

## 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

### AMAZING AMERICAN LOTUS

Sun, Aug 18 @ 1:00pm  
Join us at the GBU for a hike  
to learn about the American  
Lotus and its rich natural  
and cultural history, as well  
as the many other coastal  
wetland plants we see  
along the way.

### INSECT INVESTIGATIONS

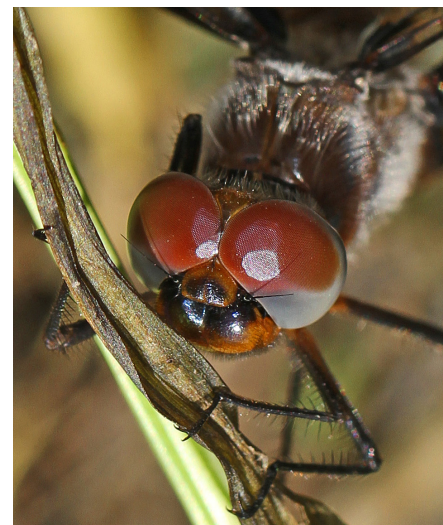
Sun, Sept 22 @ 1:00pm  
This kid-friendly event will  
feature the bugs of our  
region, the good, the bad,  
the ugly, and the CUTE!  
GBU

### CLOUD STUDIES

#### NASA GLOBE PROGRAM

GI Resident and 2019 MI  
Science Teacher of the Year  
Jeff Bouwman will lead a  
program to photograph  
clouds and submit the data  
to NASA through the GLOBE  
(Global Observations to  
Benefit the Environment)  
Date TBD in Sept or Oct  
GBU

— continued on page 8



LEFT: JOHN LEON, RIGHT: JUDY GALLAGHER, CC BY 2.0

## NATIVE SPECIES OF GROSSE ILE Black Saddlebags Dragonfly (*Tramea lacerata*)

BY BERT URBANI

There are 162 species of odonata (dragonflies and damselflies) in Michigan. The way to distinguish dragons from damsels is to see them at rest; dragonflies rest with their wings outstretched, perpendicular to their bodies, while damselflies can fold their wings straight behind them or in a slight V.

**CHARACTERISTICS:** The Black Saddlebags dragonflies get their name from the large, black, oddly shaped blotches on each hindwing that look like the leather saddlebags carried by horses or mules. The blotches are solid while the rest of the wings are transparent. They are 2 inches long, with large red eyes. Their wingspan is larger than their bodies, a trait of other skimmer dragonflies.

**RANGE & HABITAT:** Black Saddlesbags are found throughout North America, near lakes, ponds, ditches of stagnant or slow-moving

water. They are one of the dragonfly species that actually migrate! Unfortunately, not much is known about dragonfly migration.

**LIFESTYLE:** Dragonflies spend most of their lives as aquatic larvae, or nymphs, as long as 4 to 6 years, depending on the species. They look like tiny lobsters. At the appropriate time, the nymphs crawl onto land and begin a series of molts into their adult winged form.

**REPRODUCTION:** The dragonfly mating ritual is called the copulation wheel, linked together in midair. After one mating, the female has enough sperm to last for the rest of her life (several months). But if she mates again, the second male can brush away the fertilized eggs to implant his sperm. The female lays eggs on an aquatic plant or just in the water.

— continued on Page 2

## SPECIAL DONORS

*IN MEMORY OF  
MARGARETE HASSERODT*

*Danielle Anne Klotzek  
Amanda & Phil Phillips*

*IN MEMORY OF  
BRUCE & JOAN JONES*

*Scott & Jennifer Brown*

*IN MEMORY OF  
ART PAYETTE*

*Patricia Smart*

*IN MEMORY OF  
PAUL ABRAMCZYK*

*Jeannie Krage*

*A SPECIAL THANKS TO  
BASF CORPORATION  
FOR ITS GENEROUS  
DONATION*

*Thank You  
for your  
contributions!*

— *Dragonfly, continued from Cover*

**DIET:** Dragonfly nymphs eat small aquatic insects. Adult mouths are adapted for biting, and their diet consists of insects, including termites, ants, and mosquitoes, so they are good to have around.

