



# CONNECTED TO THE LAND

FRIENDS OF NACHUSA GRASSLANDS

2021 ANNUAL REPORT



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Dear Friend of Nachusa Grasslands,

Gazing out with wistful eyes over a Nachusa vista dotted with copses of oak, undulating hills and roaming herds, we catch a glimpse of a vast landscape that once was. Looking out, we see the ghosts of grasslands past. But standing on a remnant knob it is more than just romanticized nostalgia we have for those bygone prairie days — we feel connected to them in a deep and profound way.

Every square inch of unplowed, old growth grassland is rooted in this deep history. That these remnant prairie gems were spared the plow and later protected is cause for celebration. That adjacent row crop fields have been taken out of cultivation and restored to robust grasslands is a marvel worthy of our revel.

In the seeds we sow we find redemption, and through our labors of love we see inspiring results. With awe and wonder we watch after much dedication and perseverance as a diversity of life emerges from agriculture fields. The Nachusa community has come to live Wendell Berry's words: "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."

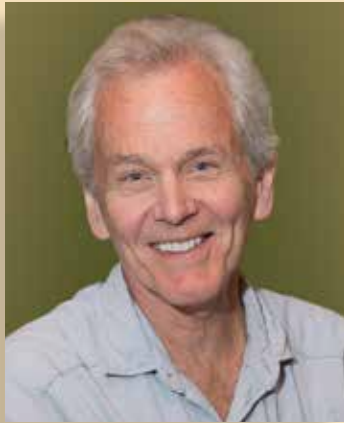
Care and love impel us to steward these cherished areas. Humility, curiosity, and hunger for knowledge drive us to fund science and research. A duty to the future pushes us to build endowments, providing funds in perpetuity. And now, with a sense of urgency and trust in our supporters, we have expanded our mission and have established a new land protection fund that will support the acquisition of new acres for Nachusa Grasslands.

With each new parcel protected, more prairie is made possible. As the footprint of Nachusa continues to grow, so does our need for your support. There has never been a more exciting time to become involved. Please join us in meeting the moment for the prairie.

Sincerely,

*Mike*

Mike Saxton



# MESSAGE FROM THE PRAIRIE

BY BERNIE BUCHHOLZ, FRIENDS PRESIDENT

I love Nachusa Grasslands. But sometimes while working in a new prairie planting, hot, tired, and alone with my thoughts, I think, "This is hard! What am I doing here? Why am I doggedly pursuing the dream of healthy grasslands? What is it that connects me so deeply to this place?"

With the benefit of a soothing shower and some needed rest, familiar answers come to mind.

I have witnessed firsthand the soul-warming sight of the rebirth of a prairie. It's a miracle that nature re-creates from the rich mixes of seeds gathered from our relic prairies. Not a year goes by without the "sudden" appearance of a flower sown years prior, exploding across a planting. This expanding habitat for plants and animals buffers the relentless losses elsewhere. Something wonderful is happening here.

There is joy in sharing common purpose with others engaged in land stewardship and biodiversity conservation at Nachusa and across the earth.

Even though I'm told that it needn't be earned, there is a feeling of self-worth gained from time and energy spent on this restoration mission. For me, engaging in repair is so much better than anguishing in despair.

I've become profoundly connected to this place as I've experienced it over time, seeing the quiet and beauty of the landscape from a thousand different angles. Each year I learn more as scientific research informs and improves our efforts. Flora and fauna are thriving.

Finally, there is the praise of an appreciative visitor and, of course, the peace of simply being outdoors.

These truths indelibly connect me to the grasslands. In a term applied to certain plants and animals that can only survive in prairie habitat, I, too, am prairie-dependent.

What connects you to Nachusa Grasslands? What brings you back as a donor, volunteer, or visitor? Even if you have never been on the site, you are connected to the prairie through your values, aspirations, or intellect. In this edition of our annual report, you will learn how others are connected to Nachusa and will feel kinship with the authors.

All things connect. Cherish your bonds to Nachusa Grasslands. I do.

Warm regards from the prairie.









# THE LAND

BY MIKE P CARR

The constant babbling brook of my life has been "The Land". Raised the third child of nine children in the Sixties by a blue-collar worker and a homemaker, I had lots of time to explore the 1x3 mile New England woodland in the backyard with my brother and the other kids in the neighborhood. I discovered early that if I wanted one on one time with my Dad I needed to ask him to go fishing or to take me to an interesting place he knew about. All interesting places for Dad were natural areas. On these adventures I learned how to identify plants, insects, geographical anomalies, trees, and most of all, invasive species. Later in life Dad and I took trips across the country to visit natural areas. On every trip we struggled with all the invasives that were choking out the life and beauty of the places we visited. We were

frustrated that no work was being done to remove invasives from public places. This lack of attention leads to new generations that do not know what nature was like for past generations.

In 2010 I moved into a home that shared a lot line with Nachusa Grasslands. I was soon working to remove invasives from a new purchase called Big Jump. I had spent life enjoying the land and longing for its release from invasives but not committing to the depauperate thing I saw. Finally, I had the chance to remove invasives from a public space. This became a chance







to fulfill the dreams of my father as well as my own. As invasives at Big Jump began to recede, I found that the restlessness I felt began to recede as well. I had begun putting down roots in the soil of Nachusa.

