

UPCOMING EVENTS AROUND TOWN

**GIBRALTAR BAY UNIT
(GBU) DETROIT RIVER
INT'L WILDLIFE REFUGE**
28820 E. River Rd.
Open to the Public Daily,
Dawn to Dusk

AIRPORT NATURE AREA
Open, hosted by GINLC
Sundays, May 6 - Oct 28
1:00 – 4:00 pm

**KOBILJAK PRESERVE
CLEAN-UP**
Sat, July 28 @ 9:00 am
Sat, Oct 6 @ 9:00 am
Thorofare Canal at
Thorofare & Byromar Lane

**HIGH SCHOOL NATURE
AREA MAINTENANCE**
Sat, Aug 18 @ 9:00am
Support the high school
Ecological Awareness Club
by assisting at their Nature
Area on Grays Drive

**WALK TO THE
LOVELY LOTUS**
Sun, Aug 19 @ 1:00pm
Join us at the GBU

**INTREPID POND
CLEAN-UP**
Sat, Sept 8 @ 9:00am
On Meridian at Intrepid



L: SPECIAL JAKE, CC BY-SA 3.0, R: TREE & J. HENSDILL, CC BY-SA 2.0

NATIVE SPECIES OF GROSSE ILE Virginia Opossum (*Didelphis virginiana*)

BY BERT URBANI

Three cheers for Opossums! Hip hip hooray! Why the hoopla you ask? Opossums are among our most underrated native animals (along with bats) but they are actually among our coolest! What's cool about opossums? One, they are North America's only marsupial! (Marsupials, such as kangaroos and koalas, give birth to young that are not fully developed and are carried and nursed in a pouch on the mother's belly until they are big enough to face the outside world.) Two, they are one of the oldest living mammals, having been around during the dinosaurs! Three, they deserve an Oscar for "playing 'possum." And four, they are our heroes, because they eat lots and lots of ticks! (See Jordan's article on page 9.)

CHARACTERISTICS: Adult opossums are 2 – 3 feet in length and weigh up to 14 pounds, with males

somewhat larger than females. One third of their length is the tail, which is round and scaly. The head is conical, with round leathery ears and a snout tipped by a pink nose. They have poor vision but acute hearing and sense of smell and are resistant to rabies. Their usual defense is to first growl and hiss. They are famous for playing dead (possum). The opossum will fall on its side, curl up, open its mouth and drool, and release a foul-smelling liquid from its anal glands. While in this state, no amount of prodding will produce a reaction, and this paralysis lasts from several minutes to four hours.

RANGE & HABITAT: Other opossums are found throughout the Western Hemisphere, but the Virginia or Common Opossum is the only one in North America. They are moving farther

When opossum babies grow too big for the pouch but are too young to travel on their own, their mother carries them around on her back. White, gray, black and pink are their colors.

– Continued on Page 11

SPECIAL DONORS

IN MEMORY OF MARGARETE HASSERODT

*Derek Chan &
Marie-Eve Pepin
Kimberly Mobley
Ann & Eric Torgersen
James & Julie Tyburski
Lois Zook*

IN MEMORY OF JOAN JONES

*Diane & Michael Baldwin
Diane Brown &
Karen Stamper
Judy Logan
Rhonwen Newton
Willoughby Newton III
Ernest & Sharon Williams*

IN MEMORY OF TONI KOVACS

Grosse Ile Garden Club

**A SPECIAL THANKS TO
DTE ENERGY TRENTON
CHANNEL POWER PLANT
& GROSSE ILE BRIDGE
COMPANY FOR THEIR
GENEROUS DONATIONS**

Thank You
for your
contributions!

Reflections From the President

BY PETER KANTZ

Now that the World Health Organization has recognized video game addiction as a disease, I have some good news for you, Grosse Ile is uniquely positioned to ward off and fight this dreaded disease. Turn off your gaming device and go outside. Discover the natural beauty that surrounds you. Start by hiking the trails at the wildlife refuge located at 28820 East River. GINLC initiated this refuge twenty years ago. It is now part of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge and it is open to the public year-round from dawn to dusk. On Sundays from 1:00 pm to 4:00 pm, May through October, GINLC opens an additional 40 acres of airport property to the public. Hike the mile-long trail on Open Space property, starting and ending at the Meridian trailhead where GINLC maintains an information kiosk, bike rack and bench. View the wetlands, marsh and river at GINLC's Hennepin Marsh Gateway Preserve, located on Meridian about a half mile north of Bridge. Visit Sunrise Park at the intersection of Grosse Ile Parkway and East River, an area where GINLC has invested tens of thousands of dollars to give the public access to the river and a place to relax and enjoy the magnificent river views. Other GINLC-sponsored areas to visit and enjoy nature are the Kobiljak Preserve located on Thorofare just north of Highland and Intrepid Pond at the intersection of Meridian and Intrepid. These are just a few areas on Grosse Ile that you can use to combat video game addiction. Please pass this valuable information on to someone you know who may be suffering from this dreaded disease.



