends of Nachusa Grasslands
November 2015

“OUR SIMPLE PLEASURE: SEEING THE CHANGES IN THE LANDSCAPE, BROUGHT ABOUT BY THE CHANGE OF SEASONS.”

— JOHN HENEGHAN AND TRICIA LOWERY



AUTUMN ROAD ★



PALE PURPLE CONEFLOWER
(*ECHINACEA PALLIDA*) ✧

*Friends of
Nachusa Grasslands*

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Bison Watching

MIKE SAXTON



BISON, BUNKHOUSE, AND BARN ♦



GRAZING IN THE GRASS ♦



HERD WITH CALVES ♦



BISON WALLOWING +

The view from the deck of the Bunkhouse — or Holland House, if you like — has changed dramatically over the course of my more than half a decade at Nachusa.

Looking south, I once saw rusted metal corn cribs on a cracked concrete slab. A defunct windmill straddled the battered old pump house. A weather-beaten dairy barn, long out of use, and a rickety timber frame barn with collapsed floors, peeling paint, and broken cupolas, cluttered up the scenery. Beyond stood row upon row of corn, gently rustling in the summer breeze. But the most prominent features of the old farm were not the dilapidated structures or monoculture fields; rather the sights, smells, and sounds of hundreds of cows. Roughly 200 head of cattle were either confined in the crammed feedlot or grazing lazily in the pasture.

Those days are gone now. As I look south from the deck of the house, I don't see ramshackle buildings, cornrows, or crowded cattle. Instead, I see a sturdy new corral, beautifully restored prairie, and — if I'm lucky — a herd of bison grazing. Sometimes it is a solitary bull that saunters out of the corral and

wanders onto the front lawn to nibble at the freshly mowed grass.

Other times it might be 30 bison feeding and grunting, tails swishing, a stone's throw from the front door. The calves romp and chase but never stray too far from momma. Bulls butt heads, challenging their rivals until one relents and gives way. Bison cows cast weary glances in our direction, yet seem untroubled by our proximity.

Nachusa has many amazing spots from which one can sit and appreciate brilliant vistas and expansive views. Few spots can rival the beauty and awe-inducing calm of the view from the top of Doug's Knob or Tim's Half Knob. But the experience of sitting on your front deck enjoying a cold beer and the company of good friends, while watching bison graze against the backdrop of the setting sun, is a simple pleasure.

It doesn't get much better.

**"...WATCHING
BISON GRAZE AGAINST
THE BACKDROP OF
THE SETTING SUN..."**

Family Pleasures

MEGHAN ROSS

As far as my boys know, Nachusa Grasslands has always been part of their grandparents' — Mary and Al Meier's — lives. Lucky for them, my parents have been more than happy to bring their grandkids along for the ride.

Because of that, my children have spied on a herd of bison in their natural habitat.

Wading through grasses taller than they, my boys have imagined what it was like to be a pioneer crossing the prairie.

They have wrapped up a homeschool unit on plants with a hands-on field trip among native Illinois flora. A school outing is even better when it's facilitated by your grandparents who prepare educational scavenger hunts just for you.

The kids have experienced the refreshing joy of wading in a cool creek after a sweltering day on the prairie and the simple pleasure of tossing rocks into the water just to watch them splash. *(If I'm lucky, next year they will remember to aim away from their mother before launching.)*

My boys are learning that there's beauty in plant diversity. I hope we teach them to translate that lesson to people.

I hope, too, that they learn that hard work will eventually produce tangible results, even if it sometimes takes a while to see the rewards. There's value in sticking with a goal over the long haul.

The boys have had the privilege of being part of something bigger than themselves. Thirty minutes of seed picking by two little elementary school kids a few times a year doesn't amount to a drop in the bucket in the work of prairie restoration. But for that half hour, as they add their handfuls of harvested seed to our collection bags, they're doing their small part to contribute.



MEGHAN, LANDON, AND SIMON AT AUTUMN ON THE PRAIRIE 🌻



RELAXING AT CLEAR CREEK FORD ♣

COLLECTING SEEDS 🌻

“MY BOYS ARE LEARNING THAT THERE'S BEAUTY IN PLANT DIVERSITY.”

“I FIND EXTRAORDINARY PLEASURE WALKING THROUGH A DEGRADED REMNANT PRAIRIE THAT HAS EXPERIENCED FIRE FOR THE FIRST TIME IN 100-PLUS YEARS, THEN LATER IN THE SEASON, SEEING A FLOWER THAT I HAVE NEVER SEEN AT THAT LOCATION BEFORE. TO SEE THE PERSISTENCE OF THE PRAIRIE THROUGH AT LEAST 70 YEARS OF GRAZING — RELEASED TO EXPRESS ITS BEAUTY IN THESE GENTLE FLOWERS — FEEDS MY SOUL.”

