



Preserving Carbondale's Natural Areas

# Green Earth News

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Green Earth, Inc.  
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## Board of Directors

Beth Fisher, *President*  
Nathan Speagle, *Vice President*  
Keith Beyler, *Treasurer*  
David Gibson, Judy Martinko,  
Ken Mayberry, Dorcy Prosser,  
Drew Scott, Becca Tally,  
Laurel Toussaint.

## Executive Director

Stephanie Eichholz,  
[director@greenearthinc.org](mailto:director@greenearthinc.org)  
(618) 201-3774

## Trail Adopters

### Brush Hill

Mike & Chris Long

### Oakland

NeuroRestorative  
CUF Youth Group

### Chautauqua Bottoms

Bob & Janel Taylor  
Dorcy Prosser & Jan Weiss  
Ken Mayberry

### Fernlands

Nathan Speagle

### Pyles Fork

SIUC Geography Club

## Green Earth, Inc.

is a 501(c)3 not-for-profit organization established in 1974.

Green Earth's mission is to acquire and preserve natural areas in the vicinity of Carbondale, Illinois, and provide access for public enjoyment and education.

We strive to preserve these areas for future generations, and encourage public input and participation for these objectives.

## Significant Upgrades Coming To Chautauqua Bottoms

*The need for change* Anyone who has walked trails within Chautauqua Bottoms during the wet season knows that this entire area can become waterlogged - trails can be several inches under water for extended periods of time - preventing anyone from getting through with dry feet. And because Little Crab Orchard Creek runs through the property, the westernmost trail is isolated from the other two. Not only does this trail lack a parking lot, but it can only be accessed from the south by walking along Chautauqua Road where cars pass by at high speeds. Ever since purchasing the western parcel in 2004 we have wanted to improve the trail surface, eliminate the need to walk on the road, and connect our three separate trails.

*Improvements are coming* In 2015 Green Earth was awarded a grant under the IDNR's Recreational Trails Program for upgrades to the Chautauqua Bottoms trails. We have been in a holding pattern for the past two years because of state budgetary issues, but we are pleased to announce that we are finally able to move forward with the projects. The upgrades include improvements to the trail surfaces and the installation of a pedestrian bridge over Little Crab Orchard Creek.

*Opening up the trails to those with limited mobility* With Prairie Living Senior Community adjacent to our site on the south end, and with the Center for Independent Living nearby on the north end, we are motivated to upgrade the trail connecting Chautauqua Road to Sunset Drive to ADA friendly standards. We will follow the USFS guidelines for wilderness accessibility - meaning that this trail will not be paved and will not lose its naturalness. Instead it will have a hard-packed smooth surface, ramped elevation changes, widths to accommodate wheelchair passing zones, and an improved parking lot with dedicated handicap parking. We want to promote access to natural areas to as much of the population as possible. Carbondale has a reputation for accessibility and we are pleased that we can add to this standing.

*Other improvements* The remainder of the trails within the preserve will receive gravel for improved drainage and drier feet. The main parking area will be given a much needed overhaul including more parking, aesthetic upgrades, and informational signs.

*Funding this work* Of course all these upgrades take funding. The IDNR RTP grant will pay for 80% of this project (\$102,000), leaving us to fundraise the remaining 20% (\$25,500). We are able to leverage \$5,000 from an Amenities Grant (see page 3) as match, and we will continue to look for other ways to leverage funds, but it will ultimately be up to our local community to help us meet the match portion of this project.

*Public Unveiling* We are planning a Kick-Off event in September where we will invite the public to view an artist rendering of the pedestrian bridge, present details of the project, answer questions, and discuss the future of Green Earth's trail systems within Carbondale. Please join us and be a part of this exciting project! Date and time information will be announced later this summer.



## President's Corner

*Beth Fisher, beth.bfisher@verizon.net*

As you've seen in this issue, there are lots of exciting projects underway at Green Earth. As a neighbor to the Chautauqua Bottoms preserve, I'm looking forward to having a connected trail system for longer hikes and trail runs. And I hope more of our community members will be able to take advantage of this improved amenity.

All of our preserves have been looking terrific lately thanks to our volunteers' efforts to remove invasive plant species. You've read many stories over the years about community groups and individuals taking on this work. Their dedication was recently recognized by the River to River Cooperative Weed Management Area. GE board members David Gibson and Ken Mayberry, along with Green Earth itself, were given the 2017 Awards for Excellence in Addressing Invasive Species. We're extremely proud of their accomplishments!