The best method of preventing video game addiction is to become an active GINLC volunteer. Many opportunities exist to help preserve the natural resources of Grosse Ile. No previous experience is required. Volunteers interested in helping with outdoor stewardship, educational programs, administrative tasks, etc. are all welcome and needed. Talk to one of our Board Members, visit our website www.ginlc.org, like us on Facebook or send us an email at info@ginlc.org for more information.

UPCOMING EVENTS *Continued*

ENVIRONMENTAL CAREER DAY

Sat, Sept 15 @ 1pm
Students learn about
green career options
Centennial Farm

HENNEPIN MARSH GATEWAY CLEAN-UP

Sat, Sept 22 @ 9:00am
On Meridian at
Annette Ave.

OWL PROWL

Fri, Nov 9 @ 7:00pm
Centennial Farm

GINLC ANNUAL MEETING

Sat, Nov 10 @ 10:00am
Grosse Ile Golf &
Country Club



Celebrating *Earth Day* 2018

BY PAMELA A. FRUCCI

The adult attendees at GINLC's April 22 Earth Day celebration were treated to a series of speakers and informative displays, while 50-60 children enjoyed outside activities.

The first presentation (via flashdrive from New Mexico) was by Dr. James Swan who grew up on the Island and got his doctorate in environmental studies at the U of M. His father Don Swan owned and operated the Wonder Well until he died in 1994, on the same day that the well dried up. Jim's message was all about the need to continue to keep our land and waterways unpolluted. It was even more special to have this inspirational video from a native son of Grosse Ile.

Keynoter speaker John Demerjian, Wayne County's Resource Recovery coordinator, focused on "The State of Recycling" in Wayne County. John's statistics on the level of recycling on Grosse Ile remind us that we all need to do better! He brought a large quantity of recycled pencils made from old blue jeans and tires. They were distributed at the Earth Day celebration and during the IslandFest parade.

Also speaking were Robert Kulick who runs Cresit, a Wyandotte solar panel installation company, Stephanie Kearny on bee keeping, Emily Wash about the efforts of the GIHS's Environmental Awareness Club, John Leon on the Township's new ordinance banning the use of coal tar

products to resurface driveways, DTE Energy offering free energy audits for homeowners, and State Rep. Darrin Camilleri informing the listeners on environmental bills before the

Michigan legislature.

Displays included a photo of Wayne Sawka's Eagle Scout project – the oak tree stump with historic dates at the township hall, a sample solar panel from Cresit, and about the activities of the high school Environmental Awareness Club.

Outside activities for kids included various animals brought by Lake Erie Metropark staff, planting seeds, an art project demonstrating how bees pollinate plants and making stepping stones.

Event chair Pam Frucci's opening remarks reminded the attendees that the first Earth Day in 1970 attracted 20 million concerned citizens across the country due to two significant events in 1969. One, an oil well blow-out off the coast of California washed thousands of tons of black sludge onto Santa Barbara's pristine beaches. The second was when the astronauts landed on the moon and sent back photos of Earth; for the first time, we could actually see how interconnected we all are.

Many thanks to GINLC board member Pam Frucci and her committee made up of fellow board members Guido Colarossi, Fred Pepper, and Bert Urbani, along with retired GITS kindergarten teacher and environmentalist Colleen Gimpel.



Top Left: Nancy Cryslar helps local children paint rocks as part of the Earth Day celebration. Top Right: Emily Wash, president of the GIHS Environmental Awareness Club, holds a fox snake from Lake Erie Metropark and Center: stands in front of the Club's informational board at the Earth Day celebration.

Tick Tips & Not-So-Fun Facts

Here are some tips I've gained from experience:

- Wear rubber knee-high boots with your pants tucked in when working in tick areas
- Use bug spray and wear light colored clothing; it makes them easier to see
- Always do a body check in the mirror and/or take a shower after being afield; ticks like to seek out the warmest parts of your body.

