

# OUABACHE LAND CONSERVANCY NEWSLETTER

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Phone: 765-548-4007

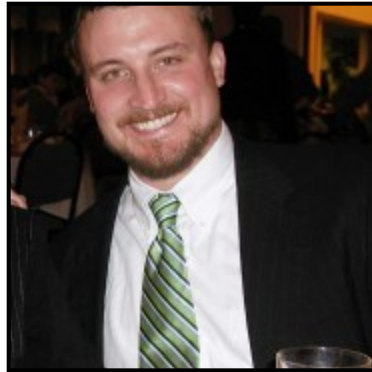
Information about OLC can be  
found on their website at  
[ouabachelandconservancy.org](http://ouabachelandconservancy.org)



### Mission Statement:

The Ouabache Land Conservancy protects, preserves and restores land in west central Indiana to provide habitat for wildlife, maintain natural scenic beauty, improve water quality, and secure the means to produce food and fiber for future generations.

## FOURTH ANNUAL OLC MEMBERSHIP MEETING



What does "Land Trust" mean to you? Is it land set aside for public use? Is it privately owned with access only for the group that manages the land trust? If you partner with a conservancy, can you get a tax break on your land?

The Ouabache Land Conservancy is excited about having Christian Freitag from the Sycamore Land Trust as the keynote speaker for the annual banquet. Christian will share successes and answer questions you may have.

Please join us on January 31, 2014 at Rick's Smokehouse in Terre Haute for food, fellowship and an entertaining and educational presentation. Social hour with a silent auction begins at 6 pm, with dinner at 7 pm.

Cost is \$20.00 which includes your meal. This event is open to the public, but RSVP is needed for the dinner count. Contact Brendan Kearns at [brendanrkearns@gmail.com](mailto:brendanrkearns@gmail.com) or 812-236-3048 to reserve your seats.

### In a Nutshell:

Date: January 31, 2014  
Time: 6:00 Social Hour  
& Silent Auction  
7:00 Dinner  
Location: Rick's Smokehouse  
3102 Wabash Ave  
Terre Haute, IN  
Price: \$20 per person  
RSVP: Brendan Kearns  
[brendanrkearns@gmail.com](mailto:brendanrkearns@gmail.com)  
812-236-3048

## 2013 PROGRAMS & ACTIVITIES

3rd Annual OLC Meeting  
at Kleptz Restaurant

Wabash Valley Audubon Society  
Annual Meeting

Art & River Chatter  
at Logan's Ribeye

Osher Lifelong Learning Institute  
at Westminster Village

Fall Foliage Hike at JSNP

Terre Haute Area  
Association of Realtors Meeting

## PROTECTED PROPERTIES

### Fee Simple:

Jackson-Schnyder Nature Preserve  
(Vigo Co) - 15 acres

### Conservation Easement:

McDonald Farm  
(Vigo Co) - 248 acres

Haymaker Farm  
(Putnam Co) - 161 acres

Reynolds Property  
(Vigo Co) - 15 acres

A WORD FROM THE PRESIDENT:

As the saying goes, it seems hard to believe that a year has passed already! November 2nd marked the 3rd anniversary of the Ouabache Land Conservancy becoming a 501(c)(3) non-profit land trust. We owe much of our early success to our immediate past president Dave Burns for building the foundation of OLC all the way from its origin as a committee with the Sycamore Trails RC&D. Of course, there have been many others that have contributed greatly over the years and they should have great satisfaction knowing that they have contributed to making west central Indiana a better place to live.

Many thanks go to Brendan Kearns, VP of Programs & Development, and Hansford Mann, VP of Acquisition & Stewardship, for their work spreading the word about OLC and its mission to the general public through community programs and professional organizations like the Terre Haute Area Association of Realtors. Several more outreach programs are being planned for 2014 that will share OLC's vision of protecting special places in our service area. In addition, there are several "irons in the fire" for properties to protect!