For ten years I have fought invasives at Nachusa, while the roots grew deeper and stronger. This year, as a maturing root system would dictate, I have begun the journey of restoration. It is not enough to remove invasives—we must replant the native species. I have chosen savannas as my place to plant a flag. This is the ecosystem that I grew up loving and where Dad and I most often walked, the place I learned to identify plants and connected with my father. This connection to the land is just starting to bear fruit. Where will it lead?





# ROOTS OF HERITAGE

BY HEATHER BAKER

When I first started as a volunteer at Nachusa Grasslands, I was at the beginning of my own process of understanding environmentalism and conservation and how I could contribute to creating a healthier and happier world. Luckily, Nachusa Grasslands was basically at my back door. I jumped in, and although I grew up only 20 minutes away, as I learned more about the natural environment around me, I started to feel a deeper connection to my time and place here in Illinois than ever before. It was grounding, and I felt as if I were growing more established roots of my own here. As years passed, I began to look forward to seeing flowers bloom throughout the seasons in the same way that I look forward to seeing old friends. I felt a stronger sense of community, both with the plants and animals, as well as with the people who share my joy in protecting and playing in the prairie. It's fascinating to think about the relationship to this land that



generations before me have also experienced. There is a lineage of people who have greeted the Pasque flowers in the spring and the asters in the fall, who know the feeling of getting lost in a field of grass taller than you, or who have seen the bison peacefully roaming with piles of snow on their backs in the winter. There is also a sense that the land remembers this history. Our grasslands are not just a stage that people have played on, but they make up characters and communities that we have grown with. This is home, and in becoming more deeply connected with the unique character of this home, I have found how I can make my part of the world a little happier and healthier. I have developed a sense of pride for being from the Prairie State, and it is comforting to know that, through the stewardship being done at Nachusa Grasslands and other sites in Illinois, the lineage of prairie and prairie people will continue.







# HOME ON THE PRAIRIE

BY KEITH KAUFFMANN

The grass is short here near the top of Dot's Knob. Taller grass covers the land at the base of the hill, and beyond the grass, sunlight sparkles off the water of a beaver pond. Several bison graze on the far side of the wetlands. North America once had 170 million acres of similar landscape. The barn and silos in the distance remind me that little of that original prairie remains.

The flatlands of the world play an essential role in feeding the world's human population, and most of the land where bison once roamed is now covered by fields of corn, soybeans, and wheat. In fact, the cultivated prairie lands of North America now produce about a quarter of the world's corn and soybeans and nearly ten percent of the world's wheat.



I grew up and spent most of my life on that prairie of farms and fields. I enthusiastically chopped milkweeds so that Dad's soybean fields would be pristine. Even today, I admire perfectly square fields, straight rows, and uniform plants. That prairie will always be home.

In the past, I helped plant pastures. But now, I spend the morning digging clover and alfalfa out of a remnant of the original prairie. As I take a break, I admire the randomness around me. Species cluster in the areas where soil type, moisture, or sunlight provides their ideal habitat.

A smattering of yellow coneflower and rough blazing star surrounds me. A plum thicket has

