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*a hopeful horizon*  
**BECAUSE OF YOU**

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[www.landtrust.org](http://www.landtrust.org) | 231.347.0991



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The individuals, families, businesses, and foundations who are current members.

The 400+ volunteers who donate thousands of hours.

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# LTC, GOLF, AND LEMONADE

a word from Kieran Fleming,  
Executive Director

During this crisis, an old saying keeps playing in my head about when life gives you lemons, it is best to make lemonade. I was talking to Mary Hramiec-Hoffman (an incredible local artist and member of our Save the Trees fundraising committee) yesterday and she was pointing out how this uninvited pause may be a good thing for reasons we will discover if we look in the right places. I agree with her. In our own family, my daughter Claire aptly pointed out that had this not occurred, it is hard to imagine when, if ever, our core family would spend more than a week together again. Both of our girls just finished college/technical school and would otherwise be out making their own path in the world. Probably not from home. That realization hit kind of hard and makes me want to get as much as I can out of this time with them home. I have gained a deeper appreciation for the fact that Claire is a particularly engaging philosopher and that Ellie has a great (if not slightly twisted) sense of humor. And our two dogs are like cottage cheese three months past the expiration date: spoiled. They found the lemonade on day one of the lock down.

This crisis hit our Environmental Education (EE) program particularly hard. Schools moved to remote programming, meaning that all field trips to our preserves were canceled. Within days, Sarah Mayhew overhauled the entire plan for spring and summer. With the help of her team, we quickly had high quality EE programming available online for teachers who are still charged with educating our kids. At a time when we could have called it a loss and no one would have blinked, we took quick action to help in the most practical way possible. Our EE program values getting kids outside above all, but it was time to make some lemonade and this batch turned out pretty darn well.

In these pages you are going to read about the significant increase in the use of LTC lands during this crisis. This has been a big challenge while staying

in the framework of the stay at home orders. But we are doing it and doing it well thanks to an elite stewardship team and incredible volunteers. With over 100 miles of trails on LTC protected lands, our communities have access to the outdoors without the restrictions we see elsewhere. In this regard, LTC has never been so relevant to all who cherish the North Country. That is showing itself both through a quadrupling of visits to our lands and a doubling in our social media followers in the last year. Maybe during these unsettled times, more people are opening their eyes to just how wonderful our northern Michigan "backyard" really is. How important it is to our mental and physical well-being during periods of stress. Have we been taking the awesomeness of Up North for granted? Sometimes we do not really appreciate what matters most until we need to lean on it in a real way.

If you had not already heard, our cover story (page 8) will tell you that LTC now owns a former golf course. I suppose this will dismay some golfers and, while I do not golf, I get it. On the flipside, it will be open for the public to enjoy the spectacular views in a different form. The new Offield Family Viewlands will benefit thousands of people who live in or visit our community, with trails and many other recreational opportunities, forever. Working with the Offield family on this project was incredibly inspiring. The whole family wanted to give to our community now when things might otherwise look kind of bleak. We are still raising funds for this project, but we are on our way to transforming it into what we believe is going to be our most popular LTC land.

While I am an optimist, I am not oblivious to the hardship and challenges this crisis brings. Our leadership worries about our finances, keeping our team healthy, and our morale. So, we will remain prudent. We will count on YOU, our supporters, and we will be prepared for whatever the future brings. But we will do all of that while enjoying the lemonade.



# ISLAND ACRES

The Conn's Cove Nature Preserve located on the east side of Beaver Island has expanded once again, bringing its total size to 200 acres.

A significant bargain sale enabled the Conservancy to purchase a 40-acre parcel from a land company to square off the southwestern side of the preserve. Rik Lobenherz, a partner in the land company, explained the rationale behind the sale: "As an isolated 40 acres adjacent to the preserve, we saw that it was a logical addition to the preserve. Over the years, I have done several projects with the Conservancy and have always had great experiences."

The original 20-acre preserve was created in 2010 and includes 700 feet of Lake Michigan shoreline. In late 2019, a 140-acre addition occurred when land previously protected with a conservation easement was sold at a bargain sale. "This third addition has created a very large preserve for the Island," said Caitlin Donnelly, the Conservancy's director of land protection. "While there are no trails or formal parking areas here, this land is very close to the Central Michigan University Biological Station. We hope the preserve will become a place for research, discovery, and simple nature enjoyment."

## A Return to Roots

### PROTECTING A FAMILY HERITAGE THROUGH NAME AND LAND

A 40-acre property just one mile outside the City of Cheboygan was recently donated by the Tromble Family Foundation to become the Tromble Family Nature Preserve.