I would also like to thank Director, Marty Jones, and Advisory Board member, Larry Owen, for getting us started on the road to strategic planning for OLC. In early 2014, we are looking forward to meeting with Directors and Advisory Board members to assess our land trust and identify areas for improvement to make ourselves better! More will be forthcoming on this initiative. Each Director and Advisory Board member made special contributions during the year, whether it be "keeping the books" like George Bakken or sending an email of encouragement like Ted Harris. I truly appreciate all contributions and look forward to each and every one in the coming year.

I welcome Larry Owen stepping up from the Advisory Board to a Director. Larry is an experienced consulting forester that knows the people & woods of this area second to none and is already making valuable contributions. Hopefully more Advisory Board members can follow Larry's lead and step up to a Director too. Also, I'm very happy to announce that Dr. Rob Jean has agreed to join the Advisory Board. Rob is Assistant Professor of Ecology at St. Mary-of-the-Woods College; his natural environment expertise and his assistance with managing Jackson-Schnyder Nature Preserve will be invaluable.

Now it is time to renew (or join for the first time) our memberships in Ouabache Land Conservancy for 2014. Please contribute generously in order for OLC to grow and continue to make our little piece of Earth a better place. Without everyone pulling together we cannot continue to grow. I'm looking forward to our 4th Annual Meeting on January 31, hopefully you can make it!

Thanks for your support!

Phil Cox



OLC would like to thank these non-board members for their support!

- |                     |                     |                       |                         |
|---------------------|---------------------|-----------------------|-------------------------|
| John Bacone         | Forest Clark        | Sallie Cox            | Skitz Evard             |
| Mike & Amy Fisher   | Nick Harby          | Bob & Joanne Haymaker | John Mast               |
| Todd Nation         | Wayne & Joan Osburn | Greg & Clare Oskay    | Craig & Carole Reynolds |
| Keith & Susie Ruble | Joan Samuels        | Amber Slaughterbeck   | Ted & Susan Ulrich      |

Current Members!

It's that time of year again: fill out the renewal form on the back page!

FALL FOLIAGE HIKE, OCTOBER 19, 2013



Members and friends of the Ouabache Land Conservancy enjoyed a brisk fall foliage hike of the Jackson-Schnyder Nature Preserve on October 19th. The hike celebrated the four-year anniversary of its dedication as a State nature preserve. Dr. Marion Jackson and Dr. Rob Jean led hikers through approximately 25 species of trees found on the 15-acre Preserve. In addition, the fall foliage of the 4-acre tallgrass prairie was highlighted. The tallgrass prairie was planted in 2009 with 10 species of native grasses and sedges (such as Big & Little Bluestem, Indiana Grass, Prairie Oval Sedge, Switchgrass and Prairie Dropseed) and 38 species of native forbs (such as Compass Plant, Mountain Mint, Stiff Goldenrod and

Round-Headed Bush Clover). Participants included, (L to R): Dr. Paul Salstrom, Dr. Marion Jackson, Phil Cox, Carson Cox, Sister Mary Griffin, Brendan Kearns, Jo Ligget, Sam Ligget, and Dr. Rob Jean.

BOARD OF DIRECTORS – 2014

<u>Officers</u>	<u>Office</u>	<u>Term Expires</u>	<u>Advisory Board</u>	
Phil Cox	President	2014	Susan Berta	Dave Burns
Hansford Mann	VP of Acquisition & Stewardship	2016	Mary Beth Eberwein	Ted Harris
Brendan Kerns	VP of Programs & Development	2015	Steve Herbert	Robert Jean
Bill Mitchell	Secretary	2014	Carissa Lovett	Mike Maloney
George Bakken	Treasurer	2015	Karen Moffett	Raoul Moore
			Fred Nation	Marshall Parks
			Patrick Ralston	Peter Scott
			Gerald "Bud" Sharp	Jim Speer
<u>Directors</u>			<u>Honorary Advisory Board</u>	
Marion Jackson	Director	2016	Jim McDonald	
Marty Jones	Director	2015		
Gerald McGlone	Director	2016		
Larry Owen	Director	2016		
Jim Sullivan	Director	2015		
John Whitaker	Director	2014		



Check out our website at [ouabachelandconservancy.org](http://ouabachelandconservancy.org) or visit us on Facebook!