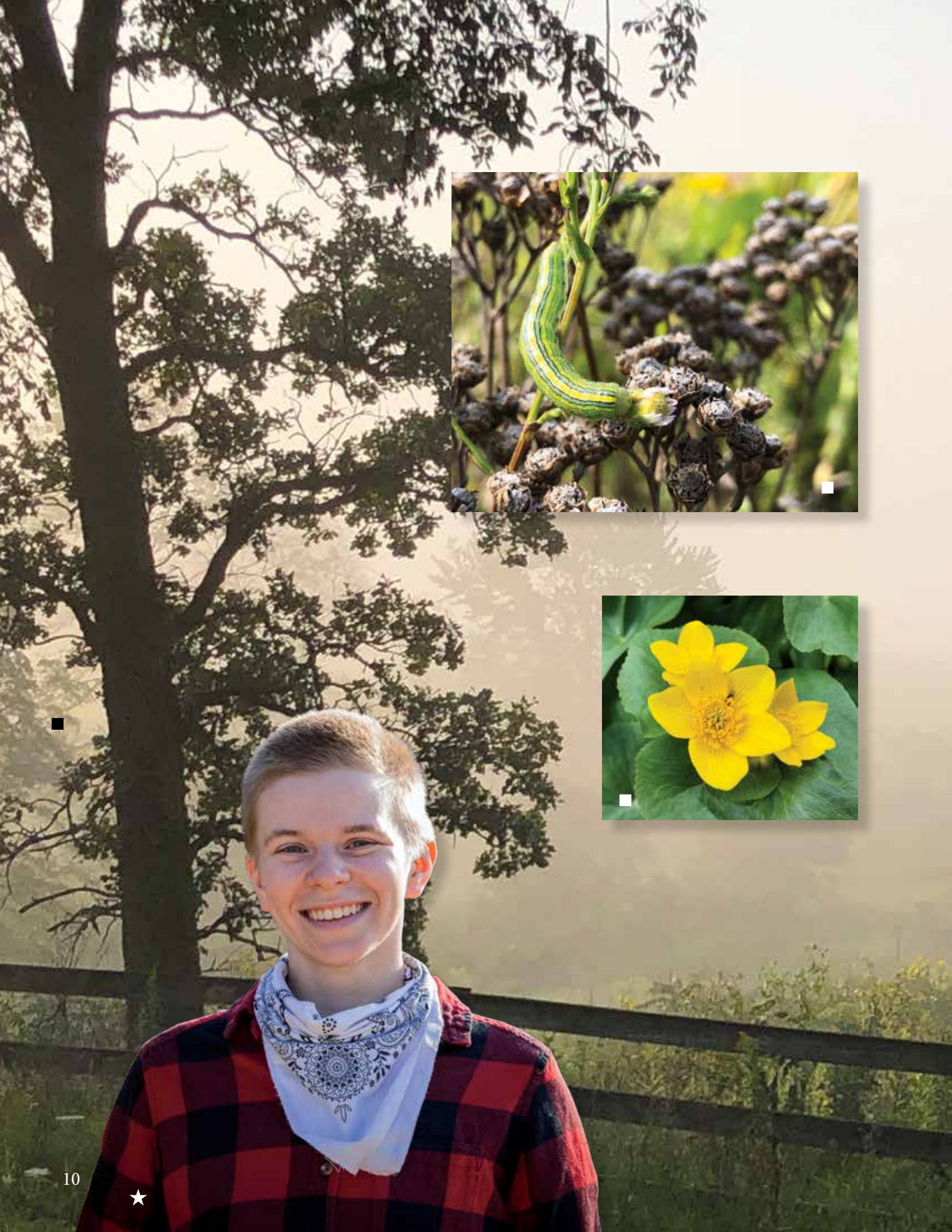


taken over a small ravine down to my left. I know there is a small patch of mountain mint just above the thicket, and lead plant grows farther up the slope. To my right, a slab of sandstone is covered with lichens. Just beyond the stone, a monarch butterfly circles a milkweed.

Every day here brings a new discovery. I am thankful that cultivated lands have become sufficiently productive so that this piece of prairie can be spared, because this prairie now also feels like home.









# STEWARDING THE LAND

BY ANNA SCHEIDEL

I still remember the first time I visited Nachusa. I was taking a class at The Morton Arboretum back in 2015, and it was our last field trip. I can recall Jay enchanting our class with his fantastical prairie stories, weaving together the tale of how Nachusa came to be. We all went out on the trucks into the field, where he showed us the prairie plants still just starting to emerge in mid-May. It was a new planting, perhaps not even five years old, yet it was already brimming with diversity. As we were shown the rest of the preserve, I couldn't help but marvel at how vast the landscape appeared—it looked like it never ended.

I was hired as a restoration technician in 2019. I walked the prairie five days a week for months, able to watch the plants mature from seedlings to full-fledged giants towering over my head. More times than I'd like to admit, I can recall getting completely and utterly lost in the tall, thick vegetation. Having grown up in the Chicago suburbs, I was more used to seeing nature preserves of a few hundred acres at the most surrounded on all sides by private homes and businesses. Nature was something you could go visit for some time and then depart. I certainly don't feel separate from nature

when I'm working with the crew at Nachusa! I decided to come back for a second and finally a third year. All day long, I eradicate weeds and hand-harvest seeds. It can be hot, humid, and exhausting at times, yes, but sometimes at the end of the day I still wander back outside for a stroll. Stewarding the land is not a mere job; it is a mission, a purpose, and a passion. Our crew gathered and spread the seeds, and knowing that my hands helped rebuild this planting gives me a sense of pride, as I hope it does the rest of my crew. I helped bring back this prairie, my hard work is here, and will be here for however long Nachusa lasts.

Years from now, when another student visits on a class trip, they will marvel at our prairie and find it teeming with life.



# 2021 SCIENCE GRANT RECIPIENTS

**KATHRYN BLOODWORTH**, PhD candidate, University of North Carolina at Greensboro. "Fire Effects on Multiple Ecosystem Outcomes: A Meta-Analysis for the Land Managers of Tallgrass Prairie." The goal of this comprehensive three-year effort is to understand the role of fire frequency in conserving multiple ecosystem outcomes including, but not limited to, its effects on birds, insects, small mammals, soil characteristics, woody plants, grasses, and forbs across a wide variety of settings (including Nachusa Grasslands) in the tallgrass prairie region. This analysis should provide land managers with the information they need to make vital decisions on fire frequency for specific desired outcomes. \$7,125 (in 2021)

**REB BRYANT**, PhD candidate, The University of Kansas. "Testing the Effect of Native Arbuscular Mycorrhizal fungi (AMF) on Prairie Restoration Success at Nachusa Grasslands." The goal of this three-year project is to study the question of whether or not the inoculation of specific native arbuscular mycorrhizal fungi (AMF) into the soil of greenhouse-grown plants can facilitate the plant abundance of "hard-to-establish" plant species in prairie restorations. If successful, this work will provide a library of AMF cultures that can be used to increase biodiversity in future restorations. \$14,525.