## Changes to the GE Board of Directors

We are happy to welcome Drew Scott to fill the Student Board Member position. Drew is a PhD student in Plant Biology studying heterogeneity, plant communities, and ecosystem functions. Drew joined the Green Earth board to help provide environmental outreach to the community. He lives in Carbondale with his wife, Kaitlyn, and their hamster, Francis.

Several Board Members have stepped down this past quarter to move on to other endeavors or to enjoy retirement.

\* Longtime GE board member Patricia Justice has retired from service. Starting her tenure in 1991, Pat's longevity on the GE board is remarkable. Pat may have retired after 26 years, but we will continue to seek out her institutional knowledge of GE's operations for many years to come. We wish her well in her retirement!

\* Retired law professor Wenona Whitfield is stepping down to spend more time and energy on her many volunteer causes. Though Wenona had served on the GE board for 3.5 years, she has in fact been helping our organization with legal land-use issues (her area of expertise) for many years, and has generously offered to continue to do so. We are fortunate to continue an affiliation with someone so generous with her expertise.

\* Student board member George Manning is stepping down as he prepares to complete his PhD in Plant Biology this fall. George's background in native plant ecology was a great benefit to GE during his time with us. We wish George the best in his future career.

## Thanks To Our Recent Contributors. We Couldn't Exist Without Your Support!

### \$500+

Judy & John Martinko  
Martha Crothers

### \$200 - \$499

Jennifer Deloach & Don Doty  
Laurel Toussaint & Tom Bik  
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Mary Lamb & William Peterson

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Kirsten Trimble  
Ruth Hoak, Lily Crane  
Mary Schmid & Katherina Cahoon

### \$5 - \$49

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Bret Serferian

### Monthly Contributors

Sally Bennet Mercurio  
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Steve Gough, Katherine Poulos  
Beth & Derek Fisher

### eScrip Contributors

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Mike & Stephanie Eichholz  
Sara Eynon, Beth Fisher  
David Gibson, Jan Hinde,  
Judy Lewis, Beth Malmquist  
Judy Martinko, Ken Mayberry  
Nancy Miller, Mary O'hara  
Moe Phemister, Katherine Poulos,  
Alison Quick, Tom Redmond  
Allison Ribley, Suzanne Schmitz  
Nathan Speagle, Laurel Toussaint  
Wenona Whitfield

*Our eScrip contributors brought in \$43.00 this month alone, and a total of \$281.63 so far this year - just by shopping at Schnucks! This is an easy and cost free way to raise money for GE!.  
Page 4 contains info on how to sign up.*

## Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation Grant Awards

**ICECF Trailhead Amenities Grant** The ICECF has offered Green Earth a fantastic opportunity to improve our preserves by reimbursing up to \$5,000 for trailhead amenities per site. We have plans to add benches, trash/recycling receptacles, and informational boards and kiosks—all are items we have wanted for years, but didn't have the funds to purchase. We will begin purchasing and installing our wish list items this fall, so come visit our sites and watch as we continue to improve!

**ICECF 3:1 Challenge Grant** We are very happy to announce that thanks to our contributors, we have reached our \$4,000 fundraising goal! The ICECF has matched this with \$12,000, as well as paying out an additional \$1,000 for 100 hours of volunteer time logged at the Brush Hill and Fernlands Preserves. This generates a grand total of \$17,000 to spend on habitat improvement at these two properties. Work is well underway at Brush Hill with several rounds of invasive plant removal completed by Long Forestry Consultation crews. Ozark Koala Environmental Services has just started invasive species removal at Fernlands. This work, on top of all the volunteer effort recently taken at both sites, will have a substantial impact on the ecology of these preserves. We will continue invasive species removal during future volunteer workdays so that we can maintain all the ground gained against invasive species on these properties.

**Pumpkin Glow, Night Time Hike** We are very excited to partner with the Carbondale Boys and Girls Club and the Carbondale Park District to offer our first night time Jack-O-Lantern trail hike. This event will take place at our Oakland Preserve on Friday Oct 20 and Saturday Oct 21st from dusk until 9:00 pm. The trail will be lined with hundreds of Jack-O-Lanterns creating an ethereal and beautiful night-time hike. A small fee for hiking the trail is suggested, proceeds will benefit both Green Earth and the Boys and Girls Club.



Children from throughout the area will be given the opportunity to carve pre-hollowed pumpkins for this event. A map will be made available so that family and friends can locate their little artist's work. Prizes will be offered for one boy and one girl from different age classes up to 18 years of age. Those over 18 are also invited to submit pumpkins in the adult age class for a fee. The evening will be rounded out with a bonfire, beverage/snack sales, and games for the kids. More details will follow in our Fall Newsletter and on our website with information on where and when pumpkins will be available for carving, and how to enter the contest. We hope to see you there!