— MIKE CARR

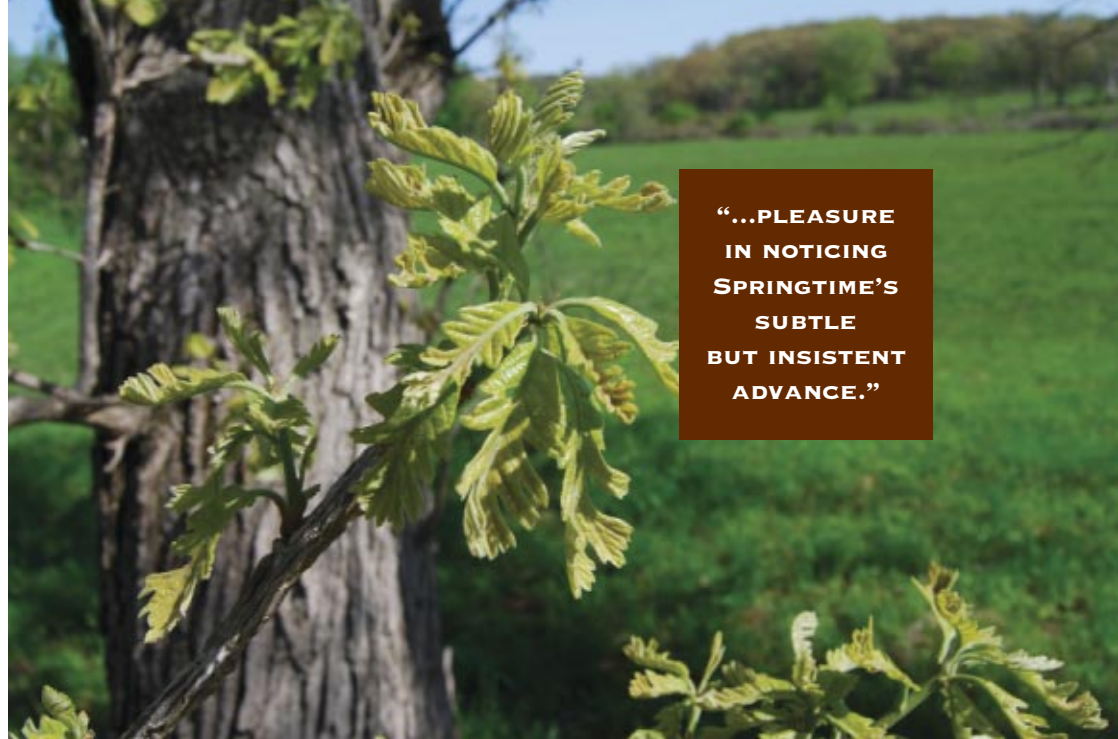
Oaks in Spring

MARY VIEREGG

Springtime in northern Illinois arrives in a blur.

It gives me pleasure to notice fine details, like those seen in the erupting leaves of the oak in this photo.

I also find pleasure in noticing springtime's subtle but insistent advance. The first tentative territorial tunes of cardinals in February. Sunlight cautiously caressing a curve of Clear Creek in March, light-starved since early November. The emergence of skunk cabbage, stealthy but sure, through the snow. Soft white plum blossoms, which contrast with April's still gray prairie backdrop. Slowly, patiently, attending to every detail, springtime nudges away the quiet dark weight of winter. Then, it gallops joyously across the landscape.



“...PLEASURE
IN NOTICING
SPRINGTIME’S
SUBTLE
BUT INSISTENT
ADVANCE.”

NEW GROWTH 🌱



The Pleasure of Pausing

MARY MEIER

From May to October, my husband, Al, and I spend many hours at Nachusa collecting seeds for our prairie restorations.

We are always eager to amass a large variety and quantity of species to enhance the diversity of our plantings.

But lately, I have been deliberately putting down my seed-collecting bucket and pausing to appreciate the beauty around me. I often relax on a rock or turn my bucket upside down and sit on it for a few minutes. I find that intentionally observing my surroundings instead of just casually noticing them during my quest for seeds gives me great pleasure.

Dot's Knob blanketed with shooting stars; Doug's Knob ablaze with prairie smoke and later swathed in a potpourri of coneflower, coreopsis, and leadplant; fringed gentians abounding at the Potholes; Potawatomi Ridge covered in rough blazing star; and little bluestem swaying in the autumn breeze on Leopold Knob...nature's palette beckons me to stop and gaze at its splendor.

It's a simple pleasure. Won't you join me?

“...OBSERVING MY
SURROUNDINGS
INSTEAD OF JUST
CASUALLY NOTICING
THEM DURING MY
QUEST FOR SEEDS
GIVES ME GREAT
PLEASURE.”

BENNETT WOODS BLANKETED WITH SHOOTING STARS ★

The Simple Pleasure of Fire and Friends

DAVID CRITES

**Bill Kleiman's e-mail comes at 6 p.m.
Tuesday: "Wednesday looks like a fire day.
I have a couple of units in mind.
Meet at the barn at 10 a.m."**

I'm one of the crew who helps with set-up. So that means: "Be at the barn by 8 a.m." Or in other words: "Go to bed now!"

Wednesday, 7 a.m., I grab the equipment lists and start the process of getting ready to burn 270 acres. Controlled burn, of course!



DAVID CRITES

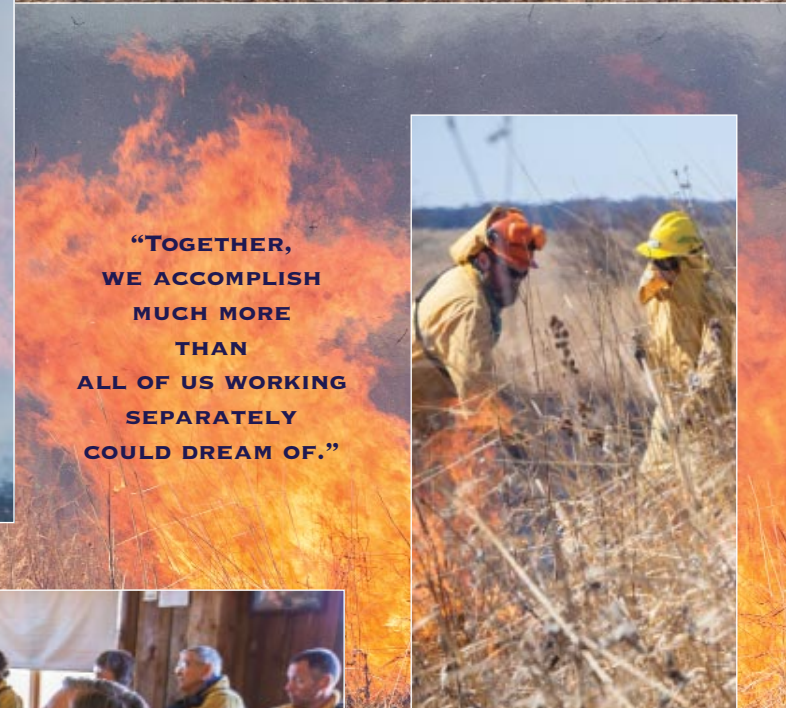
The burn goes well. There is always more work than I think there will be. At the end of the day — just as I think we're finished — Bill says, "I have one more unit in mind. It should only take an hour or so. We'll be back to the barn by 4 p.m."

