

Mississippi Valley
CONSERVANCY

The Power of Place

2020 Annual Report

*Place: it's where we're from; it's where we're going.
... It asks for our attention and care.
If we pay attention, place has much to teach us.*

From Tom Vander Ark, Emily Liebtag, and Nate McLennen

— authors of *The Power of Place: Authentic Learning Through Place-Based Education*

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FRONT COVER PHOTO:
Fishing Boy courtesy of by Brian Ramsey

Thank you for protecting this place

Last year was one of learning for me. I learned how to be adaptable and resilient. I learned what I can get by with and without. And I learned that no matter how tough things got, you were there.

**A message from
Carol Abrahamzon,
Executive Director**

We had a brief pause at the beginning of the pandemic, a moment of feeling uncertain. Would we be able to continue to protect special places such as bluffs and prairies? Would we be able to care for those places – ridding them of garlic mustard and buckthorn? Would we find ourselves a step closer to finding answers to climate change?

The pause was very brief.

Turn the pages to read the story of our first bequest – a gift of land left in a will – and learn what it offers to the community. Celebrate with us the many new places YOU have permanently protected from future development. See how partners and volunteers have helped in the fight against climate change. Learn about the vision and leadership of a member who’s pioneering a new type of endowment for the future stewardship of his land.

Yes, the pause was brief because of the support you gave us. You are the reason we were able to adapt so quickly to new ways of doing things. You are the reason over 500 additional acres are now permanently protected. You were right there alongside our restoration crew as they pulled, cut, planted, and burned the land back to a state of resilience.

2021 promises to be a year filled with hope, opportunity, and purpose. We look forward to sharing the trail to a better tomorrow with your support for protection of more places, closer to home, for our furry, feathered, and finned friends. Support for places with the power to ease your mind, to soothe your soul, and inspire your children.

Thank you for being there in 2020 and for staying on our team in 2021.

Together in conservation,



Carol Abrahamzon



Our first bequest of land: a new public nature preserve

By Drake Hokanson

A pristine tract of Black River bottomland in La Crosse has been acquired by Mississippi Valley Conservancy through the bequests of Phyllis and Dean Dempsey and Albert L. Miller. Surrounded by the Black River and sandwiched between French Island, Interstate 90, and Nakomis Avenue, the newly named Black River Bottoms preserves 52 acres of prime floodplain forest and emergent marsh within the urban footprint of La Crosse.

The foresight and generosity of the Dempseys was at work before we ever knew them. Their vision of a future in which fish, wildlife, and natural beauty would remain undisturbed for the benefit of the entire community has been realized with their bequest of the land we now call Black River Bottoms, our newest nature preserve.

*Accepting
and protecting
the bequested
land is made
possible with
your support.*

Black River Bottoms marks the first land bequest to the Conservancy in its 23-year history.

“We discussed a number of land conservation options with Dean and Phyllis, including conservation easements, land donations, and bequests,” said conservation director Abbie Church. “The idea of a bequest appealed to them for the flexibility of maintaining the privacy of the land during their lifetime, while ensuring it would become habitat managed by the Conservancy and available for public enjoyment after they passed.”

The process began in 2007 with an invitation from the Dempseys. A visit by Conservancy staff found towering swamp white oaks and massive cottonwoods, plus excellent habitat for migrating waterfowl, breeding and wintering grounds for songbirds, and breeding and feeding areas for fish and amphibians. During the warm season, the floodplain forest provides habitat for rare birds including the great egret and the prothonotary warbler.

The property is open to the public and currently accessible only by water. The nearest public boat launches are at Freedom Park, Clinton Street, and Logan Street. From the Black River channel south of the I-90 bridge, boaters can travel through the backwaters of the property to Catgut Slough (Richmond Bay), located east of French Island, for fishing, hiking, birdwatching, or just plain river lounging.



A place to connect with nature

The Dempseys' bequest embodies a vision of a future in which fish, wildlife, and natural beauty will remain undisturbed for the benefit of the entire community.