**LUKE DANIEL FANNIN**, PhD candidate, Dartmouth College. "Functional Ecology of Competing Photosynthetic Pathways in a North American Tallgrass Prairie." By comparing certain functional traits (fiber, toughness, abrasivity) of specific grass species at Nachusa with bison forage selectivity, Mr. Fannin's study will provide insight into bison foraging decisions and the potential long-term effects of bison grazing on Nachusa's plant diversity. \$450.



**NICHOLAS FOSTER**, MS candidate, Northern Illinois University. "Evaluating Restoration Efforts of Wetland Habitats." Mr. Foster will be measuring the phylogenetic diversity of three of Nachusa's wetland restorations to assess how successful the restorations have been over time. By comparing and contrasting the genetically diverse species of the current plant communities with historic monitoring data, he will be able to provide Nachusa's stewards and managers a way to look at wetland restoration effectiveness. \$1,200.







**SEAN GRIFFIN**, PhD, University of Texas at Austin. "Understanding the Ecology and Conservation of Rare Bees at Nachusa Grasslands." This grant will support the ongoing monitoring of Nachusa's wild bees first begun by Dr. Bruninga-Socolar and Dr. Sean Griffin in 2013. This year's research will focus on the ecology of the rare, at-risk bumble bee species discovered at Nachusa last year: their specific habitats, floral hosts, and time periods. Additionally, extensive sampling of bees, wasps, and flies in bison wallows, an often-overlooked habitat, will be conducted. \$13,800.



**SHERYL C. HOSLER**, PhD candidate, University of Illinois at Chicago. "How Do Dung Beetles Find the Field of Dreams?" This study will investigate the dispersal power and colonization ability of the small, functionally important dung beetles at Nachusa. Additionally, this study will continue the long-term biodiversity sampling of ground-dwelling arthropods at the twenty ReFuGE sites across the preserve. \$2,000.



**Robert and Patricia Anderson Award**

This annual award for excellence in science is made possible through a generous gift that honors Robert and Patricia Anderson

**RICHARD KING**, PhD, Northern Illinois University, Thomas B. Anton and David Mauger, Independent researchers. "Head-Starting: A New Phase in Blanding's Turtle Management at Nachusa Grasslands." The ongoing effort to increase the population and promote the persistence of the state-endangered Blanding's Turtles at Nachusa and adjacent properties within the Franklin Creek corridor entered a new phase in 2020 when thirty-seven hatchlings were released. Additional eggs were also collected in 2020, and the hatchlings have been reared for release in 2021. In addition to tracking the new "head-start" hatchlings to obtain data on their survival, movements and habitat use, this research team will track adult females to their nest sites and collect eggs for head-starting and release in 2022. \$4,750.



# 2021 SCIENCE GRANT RECIPIENTS

*Continued*

**D'ARCY R. MEYER-DOMBARD**, PhD; **KIMBERLY VAN METER**, PhD, and **SARAH KHOURY**, MS candidate, University of Illinois at Chicago. "Quantification of Microplastics in Soils and Sediments at Nachusa Grasslands, and Impact on Soil Microbiota." The goal of this study is to determine whether soils and stream sediments at Nachusa are contaminated with microplastics generated by human activity. These researchers will also explore whether any identified microplastics are impacting the microbial communities of the soils in which they are found by comparing the microbial community diversity in contaminated sites with that in uncontaminated sites. \$2,435.

**ERIN ROWLAND**, PhD candidate, Northern Illinois University. "Quantifying Burns: Using Drones to Numerically Assess the Success of Prescribed Burns." The second year of this three-year study will use drone imagery to



quantify the amount of any given unit actually burned during a prescribed fire event as well as the pattern and intensity of the fire. Additionally, the ongoing monitoring of small mammal populations in burn areas will shed light on the impact of prescribed fire on animals dependent on specific land cover. \$3,400.







**WAYNE SCHENNUM**, PhD, independent researcher. "Chrysomelid Beetles and Their Host Plants at Nachusa Grasslands." Dr. Schennum will be surveying the number and specific identity of the rarely-studied leaf beetles (Chrysomelidae) in two high quality prairie remnants and their adjacent prairie restorations at Nachusa. He will also compare the populations in the adjacent communities and identify the host plants for each identified species. \$3,500.

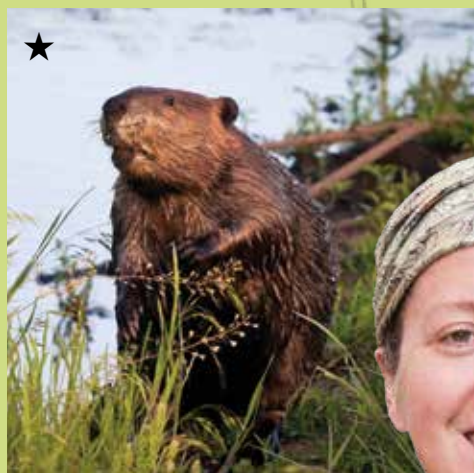


*Wayne Schennum (1949-2021) was a revered Illinois ecologist, and over the years, Friends of Nachusa Grasslands awarded him many grants to conduct surveys.*

**JESSE SIKORA**, MS candidate, Northern Illinois University. "How Does Habitat Fragmentation from Variable Land Management Practices Impact Beaver Activity?" This project will provide baseline data on beavers and their activity at Nachusa by 1) using aerial photos to identify possible beaver use areas, 2) verifying beaver use areas on the ground, 3) identifying tree size and other vegetation types in beaver use areas, and 4) using camera traps to estimate the number of beavers in each location and their use of the habitat. \$5,150.

of this continuing study is to assess seasonal dietary variation on bison health by studying the microbial community of the animals' intestinal tracts. Grant funds in 2021 will pay for fecal sampling, DNA isolation, and PCR molecular detection. \$2,000.