So, we load up again and head out for another burn. What else can we do?

Finally, at about 5:30 p.m., we roll into the barn. I'm beat, tired, and just flat-out exhausted. We all put away what's necessary, and plod up the stairs to the break room for the customary "AAR" — After Action Reviews.

We talk about the good and the bad; the fun and the work. We learn. We plan for next time.

Then comes the best part of the day: my simple pleasure! Bill says, "Anybody want to come over to my house for a beer?" And that's it! Sitting on his porch, looking out over the prairie that I help manage. Then having a beer to toast our success. Sometimes the landscape is black from the fire; other times it is green with new growth. We talk with friends, eat an impromptu snack, dream about bison, and plan the fire for tomorrow. It's satisfying to sit among my volunteer colleagues and feel like part of a synergistic team. Together, we accomplish much more than all of us working separately could dream of. This simple pleasure is what keeps me moving forward in this never-ending work of bringing the prairie back to the "Prairie State."

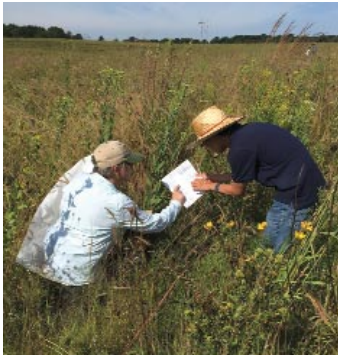


**"TOGETHER,
WE ACCOMPLISH
MUCH MORE
THAN
ALL OF US WORKING
SEPARATELY
COULD DREAM OF."**



The Pleasures of Playful Prairie Banter

KIRK HALLOWELL



VOLUNTEERS REVIEW SPECIES LIST ❖

What do childhood memories, current events, a friend's shenanigans, highlights of a trip to Europe, and techniques to manage invasive species have in common?

These and any other topic under the sun may come up in a discussion with fellow volunteers at a Nachusa work day during seed harvest.

At Nachusa, one of my favorite pleasures is the realization that our social ecology parallels the native ecology that we strive to restore. The diversity of personalities, life histories, career paths, and interests of Nachusa volunteers seems to be as varied as the flora and fauna. What a remarkable mix for engaging conversation!

One of the deep mysteries of prairie is that we may never completely understand the complexity of sustainability. Countless symbiotic and competitive relationships among soil types, microbes, weather patterns, plants, and animal species produce constancy. I suspect the same level of intricacy underlies our relationships — which makes conversations at Nachusa all the more intriguing.

"THE DIVERSITY OF PERSONALITIES, LIFE HISTORIES, CAREER PATHS, AND INTERESTS OF NACHUSA VOLUNTEERS... A REMARKABLE MIX FOR ENGAGING CONVERSATION!"

Dragonfly Summer

CINDY CROSBY

So many different species. I love saying their names: Blue dasher. Springwater dancer. Twelve-spotted skimmer. Carolina saddlebags.

Wading knee deep in Clear Creek, the cold stream sloshing over my boot tops, I while away the hours combing the creekbank to see what surprises it holds. The ebony jewelwings dazzle me. The clouds of hundreds of green darners in September overhead are almost dreamlike. And always, the dragonflies are fleeting and ethereal; tenuous sparks of color and vitality that never fail to lift my spirits.

Monitoring dragonflies at Nachusa puts me in touch with one of nature's most exciting rhythms: the season of dragons and damsels. It's a hopeful cycle, that something so ugly as a dragonfly nymph could live in the dark water for years, then eventually emerge into the light as a beautiful creature that flies. I know that learning how species counts change will help us know more about how our restoration efforts affect the water quality at Nachusa. But, deep down I know the real reason I monitor. It is a joy. A simple pleasure.



BLUE DASHER ❖

"...ALWAYS, THE DRAGONFLIES ARE FLEETING & ETHEREAL; TENUOUS SPARKS OF COLOR AND VITALITY THAT NEVER FAIL TO LIFT MY SPIRITS."



AMERICAN RUBYSPOD ❖

MEADOWHAWK ❖

The Pleasure of Paying Attention

BETTY HIGBY

From a distance, I see expanses of prairie grasses sparkling gold in the sun. They move in unison in their choreographed dance with the wind. This sight is automatically accompanied in my head by the strains of "America the Beautiful." Even after seeing this scene hundreds of times, it leaves me breathless as I absorb its wonder.

To walk in among these grasses in motion — many of them two feet above my head — is at least as breathtaking! One world is shut out as another opens up. Plants that were invisible from a distance are found here nestled among the grasses.

Each of them has its own secrets; some available in exchange for pausing to look closely. Other secrets are whispered to us only with the help of a magnifying glass or via a photograph. When I enlarge a photo of rattlesnake master globes — taken to highlight their stark contrast with slender, graceful, grasses — it reveals dozens of spirals of perfect tiny white flowers, all snuggled together. Wow.

"TO WALK IN AMONG THESE GRASSES IN MOTION — MANY OF THEM TWO FEET ABOVE MY HEAD — IS BREATHTAKING!"



"MY SIMPLE PLEASURE IS SEEING EACH NEW SPECIES BLOOM THROUGHOUT THE GROWING SEASON; IT'S LIKE GREETING OLD FRIENDS."

— SUSAN KLEIMAN



FOXGLOVE BEARDTONGUE
(PENSTEMON DIGITALIS) ✧

Friends of Nachusa Grasslands



FRIENDS ANNUAL MEETING 2015 +

FIELD MILKWORT ★



Mission

At Nachusa Grasslands, rare and endangered remnant prairie, woodlands, and wetlands are being reconnected through habitat restoration

to create one of the largest and most biologically diverse grasslands in Illinois, protecting native grasses, wildflowers, birds, insects, amphibians, reptiles and mammals.