### VIEWING OPPORTUNITIES:

Dragonflies hang around water and vegetated areas looking for prey. The left photograph on page 1 is of a Black Saddlebags dragonfly resting in our garden.

# Reflections From the President

BY PETER KANTZ

After a very cool and rainy Spring, here's hoping that we dry out a little this Summer. Although the weather didn't cooperate as much as we'd like, it didn't slow down GINLC and our many volunteers. The Earth Day event held at Centennial Farm in April was very successful with a number of speakers giving interesting presentations, numerous informational displays and fun activities for the kids. Throughout Spring several well attended educational programs were held at the Gibraltar Bay Unit of the Wildlife Refuge. During IslandFest GINLC participated in the parade, proudly celebrating our Conservationist of the Year, Ingo Hasserodt. We handed out wildflower seed packets and postcards listing future events. GINLC's IslandFest booth featured this year's high school photo contest winners, origami animals, informational brochures and maps. Special thanks to Eric Michael who organized our parade entry, including Roary, the Detroit Lions mascot, and to Rika Erikson who staffed our booth the whole weekend and made the origami cranes to inspire visitors to our table. The booth was staffed by knowledgeable GINLC members who were able to answer festival goers' questions on a wide range of subjects, as well as GIHS National Honor Society members.

Stewardship efforts, although hampered by the wet Spring, continued at the many GINLC properties and the properties GINLC stewards for the Township and the USFWS. Summer promises to be just as busy as Spring. If you'd like to keep up with GINLC and our many activities, follow us on Facebook, visit our website or send us your email address and we'll make sure you are aware of all our upcoming events. If you'd like to help out, contact us. We have many opportunities and many friendly volunteers to work with.



**ABOVE:** Nathan Armstrong points to his 1st Place entry to the GINLC photo contest. **LEFT:** GINLC Conservationist of the Year Ingo Hasserodt stands with Kevin McGutkin before riding in the IslandFest parade in Kevin's '57 T-Bird.

**IslandFest!**





# GINLC Update on McLouth Steel Site Remediation and Redevelopment

BY DOUG THIEL

*The Grosse Ile Nature and Land Conservancy continues to actively monitor the McLouth Steel Site demolition, remediation, and redevelopment project undertaken by Crown Enterprises, Inc., MSC Land Co., LLC, and the Trenton-Riverview Railroad Company. The following is a compilation of milestones and significant activities that have been achieved over the past three months.*

➡ In late April, numerous local elected officials toured the southern portion of the site with the President of Crown Enterprises to observe the progress being made at the site. An additional site tour occurred on July 17th.

➡ On May 14th the southern portion of the site was added to the Environmental Protection Agency's National Priorities List under the Superfund program, making it potentially eligible for funding. Superfund comes into play when no responsible party can be identified and provides the agency with the authority and funds to investigate and clean-up contaminated sites. The EPA has reported that once funding is approved the remedial investigation and feasibility study can take 1-5 years to be completed. If funding were approved in the near future, the remedial investigation and feasibility study likely won't start until the current site clean-up activity is completed, sometime towards the end of 2020.

➡ On May 15th the GINLC provided written comments on the draft work plans covering the investigation and clean-up activities by the Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE) for the northern portion of the former McLouth Steel Corporation site. The site is currently owned by the Riverview-Trenton Railroad Company.

➡ To-date the following buildings have been demolished at the southern end of the site: The Payroll Building, Buildings A and B, Maintenance Building, Parts Warehouse, Sinter Building and the Lime Storage Bin.

➡ In a recent meeting with the EPA it was learned that the EGLE non-residential clean-up standards will apply

to the southern portion of the site whether the site is developed commercially, industrially or recreationally. It was also learned that Crown/MSCL can select a limited area for construction prior to completion of the overall investigation and remediation of the site. In order to do so they would have to conduct a remedial investigation, a clean-up feasibility study and complete the clean-up for the limited designated area prior to construction. The cost of this work would be fully borne by Crown/MSCL.

➡ Kirsten Safakas of the EPA has completed the first draft of the Community Involvement Plan that utilized the information obtained in the one-on-one meetings held in March and April with local citizens and community leaders with the EPA and EGLE. She reported the Community Advisory Group will probably be formed this fall and will consist of 20-25 members.