**LAURIE SPENCER**, PhD candidate, Northern Illinois University. "Assessment of Enteric Parasites in Wild Bison at Nachusa Grasslands." Using microscopic analysis, PCR, and DNA sequencing, this study will measure the prevalence and abundance of intestinal parasites in Nachusa's bison herd from new and previously-collected fecal samples. Infection differences across variables such as age, sex, sample year, and diet composition will also be assessed. \$2,000.



**PALLAVI SINGH**, PhD, Northern Illinois University. "Longitudinal Characterizing of Intestinal Microbial Ecology of Bison." The goal





# OUR MISSION



*Our mission is to restore and protect the tallgrass prairie ecosystem—grasslands, savannas, woodlands, and wetlands. We care for the birds, bison, wildflowers, grasses, insects, and reptiles that are irreplaceable parts of the whole.*

## **ENCOURAGE STEWARDSHIP**

Volunteers are the heart and soul of Nachusa. Our volunteers harvest seed, manage invasive species, clear brush, plant new prairie, and conduct prescribed burns. They monitor streams, dragonflies, and frogs. Some volunteers lead hikes or share their photography or drawings. E-mail us for a volunteer opportunity that will have an immediate impact.

## **BUILD ENDOWED FUNDS**

This year we increased our goal for our two operations endowments to five million combined, which will permanently help defray the costs of stewardship. We can't do it without you! In recognition of your support, we will send you our Annual Report detailing the progress you make possible.

## **SUPPORT SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH**

We support critical scientific research that expands our understanding and improves our management restoration practices. Since 2011 we have awarded \$272,000 in research grants, and we will award \$66,000 more in early 2022. This year we also established the Friends Endowment for Nachusa Science with a goal of one million dollars, which will fund a portion of our annual grants.

## **PROTECT LAND**

We've created a fund to support land acquisitions for the continued expansion of Nachusa by providing seed money for purchases when needed. Our initial goal is \$50,000 annually.





# HERITAGE HEROES

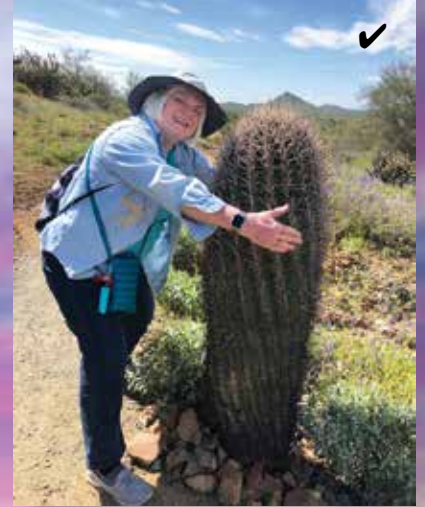
## MEET HERITAGE HERO JUDY DENNIS

**HOME:** Sterling, Illinois, 32 miles west of Nachusa Grasslands

**WORK LIFE:** Judy taught music in Sterling Public Schools for 34 years and still loves music.

**CONNECTION TO NATURE:** As a child Judy had a secret, quiet spot in a woods near her home. Even then she loved nature, and it is where she felt closest to God. It was a tour of the Grasslands with the Daughters of the American Revolution (DAR) several years ago that opened her eyes to Nachusa. She was amazed by the beauty and impressed with the research that guides its restoration. It makes her feel good to see the land protected. Most of all, she loves the peaceful atmosphere, relishing the cheerful songs of the birds and the muffled chomping of grazing bison.

**INTERESTS:** Judy takes every opportunity to hike in natural areas, including the White Tank Mountains near Surprise, Arizona. She also finds great joy in making music. She is a proud member of the String-Alongs, an Appalachian dulcimer group which performs folk music in the Nachusa area, as well as several musical groups during her winter getaways to Arizona.



**LEGACY COMMITMENT:** Hearing the story of Nachusa's long-term restoration got her thinking about what she could do to assure that the project continued to prosper and would be around for her family and friends. She chose to become a Heritage Hero and hopes others will come to enjoy and support Nachusa. ★

**LOVE OF NATURE:** Judy's new special place is Nachusa. It isn't secret like her childhood hideaway, but when it is time to get away, it's her "go-to" place for peace, quiet, and inspiration.