The mission of the Friends is to build endowments that will help defray the cost of natural areas management, staff and operating expenses; conduct and encourage stewardship; and support education and scientific activity at the preserve.



LARK SPARROW'S NEST WITH COWBIRD EGG ★

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

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

Over the past twenty-nine 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 are now providing for its long-term survival.

SALLY BAUMGARDNER AND LARRY CREEKMUR. ★



JEFF COLOGNA COLLECTING CREAM WILD INDIGO +



ANGELA BURKE AND KEVIN BURKE COLLECT DATA FROM A DEER MOUSE +



MILK SNAKE ★

Build Endowed Funds

Permanently endowed funds will support the conservation and preservation of native plants, animals and natural communities by providing funding for long-term stewardship. The Nachusa Grasslands Stewardship Endowment is managed by The Nature Conservancy and the Friends Endowment for Nachusa Grasslands is managed by the Community Foundation of Northern Illinois. Both endowments fund operations at Nachusa.

ACCOMPLISHMENT: This fiscal year, the Friends donated \$167,500 to the endowments. Total endowed funds reached \$684,700.

NEED: Our goal is to permanently endow \$3 million, with annual distributions going primarily toward operations at Nachusa Grasslands.



TELLABS WORKDAY

Encourage Education & Science

In 2015, Friends awarded \$15,000 in Scientific Research Project Grants to:

Thomas Anton, Michael Dreslik, and David Mauger, independent researchers. This team is undertaking a comprehensive survey of the state endangered Blanding's turtle in all of its potential habitats at Nachusa: \$1,000.

Elizabeth Bach, Ph.D., Post-doctoral research fellow, Illinois Natural History Survey. Dr. Bach is studying the functional role of prairie soil fungal communities in cycling and storing carbon and nitrogen in prairie ecosystems: \$2,200.

Nicholas Barber, Ph.D., Northern Illinois University. With Dr. Barber's supervision and as part of the Research Rookies Program, this grant will support a beginning student research project on the impact of bison on dung beetle community assembly in restored and remnant tallgrass prairies: \$750.

Julia Brockman, Master's degree graduate student, Southern Illinois University. She is studying bison habitat selection and their avoidance of humans at Nachusa: \$2,000



© FERRAN SALAT COLL/TNC.

JULIA BROCKMAN PREPS A BISON COLLAR

Bethanne Bruninga-Socolar, Ph.D., graduate student, Rutgers University. The aim of this project is to investigate how species and populations of bees, the most important pollinators in tallgrass prairie, respond to prairie restoration: \$2,000.

Angela Burke, Master's degree graduate student, Northern Illinois University. This project will attempt to quantify how changes in fire intervals and the presence or absence of bison affect small mammal populations in restored and remnant prairie: \$1,200.

Heather Herakovich, Master's degree graduate student, Northern Illinois University. This is the second year of a study of grassland bird density in 11 plots of land that range from one-year post-restoration to 26 years post-restoration as well as remnant control prairies and agricultural field controls: \$1,500.

Sarah Smith, Master's degree graduate student, Northern Illinois University. This project will use both field and laboratory methods to analyze dynamic soil properties (*aggregate stability, color, structure, carbon content, organic matter content, bulk density*) and particle size across a wide range of differently aged and variable topographic restorations in order to study how soils in restorations change over time: \$950.

Pati Vitt, Ph.D., Chicago Botanic Garden. This is a continuing study of prairie bush clover (*Lespedeza leptostachya*). The specific goal is to determine the effects of litter cover and burning on the germination, growth rate, and seed production of this threatened species: \$1,600.

Mark J. Wetzel, M.S., Illinois Natural History Survey, and **John W. Reynolds, Ph.D.**, Oligochaetology Lab, Kitchener, Ontario. These researchers will sample at least 40-50 sites spread across a wide range of habitats at Nachusa in order to provide accurate species level identifications of the earthworms found at the preserve: \$1,800.

Conduct & Encourage Stewardship

Volunteers are the heart and soul of prairie restoration at Nachusa. Whether it's harvesting, planting, educating, monitoring, photographing, repairing, or advocating, you'll discover a role that fits your passion and schedule.

ACCOMPLISHMENTS:

Friends had 38 Voting Members as well as 166 additional donors committed to conserving Nachusa Grasslands. Volunteers gave an amazing 15,000 hours.

NEED:

Friends offers opportunities to volunteers outside on the prairie or inside with social and administrative tasks. Your stewardship will make an important difference.

In 2016, Friends may award grants of up to \$20,000 to qualified candidates conducting scientific research significant to Nachusa Grasslands. Details on the application process can be found at nachusagrasslands.org.

Support Friends

Restoration Benefactor – \$5,000 or more
Conservation Champion – \$1,500 to \$4,999
Supporter – \$1 to \$1,499

- ☛ Become a Voting Member by volunteering 40 hours annually and making a financial gift of your choosing.
- ☛ Giving options include checks, one-time and recurring online sustainer donations, stocks and mutual funds.
- ☛ See the Friends' website for details at nachusagrasslands.org.
- ☛ Be a "Prairie Perennial" by giving at a consistent or higher level each year. Contribute to Friends through your employer's corporate giving or matching gift program.
- ☛ Be a "Heritage Hero" by including Friends in your estate plan or as a beneficiary of a life insurance or retirement account. To designate Friends, we should be named as Friends of Nachusa Grasslands, a nonprofit corporation, organized and existing under laws of the State of Illinois, with the name and address of:

Friends of Nachusa Grasslands
 8772 S. Lowden Road
 Franklin Grove, IL 61031
 Tax identification number: 26-3303031

"SIMPLEST PLEASURE? SAWYERING ON A COLD, BRIGHT WINTER'S DAY, ALONG WITH JAY STACY. AND, OF COURSE, WITH GWEN PROUDLY AND GLEEFULLY WORKING A PILE OF STICKS INTO A BLAZING BONFIRE WITHOUT ANY ACCELERANT."