➡ The following materials have been removed from the site since January: 1,930 cubic yards of asbestos, 604 tons of galbestos siding, 5,596 tons of construction and demolition debris, 41 PCB transformers, 8 roll-off boxes of baghouse dust, 39,000 gallons of pickle liquor and 64 freon/refrigerant units.

➡ All manganese and asbestos area and personal monitoring data has been below applicable government standards. There have been some minor exceedances of nuisance dust which triggered more stringent dust controls and more frequent monitoring.

➡ Currently there are no public meetings planned by the EPA or EGLE for the northern or southern portions of the site.



# STRATEGIC THINKING Leads to Environmental Education Success

BY GUIDO COLAROSSO

Our Education Committee plan for 2019 is based on a new vision and strategy. We started with a solid foundation from a famous quote from Nelson Mandela, "Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world." Our committee has recruited many new members from a variety of backgrounds and we have maintained many of our past strong programs. But our vision and strategy will now be more focused on our presence in our schools.

We are expanding partnerships with Lake Erie Metropark, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and U of M Dearborn Environmental Studies students. These partnerships ensure that the GINLC brings the best possible programs to the public, and especially to our school children, as they pertain to nature, wildlife, water, and air.

In 2019 we have formalized 13 different initiatives. Our committee wants to ensure we reach as many people as possible, and not just through the standard communication tools but by actually reaching out in person. Beside our usual public events held at the Gibraltar Bay Unit (GBU) of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge, and our programs at Parke Lane and Meridian Elementary Schools, new programs include:

**1) Grosse Ile Seniors Group.** *We are partnering with the Township to host two events per year for the seniors during the monthly lunch meetings. Based on what the seniors requested, we are bringing different speakers and presentations through the education committee and our partners.*

**2) Special Needs Schools.** *We will adapt our programs to suit whatever special needs the students from these schools might have.*

**3) Summer Bible Camps.** *This seems like a perfect opportunity for the GINLC to bring nature programs to groups of children while they are away from the classroom.*

Please let us know through our email, [info@ginlc.org](mailto:info@ginlc.org) what you think and, as important, what you would like to see from the Education Committee. In closing, the GINLC has been here now for 26 years with many, many successful accomplishments. Please join us as volunteers or as an active committee member. There is no limit to the positive impact the GINLC can make on our island through nature education and by supporting efforts to achieve cleaner water and air.

*Guido Colarossi is the vice president of the board of the GINLC and the Education Committee chair.*





# Nature Education is Always in Season

BY BERT URBANI

*In Spring and early Summer the GINLC conducted several educational programs:*

**1. Saturday, May 10, at 8:30pm** – Naturalist Sabrina Mastroianni led a gathering through the Gibraltar Bay Unit (GBU) of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge on E. River Road. Frogs are called “indicator species” because their presence or absence in a natural area is indicative of the overall health of the environment. The cool temperatures of the spring were delaying the schedule of frog appearances but we heard several species. It was a beautiful evening as the sun set and the birds settled down while the nocturnal animals became active.

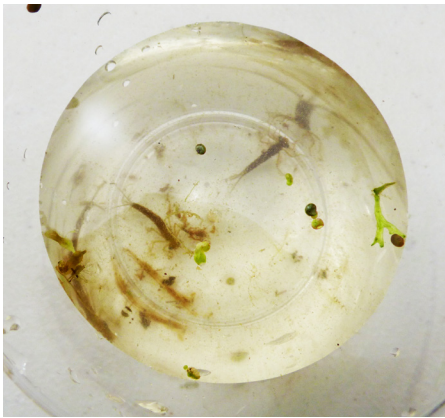
**2. Saturday, May 18** – We undertook the NASA GLOBE (GLOBal Observations to Benefit the Environment) program to quantify and identify mosquito larvae. This is a “citizen science” program and app wherein data on many subjects are collected by participants around the world and uploaded to NASA for sharing with the world. The program was led by GI resident and 2019 Michigan Science Teacher of the Year Jeff Bouwman for the GINLC at the GBU. Despite scheduling the event for late May, the unusually cool spring resulted

in zero mosquito larvae being found in the pond water. Several damselfly larvae were observed. The continuous rainy conditions are expected to produce a bumper crop of mosquitoes this year now that the weather has warmed up. People can learn how to use the GLOBE program on their own and record their site-specific observations so Grosse Ile can contribute to the growing database of real-world conditions that will guide policy decisions in the future. (Stay tuned for the Fall GLOBE program about clouds! Date TBD.)