OLC Board of Directors at Markle House (L to R) Jim Sullivan, Phil Cox, Marty Jones, John Whitaker, Hansford Mann, George Bakken. Not pictured: Brendan Kearns, Bill Mitchell, Marion Jackson, and Gerald McGlone.



HEALTHY RIVERS INITIATIVE

“But isn’t the river filthy?” always comes up during my Wabash River presentations.

While I would never recommend swimming in it for safety sake, I don’t encourage anyone to drink a tall glass of water straight from the river to prove it is “healthy”.

It is much cleaner than just a few years ago. The improvements are attributed to conservation programs like the Wetlands Reserve Program and former Indiana governor Mitch Daniels innovative Healthy Rivers Initiative (HRI).

As the program specialist for the HRI, and an enthusiast of the Wabash River, I am fortunate to educate Wabash Valley residents about our important natural asset.

During a recent river presentation that ultimately led to dialogue about the Asian Carp epidemic, a lady in her early eighties informed me she lived in Terre Haute all her life. “It was last year I took a ride on the airboat at Fairbanks Park. This river that forever I thought was a polluted mess full of trash, well, it is beautiful.” She lives within a few miles of the rivers edge, and just realized the splendor of the Wabash. We talked about eagles, otters, and deer swimming across the river. She shared her joy from that boat ride.

If you have the same perception that the Wabash is a polluted waterway that isn’t an asset, take a moment to explore her beauty. Share your new understanding with anyone that will listen. You too will experience how I feel.

The Wabash River and Sugar Creek project area spans more than 43,000 acres. It begins along the tributary Sugar Creek at Shades State Park and runs southwest to where it joins the Wabash. Following the Wabash south-southwest, the project area ends at Fairbanks Landing Fish & Wildlife Area, south of Terre Haute. The project area follows 94 river miles along the Wabash and stretches across five counties: Montgomery, Parke, Sullivan, Vermillion and Vigo.

Approximately 419 acres are now open within the Wabash River Project area. More information about the Healthy Rivers Initiative can be found online at <http://www.in.gov/dnr/healthyriver>. Brendan Kearns can be contacted by phone 812-236-3048 or e-mail [bkearns@in.dnr.gov](mailto:bkearns@in.dnr.gov)



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ABOUT OUABACHE LAND CONSERVANCY

The Ouabache (pronounced Wabash) Land Conservancy was founded in 2007 as a land trust. There are currently over 1,700 land trusts in the United States, with about 22 in the state of Indiana. The function of most land trusts is to protect natural lands and farmlands from development. Some land trusts also focus on historic sites.

OLC serves west central Indiana, including Clay, Fountain, Montgomery, Owen, Parke, Putnam, Sullivan, Vermillion, and Vigo Counties.

WANT TO BECOME A MEMBER?

Anyone can become a member and supporter of OLC and we welcome all! We invite anyone who has an interest in preserving natural and agricultural lands for future generations to attend our meetings .

We need your help to preserve our natural lands!

OLC’s board meetings are open to its general membership and to the public. They are held at 5:30 pm on the first Tuesday of each month at 4900 Mill Dam Road across from Markle Mill Park in North Terre Haute. Come join us!

Ouabache Land Conservancy especially needs people whose love for nature would motivate them to serve on our board or on a committee. We can use individuals with naturalist knowledge, real estate skills, website or newsletter experience, connections to other organizations for outreach events, and many other areas, including enthusiasm to help where needed most.