# OUR DONORS

July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2021



## \*PRAIRIE PERENNIALS

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

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

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Leonard Kuzmicki  
Lake to Prairie Wild Ones  
*in appreciation for a presentation by Elizabeth Bach*  
Amy Lardner  
Larry C. Larson\*  
Holly Harms LaSpina  
*in memory of Ralph Burnett*  
Tom Lawson\*  
*in memory of Annette, Russell, and James Lawson*  
Monica Leccese  
Allan Lindrup\*  
Stephen and Lorrie Liphart  
Paul Little  
*in memory of Laurie Bollman-Little*  
Dan Loescher  
Ellen Lohmeyer  
*in memory of Ralph Burnett*  
James and Lela Long  
Ann Lowry  
Nancy and Lyle Luckow  
Clark and Pam Lumsden\*  
Walter and Cheryl Lutz  
Lydia S. Macauley  
*in memory of Ralph Burnett*  
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*in memory of Alice Eakle Marks*  
Emily Mattison\*  
David Mauger  
Nancy Maze\*  
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Greg and Kay McKeen\*  
*in honor of Mary and Jim Vieregg*  
Mary and Alan Meier\*+  
Paul and Linda Meier\*  
Rodney and Marilyn Meiners  
Paul and Deb Mellen\*  
Timothy and Jennifer Mescher\*  
Peter and Jan Meserve\*

George and Yolane Meusel  
*in appreciation for a tour led by Bill and Susan Kleiman*  
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*in memory of Donald Reglin*  
Nancy Moen\*  
Lisa and Gerald Moore\*  
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Sandy Phillips\*  
*In memory of my Conner, McGonigle, and Fagan Families*  
Bob and Sherry Piros  
*in memory of Mary Piros Koenig*  
Jeanne Plumb  
*in memory of Donald Reglin*  
Joseph and Dona Popp\*  
Tom and Ginny Preston  
*in memory of Rick Scott*  
Lori Propheter\*  
Daniel and Rita Randecker



# OUR DONORS

July 1, 2020, to June 30, 2021



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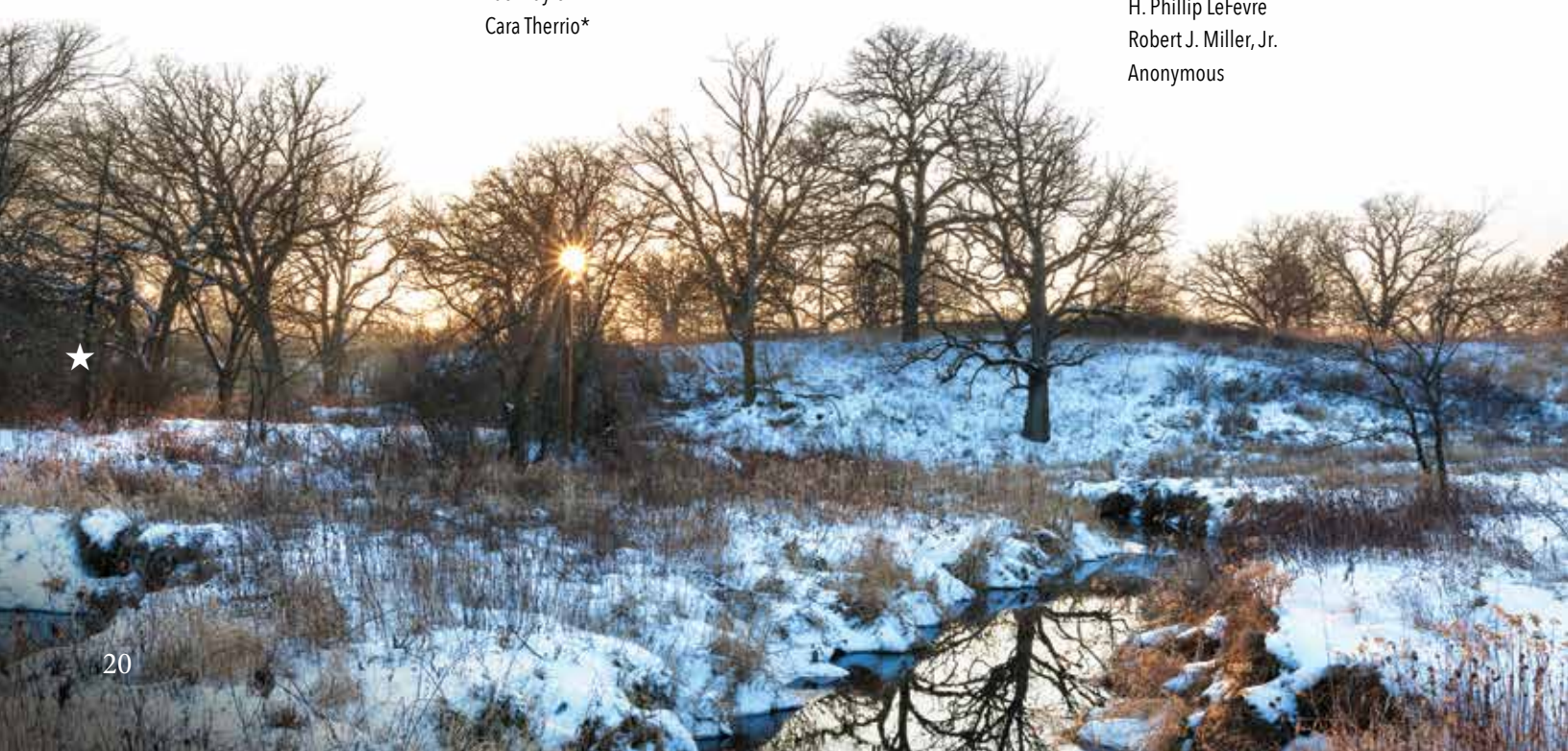
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*in memory of Donald Reglin*  
 Robert Zimmerman  
 Susan Zook  
 Anonymous  
*in memory of Sally Baumgardner*  
 Anonymous  
*in honor of Tim and  
 Carolyn Keller*  
 Anonymous  
*in memory of Marie Louise  
 Sorensen*  
 Anonymous\*  
*in honor of Mary Vieregg*  
 Anonymous (11)