**3. Sunday, May 19** – Sabrina led a “Migrants on the Move” program at the GBU about migratory birds. The Detroit River is located at the confluence of the Atlantic and Mississippi Flyways, the identified routes that most migrating birds in the eastern half of North America take in their journeys. Grosse Ile, with its many green spaces and variety of habitats, serves as an important stopover site for birds continuing on further north, as well as a “welcome home” for those who stay and breed here in the summer. Several bird species were observed.

**4. Sunday, June 9** – During “Wonderful Wetlands” at the GBU Sabrina focused on the environmental benefits that wetlands provide and the critters that live in wetlands. Attendees saw tree swallows occupying and guarding their nest boxes and turtles swimming in Gibraltar Bay. They also learned that wetlands used to be called “swamps” and were regarded as troublesome spots that needed to be filled in to be useful. Now it is known that wetlands are important, both for the biodiversity that thrives in wetlands, and the “ecological services” they provide, such as filtering pollutants and protecting upland areas from flooding.

**5. Tuesday, July 2** – Guido Colarossi introduced the GINLC to the Grosse Ile Seniors Group at Centennial Farm (some needed no introduction, including GINLC board member Pam Frucci). He then introduced the guest speaker, Jennie Braatz, USFWS Park Ranger of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge (DRIWR). Jennie talked about the Wildlife Refuge and the many opportunities for people to get involved. Everyone is anxiously awaiting the completion and opening of the Visitor Center at the Refuge Gateway on W. Jefferson. The DRIWR is a young refuge, established in 2001. It is home to hundreds of species of wildlife and plants found along the 48 miles of Detroit River and Lake Erie shoreline between the Rouge River and North Maumee Bay. The refuge staff work hard to make sure local and migrating wildlife have safe and healthy places to visit and live. A connection to nature is important for every human being for both their mental and physical health. The Gibraltar Bay Unit (GBU) of the DRIWR is right in our backyard at 28820 E. River Rd. where residents can readily experience that natural connection.



**TOP:** Sabrina and Barbara Thayer talk to the group about the different types of frogs and toads in the area on May 10. **CENTER:** Jeff Bouwman addresses the group gathered for the May 18 NASA GLOBE program to search for mosquito larvae. **Detail shows Damselfly larvae were found in the sample of pond water, but no mosquito larvae.** **BOTTOM LEFT:** Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge Park Ranger Jennie Braatz addresses the gathering at the Senior Lunch meeting at Centennial Farm. **BOTTOM RIGHT:** Tree swallows are cavity nesting birds, whether in trees or nest boxes.



GINLC'S 2018/19

# Take it Outside

## HIGH SCHOOL PHOTO CONTEST

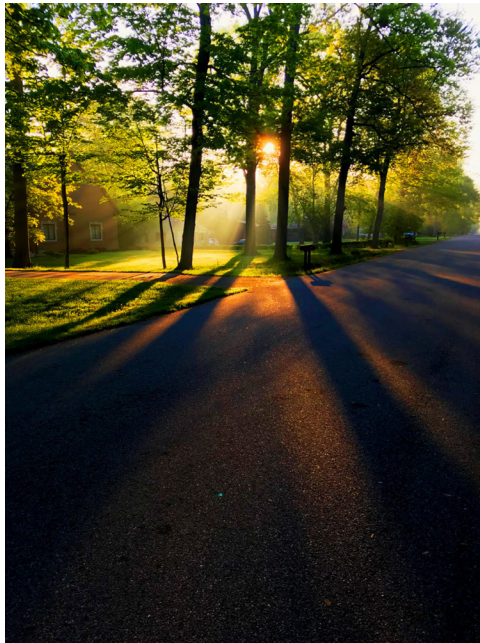
The GINLC High School Nature Photo Contest is one of the Conservancy's most popular activities. The Contest ended in May and here are the winners! Students from 12 area high schools participated and submitted a total of 173 photos. The winners were given cash prizes. In addition to these ten winners, 16 honorable mentions were awarded. All 26 photos were displayed at the GINLC booth at IslandFest and they will also be displayed at the Trenton and Wyandotte libraries this fall.