**Thanks to our Volunteers!** We are fortunate to have an active volunteer base - between our trail adopters, our monthly volunteer workdays, groups requesting special workdays, and the intrepid souls that venture out on their own schedules, we are the recipients of a great amount of work. We track volunteer hours (those that are reported at least, we know some of you sneak in work without mentioning it to us) and the numbers are impressive. Our most recent annual tally (from July 2016 to June 2017) included 242 individual volunteers for a grand total of 1,633 hours of labor. That is truly a workforce! We'd like to take a moment to highlight a few:

**Ken Mayberry:** Since 2013, Ken has accrued an impressive 755 volunteer hours, most of which are for invasive plant species removal and general preserve upkeep that he has undertaken outside of scheduled workdays.

**Nathan Speagle:** Since 2010, Nathan has accrued 643 volunteer hours split between his own invasive species removal, timber stand improvement projects, preserve upkeep, and chainsaw work to remove trees that have fallen across our trails.

**All of our Trail Adopters!** These folks visit their adopted trails at least once a month for general maintenance, keeping the trailheads in good order, restocking guides, reporting problems, and requesting workdays to address issues. A list of all our Adopters is on page one of this newsletter. This group deserves a round of applause for keeping our trails in such good order.

**Unity Point Sixth Grade Class:** Once again Science Teacher Chris Midden facilitated bringing the entire sixth grade class out for a morning of invasive species removal to cap a unit on native ecology. This group spent a total of 108 hours and pulled 22 garbage bags of garlic mustard. Hosting this enthusiastic group is always a lot of fun for us and something we look forward to each spring.

**NeuroRestorative:** Trail adopters at the Oakland site, NeuroRestorative counselors and therapists bring clients throughout the year for outdoor therapy opportunities. Each May the organization rallies for a large scale workday. This year clients, therapists, and counselors moved 2.5 tons of gravel by wheelbarrow to improve the trail surface!

# Mail-in Donation Form

\$10  \$25  \$50  \$75  \$100  \$250  Other \_\_\_\_\_

I prefer to NOT have my name listed as a donor in GE publications

Please direct my donation toward GE's general fund

Please direct my donation toward GE's green fund

Name(s) \_\_\_\_\_

Help us cut down cost and opt for GE newsletters via email

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## Premiums

Gifts of \$10 or more:

Please send me the *Invasive Species of Southern Illinois* Handbook

Gifts of \$25 or more:

Please send me a gift box of GE Photo Note Cards

Gifts of \$35 or more:

Please send me a Child Green Earth Shirt

circle one: short-sleeve long-sleeve

circle one: S M L

Gifts of \$50 or more:

Please send me an Adult Green Earth Shirt

circle one: short-sleeve long-sleeve

circle one: S M L

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## Ways to Give

### Check

Complete the information above and mail this form and your check to P.O. Box 441, Carbondale, IL 62903

### Online via Credit Card or PayPal

Visit the [greenearthinc.org](http://greenearthinc.org) donations page

### Automatic Monthly Donations via Credit Card or PayPal

Visit the [greenearthinc.org](http://greenearthinc.org) donations page

### Bank Account – Automatic Monthly Donations

Call Green Earth's Director at 618-201-3774 to get started

### Enroll in Merchant Reward Programs

Green Earth participates in both Schnuck's eScrip Program and Amazon Smiles program. Visit [greenearthinc.org/support-ge](http://greenearthinc.org/support-ge) to learn how to sign up

### Estate Planning

Remember Green Earth in your will. Call 618-201-3774 or email [director@greenearthinc.org](mailto:director@greenearthinc.org)

### Stock Transfer

Call 618-201-3774 or email [director@greenearthinc.org](mailto:director@greenearthinc.org)

## GE's Upcoming Volunteer Workdays & Events

**Aug 19** No workday in August. Enjoy the eclipse!

**Sep 16** Volunteer workday - Pyles Fork, litter cleanup with Keep Carbondale Beautiful

**Sept** (Date TBA) - Grant Kick Off Event

**Sep 30** National Public Lands Day - trail improvements at Chautauqua Bottoms, or just visit and enjoy a hike at any of our sites in honor of the Public Lands Day!

**Oct 07** Fall Plant Sale - Murdale Shopping Center

**Oct 21** Pumpkin Glow - Oakland Nature Preserve

**Nov 04** Annual Potluck Social - Location TBA

**Nov 18** Volunteer workday - TBA

**Dec 03** Alternative Gift Fair - Carbondale Civic Center

Locations subject to change based on site conditions & need.

Check our website for rain dates, updates, and changes.

ISM = Invasive Species Management

TBA = To Be Announced