## Heritage Heroes Not Listed Above

Karla Brandt  
 Harriet Choice  
 David and Laura Crites  
 H. Phillip LeFevre  
 Robert J. Miller, Jr.  
 Anonymous





# FINANCIAL RESULTS



	2020-2021 (pre-audit)	2019-2020 (audited)
<b>Net Assets Beginning of the Year</b>	\$2,240,491	\$1,966,229
<b>Support and Revenue</b>		
Program Income	599	2,151
Donations	640,811	291,111
Grants	131,900	115,500
Investment Income	628,623	62,622
Other Income	50,000	51,655
<b>Total Revenue</b>	<b>\$1,451,933</b>	<b>\$523,039</b>
<b>Expenses</b>		
Science Grants and Symposium	62,185	52,557
T-Shirt Expenses	0	2,492
Professional Expenses	7,005	7,500
Nachusa Operations via TNC	49,216	37,718
Restoration	64,757	34,327
Net Program Income	0	45
Development Expenses	14,182	11,246
Grants to Other Organizations	4,000	100,500
Insurance	2,330	2,254
Government Fees	76	138
Other Expenses	655	0
<b>Total Expenses</b>	<b>\$204,406</b>	<b>\$248,777</b>
Net change in net assets	1,247,527	274,262
<b>Net assets, end of year (June 30)</b>	<b>\$3,488,018</b>	<b>\$2,240,491</b>

## Reconciliation between Assets and Net Assets

Cash and cash equivalents	57,756	40,562
Investments		
Beneficial interest in endowments held by the Community Foundation of Northern Illinois (CFNIL*&**)	2,536,577	1,457,033
Beneficial interest in endowment held by The Nature Conservancy (TNC***)	896,688	742,896
<b>Total assets, end of year (June 30)</b>	<b>\$3,488,018</b>	<b>\$2,240,491</b>

## ENDOWMENT BALANCES

June 30, 2021

Friends Endowment for Nachusa Grasslands (CFNIL*)	\$2,426,002
Friends Endowment for Nachusa Science (CFNIL **)	\$110,573
Nachusa Grasslands Stewardship Endowment (TNC***)	\$896,688
<b>Endowments Total</b>	<b>\$3,433,263</b>

## ENDOWMENT DISTRIBUTIONS

(net of fees) June 30, 2021

	Current Year	Since Inception
CFNIL General*	\$49,216	\$136,349
CFNIL Science**	0	0
TNC***	\$28,136	\$109,844
<b>Total Distributions</b>	<b>\$77,352</b>	<b>\$246,193</b>

## LAND PROTECTION FUND\*\*\*\*

June 30, 2021

Distributions Current Year	Distributions Since Inception	Fund Balance
\$0	\$0	\$15,000

*To date, all distributions have funded operations at Nachusa. Distributions from the science endowment will fund science.*

*\*Operations endowment established May 14, 2014; 3rd Q distribution based on average yearend balance over prior 3 years.*

*\*\*Science endowment established December 1, 2020; 3rd Q distribution based on average yearend balance over prior 3 years.*

*\*\*\*Operations endowment established September 1, 2009; 2nd Q distribution based on average yearend balance over prior 5 years.*

*\*\*\*\*Established June 30, 2021. This is a savings account that will, with Board approval, provide seed money for land acquisitions by TNC.*





# LEARN MORE

## SAVE THE DATE

Friends Science Grants Announcements:  
February 1, 2022

Friends Prairie Potluck: June 11, 2022

Friends Annual Meeting: July 30, 2022

Autumn on the Prairie: September 17, 2022

## CONTACT US

Friends of Nachusa Grasslands  
8772 South Lowden Road,  
Franklin Grove, IL 61031  
708-406-9894  
nachusagrasslands@gmail.com

With grateful thanks to our writers, photographers,  
and illustrator who contributed to this annual report.

## PHOTOGRAPHERS

Each copyrighted photo is marked with a symbol  
indicating the photographer's name.