Both of Rick Tromble's parents were from Cheboygan and, though Rick spent most of his childhood in Bay City, the family would typically spend holidays and summers in Cheboygan to be with his grandparents. After 20 years of working in the restaurant industry in Florida, he and his wife Michele made a complete career change. They moved back to Cheboygan to operate Tromble Bay Farms, a nod to Rick's ancestors, many of whom farmed in Cheboygan County years ago. Today, Tromble Bay Farms consists of more than 4,000 acres and focuses primarily on raising corn, soy, hay, and beef cattle.

Rick recalls that in 2010, he was driving his then 90-year-old Uncle Warren to a doctor's appointment and they began discussing what was going to happen to the family name, since Rick had two daughters. That conversation prompted Rick to form the family foundation to keep the name alive. When Warren passed away last year, he left some money to the foundation, and that got Rick thinking again. "The land that is now a preserve was first purchased into the family by Geraldine Tromble in 1945," Rick explains. When Geraldine's daughter Carol inherited it, she put it on the market and Rick decided to purchase it, thinking at first he would add it to his farm. "But then I thought that a way to start this legacy of the family name would be to donate this particular property to make it a preserve. It is kind of unique because it is in town on a paved road and abuts the Inverness Township Hall with lots of public parking."

Geographically, this newest preserve has an attractive location. Less than a mile away from Cheboygan Area

Schools, it could become an outdoor learning lab. LTC Land Protection Specialist Becky Wadleigh explains further: "This preserve is located almost halfway between Burt Lake and Duncan Bay/Lake Huron with the closest LTC protected property nearly three miles away. We have been gifted a new 'hub' that offers

us many opportunities for further conservation efforts between these water bodies. It is an honor to help protect a piece of property that has such a long, rich family history, especially when that property brings such ecological value to the table."



Rick and Michele Tromble



# The Celebration of Biodiversity Bioblitz

## OUR SOLUTIONS ARE IN NATURE

2020 is a defining year for biodiversity and has been called the Biodiversity Super Year. People are working together to help protect biodiversity around the world, and you can join LTC and the University of Michigan Biological Station in celebrating with a week-long BioBlitz.

Biodiversity matters to us and our lives. Where would we be without pollination, clean water, soil health, or clean air to breathe? As land managers, LTC makes decisions on how to best manage its properties with larger environmental and cultural concerns in mind such as supporting the local economy, helping to bolster northern Michigan's agriculture, and public health. Our mission is to protect northern Michigan's natural environment and we aim to enhance, sustainably manage and restore natural or modified ecosystems.

We value documenting what creatures are living on and using our lands through iNaturalist, an online, crowd sourced species identification system. Some of our preserves have very few iNaturalist observations, so we challenge you to explore those lands and help us build more observations of biodiversity during a week-long virtual BioBlitz! Join naturalists, professional biologists,

and area citizens by documenting the diversity of living creatures on LTC preserves and reserves.

To get started, create your own account on iNaturalist and register for the LTC competition on our website. Explore LTC properties on your own or join a guided foray (subject to change due to Covid-19). Prizes will be awarded for the most species of flora or fauna on iNaturalist at the end of the week.



**Bioblitz dates:**  
**July 11-17, 2020**

[landtrust.org/bioblitz](https://landtrust.org/bioblitz)

## ON TRACK FOR FALL MOUNTAIN BIKING!



PHOTO BY LATITUDE 45

The mountain bike trails at the Tanton Family Working Forest Reserve, just 10 minutes from Petoskey, are on track to open in late September (if not sooner!). The parking area will be constructed in June and trails by early July.

It is very important to STAY OFF trails until they are formally opened. We get it. It is very tempting to hop on new trails, but this is very UNSAFE for users and riders. It will only delay building as early riding can destroy unfinished trails.

We can't wait to tell you when the trails are officially open! Donors will be the first to know. It is not too late to make a donation to the trail via mail or online: [landtrust.org/mountainbiketrail](https://landtrust.org/mountainbiketrail). Checks can be made to Little Traverse Conservancy with "mountain bike trail" in the memo.

See you on the trail (soon)!

# NATURE as NOURISHMENT

“The most important characteristic of an organism is that capacity for internal self-renewal known as health.”

