



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Unexpected Inheritance Funds Illinois Conservation Science

Grateful Son Creates Endowment in Honor of Nature-Loving Parents to Fund Long-Term Scientific Studies at Nachusa Grasslands

[Franklin Grove, IL, February, 24 2021] — Upon learning of his unexpected inheritance, Keith Anderson, of DeKalb County, knew he wanted it to go to work in a way that honored his parents and helped the native plants and animals that Anderson cared for through volunteering at Nachusa Grasslands, a 4,000-acre prairie, woodland, and wetland preserve in Lee and Ogle Counties. Anderson said, “I wanted to honor my parents and the values that they knowingly or unknowingly passed on to me.”

Named for his parents, the Robert and Patricia Anderson Grant will permanently fund an annual science grant and grantee at Nachusa Grasslands. Science grants are raised and administered by the Friends of Nachusa Grasslands (“Friends”), the not-for-profit organization dedicated to providing for the long-term care and management of the preserve.

Anderson described his father as someone who worked hard at a leading pharmaceutical company for 37 years. “Dad was a successful project manager who oversaw the construction of new office and manufacturing facilities in the United States and Puerto Rico for Abbott Labs. He lived very humbly and wasn’t interested in the trappings of success.” His mother was an avid gardener, loved house plants, and owned a retail plant shop in Mt. Prospect, Illinois for a short time. Anderson relates that as a teenager, he spent many hours with his mother at wholesale greenhouses helping to purchase inventory for her shop. “Between her houseplants and time at the greenhouses, I think the seed was laid for my interest in the plant world.” Anderson also credits his love of nature to the menagerie of pets they had as he was growing up, and his many happy hours spent playing in a field behind their house. “My siblings and I spent a lot of time chasing butterflies, grasshoppers, lightning bugs at night, and the occasional snake, in that field. I was particularly fascinated by ants and can remember spending countless hours observing them.”

Anderson also recalled that his Dad “planted a pin oak in the backyard of our house when we were kids. He spent untold amounts of time nurturing that oak, he was very protective of it.” Anderson’s father lived in that same house until he passed in December, and Anderson states that, to this day, “that pin oak is the most beautiful tree, straight as an arrow and providing lots of shade.”

Friends board member Mike Carr states, “We see that Keith Anderson’s love of nature, work ethic, and humble ways come from his parents and are thrilled that he chose to support science at Nachusa Grasslands. There are numerous scientific studies occurring at the grasslands to understand the ecosystems there and how restoration of the land affects all aspects such as soil, air, water, plants, and animals. The Robert and Patricia Anderson Grant will provide a significant source of funding for this work.”

For more information about conservation science grants funded by Friends of Nachusa Grasslands, visit www.nachusagrasslands.org/science-at-nachusa-grasslands.

#

About Nachusa Grasslands

Nachusa Grasslands is a 4,000 acre nature preserve in Northwest Illinois owned and managed by The Nature Conservancy. Nachusa Grasslands is the home to rare and endangered remnant prairie, woodlands, and wetlands, which 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.

About Friends of Nachusa Grasslands

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 mission of 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. Over the past thirty years, hundreds of scientists, land management professionals, and volunteers 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. Friends is helping to provide for its long-term survival through endowments, gifts, and fundraising.

To learn more about Nachusa Grasslands, visit the Friends of Nachusa Grasslands at www.nachusagrasslands.org.

To learn more about The Nature Conservancy, visit www.nature.org.

To learn about the Illinois Chapter of The Nature Conservancy, visit <https://www.nature.org/en-us/about-us/where-we-work/united-states/illinois/>