It is important to note that for Lyme disease infection, the tick has to be attached for 36-48 hours before the bacteria is transmitted from tick to human, so frequent body exams and speedy tick removal can prevent the disease even if you are bitten.

Lone Star tick bites can cause an allergy to red meat!



It took years to solve the puzzle of why outdoorsy people were

developing allergies to red meat (doctors thought they were crazy). But when they superimposed a map of these meat allergy sufferers upon a map of Rocky Mountain Spotted Fever (borne by Lone Star ticks), it fit perfectly!

For more info visit:
https://www.michigan.gov/documents/emergingdiseases/resize_307382_7.pdf

<http://www.caryinstitute.org/newsroom/opossum-skippers-ticks>

Oh, no! Ticks!

BY JORDAN THOMPSON

I recently went for a walk through a wet grassy area in the woods behind my house and after returning to my yard I did my usual quick check for ticks on my lower legs. Lo and behold, I found two hitchhikers crawling around on the outside of my jeans just below my knee. I gave them a quick flick of my finger to get them off before they found their way under my clothing. Later that evening I felt one crawling up the back of my calf. I had apparently missed one, but luckily it had not settled in to a spot to bite and attach itself to feed.

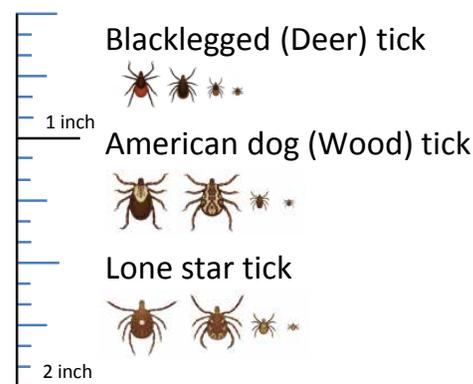
Grosse Ile is an ideal habitat for ticks, temperate natural areas with plenty of warm-blooded hosts. Ticks thrive in moist shaded areas with plenty of low plant growth when not attached to their host - deer, coyotes, raccoons, woodchucks, chipmunks, rabbits, squirrels, mice and voles. And like mosquitoes, ticks require a blood meal from a mammal to reproduce. In the springtime female ticks move to the end of tall grass blades or other undergrowth to lay in wait for a host to walk past where she will grab on and move to an area on the host's body to bite and fill with blood. Eventually she falls off to lay her eggs, and the cycle repeats itself the following spring.

Interestingly, one animal that seems to evade being a good host is the Virginia or Common Opossum. Studies have shown that opossums are excellent groomers and actually remove or eat over 95% of the ticks they encounter (up to 5,000 ticks per year!), making them Nature's tick vacuum cleaners.

Ticks have not always been so prevalent in Michigan but because of changing climatic conditions and habitat, many different species of ticks have been expanding their ranges in our state in recent years. I have no recollection of ticks while growing up in rural Michigan, but for the last 20 or so years I have increasingly found them crawling on me after venturing out into the spring woods. While I am not an expert in tick identification, I do know that most can carry a variety of transmittable diseases, most notably Lyme disease, so I am always vigilant checking for them every time I'm out into their likely habitats. Spring and early summer seem to be the worst times of the year for ticks and shaded wet areas with tall grass or plants seem to be the areas that hold the most. Deer runs through these low grassy areas are usually the worst and should be avoided; walk in open wooded areas on established trails or mowed areas if possible to avoid these pests. Many people think ticks are insects but they are actually arachnids and are related to spiders. I've been very fortunate that for all the ticks I've ever found or removed, only one had been on long enough to attach or embed his mouth into my skin which required tweezers to remove.



Size Comparison (to Scale)



Left: Lone Star Tick. Top Right: Deer Tick. Above Chart shows Tick Stages: female, male, nymph, larva.

GINLC'S 2017/18

Take it Outside

HIGH SCHOOL
PHOTO CONTEST



GRAND PRIZE // Nature Up Close // *Life Survives*
Logan Diroff, Trenton High School

BY BERT URBANI

Feast your eyes on these gorgeous photos, winners of the GINLC's 2017/2018 **Take It Outside** digital photo contest that encourages high school students to explore our fascinating local environment. This year's categories were *Nature's Architecture*, *The Right Place @ The Right Time*, and *Nature Up Close*. Kudos to GINLC member Lori Riopelle, who orchestrated the contest, from circulating the posters, talking with teachers, receiving the entries, coordinating with the judges, preparing the winning photo displays, and delivering the cash prizes. The 10 winning photos and 25 honorable mentions were at the 25th anniversary celebration and IslandFest and will be on display at the Wyandotte Beacon library in October and Trenton Veterans' Memorial Library in November. Our

contest has grown from 33 entries in 2012/2013 to 190 this year! Many thanks to the teachers from 10 schools who informed and motivated their students to participate.