- Aldo Leopold, from “Wilderness for Science” in *A Sand County Almanac*

We all need nature. And at this moment, among those who need it the most are the humans working on the front lines of the response taxing their immune systems, putting themselves and their own families at more risk than the rest of the population. Even before the COVID crisis, a crisis has been evolving among our health care workers. A 10-year study reported at a 2018 conference of the American Psychiatry Association found that doctors have been experiencing roughly double the suicide rate of the general population.

The health of America has been suffering for a very long time, which has decreased our resiliency and made us vulnerable to illness. There are national efforts to determine ways to ensure everyone has a chance to incorporate and include time in nature into their lives, with a special emphasis on how to ensure this for our health care workers (see [www.shiftjh.org](http://www.shiftjh.org)).

Nearly every morning before her shift at McLaren Northern Michigan, PACU (post-anesthesia care unit) nurse Melissa Robbins takes a long walk or run along the Petoskey waterfront or the Bear River. “I am so grateful for the beauty and comfort I find in the natural world,” Melissa said. “It is the perfect harmonizer for me and puts me in the right

mindset for the work day ahead or to reflect on the day left behind. I’m a much better person in every aspect of my life after being immersed in this glorious location I get to call home.”

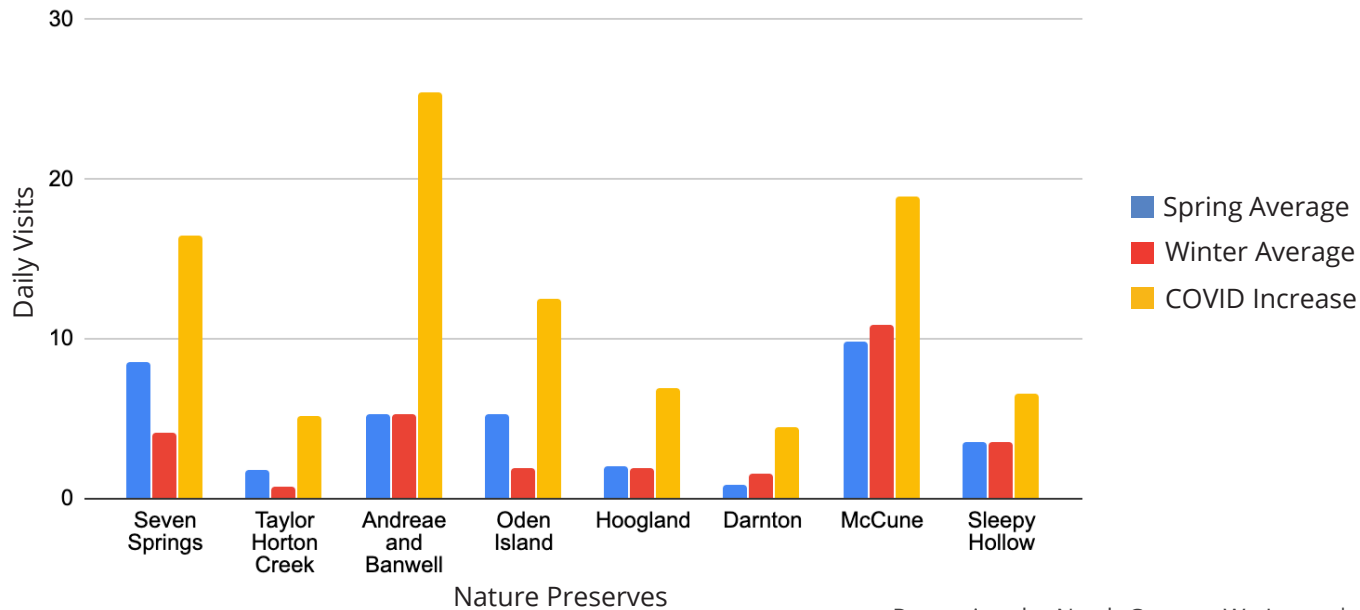
This work of protecting our natural world so that everyone has access to it is a primary goal of the Little Traverse Conservancy. Natural views and natural lands have hugely impactful and lasting mental and physical health effects on everyone who lives in, works in, or visits our communities. As we are seeing more evidence that nature is offering the comfort and solace people are craving at this time, we at LTC remain committed to continuing this good work that benefits all. The support of our members makes this work possible!