Lori Riopelle, a member of the GINLC Education Committee, deserves appreciation and praise for her dedication in running the entire contest. Thank you to our judges, David Chapman and Sam Warner, for their time and expertise in reviewing the 173 photos and making the tough decisions. Thanks also to the teachers who publicize the contest and encourage their students to participate.

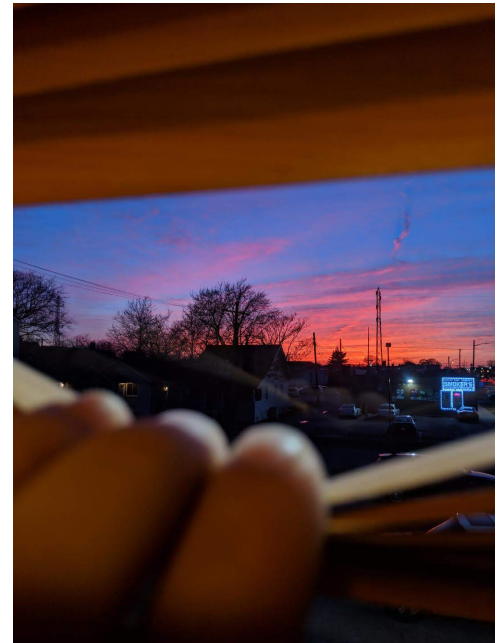


GRAND PRIZE // Bottle Caps // *Patterns & Textures*  
Chase Kendle, Southgate Anderson High School

### AMAZING MOMENTS



CENTER LEFT:  
1ST PLACE // *Walk to Bus Stop*  
Joey Gall,  
Grosse Ile H.S.



BOTTOM:  
2ND PLACE // *Flower*  
Frances Hickey,  
Roosevelt H.S.



CENTER RIGHT:  
3RD PLACE // *Wake Up*  
Dominik Fischer,  
Riverview H.S.



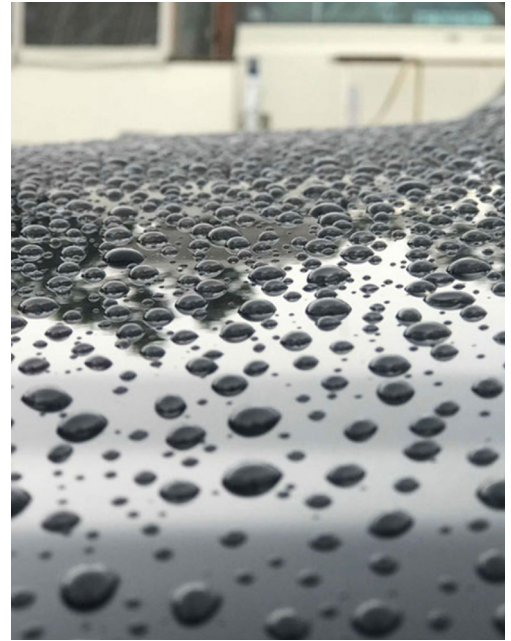
## PATTERNS & TEXTURES



1ST PLACE // ***Icy Pines***  
Isabelle McGrath, Flat Rock H.S.



2ND PLACE // ***Hills & Valleys***  
Taylor Smith, Riverview H.S.



3RD PLACE // ***Droplets***  
Ian Anderson, Grosse Ile H.S.



## CREATURES, CRITTERS & CRAWLY THINGS



LEFT CENTER:  
1ST PLACE //  
***Water Droplets  
on Lady Bug***  
Nathan  
Armstrong,  
Grosse Ile H.S.

CENTER RIGHT:  
2ND PLACE //  
***Bee***  
Emily Brooks,  
Roosevelt H.S.

BOTTOM:  
3RD PLACE //  
***Dead & Gone***  
Greg Timmons,  
Roosevelt H.S.