## Markle's Dam: The Fish Community



The same year that Indiana became a state, 1816, Abraham Markle built a Dam on Otter Creek just east of what is now North Terre Haute, Vigo County Indiana. The associated mill started operation in 1817 and was used as a gristmill, sawmill and distillery until 1938, when it burned. The dam is still present although it has been renovated. The stream is fairly large here, large enough to support a great variety of fish. The stream is permanent, rather than drying up in summer as many of the smaller streams of the area do. The presence of the dam over this long period has had a tremendous influence on the fish community. Water constantly going over the dam (or through the dam where the waterwheel used to be), keeps the various bottom types washed off and more important, maintained, in the area of

the dam. Just below the dam, the water forms a large and fairly deep pool. Here a number of larger fish species live, sunfishes, bass, suckers, and more. Many people have fished here over the years, including my wife and kids. Below the pool the bottom is basically of flatrock, some places bare, and some places with larger and smaller pieces of rock, these pieces of rock becoming smaller downstream. Below the flatrock area is a section of gravel, then sand, then silt.

Nearly all of the main stream bottom types, thus much of the habitat variation found in Vigo County, are found here in one small area. Habitat variation generally leads to fish diversity, and so it has here. Markle's Dam is by far the most important area for fish diversity in Vigo County, and is one of the most important areas in Indiana. A total of 78 fish species has been collected at Markle's Dam over the past half century. This is 36.9% of the 211 species of fish that have been collected in the entire state Indiana. Some of the noteworthy species at Markle's Dam are the silver lamprey, shortnose gar, bowfin, gizzard shad, grass pickerel, 28 species of shiners, minnows, and chubs (including the carp, grass carp and one of the newly introduced carp types and are frequently seen jumping above the water and even into boats on our largest streams), 14 species of suckers, 6 species of catfish. The catfish include two species of madtoms. Madtoms reach a length of about 4 inches and carry a fairly potent poison in their spines, about the strength of a bee sting. Also occurring are the blackstripe topminnow, western mosquitofish, brook silverside, mottled sculpin, 11 species of bass, bluegill, and crappie, and nine species of darters and perch. The darters, madtoms, and sculpins are three of the most interesting groups of species as they are attracted to and live in the rocky, gravelly areas. The madtoms are not too colorful, but are interesting for their poison, discussed above. The sculpins are funny looking fish - with big heads and big fan shaped fins. The orangethroat and Johnny darters are the most common darters of Vigo County, and they are found in sandy and silty substrates so common in the area. Some of the other darters are highly colored, especially the males. These occur almost entirely in the rocky and gravelly substrates at Markle's dam. Especially colorful, at least during mating season, are the greenside darter (bright green and often lives in the algae) and the rainbow darter (a variety of reds and other colors).

Brouilletes Creek enters the Wabash River on the east side of the dam and once (in the 1960's) also had a flatrock bottom and a great variety of fish, although never anywhere as near as many species as those at Markle's dam. The reason is that the flatrock was exposed for a time, but then during various floods the flatrock was buried under the sand and silt typical of the slower streams of Vigo County and the gravel loving species disappeared. Undoubtedly the rock will again be exposed, and some of the gravel rock loving species will again move in.

– John O. Whitaker, Jr.

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## JOIN OR RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP FOR 2014

**Yes!** I want to become a member of Ouabache Land Conservancy to help with its important conservation work!

I am enclosing a tax-deductible contribution in the amount of:

\$25    \$50    \$100    \$250    \$500    \$1,000    \$2,500    \$5,000   Other amount: \_\_\_\_\_

New Member    Membership Renewal

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_

Home phone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ Work phone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_

Cell phone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Would you prefer to receive newsletters & written communications via email \_\_\_\_\_ or hard copy via US Postal Service \_\_\_\_\_

*Please make checks payable to "Ouabache Land Conservancy".*

Mail to: Ouabache Land Conservancy  
c/o George Bakken  
P.O. Box 10993  
Terre Haute, IN 47801-0993