*Below: In the first few weeks of the pandemic, our trail cameras captured a dramatic increase in use of LTC nature preserves and reserves.*



PHOTO BY MELISSA ROBBINS

## INCREASE IN TRAIL USE





# Stay Curious

NATURE IS  
STILL OPEN

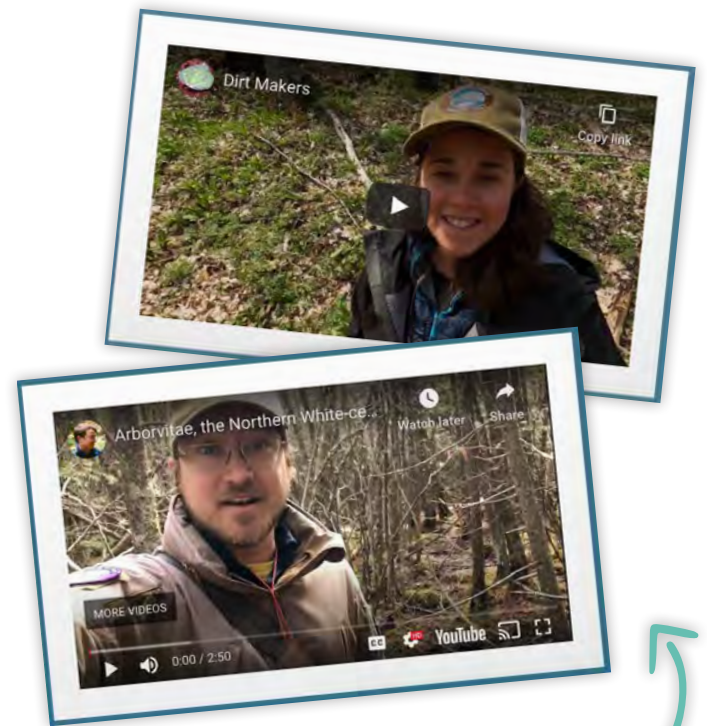
Our passion is being able to provide students and teachers with a meaningful outdoor experience, and we love nothing more than being outside leading groups in exploration. Although we may not currently be able to gather in the woods together, nature is still open for us to explore and learn.

As outdoor educators we're accustomed to an unpredictable environment and the necessity of improvising. So in response to the current situation, we have created a brand new web experience found at [landtrust.org/environmental-education](https://landtrust.org/environmental-education). The program page is divided into three categories:

1) Online Learning Links; 2) Activities and Lessons; and 3) Virtual Programs.

Our virtual field trips are designed to reflect our teaching styles, be engaging, educational and encourage students to explore the natural world around them. The website links provide further resources for outdoor learning, lesson plans and activities.

It's our hope that we will soon be back leading programs in person, but in the meantime, we will continue to adapt and evolve along with these changing times.



[landtrust.org/environmental-education](https://landtrust.org/environmental-education)



PHOTO BY JOHN CURTIS



"During these unsettling times, and in the interest of protecting personal health, the 2020 Save the Trees in-person event has been canceled. Thankfully, you can still 'save the trees.'"

- LTC Executive Director  
Kieran Fleming

# You are invited to Save the Trees from afar or wherever you are

While we cannot gather in person this year, we ask that you help continue the spirit of the 31st annual Save The Trees fundraising event.

For 48 years Little Traverse Conservancy and our members have been here to protect and care for our wonderful waters, beaches, forests, trails - all the features that make northern Michigan so special to us. By joining the sponsors shown below, you will help to ensure that the land you love in northern Michigan will continue to be maintained and protected at the highest level of care.

Your tax-deductible gifts are gratefully accepted through July 23, 2020 (original date for the in-person event).

If you are able, your gift can make all the difference this year.

[landtrust.org/trees](https://landtrust.org/trees)

## DONOR BENEFITS

### ASPEN \$75

Plants 3 trees  
Listed in fall newsletter

### TAMARACK \$250

Plants 10 trees  
Listed on web page  
Listed on Save the Trees thank you cards

### BALSAM FIR \$500

Plants 20 trees

### EASTERN HEMLOCK \$1,000

Plants 40 trees  
Listed on 2021 event poster

### WHITE PINE \$2,500

Plants 100 trees  
Name on Save the Trees Harbor Light thank you ad

### RED OAK \$5,000

Plants 200 trees

### SUGAR MAPLE \$10,000

Plants 400 trees  
Dedicated post on social media describing why you chose to support conservation this year

# K | W | N

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**Petoskey  
Plastics**



**Evening Star Joinery**

HARBOR SPRINGS

\*Each donor level includes the benefits of the preceding levels. Sponsors may opt out of any benefit.