# Stewardship

BY PETER KANTZ

Stewardship has been a challenge this year with cool, rainy weather, record high water levels, soggy ground and grass that needs to be cut every few days. Large portions of our waterfront properties are under water. Observation platforms are unusable because the trails leading to them are flooded. With water levels expected to rise through the middle of July, some properties will not receive the attention they normally receive during the summer. Water levels on the Great Lakes typically rise and fall several feet over a period of years. This year, however, we are dealing with record-breaking high-water levels. As things dry out and water levels return to more normal levels, we'll assess the damage, make repairs and plan for the future. Most of our properties are left in their natural state and will require no remediation. Other properties have been improved to allow easier public access: trails, boardwalks, benches, observation platforms, kiosks and signage have been installed to enhance the outdoor experience. Those properties affected by the high-water levels will require special attention and alterations may need to be made if high water levels persist in the coming years.

Our stewardship efforts are often supplemented by Boy Scouts working on Eagle Scout projects. This year in response to our high-water issues, Daniel Ozog has agreed to relocate the observation platform overlooking the airport lagoon to higher ground as his Eagle Scout project. The observation platform is currently inaccessible due to high water. Daniel's brother, Antony, is finishing up his Eagle Scout project this Summer, an outdoor display at the Meridian Trailhead. Joshua Primeau will be starting his Eagle Scout project, another outdoor display at the Meridian Trailhead. The Meridian Trailhead is a GINLC property that we steward to improve the public's access to Meridian Woods, Grosse Ile's largest tract of Open Space. The displays at the Trailhead serve to educate the public. Over the past 3 years, GINLC has been fortunate to sponsor 12 Eagle Scout projects.

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](mailto:info@ginlc.org).

*"Stewardship is work, but it is a feel-good experience; you've accomplished something & you've helped your community"*



***Sunrise Park is getting better and better, and, unfortunately, wetter and wetter. On March 30 (above), GINLC volunteers planted shrubs at the top of the south retaining wall. On May 18 (top), volunteers accomplished a cleanup of the park. The two retaining walls look great and the newly planted shrubs are holding their own despite some nibbling from the local fauna and their fawns. The water is even higher now, limiting the use of the park.***

## UPCOMING EVENTS *Continued*

### "TAKE IT OUTSIDE"

High School Nature  
Photo Contest begins  
Oct 1

### THE NATURE OF HALLOWEEN

Sun, Oct 27 @ 1:00pm  
Learn how nature  
figures into traditions  
of Halloween — GBU

### OWL PROWL

Sat, Nov 2 @ 6:30pm  
Centennial Farm

### GINLC ANNUAL MEETING

Sat, Nov 9 @ 10:00am  
Grosse Ile Golf &  
Country Club



# Celebrating *Earth Day* 2019

BY BERT URBANI



The GINLC celebrated Earth Day in two events at the elementary schools, and also at Centennial Farm on April 27. The Centennial Farm event featured information and activities for adults and children. Our State Representative Darrin Camilleri gave us insight on what's happening in Lansing, followed by an update about the McLouth Steel site by Doug Thiel (see page 3 for Doug's latest report). GINLC member and 2019 Michigan Science Teacher of the Year Jeff Bouwman shared his philosophy on teaching science and his involvement with the NASA GLOBE citizen science program (see page 5 for a description of Jeff's May program at the GBU). Emma Griffin and Emma Kronell from the Grosse Ile High School Environmental Awareness Club talked about the club's focus on living sustainably by reducing single use plastics and toxic chemicals in daily life. GINLC member Alison Drzinski provided a tutorial about how to help save the Monarch Butterfly by finding eggs and caterpillars, raising them to adulthood in your home, and releasing them. Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge Manager Susan White gave an update on the Refuge and the Visitor Center which is still under construction. Displays included the winners of the GINLC 2018 High School Photo Contest, Monarch Butterflies, Heritage Trees, Healthy Lawns, Home Energy Conservation, GI High School Environmental Awareness Club, Coal Tar Ban on Grosse Ile, and Pam Frucci's It's Easy Being Green.