— RON DETERS



Our Donors

JULY 1, 2014, TO JUNE 30, 2015

★ Heritage Heroes

Donors who have committed to including the Friends of Nachusa Grasslands in their estate plans.

* Prairie Perennials

Donors who have given to the Friends of Nachusa Grasslands in consecutive years at the same or a higher level.

Restoration Benefactors

\$5,000 or more

Alliance Financial
clo Frank McGhee and Linda Stone
 Bobolink Foundation*
clo Wendy Paulson
 Bernie and Cindy Buchholz**
 Alan Carpenter*
 Mary Walsh and Dave Crossett*
 DeWayne and Donna Fellows*
 Hamill Family Foundation*
*On behalf of Nancy C.H. Winter;
 In honor of the Nachusa volunteers*
 Jay Stacy*
 Tawani Foundation
 Jim and Mary Vieregg*
 Fred and Martha Wetzel
In memory of Irene V. Santee

Conservation Champions

\$1,500 to \$4,999

Michele and Don Cronin
 Jan Grainger*
 Jerry and Linda Hartz*
 Jeff and Joan Meiners*
 Don and Espie Nelson*
 Steven and Robin Read
 Millie Saathoff
 Dale Shriver*
 Vanderpoel Conservation Foundation*

Supporters

\$1 to \$1,499

Cindy and Fred Acker*
In memory of Richard Acker
 Ben Adams
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 Katie and Rich Beilfuss*
 David Bendlin*
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 Todd and Tonya Bittner*
*In honor of Bill Kleiman and
 everyone who made the bison
 reintroduction project a reality*
 Cindy Blue*
 Ray Boehmer*
 George and Kathy Bouska*
 Barbara Thomas Bowers
*In memory of Titus and Patton,
 my two Rottweilers*
 Bruce and Beth Wiley Boyd*
 Brad Buchholz*
 Ralph Burnett
 Diane Burns
 Douglas Campbell

Ryan Campbell
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In honor of Nancy Hotchkiss
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 David Davidson
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In honor of Mary and Alan Meier
 Helen Evenson
 Exelon Dollars for Doers Program
In honor of Pete Oliver

Supporters ... continued

\$1 to \$1,499

Jay Fahn and Nina Diamond
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Sally Bowers and Howard Fenton*
Conrad and Carol Fialkowski*
Clint Finger
*Celebrating Jim and Mary Vieregg's
commitment to Nachusa and their
time to show us the prairie*
Robert Fisher
*In celebration of
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William D. Fruin, Jr.*
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In honor of Lisa and John Ayres
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Christian and Laura Hakala
In honor of Bill and Susan Kleiman
Kirk and Katie Hallowell**
Michael Hansen
In memory of Carl and Betty Hansen
Hank and Becky Hartman
James and Betty Higby*
*In honor of Melda Heeg and in memory of
Willard "Bill" Heeg and Oscar Kerchner*
Mark and Cecilia Hochsprung*
Ann Holt-Harris*
Carolyn Hotchkiss*
Eugene Hotchkiss*
In honor of Nancy Hotchkiss
John and Ingrid Hotchkiss*
Nancy Hotchkiss*
Terry and Janie Houchin
*In honor of Mary and Al Meier and
their work at Resurrection Lutheran
Church and Nachusa Grasslands*

John Huck*
In memory of Roxana Huck
Kathy Huffman
Ronald Ingraham*
Stephen and Anne Janzer*
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Mickey Collins and Aki Knezevic*
Mark Kruis
Donnajean Lanciotti*
J. Gregory Langan
In honor of Betty Higby
Charles Larry and Emmylou Studier*
Tom Lawson*
*In memory of Annette, Russell,
and James Lawson*
Datuk Dr. Robert F. Inger and
Datin Tan Fui Lian
Laura Hostetler and Mark Liechty
Dennis and Charlene Loescher
Clark and Pamela Lumsden
John Macdonald
Nancy Chadbourne Maze*
Patricia McMillen
In honor of Nan McMillen
Alan and Mary Meier**
Clyde D. Meier*
In memory of Mary Termont Meier
Diane Moore*
John Howard Moore*
Morrison Family Foundation*
On behalf of Bruce and Beth Boyd
Penny Moser*
Thomas Mulcahy
Melissa Murphy*
In celebration of Lisa Murphy
David and Nancy Napalo*
Peter W. Nichols, MD*
Kevin O'Neill*



**"WALKING AT NACHUSA IS ALWAYS A
SIMPLE PLEASURE. YOU NEVER KNOW WHAT
BUTTERFLIES YOU MAY SEE!"** — JOHN AYRES

BUCKEYE BUTTERFLY ❖

Pete Oliver
Drs. Anna and Ralph Orland
Jonah Orlofsky
Panoptic Solutions
Mike Carr, Employee Match
Susan and Don Panozzo*
Scott Baker and Sara Parikh*
Thomas Peterson*
Sandy Phillips*
*In memory of our Conner, McGonigle,
and Fagan families*
Joseph S. and Dona M. Popp*
In memory of deceased family members
Tom and Karen Pulver
Renae Rebechini*
Richard Rockenbach
In memory of Donald Rockenbach
Cassandra Rodgers*
Kevin Rohling*
George B. Rose*
Chuck Rosenberry*
Edwin and Barbara Rossow*
In honor of James and Mary Vieregg
John and Barbara Rutherford*
C. Rutkoske
Martha and Zink Sanders*
Denise Sandoval
Kate and Ron Saxton*
In memory of Bob Nagle and Ron Deitz
Mike Saxton**
Richard Schoenberger
Juergen and Meredith Schroer*
In honor of Roger and Becky Anderson
Stephanie Shetler
Bob and Joyce Shone*
James Shotsberger
Judy Snyder*
Paul and Carol Soderholm*