And last, but not least, many thanks to our two judges, Molly Gabbard and Whitney Weaver. When Molly is not enjoying the beauty of nature, she is volunteering in her school district. Nature is her passion, and photography is her hobby. Whitney Weaver teaches drawing, painting, studio, graphic design, and introduction to 2D art at Trenton High School. She has a master's in visual art education from Wayne State University. Thank you, ladies, for donating your time and expertise to the challenge of selecting the winners from such a large and talented field.

TURN THE PAGE to view the rest of the winning photos!

IslandFest!

The GINLC participated in IslandFest again this year, proudly celebrating our Conservationist of the Year, Barbara Thayer, and providing an informational booth at the hangar. Many thanks to our members who made the arrangements, staffed the booth, and informed and educated the visitors to the booth about the activities of the GINLC and how they can live cleaner, greener lives. This year we were pleased to share booth space with the high school Environmental Awareness Club. We are thrilled to encourage Grosse Ile's next generation of environmental stewards in every way.



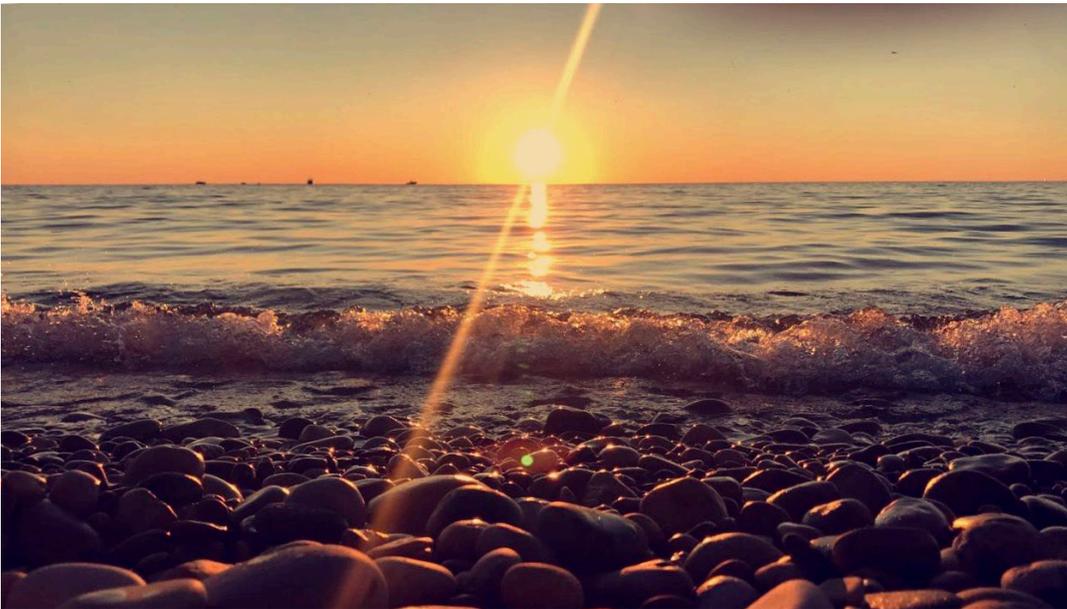
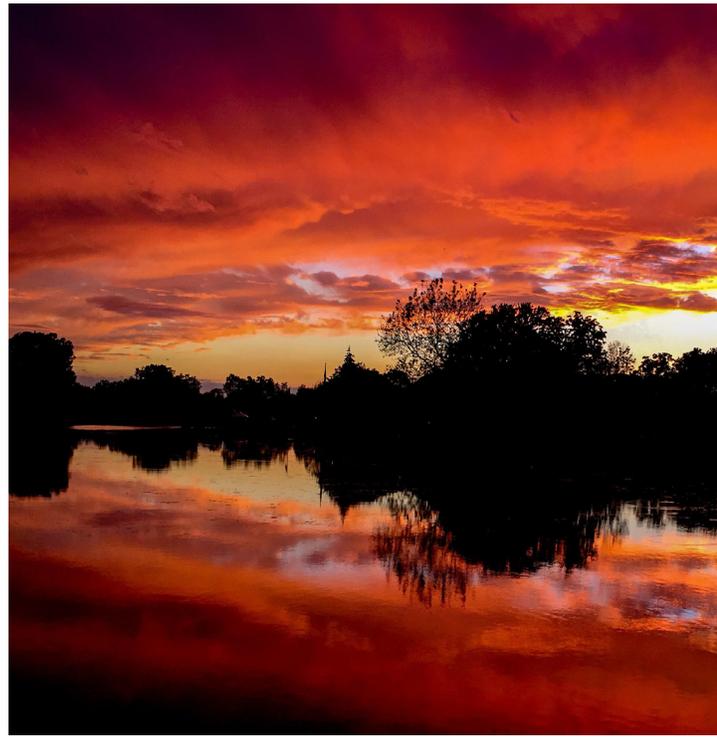
Education Committee members Julia Barill, Sabrina Mastroianni, and Emily Wash at the GINLC booth.