Announcing

# The Offield Family Viewlands

A BRAND NEW WORKING  
FOREST RESERVE

The protection of the Offield Family Viewlands is one of the most exciting community projects in our history around Little Traverse Bay, made possible by significant gifts from local foundations and donors. The purchase of the 290-acre former Little Traverse Bay Golf Club property was finalized on April 22 (Earth Day). Grants from the Offield Family Foundation and others, along with the support of LTC's membership, has allowed the Conservancy to complete this project. The property is located between Harbor Springs, Alanson, and Petoskey and a short drive from many Up North communities.

"This was an incredible opportunity that challenged us in both new and familiar ways," said Kieran Fleming, executive director of the Conservancy. "We simply could not have considered it without the generosity of the Offield family and the commitment of our annual members who make our daily work possible. The total cost of this project is \$2 million. The Offield gift and an additional \$105,000 pledge made by anonymous donors allowed us to secure a loan to close on the purchase. However, we are still seeking \$343,088 that will allow us to pay off the loan, move ahead with restoration plans and provide access for our community."

Now known as the Offield Family Viewlands Working Forest Reserve, it is a place that offers extraordinary views of Little Traverse Bay and the Inland Waterway. The golf course had recently been closed and purchased by a real estate investor. The Conservancy approached that investor to inquire about a sale to the Conservancy which would allow it to be protected in a permanent manner. A tight timeline made the purchase uncertain until the Offield Family Foundation gift was pledged.

"We cannot overstate the impact that the Offield family and its foundation has had on the protection of our region's lands," Fleming said. "For decades, their land ethic has left an imprint on this area that many probably take for granted. We are thrilled that we could name this reserve to honor the foresight and generosity they have shown for so long."

"Working with the Little Traverse Conservancy has always been a top priority of our family," said Jim Offield whose father Wrigley "Bud" Offield was on the Conservancy's original board of trustees in the 1970s.

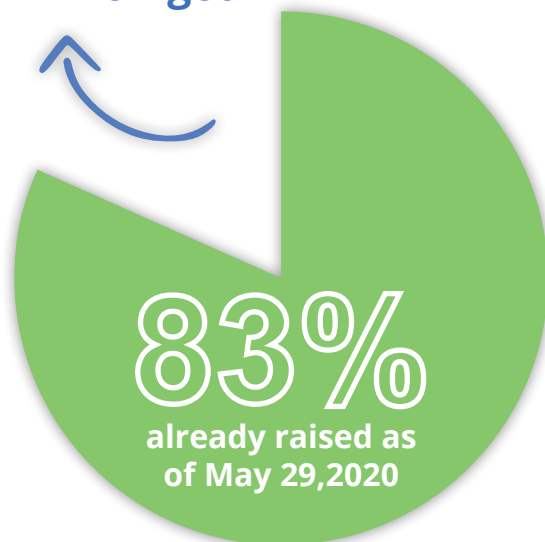
Bud and his wife Eddi also donated the land where the Conservancy office has sat for decades. "It is an honor to work on a cause that offers continued comfort, beauty, and health for this region that many of us deeply love," Jim said.

Fleming added, "We all need access to the natural world, especially now. This is a place close to many towns where you and your family will soon be able to explore at a safe distance from others. Imagine a picnic while overlooking Little Traverse Bay or a senior portrait taken from the top of the hill with the bay or the Inland Waterway as the backdrop. Our members and supporters have prioritized having these lands protected for everyone."

The land is planned to be open to the public by the end of June. See page 9 for more information and visit our website at [www.landtrust.org/OffieldFamilyViewlands](http://www.landtrust.org/OffieldFamilyViewlands) for map and updated information as our plans evolve.



**\$343,088 left to raise  
of \$2 million goal**





## Restoring a golf course

We will be restoring the Viewlands to a more natural state through a hands-on approach with the land. Our main goals are: 1) ensure certain views remain open; 2) improve the biodiversity of species that can thrive there, and 3) provide safe and enjoyable access to the public.

Environmental screenings were conducted earlier this spring and concluded that major contamination of the land was not an issue.

In order to hasten the process of restoring the fairways, we will be planting native grasses and wildflowers to create a perennial meadow. We anticipate that the land will become much more attractive – for both humans and non-humans - after a couple of years of establishing these meadows.

In addition, we plan to reforest portions of the Viewlands by planting trees and small native shrubs. The reforestation will add diversity to a region that has seen a dramatic loss of ash and beech trees. We see this as an opportunity to restore fragmented habitats and broaden ecosystem protection for the benefit of all living things.



YOU CAN  
HELP PROTECT  
THIS SPECIAL  
PLACE FOR  
GENERATIONS.