Michael and Julia Studier
Jeanie and Tim Sullivan*
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Bruce Vickrey*
Jon and Ann-Marie Vignano*
Jeffrey Walk
Mary Waterson*
Margaret Williams
Mr. and Mrs. John S. Wineman, Jr.
In honor of Nancy Hotchkiss
Kendall Winter
Evelyn Young*
In honor of Mary and Al Meier
Rob Zimmerman
Anonymous
Exelon Employee Giving Program
Anonymous
In memory of Charles Buyers
Anonymous
*In honor of Emmylou Studier and
Charles Larry*
Anonymous*
Anonymous

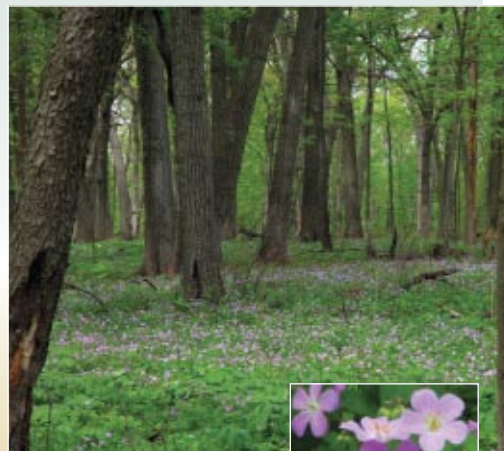
In-Kind Donors

Betsy Bowron-Komerska
Belvidere North High School
*Green Club, Student Volunteers,
Belvidere, IL*

Financial Results

“WHEN I WALK THROUGH
OUR OAK WOODLANDS
AND SEE THE GOOD EFFECTS
OF THE MANY PRESCRIBED
FIRES WE DO,
IT IS A SIMPLE PLEASURE.
THE FIRES BRING THE
SUNSHINE. THEN THE
WOODLAND PLANTS
BECOME ABUNDANT —
PLANTS LIKE JOE PYE,
LONG-AWNED WOOD GRASS,
NODDING FESCUE,
AND WILD GERANIUM —
AND AN OAK SAPLING FINDS
ITS SPACE IN THE WOODS.”

— BILL KLEIMAN



WILD GERANIUMS 



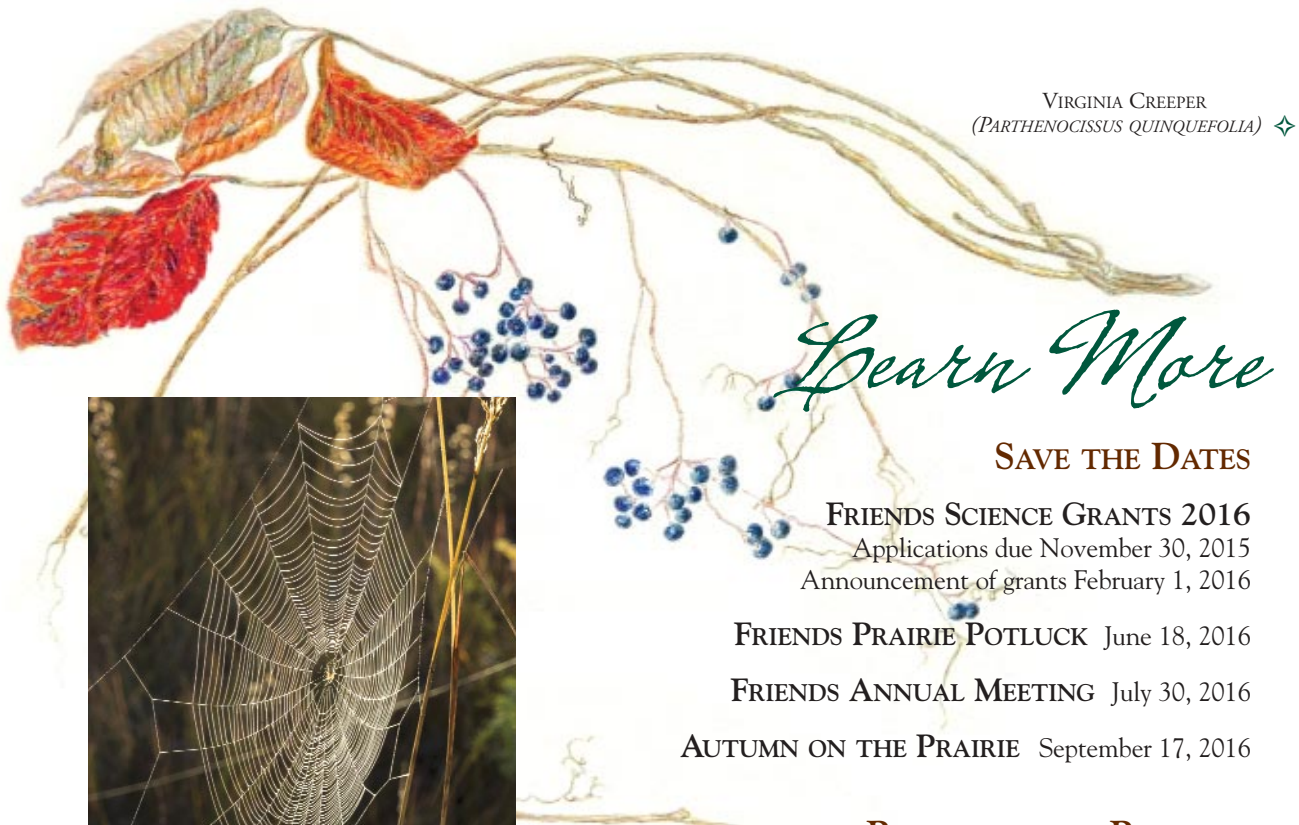
	2015 7/1/14 - 6/30/15		2014 7/1/13 - 6/30/14	
BEGINNING BALANCE	\$ 18,290		\$ 11,689	
REVENUES				
Cash Donations	\$ 146,078	74%	\$ 228,226	83%
CRP Income	\$ 50,000	25%	\$ 47,345	17%
CFNIL Endowment Income	\$ 833	<1%	\$ —	—
Amazon Smile Income	\$ 23	<1%	\$ —	—
Total Revenues	\$ 196,934	100%	\$ 275,571	100%
DISBURSEMENTS				
In Direct Support of Our Mission				
Gifts to TNC Nachusa Endowment	\$ 105,000	55%	\$ 150,000	56%
Gifts to CFNIL Nachusa Endowment	\$ 62,500	33%	\$ 100,000	37%
Nachusa Operations via TNC	\$ 833	<1%	\$ —	—
Science Grants	\$ 15,000	8%	\$ 10,000	4%
Stewardship	\$ 0	0%	\$ 126	<1%
Grants to other Organizations	\$ 500	<1%	\$ 200	<1%
Subtotal	\$ 183,833	96%	\$ 260,326	97%
Expenses				
Banking Fees	\$ 188	<1%	\$ 80	<1%
Government Fees	\$ 25	<1%	\$ 28	<1%
Insurance	\$ 3,563	2%	\$ 3,653	1%
Development	\$ 4,202	2%	\$ 4,883	2%
Subtotal	\$ 7,978	4%	\$ 8,644	3%
Total Disbursements	\$ 191,811	100%	\$ 268,970	100%
ENDING BALANCE	\$ 23,413		\$ 18,290	