The great egret is known to fish the shallow waters of Black River Bottoms. It is one of several bird species on the property that are listed as threatened in the state of Wisconsin.



MORE LAND PROTECTED

40
acres

Tom and Sharon Sharratt protected the 40-acre parcel they recently added to their Timber

Coulee Tree Farm. The farm now includes a total of 271 acres that are permanently protected from development. They've done a great deal of restoration work on the new property, including removal of invasive black locust trees, with the help of high school students in need of activities while school programs were shut down.



88
acres

Diane and Charles Canniff protected their undeveloped bluffland and prairie to protect wildlife,

water, and resilience to climate change. They bought the land 50 years ago and soon began thinking about protecting it forever. The property supports a diverse range of plant and animal species, including several state-listed "species of special concern." Diane recalls winter days when she'd sit outside and close her eyes to identify birds by the sounds of their wings.

111
acres

Peg Brenneke, a Monroe County native, resisted selling her grandfather's farm to

a sand mine company when everyone around her succumbed to the pressure. Now, Peg and the Conservancy have ensured that the 111 acres will remain unscathed. If she had sold, land that her grandfather dedicated his life to could have been lost to mineral extraction. Peg is upholding her grandfather's legacy of restoring the land after previous erosion damage.



165
acres

Poised to sell their beautiful Monroe County property, Chris and Joyce Barlow included

the buyers in negotiation of their conservation easement to permanently protect the woodland, prairie, and creek when the property is sold. The buyers, Carrie and Brian Lord, see the agreement as value added to their purchase. Of the Barlows, Brian said, "They became mentors. We'll forever be connected to them for their entrusting us to carry on their legacy."



19
acres

The congregation of Mount Calvary Evangelical Lutheran Church celebrated completion of a long-

hoped-for land conservation easement for its 19-acre Little Bluff property high above the church in Trempealeau. About a thousand years ago the bluff was a sacred place for a religion practiced by the Mississippian Native American culture. Today, its fruit and nut trees provide both food and shelter for migratory songbirds. The church welcomes visitors to walk the trail to enjoy the views from the top of the bluff.

37
acres

Ellen Brooks and Dave Hackett protected their land, which expands a wildlife corridor due

to its proximity to the adjacent state-owned land and other lands protected by the Conservancy – some 2,300 acres of contiguous protected habitat. Protected corridors are growing ever more important for climate resilience as native habitats and species are lost to development. Ellen and Dave's contribution to protecting native habitats will last forever!



Thanks to the mighty volunteers!

From the beginning, volunteers have played an essential role in building the resilience of the wild lands you've protected. This year was no exception.

Even in an uncertain year with many new safety restrictions, the hardy volunteers who helped in the field accomplished a great deal. We thank them.

2020 Volunteer Accomplishments:

- *Installed over 3 miles of firebreaks.*
- *Cleared 4 acres of invasive brush.*
- *Pulled over 500 pounds of garlic mustard.*
- *Burned 57 acres of fire-dependent habitat.*
- *Collected millions of prairie seeds.*



2020 FINANCIAL SUMMARY

Every protected property requires an investment of scientific, legal, and administrative resources to assess, document, and monitor the health of the land. Fundraising and education efforts require time and resources to create awareness among landowners and engage communities with our mission.

Your support makes it all possible.

Mississippi Valley Conservancy is committed to strong fiscal health. The financial summary at right is based on the complete financial audit that was conducted by Wegner CPAs. Their full report is available on our website or by contacting us at 608-784-3606 ext.1.

Expense Allocation

87% Programs



*13%
Core
Mission
Support*

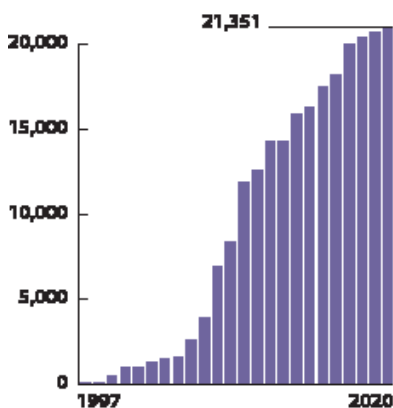
Anyone can help protect land, water, and climate by volunteering in our *For the Wild* program. We need help with projects both indoors and outdoors, including habitat restoration, special events assistance, mailings, writing, graphic design, photography, videography, and more. And volunteering is a great way to meet more people like you!