[landtrust.org/offfieldfamilyviewlands](https://landtrust.org/offfieldfamilyviewlands)

PHOTO BY RAY GAYNOR

## Q & A:

### ? Did you shut down the golf course?

The golf course and associated businesses had already been closed when the Conservancy became involved. We purchased this property from a private land investor who had purchased the land from the owner of the Little Traverse Bay Golf Club earlier this year.

### ? What activities will be allowed here?

Like all LTC trails, the Viewlands will be multi-use and open for running, biking, snowshoeing, skiing, walking dogs on leash, etc. We acquired this land because we recognized the incredible opportunity for nature recreation and enjoyment of extraordinary views.

### ? What do you plan to do with the buildings?

Keeping with our mission of land preservation at the forefront, we are in discussion with various parties who may have interest in using the restaurant and concession stand structures. If no acceptable opportunities emerge, we may remove those buildings. The existing pole barns will be used to hold Conservancy tools and equipment. Staff will continue to work with LTC committee members and trustees to develop the best management plan for this land and structures over the next year. In the meantime, the public is asked to please stay away from the buildings.

### ? What is a working forest reserve?

We established the working forest category in 2015 to distinguish lands that are more actively managed through forestry or other habitat improvements from lands where we generally let nature take its course, our nature preserves. The Offield Family Viewlands will fall under our working forest reserve category. While that doesn't mean you will see logging trucks out there this year, someday that may be a management tool. You will more likely see us actively restoring some of the lands by planting trees and native grasses.

### ? Will you be planting trees everywhere?

We are currently evaluating different plans for reconnecting the natural communities best suited for this land. We plan to balance our reforesting goals with maintaining the views. Therefore, we will likely be establishing meadows of native grasses in some of the former fairways and will be carefully selecting where certain tree species should be planted. Look for opportunities to help us plant trees in the coming years!





PHOTO BY GRETCHEN DORIAN



# Coming together while staying apart: WE CAN DO IT!

In May, volunteers from all over our service area started getting outside to check on nature preserves, clear trails, and plant trees. As usual, our volunteers didn't let us down this spring. While respecting social distancing guidelines, they gathered around the goal of shining up our trails and improving preserve habitat. Thank you all who continue to help out!

## PHOTOS:

1. Arya Grace drawing a trout lily while monitoring a vernal pool.
2. Brad and Sue Moffatt hiking with family in search of downed trees at Bubbling Springs Nature Preserve.
3. Larry Kepner with a well-earned cook-out picnic after trail clearing at Hoogland Family Nature Preserve.
4. Roldan Grace monitoring a vernal pool with his family.
5. A good example of how to stay safe in a small group! Volunteers met to make plans for trail maintenance at Chaboiganing Nature Preserve. L-R: Pat Dougherty, Julie Dougherty, Adam Schubel, Doug Fuller, Bill Garlinghouse, Cacia Lesh.
6. Hugh Melling, Larry Kepler, and Dan CasaSanta building a bridge at Hoogland Family Nature Preserve.
7. Volunteers planting 2,000 trees at Consuelo Diane and Charles L. Wilson Jr. Working Forest Reserve.



Former LTC Director of Stewardship Doug Fuller was recently awarded the Heart of the Lakes Abby Mahan Gartland Award, acknowledging his outstanding work as a volunteer in his community. This award is a celebration of those who go above and beyond to protect and steward the places we love.

"Doug Fuller is a local legend among those of us working in conservation related fields in northern Michigan. We are so pleased to celebrate such a knowledgeable, generous, kind and fun person whom we admire so much," said Kieran Fleming, LTC's executive director.

# Grateful for you...

**Ric and Lisa Loyd** for picking up trash at Waldron Fen and Fochtman nature preserves.

**Jason Chamberlain** for returning a lost GPS unit.

**Rick and son Garrett Waite** for clearing trails at the Adolph and Margaret Gauthier Preserve as community service for the National Honor Society.

**Vaughn McGraw** for fence repair at the Clyde and Martha Williams Preserve.

**John Baker, Richard Jenkins, Glen and Diane Matthews, John and Mary Merrill** for planting trees at Consuelo Diane and Charles L. Wilson Jr. Working Forest Reserve.

**Kelly, Heidi and Jack Dumas** for picking up trash at Bubbling Springs Nature Preserve.

**Richard Jenkins** for fence repair at the Offield Family Viewlands and help with boardwalk maintenance at the Art and Sally Hailand and the Helstrom Family nature preserves.