- |                 |                 |                  |
|-----------------|-----------------|------------------|
| ★ Dee Hudson    | ● Tim Ngo       | ❖ Reb Bryant     |
| ◆ Charles Larry | ■ Anna Scheidel | ❖ Howard Michler |
| ▼ Bill Kleiman  | ✦ Betty Higby   | ✓ Judy Dennis    |
| ✕ Greg Baker    |                 |                  |

## ILLUSTRATOR

Betty Higby

## Front and back cover photos:

Charles Larry

**Editor-in-Chief:** Bernie Buchholz

**Managing Editor:** Dee Hudson

**General Editor:** James Higby

**Graphic Designer:** Cindy Kiple

**Printing:** Georgene Meyers and RGM Graphics

## DIRECTORS

Mike Carr (2020-2022)

Heather Herakovich (2020-2022)

Charles Larry (2021-2023)

## OFFICERS (2021-2022)

Bernie Buchholz, president

Mike Saxton, vice president

Mary Vieregg, vice president

Mark Jordan, treasurer

Mary Meier, secretary



## WHAT KEEPS ME CONNECTED TO NACHUSA GRASSLANDS

**Bill Kleiman:** What keeps me connected? All four seasons I take short walks around Nachusa, where I carry a squirt bottle of herbicide or a weed spade. I look for places I have not seen for a while.

**Betty Higby:** Nachusa Grasslands provides me opportunities to work with amazing individuals who also are committed to preserving and restoring the unique biodiversity that was historically here. Also, being at Nachusa brings me a calming joy which grows with each exposure and lingers between visits, calling me back.

**Don Panozo:** Talking to friends about Nachusa. Not sure if they're listening. Doesn't matter, for in my mind I've now become connected to the beauty of the Prairie.

**Mary Meier:** The prairie and the people keep me connected to Nachusa.

**Mark Jordan:** A Pileated Woodpecker landing on an Oak. The promise below ashes. A Shooting Star heralding the spring. A Beetle in the dung. Big Bluestem. Images of ancestral landscapes. Dreams of Diversity. Good People doing good work. An adventure with a Grandchild. Purpose. Earned Beauty. Earned Peace. Amen.

**Mike Saxton:** Being 306 miles away, I don't often see the prairie. But I know it's there – with verdant springs and raw winters, brilliant sunsets and starry nights, diverse planting and stunning remnants, and inspiring staff and dedicated stewards.

**Catherine Gort:** My sons' school burned down and was not to be rebuilt, so we took our wagon to bring a chunk of the prairie, which teachers had restored there for learning, home to our yard. My connection to prairie was born and continues on workdays at Nachusa, where I can breathe in the fragrance of the prairie and move with her rhythms.

**Yoshi Fredisdorf:** The moment I touched the shockingly bright white quinine was the connection of times between the efforts of seeding by others and appreciation years later by me. I may be a little speck of a being in this universe, yet my work may add more quinine's grace on this grassland.



# CONNECTING GENERATIONS

BY TIM SHERCK



One of the great pleasures of volunteering at Nachusa is the interaction that occurs across the wide age range of those supporting the restoration work – from those like myself, advanced in our senior years, to young, bright, and eager grad students, seasonal staff, and volunteers. All ages bring different experiences and abilities, and we benefit from each other. I am always inspired by the passion for the land and the determination to achieve a sustainable future shown by those in the younger generation at Nachusa. I hope they also find encouragement from the more senior of us who have chosen to dedicate our time and resources to giving something back for the protection and restoration of this precious land. In the pre-settlement landscape of Nachusa I also find echoes of much earlier generations of humans who lived on and cared for the native prairie long ago. I find great satisfaction in both finding connection with that ancestral past and in advancing and appreciating today's restoration work, the full benefit of which will be realized beyond my own lifetime into future generations.





“Humankind has not woven the web of life.

We are but one thread within it. Whatever we  
do to the web, we do to ourselves. All things  
are bound together. All things connect.”

—Chief Seattle



FRIENDS OF  
NACHUSA  
GRASSLANDS  
[nachusagrasslands.org](http://nachusagrasslands.org)





*"When we see land as a community to which we belong,  
we may begin to use it with love and respect."*

*-Aldo Leopold*

## Thank you for supporting Friends of Nachusa Grasslands

Giving levels listed in our Annual Report are

Supporter — \$1 to \$1,499

Conservation Champion — \$1,500 to \$4,999

Restoration Benefactor — \$5,000 or more

### How should Friends apply my donation?

Where most needed

### Stewardship/Science Endowments\*

- Friends Endowment for Nachusa Grasslands (CFNIL)  
 Nachusa Grasslands Stewardship Endowment (TNC)  
 Friends Endowment for Nachusa Science (CFNIL)

### Funds\*\*

- Friends Fund for Science  
 Friends Land Protection Fund  
 In Honor/Memory of: \_\_\_\_\_

*For an honor/memorial acknowledgment or employer match, please include information on a separate note.*

### Send me information about:

- Including Friends in my estate to become a Heritage Hero  
 Donating stocks, bonds, mutual funds, or other assets  
 Donating from my IRA



FRIENDS OF  
NACHUSA  
GRASSLANDS

Visit [nachusagrasslands.org/donations](http://nachusagrasslands.org/donations) for endowment details, giving options and more information.

\* Endowments permanently secure funding for the future.  
\*\* Funds support current science or land purchases.

PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY

NAME(S) (as you wish it printed in the Friends Annual Report)

MAKE MY GIFT ANONYMOUS

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EMAIL  Please add me to the Friends Prairi-E Updates and newsletter list.

Enclosed is my check to **Friends of Nachusa Grasslands** for:

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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.

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*Thank you for your support!*

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