When signing up to volunteer, we invite you to tell us about yourself so we can reach out to you when we have opportunities that match your interests. There's no obligation when you sign up. It simply helps us to reach out to the right people at the right times.

www.mississippivalleyconservancy.org/volunteer



Land protected since 1997
21,351 acres and growing!



FY 2019–20 Expense Allocation
Total Expenses \$731,944



Land Protection	\$ 307,553
Land Management	187,090
Outreach & Education	144,170
Core Mission Support	93,131
Total Expenses	\$ 731,944

FY 2019–20 Fundraising & Revenue
Total Revenue \$1,002,247



Contributions	632,894
Investment Income	\$ 108,217
Special Events	89,021
Released from Restrictions	87,865
Grants & Endowments	84,250
Total Revenue	\$ 1,002,247



BEFORE

Native wildflowers, buzzing bees, rare songbirds, and deep-rooted prairie grasses are examples of the tremendous biodiversity of the Holland Sand Prairie State Natural Area. Some of the wildflowers benefiting from recent restoration work include hoary vervain, hairy puccoon, rough blazing star, and prairie smoke (at left from top to bottom).



AFTER

Wildflower photos top to bottom: hoary vervain by Aaron Carlson, hairy puccoon by Carol Labuzzetta, rough blazing star by Aaron Carlson, prairie smoke by Carol Labuzzetta

The deep roots of carbon storage

Science tells us that protection of grassland is one of the best nature-based solutions in the fight against climate change because the deep roots of prairie grasses store carbon and prevent it from escaping into the atmosphere. That's good news for all of us.

It means continuing to support our work of protecting and restoring prairies will have a positive impact on our efforts to slow climate change.

Because every property has different features, there is no cookie-cutter solution for maintaining and building the resilience of the land. Forests have long been considered critical “carbon sinks,” consuming about a quarter of the carbon dioxide pollution produced by humans worldwide. But a study from the University of California, Davis, published in the journal *Environmental Research Letters*, found that in 21st-century California, grasslands are more resilient carbon sinks than forests. Because of this, the study suggests that grasslands should be included in California's ambitious goal of reducing greenhouse gas emissions, by 2030, to 40 percent below 1990 levels.

How does this affect Wisconsin? The findings could inform similar carbon offset efforts in Wisconsin and around the globe, particularly those in semi-arid environments, which cover about 40 percent of the planet. According to the lead author, the UC Davis study shows that grasslands store more carbon than forests because they are impacted less by droughts and wildfires.

In the early 1800s, there were more than 2.1 million acres of prairie in Wisconsin. Only 2,000 acres of high-quality prairie remain in our state today. The Holland Sand Prairie State Natural Area (shown opposite) is one of many grasslands you've helped protect.

Together, we've protected more than 21,000 acres of land from development – to capture and store carbon – for today and the future.

Partners in habitat restoration

On a mild November day, volunteers from Wisconsin's Challenge Academy worked with Conservancy staff (upper left photo) to restore the remnant sand prairie at Holland Sand Prairie by removing non-native trees and brush, piling brush for future burning, and loading usable firewood to be sold to campers at nearby Perrot State Park to benefit the Park. Friends of the Holland Sand Prairie later seeded the newly cleared areas with seeds collected from native plants on the property. Your support allows us to work with conservation partners to manage the lands you've protected.

Eyes on the future: enduring protection for an ancient landscape

Written by Dave Skoloda with photos by Nadia Czajkowski

Jim Czajkowski has a vision for the future of the land where he and his wife, Joyce, have lived for the last 40 years. The vision is rooted in the past; their land is home for ancient bur and white oak trees, some of which have been growing there since the American Revolution.