GINLC Conservationist of the Year Barbara Thayer waves to the crowd during the IslandFest parade on June 2. With Barbara is her husband, Ralph.

NATURE'S ARCHITECTURE ↓

RIGHT PLACE @ THE RIGHT TIME ↓



LEFT TOP:
1ST PLACE //
Organic Architecture
Jordan Zack,
Riverview H.S.

LEFT CENTER:
2ND PLACE //
Nature
Nikki Bartlett,
Grosse Ile H.S.

LEFT BOTTOM:
3RD PLACE //
Preserved Architecture
Joseph Kaczor,
Riverview H.S.

CENTER TOP:
1ST PLACE //
While Earth Rotates
Jordan Zack,
Riverview H.S.

CENTER:
2ND PLACE //
Rays on Lake Erie
Kaiser Rennalls,
Riverview H.S.

CENTER BOTTOM:
3RD PLACE //
Taking Flight
Jolie Ballard,
Roosevelt H.S.

NATURE UP
CLOSE ↓



RIGHT TOP:
1ST PLACE //
Clingy
Jordan Zack,
Riverview H.S.

RIGHT CENTER:
2ND PLACE //
In Dew Time
Joshua Prim,
Riverview H.S.

RIGHT BOTTOM:
3RD PLACE //
The Carpenter
Joshua Kohowski,
Trenton H.S.



Celebrating 25 Years!

BY PAMELA A. FRUCCI & BERT URBANI

The weather was great on Saturday, May 12; the location – even though across the river in Elizabeth Park – was perfect; and 160 people, both GINLC board members, spouses and guests, enjoyed a catered meal along with dinner music. The big hit in celebrating 25 years of the GINLC was hearing founding board members share stories of the early days of the conservancy.

Founding members were Dr. Bruce Jones, Bill Heinrich, Mary Ann Czechowski, Michael Perry, Ingo Hasserodt, Kurt Kobiljak, Amanda and Phil Phillips, John Schweickart, Sylvia Walworth, and Carol and Doug Woodring. Current president and M.C. Peter Kantz paid tribute to the founding members who organized back in 1993 due to concerns about overdevelopment on the Island.

Today, newcomers to Grosse Ile take it for granted that much of our beautiful island has been left in its natural state for us to enjoy, but 25 years ago, that was not a certainty. Rapid and uncoordinated development was gobbling up the meadows and woods that long-time residents treasured. It also threatened to overwhelm critical infrastructure such as the wastewater treatment system. Spurred by these concerns, both the GINLC and the Township's Open Space program were born and continue to complement each other, with Open Space protecting 600 acres of land and the GINLC 240 acres. In fact, Founder Ingo Hasserodt noted that the GINLC is the second largest land owner on the island, behind only the Township. Founders Amanda, Kurt and John shared insight about the challenges they faced and their satisfaction for the continuing success of the organization they started.

Peter provided an update on the current activities and accomplishments of the group. Among the projects taken on by the Conservancy are access to the waterway at the north end of the Island, stewarding the Intrepid Pond along Meridian Road, the Kobiljak property, a natural area next to the GIHS football stadium, and Sunrise Park, and providing guides on Sundays in the summer months at the Wildlife Refuge's Gibraltar Bay Unit off East River Road. Former presidents Doug Thiel and Liz Hugel reflected on their experiences.

Among those offering congratulations were Township Supervisor Brian Loftus who appreciates the return to nature of many areas on Grosse Ile thanks to the Conservancy. Proclamations were also received from

our U.S. Congresswoman Debbie Dingell and our State Representative Darrin Camilleri.