**ABOVE LEFT:** Centennial Farm Celebration – Mary Ann Houston and Patty Smart pose with “Root Man” planters for Earth Day gardeners. **ABOVE RIGHT:** State Rep. Darrin Camilleri joined the conversation about the McLouth Steel Site demolition and redevelopment. **LEFT :** A mother and her young son investigate the critters in pond water. **BELOW LEFT:** Meridian School Celebration – GINLC volunteers Harriet Cole, Lori Riopelle, and Nancy Cryslar with their “How Does Our Trash Affect Our Wildlife?” display. **BELOW RIGHT:** Students search through sand on “the beach” to discover what trash and “treasures” are typically left behind, and often ingested by wildlife.



Kids' activities included a pond water study, Tree ID walk, a butterfly craft, a huge life-sized sling shot, and planting “Root Man” planters created by Eric and Jean Michael and Doug and Cari Thiel. Many thanks to Joe's Top Dog Restaurant and Bar of Dearborn for providing free hot dogs, and to the Honorable Darrin Camilleri, Emma and Emma, Lake Erie Metropark, Westcroft Gardens, the US Fish & Wildlife Service, and our many member volunteers.





## We Hate to be Party Poopers, but Yes, Balloons are Deadly for Wildlife

They are also everywhere, as many people decorate with balloons for birthdays, graduations, and weddings. The Indianapolis 500 at the Indianapolis Speedway actually starts with the release of thousands of balloons. Technically, balloons are biodegradable, made from natural rubber latex. But studies show that it can take years for balloons to biodegrade, and during that time, they can be consumed by wildlife, or wildlife can become tangled in ribbons or strings attached to the balloons. Balloon fragments are among the items found in the stomachs of dead turtles, fish, birds and other wildlife and can be more deadly than hard plastics.

A grad student in U-M's School for Environment and Sustainability, Lara O'Brien has created a web survey form for volunteer citizen-scientists to report balloon debris findings along the Great Lakes: when, where and what kind of debris. Access the form at [balloondebris.org](http://balloondebris.org) when you find them around here. Even the trade group, The Balloon Council, opposes balloon releases, urging the public to use balloons responsibly by weighing them down, and popping and disposing of them properly after the celebration. And, helium is in short supply, causing problems for the medical community as well as party planners.

For more info, <https://www.freep.com/search/balloons/>

# GINLC Awards Annual Scholarship to *Margaret Holmes*

*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 Margaret Holmes. Below is Margaret's inspiring essay. Congratulations, Margaret!*

Throughout my life I have always had a soft spot for community service and the desire and ability to help others in as many ways possible. This commitment allows me to better myself while bettering the well-being of my community and others. The practice of selflessness is very important to me. It would be an honor to have my commitment to community service and overall success be acknowledged by the Grosse Ile Nature and Land Conservancy for this scholarship opportunity.

Some clubs and organizations I have had experience with are the Island Beautification Committee, Southwest Detroit Cleanup, Humbug Marsh Tree Planting and Stewardship. As a Junior Chairman on the Island Beautification Committee, I have learned that the role we play in our shared environment community is so important. As a group we work to keep our community clean and maintained, acknowledge local shops for their service, and create new ideas for making the island more eco-friendly and beautiful. Being a part of the Southwest Detroit Cleanup we work on the beautification of inner-city neighborhoods. We focus on cooperative vegetable gardens, which consist of raised vegetable beds, composting areas, and rainwater collection.

I am looking forward to continuing these habits of giving back to communities for the rest of my life. I believe my choice of major will allow me to achieve this goal. I plan to attend Michigan State University School of Package Engineering in the fall of 2019. I plan to join clubs in college and continue to involve myself in more volunteer activities. Through my major I hope to fulfill my plans to get companies on board with using all eco-friendly supplies. Winning this award would give me the ability to further my education and help to accomplish this goal in community service.

With your help I would love having these dreams become my reality. The Grosse Ile Nature and Land Conservancy Scholarship will help me avoid student debt and less student debt allows for more success after college. Having less student debt will give me more room for inspiration and more time to spend thinking about my future and the future of my community.