The 80-acre property near the Wisconsin River in Crawford County has a relict oak savanna, and the property management plan that is part of their conservation easement with Mississippi Valley Conservancy includes restoration and maintenance of the savanna.

The Czajkowskis' land is home to globally imperiled oak savannas with oak trees dating back to the time of the Revolutionary War.

Oak savannas – wide spreading trees with grassy park-like vegetation beneath – were once a common landscape in the Midwest, but only a fraction of that landscape survives. With investments of hard work and money, the Czajkowskis have reclaimed land that was overgrown with invasive honeysuckle. Jim said in a recent interview that the savanna was identified by Abbie Church, MVC's conservation director, when she surveyed the property as part of the easement planning. They learned the age of the oaks when they participated in a study by scientists at the University of Wisconsin-Platteville who did borings of oak trees in the Driftless Area to reveal a long-term picture of drought in the region. One of the trees was dated to 1768.

Czajkowski, 73, a retired Crawford County Circuit Court judge, serves as chair of the Land Protection and Management Committee of the



Jim and Joyce Czajkowski, shown with granddaughter Tess, are developing their extended land management plan.

Conservancy's board of directors. In that capacity he has now extended his vision to how to fund maintenance on the land after ownership passes to others sometime in the future. Joyce said in a telephone interview that this is part of their longtime caring for the land that they found when Jim finished his Air Force service and joined a Prairie du Chien law firm.

Jim knows he's not going to outlive the savanna, so he set out to find a way to provide future maintenance since the Conservancy doesn't have the resources for long-term habitat management on privately owned land with easements. Although he and Joyce have been planning for future care of the land for years, Jim's recent diagnosis of lymphoma "spurred me on," he said.

Jim learned of a land trust in Door County that had arranged with the Wisconsin Natural Resources Foundation to manage an endowment for maintenance of a protected property. He used that plan as a model for what he proposed for the Conservancy – a voluntary endowment funded by a land owner – a \$40,000 minimum investment – managed by the WNRF to pay costs of future maintenance under a management plan created by the property owner and the Conservancy.

Jim said he and Joyce and their land would "be the guinea pigs" for the recently approved endowment plan.

The conservation plan they are working on must take into account climate change, he said, citing the intense rainstorms and the uncertainties about what species of plants will survive the changes to come. The signs of change are evident in erosion from more intense storms, the decline of bird species, and the continuing threat of invasive species including multiflora rose and honeysuckle.

Abbie and others will have to figure it out, he said, but they'll have money to work with from the endowment. "We can't simply drop off the face of the earth and expect [the work] to continue" without the thousands of dollars in returns from the endowment.



The Czajkowskis have a commitment from their daughters, Lara and Nadia, and their spouses, to keep up the care of the property. "They've spent many hours working on the prairie," Jim said. For example, after an autumn burn on the steep land, in early December, Lara and Michael spread 100 pounds of prairie seed in the area burned. The 100-year plan for the land under the endowment is to be finished in February 2021.

At left: Jim, daughter Lara, and granddaughter Tess demonstrate the size of one of the oldest oaks on their property, while grandson Kye takes aim at some wild game with his stick gun.

MEMBER SPOTLIGHT

Expanding the circle



With seven grandchildren and seven great-grandchildren, Dorothy Wetterlin has plenty of reasons to care about the future of the planet. She also knows the gentle power of a coffee party to widen the circle of support.

Photo courtesy of Julie Wetterlin

Several years ago, after reading a story about a local organization that was trying to save bats, Dorothy Wetterlin called the Conservancy to learn more. Her daughters are both nature-lovers who want to “save the planet,” and her interest in the environment has grown, thanks to them. One of her daughters uses solar power for her home and the other has her yard planted to feed birds and pollinators.