Sponsors of the anniversary dinner included BASF Corporation, Jack Demmer, Merrill Lynch, and Steven Schweickart at the Gold level, Compeau Bros., Inc., Grosse Ile Bridge Company, Mans Lumber, and an anonymous gift in memory of Dr. Bruce and Joan Jones at the Silver Level, and C. E. Raines Company, Eldercare Home Care Group, Gorno Ford, Grosse Ile Urgent Care, Island Pet Care, Peter & Betsy Kantz, John Leon & Roberta Urbani, Brian & Ann



“The evening inspired members to go out and fill the next 25 years with more exciting, innovative, educational programs and conservation efforts to fulfill our mission.”

Loftus, Patricia A. Lukasik, Phil & Marie Pellett, Public Service Credit Union, and Doug & Cari Thiel at the Bronze Level. Thank you to all our sponsors!

A good time was had by all, and the evening inspired members to go out and fill the next 25 years with more exciting and innovative educational programs and conservation efforts to fulfill our mission “to promote for public benefit the preservation, stewardship and understanding of the natural resources in the Township of Grosse Ile and surrounding area.” The Conservancy is looking forward to celebrating its 50th anniversary in 2043 by keeping the Island green, beautiful, and natural.

Several of the founding members of the GINLC attended the celebration. Center, Amanda Phillips. Men, left to right, Phil Phillips, Kurt Kobiljak, Ingo Hasserodt, John Schweickart, and Jim Conley.

Honoring Generations of Grosse Ile's Conservation Stewards

Margarete Hasserodt, 1939 – 2018

With heavy hearts we share the news that our long-time board member and dear friend Margarete Hasserodt passed away peacefully at her home on Swan Island on May 27.

We are lucky to have a copy of an autobiographical sketch that Margarete prepared years ago that eloquently explains her passion for preserving and sharing Grosse Ile's natural beauty. Here are Margarete's words: "I was born in Germany and after WWII I was raised in an area called Saxonia Forest, near Hamburg. In my youth, I experienced a life of fresh air, forests filled with



wildlife and a beautiful countryside. I learned how to harvest from the forest and land and recycling was a necessity. After I moved to the United States some forty years ago, I realized the importance of that experience that my two daughters and later my grandchildren should grow up with. So in 1978 we moved to Grosse Ile, a township on an island in the Detroit River that we knew would provide us all with that kind of lifestyle."

Margarete Hasserodt lived a life filled with love of family, nature, and community. She used her seemingly boundless energy as an activist and as a volunteer for organizations that were very important to her such as the National Organization for Women and the Grosse Ile Nature and Land Conservancy. As a naturalized U.S. citizen, she was also very committed to democracy and the preservation of voting rights; she was proud to serve many years as an election precinct co-chairperson for the Township of Grosse Ile. Margarete was recognized by the GINLC as its first Conservationist of the Year in 2005, and as the Grosse Ile Rotary's Citizen of the Year in 2008. Her most favored role, however, was always to be "Oma" to her four grandchildren. She will be greatly missed by all who knew and loved her.

The family has generously designated contributions to honor Margarete to the Grosse Ile Nature and Land Conservancy.

GINLC Awards Annual Scholarship to Ian Stewart

Every year the GINLC awards a scholarship in honor of Dr. Bruce Jones to the Grosse Ile High School senior who has exhibited academic excellence and passion for protecting our natural resources. This year's winner is Ian Stewart. Below is Ian's inspiring essay that he submitted in applying for the scholarship. Congratulations, Ian!

Scholarship Application

BY IAN STEWART

I have been volunteering to help keep our environment clean for almost as long as I can remember. I helped to clean the grounds of Meridian Elementary School multiple times starting in kindergarten, and I first helped out at Island Clean Up when I was in third grade, returning almost every subsequent year. These early experiences showed me that spending time to take care of our environment is both fun and fulfilling, and I have since taken every opportunity to help conservation efforts that I can.

Although I have worked with both the Grosse Ile High School Gardening Club and the Environmental Awareness Club, the majority of my time spent taking care of nature has been through the Boy Scouts of America. I have participated in conservation projects every year, from planting trees to pulling weeds to building rock walls that will mitigate unwanted erosion. In addition to our Troop's conservation efforts, I have also spent time volunteering my services at the Claycomb Ecology Conservation Center during our summer camp at the Edward N. Cole Canoe Base, using my free time after working on merit badges all day to help plant shrubs or take care of the wild animals that take shelter there. I have even done conservation work in New Mexico, helping to repair trails worn down by erosion to prevent

– Continued on page 10

Easy Ways to Give



KROGER CARDS

Enroll your Kroger Plus card to benefit

the Grosse Ile Nature & Land Conservancy! Go to www.kroger.com/communityrewards to enroll or re-enroll (you have to renew every year). Thanks!