ENDOWED FUNDS BALANCE • As of June 30, 2015

Nachusa Grasslands Stewardship Endowment	\$ 500,291
Friends Endowment for Nachusa Grasslands	\$ 184,408
Total Endowed Funds	\$ 684,699

BALANCE SHEET • As of June 30, 2015

ASSETS		LIABILITIES	
Cash	\$ 23,413	Liabilities	\$ 0
		Funds Balance	\$ 23,413
Total Assets	\$ 23,413	Total Liabilities	\$ 23,413



VIRGINIA CREEPER
(*PARTHENOCISSUS QUINQUEFOLIA*) ✧

Learn More

SAVE THE DATES

FRIENDS SCIENCE GRANTS 2016
Applications due November 30, 2015
Announcement of grants February 1, 2016

FRIENDS PRAIRIE POTLUCK June 18, 2016

FRIENDS ANNUAL MEETING July 30, 2016

AUTUMN ON THE PRAIRIE September 17, 2016

RECOMMENDED READING

Seasons of the Tallgrass Prairie by Carol Lerner

Last Stand of the Tallgrass Prairie
by Aimee Larabee and John Altman

A Practical Guide to Prairie Reconstruction by Carl Kurtz

*The Tallgrass Prairie Guide to Seed and Seedling
Identification in the Upper Midwest* by Dave Williams

Big Bluestem: Journey into the Tall Grass by Annick Smith

*Buffalo for the Broken Heart: Restoring Life to a
Black Hills Ranch* by Dan O'Brien

*Grassland: The History, Biology, Politics, and
Promise of the American Prairie* by Richard Manning

Grass Roots: The Universe of Home by Paul Gruchow

Journal of a Prairie Year by Paul Gruchow

The Tallgrass Prairie Reader by John T. Price



SPIDER ART ✧

CONTACT US

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Franklin Grove, Illinois 61031
708-406-9894
nachusagrasslands@gmail.com



PHOTO HIKE ✧

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

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- | | |
|------------------|--------------------|
| ✦ Bryan Burke | ♥ Heather Marshall |
| ✦ Cindy Crosby | ✦ Bill Kleiman |
| ★ Kirk Hollowell | ♣ Al Meier |
| ✧ Betty Higby | ☀ Meghan Ross |
| ☀ James Higby | ☀ Tony Ross |
| ✦ Dee Hudson | ✦ Mike Saxton |
| ♥ Mark Jordan | ♥ Mary Vieregg |
| ☀ Charles Larry | |

ILLUSTRATOR

✧ Betty Higby

*Front cover photo, inside front cover background
photo, inside back cover background photo, and
back cover photo by ✧ Charles Larry*

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Graphic Designer: Betsy Bowron-Komerska
Managing Editor: Cindy Crosby
Assigning Editor: Mike Saxton

Copy editing and/or assistance provided by:
Bernie Buchholz, Ron and Gwen Deters,
Dee Hudson, Kirk Hollowell, Charles Larry,
Mary Meier, and Mary Vieregg

♻ Paper contains 30% recycled post-consumer fiber.

BUTTERFLY WALK AT AUTUMN ON THE PRAIRIE ★

Heritage Heroes Initiative

KIRK HALLOWELL

Becoming a “Heritage Hero” is an opportunity to demonstrate a lasting commitment to preserving a vital ecosystem by providing for Nachusa Grasslands in your will or estate plan.

Since our launch in April 2015, we have received nine commitments from families or individuals to sustain Friends as Heritage Heroes.

Meet two of them here.

We Salute Our Heritage Heroes

- Anonymous
- Bernie and Cindy Buchholz
- David and Laura Crites
- Kirk and Katie Hallowell
- Mark and Cecilia Hochsprung
- Al and Mary Meier
- Mike Saxton
- Tim Sherck
- Daniel Thompson



If you would like additional information on becoming a Heritage Hero, please contact Kirk Hallowell at: nachusagrasslands@gmail.com



Heritage Hero MARK HOCHSPRUNG

“I LOVE THE IDEA OF HAVING LAND SET ASIDE AND PRESERVED FOR PERPETUITY. I’M NOT OUT TO CHANGE THE WORLD, I’M JUST DOING MY PART.”

HOME: Oak Lawn, Illinois

MARRIED: Cecilia

EDUCATION: University of Minnesota – Forestry

CAREER: After serving our country as a Marine in Vietnam, Mark had a successful career as a business owner and in accounting leadership roles for several organizations.

COMMITMENT TO RESTORATION: Mark’s attempt at early retirement was fortuitously delayed by an opportunity to serve as a seasonal employee at The Morton Arboretum. Eleven years later, Mark now serves as Natural Resources Supervisor on their staff where he oversees restoration efforts.

CONNECTION TO NACHUSA: Mark attended the 2014 Grassland Restoration Network Conference and was inspired by the people and vision he encountered.