Dorothy connected with Carol Abrahamzon and invited her for coffee. She so enjoyed meeting Carol and learning about the Conservancy that she suggested Carol come back with more information to share with some of her friends. This became a little ritual, and Dorothy invited different friends each time. As interest grew, she even rallied a group of those friends to reserve a table and attend our fall fundraiser and auction. Fun was had by all.

Now ninety years old, Dorothy says she’s always enjoyed her experiences with the Conservancy. She recalls one year when she attended the member meeting by herself. She sat at a table with complete strangers who were very nice and made her feel welcome. When the program was about to begin one of them got up and went to the podium. To her surprise, he was the featured guest speaker!

We thank Dorothy for sharing her circle and her ongoing support.

MORE WAYS TO PROTECT LAND

Gifts of Stock

Gifts of appreciated stock can save you taxes in two ways. They can help avoid paying capital gains tax on the increase in value of your stock, and you can receive a tax deduction for the full fair market value of the stock on the date of the gift. To find out more, call Carol Abrahamzon at (608-784-3606 x 4).

Planned Giving

The Conservancy can be remembered in wills or living trusts through cash or property bequests. This is one of the simplest ways to make a future gift. Some ways in which you may include the Conservancy in your plans:

- Leave a fixed amount in your will. You may include a specific dollar amount, or a percentage of your assets.
- Appreciated assets such as real estate, stocks, bonds or securities can be donated, and tax benefits realized from the donation without paying tax on capital gains.

Thanks to *YOU*, amazing things are happening.

MEMBERS OF 2020

\$10,000 & Above

Anonymous
Emily Campbell Bequest
Jim Fowler
Franciscan Sisters of
Perpetual Adoration
Barbara and Donald Frank
The PMG Foundation, Inc.
c/o Trust Point
Sue Anne Gelatt Foundation
c/o Trust Point
La Crosse Community Foundation
Warren and Denise Loveland
The Paul E. Stry Foundation
Rob and Kathie Tyser
Nick and Yonok Zeller

\$5,000 - \$9,999

American Transmission Company
David Bange
Chris and Joyce Barlow
Michael and Barbara Baroni
Gretchen Benjamin
Tony and Teresa Brenengen
Pat Caffrey and Peg Zappen
Roy Campbell and Ellen Ullsvik
Charles and Diane Canniff
Dave Hackett and Ellen Brooks
Harvey Fund of Greater Milwaukee
Foundation
Todd and Lin Huffman
George and Sharon Kerckhove
Land Trust Alliance
Jon and Ann Rigden
Susan Ruedisili
Karen Steingraber and
John Durbrow
Jim and Jo Ann Wickizer
Wisconsin Dept. of Veterans Affairs
WLAX/WEUX Fox 25-48
Xcel Energy

\$1,000 - \$4,999

Anonymous
3 Amigos Property Management
Carol and Bill Abrahamson
Michael Aleckson
Byron and Susann Annis
Randall Bekkers and Laurie Harmon
Cindy and Bill Berg
Thomas Boston
Jim and Jan Brady
Jennifer and Mark Brumm
Erica Burger
Cece Caron and Thomas Erb
Steve and Susan Carpenter
Clif Bar Family Foundation
Matthew and Marilee Cole
Crawford County Community Fund
James and Joyce Czajkowski
Dairyland Power Cooperative
Daniel Deetz and Rebecca
Haack-Deetz
Mary and Leland Drangstveit