**Richard Jenkins, Tom and Kim Rowland, Mike Bodt and Pete Gurney** for planting trees at Goodhart Farms Nature Preserve.

**Dan and Linda CasaSanta** for replacing a trail map at Hoogland Family Nature Preserve.

**Scott Carbeck** for help with the Ruffed Grouse Society article.

**Hugh Melling, Larry Kepner, Dan CasaSanta, Mike Bodt and Pete Gurney** for constructing a bridge at the Hoogland Family Nature Preserve.

**John Baker** for building preserve welcome kiosks.

Trail blazers: **Brad and Sue Moffatt, Dan Dueweke, Jon Griffin, Larry Kepner, Dan CasaSanta, Randy Tarzwell, Pat and Julie Dougherty, John and Sally Royle and boys.**

**Sue Kurtz, Ray Gaynor, Eric Shea and Spencer McCormack** for sharing photography and videography work.

**Anne T. Melvin** for her continued guidance and support of LTC's membership program.

**Bob Handyside** for sharing his vast knowledge of the Offield Family Viewlands clubhouse.

**Wildtype Native Plant Nursery** for generous assistance with a plant order.

**Chris Ford and Glen Matthews** for helping plant shrubs at the Jack and Tucker Harris Working Forest Reserve.

**Cindy Hunt and Journeous** for messaging help

# New Members

We welcome the following new members who donated between February 13 and May 14, 2020.

Dana Andrews  
Mark and Mary Buchanan  
Kathy and Richard Genthe  
Jim Gilbreath  
Mr. Michael Glentz  
Lindsay Hall and Solomon Harvey  
Alan Heavner  
Austin Hood  
Mrs. Ann Knutsen  
Lucas and Jessica Meredith

Brian and Noreen Pannebecker  
Andrew and Julie Pflug  
Mark and Karen Pollard  
Mark Russell  
Mike and Sara Schmidt  
Dave Shellenberger  
Ron Skelton  
Pat Sobolak  
Heather and Joshua Tallis  
Mr. and Mrs. Dennis Walkowiak

## Memorials & Honorariums

Gifts given between February 17 and May 14, 2020.

### IN HONOR OF

#### **Diane Morand**

Laura Karnes

#### **Dr. Marie Fluent**

Dr. Natalya Brezden  
Dr. Johnna Discoll  
Dr. Joan March  
Dr. Sue Weiss

#### **Lindsay Hall**

Jeff and Cindy Hall

#### **Michael FitzSimons**

Mr. and Mrs. Michael L. Turnbull

#### **Sarah Gurney**

William and Lucy Stubbings

### IN MEMORY OF

#### **Nicholas Azzollini**

Mr. and Mrs. David H. Hoster, II

#### **Norman Baker**

Mr. and Mrs. Robert C. Leland, Jr.

#### **Julia Barnes**

Mrs. Joan F. Smith

#### **Sherwin "Mickey" Behrmann**

Margie Marks and Patrick Wise

#### **Irvin Bieser**

Mr. and Mrs. David H. Hoster, II  
John and Sharon Neighbours  
Mr. and Mrs. Louis Sanford

#### **Lynne Borman**

Ms. Suzanne Wingate

#### **Thomas Ailbe Burke**

Nancy Burke

#### **Lawrence Cummings**

Margie Marks and Patrick Wise

#### **Jack Michael Duff**

Mike and Lee Ann King

#### **Rosalie Disner**

Alice Terzian

#### **Dennis Fulbright**

Jill and Dave Patterson

#### **William Fuller**

Mr. and Mrs. Patrick Hylant, Sr.

#### **Fran Grayson**

Norman and Karan Weinberg

#### **Robert Hermann**

Mr. and Mrs. Johnson Hightower

#### **Maryle and Robert Hermann**

Mrs. Joan F. Smith

#### **Phyllis Holmes**

Dr. and Mrs. Robert Bitterman

#### **Dale and Irene Jacobs**

Mrs. Winfield H. Bearce

#### **Henriette Kaplan**

Dr. and Mrs. Robert Bitterman

#### **Susan Letts**

David and Genny Letts  
Meredith and Rick Neumann

#### **Jennifer E. Mann**

Mrs. Joan F. Smith

#### **Mr. and Mrs. Bruce McCullough**

Dr. and Mrs. Robert V. Russell, Jr.