Heritage Hero MIKE SAXTON

“AT NACHUSA, I AM MENTORED BY THE STAFF, INSPIRED BY THE VOLUNTEERS, AND CHALLENGED BY THE LAND. THIS IS JUST ANOTHER STEP IN MY COMMITMENT TO SUPPORT THE CORE MISSION OF NACHUSA GRASSLANDS.”

HOME: Weekends – Logan Square, Chicago
Weekdays – Holland House, Nachusa Grasslands
EDUCATION: St. Ambrose University, Bachelors – History; Northern Illinois University M.S. – Biological Geography

CAREER: Mike joined Nachusa in 2007 as a seasonal restoration technician and was inspired to stay. Mike has also served in staff positions for the Audubon Chicago Region and The Nature Conservancy’s Philanthropy team.

COMMITMENT TO RESTORATION: Mike’s career-long commitment to restoration is reflected in his master’s research project focused on seed bank germination and understory diversity in oak savanna restorations. His evolving roles at Nachusa include crew leader, educator, restoration ecologist, and project leader – most recently for the extensive bison fencing and corral construction efforts.

Seeding the Future

BERNIE BUCHHOLZ

It takes imagination and faith for a steward to envision a vibrant prairie replacing acres of neatly marshalled corn.

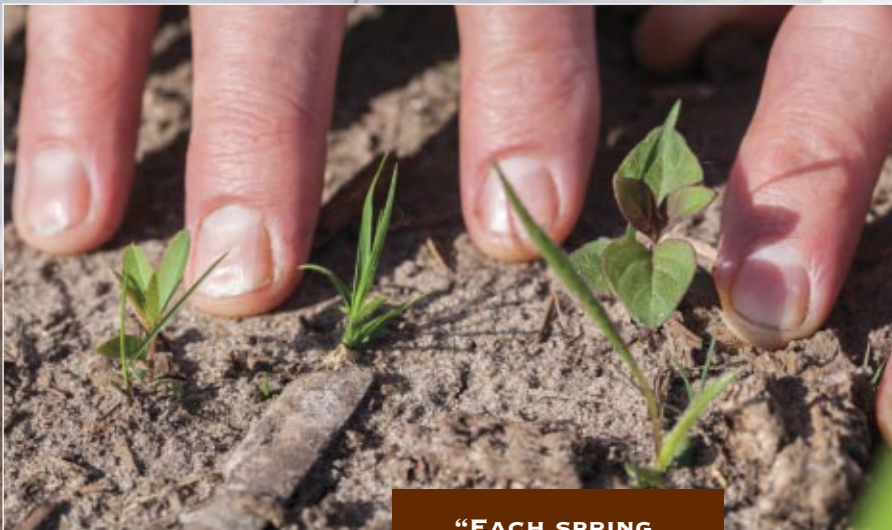
But the vision of a robust and unruly prairie keeps me moving forward each season.

Planting in November is gratifying. It marks the end of a busy year. Millions of seeds bursting with potential are finally in place. They nestle in the earth for a season of freezing and thawing, each species breaking nature's protective dormancy in a slightly different way. Ultimately, I don't know what — if anything — will germinate in the spring.

Will it be a rich, dense spread of many species from edge to edge of the planting? Or will I find only occasional seedlings scattered across a wide, bare area? There's no way to speed up the process. So, I wait.

Nature reveals the results each spring. I hope to see a flush of seedlings, most only an inch or so tall. In mid-May, I study the autumn-seeded ground to discover what's popped up. I name the species I see out loud: coneflower, little bluestem, pussy toes. It's a hands and knees ritual. There's extra satisfaction when I spot the most coveted species: leadplant, coreopsis, cacalia.

But today, planting in November, I pause from my work. Take a breath. Then I smile, thinking about spring. The effort of planting in November is sustained by the vision of new prairie growing from this bare earth.



**“EACH SPRING,
I STUDY THE
AUTUMN-SEEDED
GROUND TO
DISCOVER WHAT’S
POPPED UP.”**



nachusagrasslands.org





FRIENDS OF
NACHUSA
GRASSLANDS

"THE CARE OF THE EARTH IS OUR MOST ANCIENT
AND MOST WORTHY AND, AFTER ALL, OUR MOST PLEASING
RESPONSIBILITY. TO CHERISH WHAT REMAINS OF IT AND
TO FOSTER ITS RENEWAL IS OUR ONLY HOPE."

— WENDELL BERRY

Yes, I wish to support FRIENDS OF NACHUSA GRASSLANDS.

- Restoration Benefactor \$5,000 & Up \$ _____
- Conservation Champion \$1,500 to \$4,999 \$ _____
- Supporter \$1 to \$1,499 \$ _____

Please check and complete whatever applies to your donation:

- In Honor / Memory (*circle one*) of: _____
- Undesignated, to be used as most needed.
- Designated for: Nachusa Grasslands Stewardship Endowment (*held by TNC**)
 Friends Endowment for Nachusa Grasslands (*held by CFNIL***)
 Friends Scientific Research Grants at Nachusa Grasslands

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

Name(s) (*as you wish it printed in the Friends of Nachusa Grasslands Annual Report*) Anonymous

ADDRESS _____ CITY, STATE & ZIP CODE _____

DAYTIME PHONE _____ EVENING PHONE _____ EMAIL Please add me to the Friends Prairi-E Updates list.

FRIENDS OF NACHUSA GRASSLANDS is a non-profit registered 501(c)(3) organization.

Your gift is tax-deductible to the full extent permitted by law.

*The Nature Conservancy

**Community Foundation of Northern Illinois

- Please contact me about how I can become a **Heritage Hero** by including the Friends in my estate plan.
- Please contact me about other giving options, such as stock, bonds, and mutual funds.
- Please contact me about volunteering.

Enclosed is my check to
FRIENDS OF NACHUSA GRASSLANDS
for: \$ _____

You can also make a one-time or
recurring credit card gifts online at:
www.nachusagrasslands.org

Please send your gift to:
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8772 S. Lowden Road
Franklin Grove, IL 61031

Thank you for your support!