Tim and Sue Durtsche
EarthShare
Eric and Kay Edquist
Jen and Andrew Erickson
Jay and Diane Fernholz
Joan Filla
Robert and Barbara Fisher
F.J. Robers Co., LLC
Fowler & Hammer, Inc.
Marlene Gerzema
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Bud and Barb Hammes
Mary Helgren and Richard Radek
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Kathryn Hietbrink
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Joe and Deb Hooyma
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Tim and Regina Johnson
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Daniel and Katherine Kern
Maureen Kinney
Tom and Linda Kirch
Sue Knopf
Ralph Knudson and Nancy
Heerens-Knudson
Fred Koerschner
Forrest and Sue Ann Krause
Nancy Kroner
George and Elizabeth Kruck
Clyde Kuennen
David and Karen Lange
Joel Lazingger
John and Louise Leary
Jean and Mark Ledman
Chuck and Linda Lee
Richard and Dorothy Lenard
Richard and Patti Lokken
Tom Lukens and Pam Saunders
Mike and Carol Mader
Mayo Clinic Health System
James Michelson
David R Morrison
Michael and Susan Mosling
Natural Resources Foundation
of Wisconsin, Inc
Loran Nordgren
Mike and Sylvia O'Brien
Dennis and Sarah Ohlrogge
Organic Valley
People's Food Cooperative, Inc.
Ron and Jane Rada
Scott Reber and Marilyn Shultz
Shelley Roberts and Dewey Moore
Patricia Schmid
Roz Schnick Consulting, LLC
Alan and Rosanne Schulz
Jeff and Kris Sexton
Tom and Sharon Sharratt
David and Gretchen Skoloda
Target Circle
James Theler and Suzanne Harris
Craig and Mary Thompson

Audrey Uber
Keith and Lynne Valiquette
Mary Veldey
Steve Ventura and Margaret Krome
Viroqua Area Foundation
Robert and Lori Wallock
Edward and Roberta Walsh
Dorothy Wetterlin
Eric and Vicki Wheeler
Pat and Bobbie Wilson

\$500 - \$999

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Brian and Joyce Abernathy
Dennis and Leslie Adams
Altra Financial Services
Allan Beatty
Brian and Barb Benson
Sara Bentley
Dianna Brown
Elizabeth Campbell
Forrest and Leigh Carlson
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Cleary-Kumm Foundation
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Paul and Becky DeGarmo
James and Sue Dillenbeck
Mark and Jane Domroese
Sr. Helen Elsbernd
Annette Friedewald
Philip and Melissa Gelatt
Greater Milwaukee Foundation –
JayKay Foundation Fund
Dianne Greenley
Sigurd and Jean Ann Gundersen III
Werner and Dianna Haas
Glenn Hagar
Bruce Harvey and Nancy Ettenheim
Dr. Mark and Anne-Marie Hein
Mike and Mary Carole Hoffman
John and Rita Hoffmann
Drake Hokanson and Carol Kratz
Christopher and Krista Huiras
Carolyn Mahlum-Jenkins and
Glen Jenkins
George and Carmeen Johnston
Aaron and Kristin Koepke
Catherine E Kolkmeier
Barbara and Joseph Kruse
Patricia Kulig
Seamus Leahy and Lisa Zinzow
Laurie Logan and Alice Bachop
Randy and Rita Magno
Milo and Beverly Mayer Mach Family
Fund of La Crosse Community
Foundation
Ron McKelvey and Chris Saudek
Robert and Patricia Mika
Mike Mossman
Mike Mulroy
Dr. James H Munn
James and Phylis Munsch
Marilyn Nieckarz
Rita Oldenburg
Joe Pfeiffer
Allan Pischke
Michael Polelle
Pete and Barb Putnam
John and Kathy Reinhart
James and Kathryn Rozovics
Gerard Rugowski and Jayne Stokke
Jack and Judy Rusch
Dennis and Sharon Ryan
Jed and Melanie Schaller

Paul and Joan Schoenfeld
Vicky and Jon Schultz
Marc and Sue Schultz
Jeri Sebo
John Shillinglaw
Jim and Rose Sime
The Sinsinawa Dominicans
Fred and Jean Skemp
Dennis and Betsy Stannard
Isaac Tippetts
Carol and Phil Toberman
Rev. Allan and Carla Townsend
Trust Point, Inc.
Christine Uber
Jonathan and Debera Uy
Walmart Community Grants Team
Leslie Wegener
Wisconsin Land Fund