*"Through my major I hope to fulfill my plans to get companies on board with using all eco-friendly supplies"*



# Grosse Ile's Ban on Coal Tar Sealants Gets Regional Recognition

BY JOHN LEON

At the urging of the GINLC, Grosse Ile Township banned the use of coal tar pavement sealants in 2017. Not long afterwards, I made a presentation to the Alliance of Downriver Watersheds on the dangers of coal tar, and after much thought, the Alliance decided to host a webinar to spread the word. On June 18, the Alliance in partnership with the Huron River Watershed Council (HRWC) held a Coal Tar webinar called "The Problem with Pavement Sealants: How to avoid toxic PAHs in your waterways and protect public health." (Watch the webinar at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=06qB5dZmS8k&t=2215s> John starts at 27:51)

Van Buren Township Public Services Director Matt Best and I were invited to present at the webinar. We shared the stories of how the GINLC and Van Buren Township became involved in developing ordinances to ban the use of coal tar pavement sealants. The goal was for other members of the HRWC to be inspired to take up this cause in their communities by learning how two different communities, Grosse Ile and Van Buren Township, got their local governments to pass bans on the use of coal tar.

Before the ban, coal tar-based sealcoat was applied widely in Grosse Ile on driveways and parking lots, although it was prohibited on the bike paths. Sealcoat applicators say the product prolongs the life of asphalt. However, coal tar sealcoats are incredibly high in polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, or PAHs. PAHs are of concern because many of these compounds have been identified as toxic, mutagenic, teratogenic (causing birth defects) and/or probable human carcinogens. Coal tar sealants contain 1000 times more PAHs than asphalt-based sealants (a readily available alternative) and are the number one source of PAHs in lake sediments. In fact, studies show up to 50-75% of all PAHs found in sediments within the Great Lakes region comes from coal tar sealcoat.

There are alternative products from seal coat applicators that are comparably priced and there are also latex based products for the Do-It-Yourselfers that can be bought at all the big box stores.

Because there is an ordinance in place that bans the use of coal tar, any resident can report to the public safety department suspicious applications of seal coating. Remember ... If you smell something, say something! If the smell is very strong, then most likely it's a coal tar coating. If the applicator is still on the job, you can ask for the Safety Data Sheet (SDS) which will show what material they are applying.

You also can call me to do a basic test to

determine if the seal coating is in violation of the ban. You can reach me at 734-671-0125. I am hoping that by this time, everyone is in compliance and there is no need to give me a call! If you would like a presentation to a group about coal tar and the GI ordinance, please call me at the above number.



## Healthy Lawns Rehash

BY BERT URBANI

It's summer and your lawn is slowing down its growth. Now is NOT the time to fertilize.

- Keep cutting your lawn high (3 inches).
- Keep the clippings on the lawn to be a natural fertilizer.
- Water sensibly as needed (1/2 – 1 inch per week).
- Hand pull or spot treat any unacceptable weeds.

*Relax and enjoy your summer without being a servant to your lawn!*



## 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](http://www.kroger.com/communityrewards) to enroll. 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.

# Hot Off the Presses!

The updated Guide to the Natural Areas of Grosse Ile is hot off the presses and available now at the Township Hall, Kroger, the GBU during Sunday Open House, and GINLC events. It features the latest map showing new land acquisitions by the GINLC and the Open Space program and the bike paths.



## Got Ticks? There's an App For That!

Coming soon to a leg or armpit near (or on?) you – a yucky tick! Coming soon to your phone – “The Tick App” developed by MSU and other university researchers to collect and share information about ticks! The app is downloadable now on iOS and Android devices. Tick populations are on the rise in Michigan and here on Grosse Ile. Using the tick app will help you identify ticks you encounter and inform researchers about the location and quantity of tick infestations. This is another example of “citizen science” where publicly collected data is shared to help researchers help the public.



For more info, go to [thetickapp.org](http://thetickapp.org) and search “the tick app.” The site also has good tips on how to avoid tick bites (wear long sleeves and long pants, pull your socks over your pant legs, shower and do a thorough body check for ticks). Check your kids and pets as well.

TO RECEIVE EVENT NOTICES & NEWSLETTERS BY EMAIL, CONTACT US AT [INFO@GINLC.ORG](mailto:INFO@GINLC.ORG)



### SUMMER 2019

To sign up for a work party call  
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734-558-2149

To make a donation, call  
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