AMAZON SMILE

Don't forget to smile — Sign up for Amazon Smile!

Select Grosse Ile Nature & Land Conservancy as your charitable organization, and then 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products will be donated to GINLC.



Celebrating 25 Years! More Thoughts From the Founders

As part of our 25th anniversary celebration we are reflecting on where we started. In the Spring 2018 newsletter there were articles and comments from founders Ingo Hasserodt, Bill Heinrich and Amanda Phillips. Amanda and Ingo spoke at the May 12 dinner, as did Kurt Kobiljak and John Schweickart. The following are comments that I received from a questionnaire sent to all founders for whom we had current addresses:

Mike Perry sent brief remarks, noting that, like all of the founders, he got involved through Dr. Bruce Jones. He feels that the community responded positively to the organization and that its original goals of conserving land and saving trees have been met. He also feels that the GINLC is still headed in the right direction. Thank you, Mike!

Kurt Kobiljak noted that the original goals were to protect Grosse Ile's land and water resources and to educate its residents. During the 1990s there was a battle between development and conservation. He feels that the environmental educational programs are outstanding, but more advocacy is necessary for land acquisition and protection and more needs to be done to educate residents about the benefits of conservation easements and land donations to preserve Grosse Ile's resources for future generations. "It is gratifying to see that all the work invested 25 years ago is being matched by the same type of effort in 2018," said Kurt. He continues to assist the Conservancy – thank you, Kurt!

Bill Heinrich typed out a 'stream of consciousness' that paints a picture of the birth of a conservationist: "Can you think of growing up on Grosse Ile on West River Road, just south of Ferry Road, during the 1930s low-water years, and learning to swim in that water next to the outflow of septic tanks, because the swimming coach at the Club pool scared me? ...The pool was too deep and there was a sand beach and a small concrete pier in front of the house at that time. (Why am I here?) ...Can you think of a large cattail marsh where McLouth Steel is (was) that you would row your boat through to get to Jefferson Avenue in Riverview? ...Can you think of one half of a lifetime dredging and filling marsh land because you were in that, or a related, business? ...That is what I did. ...Well, I finally realized what we were doing, along with a great amount of other people. ...Bruce Jones D.D.S. was one of them..." Bill noted that "Leonard Manassa, MUCC [Michigan United Conservation Clubs] representative, an old duck hunter who lived in Flat Rock, took many trips to meetings in Lansing with Bruce and I, about Stony Island. ... The GINLC did get lots of help from MUCC to get the State to buy Stony Island." Thank you, Bill, Bruce and Leonard for orchestrating that important purchase!



Bill Heinrich stands in his yard on Lowrie where he tried to preserve the woods behind his house.



IAN STEWART, *Continued from page 9*
damage to nearby plants while on an excursion at Philmont Scout Ranch. However, it should come as no surprise that the largest project I have undertaken through the BSA was my Eagle Scout Service Project, which I completed for the GINLC and GIHS over the course of the past eight months. All told, my project saw me spend roughly forty hours on planning and recruiting, and it took roughly four-hundred and fifty man-hours of volunteer work. By clearing roughly a half acre of land of dead or invasive trees and vines, I have opened the space to further projects, including the creation of a butterfly garden, a rain garden, and more. I have incredibly high hopes for the plot going forward, and I am happy to have been a large part of the project.

After I graduate, I plan to pursue a joint Bachelor's and Master's degree in engineering over the course of five years of college. During my schooling, I plan to participate in teams such as AguaClara and Engineers Without Borders, which will allow me to use my education to help improve the world for both humans and the rest of nature. Although I do not know for sure where I will eventually find employment, I do know that I wish to use the skills I will acquire throughout college to help improve the world for all of us, and one of the best ways to go about doing that is through finding greener solutions to problems such as energy, transportation, and mass production, all possibilities an advanced degree in engineering will allow me to pursue.