\$250 - \$499

Anonymous
Julie Abrahamson and TJ Clark
Robert W. Baird & Co.
Dr. Vance Baker
Laurie Bartz
Erin and Colin Belby
Benevity Community Impact Fund
Ruthann Benson
Laurence and Catherine Berg
Benjamin Bomkamp
Sarah Bratnober
Michael Brown
Paul Buboltz
Jac and Susan Bulk
Loren and Margaret Cade
Kristi and Frank Cadwell
Ursula Cejpek
Rebecca Christoffel and Andrew Williams
Abbie Church
Tom Clafin
Tom and Mary Jo Clark
Peter Clark
Thomas and Kimberley Culp
Curtis and Kristine Cvikota
Ruth and Daniel Devitt
Thomas and Joyce Ellenbecker
The Elliott Family Fund
Gladys Eternicka
Juliet Eyers
Ruth Frise
Andrea Fritts
La Crosse Community Foundation's
Fred and Mary Ann Funk Family Fund
Mary Ellen Gallagher
Jim and Jan Gallagher
Drs. James and Jo Glasser
Sandy and Kurt Grunwald
Wendelin A Guentner
Charles and Cheryl Hanson
Les and Sue Hill
Dan and Joanne Jackson
Chris and Jane Kerbaugh
Larry and Susan Kirch
John and Linda Knight
Robert Koehler
Ann and Carl Korschgen
Mike and Becky Kreiling
Al Kube
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Stephen and Cynthia Lenser
Lennie and Maria Lichter
Carolyn Lindeman
David and Connie Long
Ken and Sara Lubinski
Ted and Lisa Ludwig
Kevin and Jenny McCoy

David and Sheila Momont
Tim Muehlfeld
Ursula Muehllehner
David Nash
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Mandy Nogle
James and Donna Omernik
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Becky Post and Dave Maddocks
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Brian and Annake Ramsey
Riley Reinhart
Tom and Cindy Rorer
Lucas Rioux-Maldague
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Michael Ross
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Marty Sellers and Nancy Hartje
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Don and Dee Dee Sims
Dave and Barb Skogen
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Nancy Steinhoff
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Pam Thiel
Tom and Jane Treglowne
David and Betty Van Dyke
Wegner CPAs
Topf Wells and Sally Probasco
Mary Westlund
John Wetzel
Joanne and Michael White
Margaret and Daryl Wood
Levi Wood

\$100 - \$249

Anonymous
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John and Maureen Adams
Rhonda Akeson
Gene and Patricia Amsrud
David and Janine Andersen of
JK Farms LLC
Craig Anderson and Kile Martz
Constance Arzigian
Terry Baier
Jim and Marlene Bannen
Frank and Irene Barmore
Bruce and Kathy Bartel
Bill and Marsha Bateman
Judy Bautcha
Julia Behrenbeck
Howard and Katherine Bell
Dr. Bill and Heidi Bender
Sister Sharon Berger
Anna Biermeier and Roger Hanson
Margaret Birchler
David Blackey
Kara Breems
Peg Brenneke
Ann Brice and Bill Haviland
Bonnie Buchman
Martin and Kathleen Buehler
Deborah Buffton and
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Roger and Lisa Haro
Vince and Janice Hatt
Richard and Jane Heiden
Bill and Mary Ann Hein
Patricia Heizler
Jay Heldt and Karen Kouba
Betty Heuslein
Amy Heuslein
Joan Higgins and Carl Herrmann
Bob and Karen Hillary
Lorne Hillier
Dave and Patsy Hofer
Gracie and Jeff Hohman
Jay Holinger
Betsy Chris Holland
Jane Holzhauer
Sandra Hood Trust
Kevin Horvath
Bob and Marilyn Hurt
Christopher Hyatt and Tisha Sandberg
Yvonne Hyde
Wayne Jacobson
Jim and Linda Jenkins
Niels and Beth Jensen
Jackie Joday
Kent and Lee Johnson
Frederick Jones