#### **Kerri Mertaugh**

Edward and Jane Terrill



### *In memory of Kerri Mertaugh*

The Conservancy mourns the recent passing of board member Kerri Mertaugh. Kerri was a passionate world traveler and truly lived life to the fullest. She loved her involvement with the Conservancy, helping us preserve special places in her beloved Les Cheneaux Islands. We extend our deepest sympathies to her mother Patricia, her sister Margo, and to all of her many dear friends.

#### **Date Renton**

Rob and Ann Bassett

#### **David Lee Stebbins**

Carrie Corbin

#### **Elizabeth Terry**

Mrs. Joan F. Smith

#### **Jean Felkat Thorpe**

Mrs. Elizabeth and Mr. Morton Payne

#### **Billy Wallin**

Dr. and Mrs. Bruce Ohmart

#### **Lonnie Wallace**

Mrs. Joan F. Smith

#### **Fenn Welsheimer**

Clifford and Ruth Smith

#### **Diane Wilson**

Mrs. Joan F. Smith

#### **Mr. "Red" Wilson**

Mr. and Mrs. Robert C. Leland, Jr.

*\*NEW in 2020: The CARES Act includes ways that you can make your gift count for LTC and receive a tax deduction. Talk to your financial advisor to learn more.*





**John and Mary Merrill donated a conservation easement on their 35-acre parcel in northern Emmet County in 2013. Besides protecting their land, they show their passion for conservation through being Land Stewards, serving on the LTC Education Committee, participating in volunteer activities, as well as being members. Mary shares her thoughts on why she thinks it is important to be a member of LTC:**

"John was very interested in preserving our property and sought out information through LTC and learned about conservation easements. We were guided through the process by Ty Ratliff. At the time, I thought that putting the property into a conservation easement was enough of a 'gift' to LTC. What I did not realize was the scope of the work that LTC does to protect land in our area and that it requires ongoing financial support.

"We are members at a level that we can afford and have the donation debited monthly directly from our checking account. It's as important to me as making donations to public radio and paying bills."

"LTC has an ongoing mission to protect the north country that we love. I am also inspired by LTC's mission for educational outreach to the schools so that the next generation learns to love the land and then are inspired to protect it. That is our future."

"LTC is vital to our community and to us as a couple. We enjoy hiking, skiing and snowshoeing in the preserves and have recently volunteered to be land stewards. It is our way of giving back."





# WE ARE ALL CONNECTED

In honor of Earth Day's 50th celebration, we presented a challenge to all who love LTC lands. The main objective was to "show the love" by visiting a new LTC preserve or reserve and capturing a photo of yourself with your arms wide open. The result? A beautiful photo linking everyone together. Though we are practicing social distancing, we can still be connected through nature! From this challenge and at the height of the stay home order, we received an overwhelming amount of positive responses and comments on social media. See page 15.



"This week, I have been to all of the preserves on Beaver Island."



"LTC Nature Preserves have been our go-to during this crazy time. This is our 11th new one since social distancing has been in effect."



"We love getting out in nature and are so thankful for LTC! We have had numerous adventures and have made so many memories on the preserves."

"Thank you Little Traverse Conservancy! Your trails provide respite and wonder. Today was no exception."



"Took a walk last night at one of our favorite Nature Preserves. Who am I kidding, they're all our favorite!"



"My husband and I have lived in Petoskey all of our lives and had never been to this preserve. What a beautiful spot!"

"A few weeks into 'stay at home' we thought a good goal would be to visit the preserves in the LTC Featured Lands Pamphlet that we had not been to."

"And we're off...on adventures (and of school). Hoping to survive this pandemic with fresh air and a little exercise."

"It was incredible! Thank you for all you guys do to preserve these magical places. We are so incredibly lucky to have these little treasures to enjoy."

"Take advantage of this beautiful weather and our Stay Home order as our trails are still open for exercise and fresh air. You won't be sorry."

"Thank you! The LTC trails and apps have helped so much during this time."







Little Traverse Conservancy  
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Harbor Springs, MI 49740

[www.landtrust.org](http://www.landtrust.org)

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## BEQUESTS: PROVIDING IMPACT AND PEACE OF MIND.

For many LTC members, a bequest is the most direct and impactful way to give, no matter how large or small of a gift. A bequest is invaluable to the LTC's growth and stability. And bequests ensure that LTC will continue to protect the North Country we all love, and always care for the special places we have preserved.

For more information on bequests and other planned giving options, please contact Ty Ratliff, Associate Director, at 231.347.0991 or [tyratliff@landtrust.org](mailto:tyratliff@landtrust.org).

PROTECTING THE NORTH COUNTRY WE LOVE