Stewardship

BY PETER KANTZ

What is stewardship and who are these volunteers who do all this work? I often get asked these questions. Stewardship involves taking care of the natural resources entrusted to GINLC and entails everything from cutting the grass, planting trees, removing invasive plants and maintaining trails to building structures that enhance the nature areas and allow the public to enjoy and learn about nature. Our Stewardship Committee has about 8 members but it takes far more than 8 volunteers to take care of the natural resources entrusted to GINLC. Many individuals and organizations are involved. We have partnered with Boy Scouts working on Eagle Scout projects, students working to fulfill community service hours, church groups, and civic organizations as well as individuals who just want to make Grosse Ile a better place to live. I am always surprised at the number and diversity of people who show up at our stewardship events. They come as individuals and sometimes as couples or small groups. All are welcome and no special skills are necessary. It's not unusual for someone to stop by to see what we are doing and then join in to help out.

At our Monday morning stewardship of the Gibraltar Bay Unit of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge we have regular volunteers who come from a variety of communities in the Downriver area. This year, as in past years, we have college students, home on summer vacation, helping on a weekly basis.

Stewardship is work, but it is a feel-good experience; you've accomplished something and you've helped your community. If you'd like to help steward our natural resources, send me an email at info@ginlc.org.



Nature Study Area
GINLC member Jordan Thompson worked with Scouts Dakota and Wyatt Thompson (no relation to Jordan), Chad Donahue, Sullivan Cowan, and Matthew Graver to get Dakota's Eagle Scout project finished at the High School Nature Study Area. They installed a bike rack and a sign made by Dakota. Pictured are, l-r, Sullivan, Wyatt and Dakota.

Coal-Tar Sealants Banned on Grosse Ile!

Last October, the Township passed an ordinance banning the use of coal-tar sealants on driveways and parking lots. GINLC members were instrumental in informing the Township of the need to ban these toxic materials throughout the island. (They were already banned from use on Township bike paths.) This spring, all residents and businesses should have received a yellow postcard informing them about the ordinance and possible alternatives. The Township sent a letter to the local sealant businesses about the ban. If you smell something, say something! Call Code Enforcement Officer Tony Gray at 734-676-4422, ext 240 if you believe someone is illegally using coal-tar.

OPOSSUM, Continued from Cover

north due to climate change. Their native habitat is wooded areas, but they are very adaptable and are found in urban, suburban and rural settings.

LIFESTYLE: Opossums are omnivorous and nocturnal. They live solitary lives except during the breeding season or when females are raising young. They change dens frequently, using burrows dug by other animals, hollow logs, and spaces under buildings. They have high mortality rates, rarely living longer than two years in the wild.

REPRODUCTION: Opossum mothers give birth to 7 – 12 bald pink babies at one time (sometimes as many as 20!), but they are as small as bumblebees! Opossums are mammals, but, as mentioned earlier, the babies nurse in their mother's pouch. Many don't even make it into the pouch. Those that do stay clamped to the nipple for the first 50 – 60 days, and ride around in the pouch and start to venture out at around 76 days. Then they ride on their mother's back until they are weaned at around 90 days.

DIET: Opossums eat insects, slugs, snails, mice, rats, eggs, fish, fruit, carrion, pet food, garbage and TICKS! Because they groom themselves constantly, they swallow 95 percent of the ticks that cling to their fur. It is estimated that an opossum can eat 5,000 ticks in one season! They even eat snakes and are immune to almost all types of snake venom.

VIEWING OPPORTUNITIES ON GROSSE

ILE: You are more likely to encounter an opossum when you are not expecting it, some time when you are out at night, almost anywhere on the Island. Be especially careful when driving at night. Since they eat road-kill, they often become road-kill themselves. Let's protect all our wildlife!

Enjoy this Summer in Paradise

Have You Been To Sunrise Park Lately?

Sunrise Park, on E. River Rd. at the foot of Grosse Ile Parkway, continues to blossom under the stewardship of the Grosse Ile Nature & Land Conservancy and its generous donors, especially John C. Jackson. From an eyesore and a hazard, Sunrise Park is becoming one of Grosse Ile's most popular amenities.



Once a Year!

Life in a temperate climate means loving the wonderful change of seasons. C. S. Lewis describes this affinity as "rhythm," the balance of "the love of change ... with the love of permanence ... so that spring is always felt as a novelty yet always as the recurrence of an immemorial theme."



Make sure to come and experience the novelty and the immemorial recurrence of the American Lotus in Gibraltar Bay on Sunday, August 19, during GINLC's annual *Walk to the Lovely Lotus* with naturalist Natalie Cypher. Meet at 1pm at the GBU, 28820 E. River Rd. Register at GINLC.education@ginlc.org.

TO RECEIVE EVENT NOTICES & NEWSLETTERS BY EMAIL, CONTACT US AT INFO@GINLC.ORG



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SUMMER 2018

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