Larry Jost of Mill Creek Land &
Cattle Company, LLC
Alcee and Margaret Jumonville
Gerald Kann
Mark and Jacqueline Kartman
Karen Keil
Lewis Kellum
Kevin Kenow and Ruth Davis
Andrew Khitsun
Christa Kiersch
Ron and Tawni Kind
Khris and Liz Kleba
Dr. Fredric and Marion Kleinberg
Butch and Lola Kleinsmith
Allison Kleist
Kathryn Kleist
Alexander Kluth II
Kathleen Knox
Melinda Knutson and Dave Ford
Lynn Konsela
Mike Koppa
Nicholas and Sarah Korte
Eric Kraemer and Francine Klein
Deborah Krauss Smith
Dennis and Sharon Krumenauer
Lars and Marit Kulleseid
John Kussmaul
Kwik Trip Match Program
Rick and Mary Kay Lange
Ann Larkin and Paul Owecke
Rebecca Larsen
Ken and Lois Larson
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Hummingbird photo courtesy of Bruce Barrel

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Make a tax-free distribution from your IRA.

If you are 70½ or older, you can make a tax-free distribution from your traditional or Roth IRA to Mississippi Valley Conservancy. You can donate up to \$100,000 each year without incurring income tax on your withdrawal – it's an efficient way to protect land, air, and water. For more information, call Carol Abrahamzon today at 608-784-3606 x 4.

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The Stewardship Circle is made up of a special group of land conservancy supporters who have made a lasting commitment to land protection through a variety of estate-planning tools. These include bequests in a will or trust, charitable gift annuities, charitable remainder trusts, IRA designations, and gifts of life insurance.

Please consider joining this dedicated group of conservationists today by making Mississippi Valley Conservancy a part of your legacy plan.



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Photo courtesy of Brian Ramsey

On behalf of the next generation of conservationists, we thank our Stewardship Circle of supporters.



Photo courtesy of Tom Rhorer

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Mark your calendar for outdoor fun in 2021! *

You're invited to all of these family-friendly walks, hikes, outdoor and online activities. Get to know the land you've helped to protect.

LINKED TO THE LAND HIKE SERIES

Learn something new at every event.

March 20	Starting Your Garden Indoors	Online Presentation
April 25	Trail Trek Challenge 2021 Kick-off	Earth Fair – Online and in Myrick Park
May 8	International Migratory Bird Walk	Online Presentation
June 5	Planning a Pollinator Garden	Online Presentation
July 10	Kayaking Basics	Black River Bottoms, La Crosse
August 14	Fishing in the Driftless Area	Black River Bottoms, La Crosse
September 11	Can it, Freeze it, Dry it	Online Presentation
October 10	Foraging Hike	Tunnelville Cliffs, La Farge

SPECIAL EVENTS

March 27	Protecting our Climate	Online Presentation
November 5	Fall Fundraiser	Radisson Hotel La Crosse

Event dates and locations are subject to changes. To receive updates and reminders, sign up for our newsletter at the bottom of our website at www.mississippivalleyconservancy.org.

"Like" us on Facebook for more updates.

** We'll go back to group events soon. Meanwhile, we've got great presenters and resources to get you outdoors on your own.*



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Mississippi Valley Conservancy is a regional, nonprofit land trust based in La Crosse, Wisconsin. The Conservancy has permanently conserved 21,351 acres of bluffs, prairies, wetlands, and streams in 9 counties around the Mississippi, Kickapoo, and Wisconsin Rivers since its founding in 1997. Over 5,000 acres are open to the public for hiking, bird watching, hunting, fishing, photography, and snowshoeing.

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In the Driftless

Homage to Ben Logan

The watercress stays green all winter in the valley springs. Along the ridges prehistoric cliffs and around more recent mounds the birch and alder grow. The railroad ran through here a dozen decades in the past, through tunnels, over bridges, carrying grain and cattle, passengers and crews.

Now the fog hangs heavy over sand mines, machinery dealerships and fewer farms. The streams still flow and trout still swim, but now the storied past is less than dream.

The hill country was full of voices when horses pulled the plows and women churned butter in the shade of milking sheds.

Out here a year is an arbitrary thing, unlike the changes of the moon, the coming of the snow, the coming of the spring.

Ed Block © 2020