



# the VOYAGEUR

SUMMER 2016

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE GROSSE ILE NATURE & LAND CONSERVANCY

VOLUME 24 ■ NUMBER 2

"Today I have grown taller from walking with the trees." — Karl Baker

## UPCOMING EVENTS

### AT THE GIBRALTAR BAY UNIT (GBU) DETROIT RIVER INT'L WILDLIFE REFUGE

28820 E. River Rd.  
Open to the Public  
Daily, Dawn to Dusk

#### WETLAND WILDLIFE

Sat., July 23 @ 10am  
Wetlands are essential to many wildlife species. This kid-focused program will explore the characteristics of these species in a very hands-on way!

#### LOVELY LOTUSES

Sunday, Aug 14 @ 2:00pm  
Join us for a hike to learn about the American Lotus and its rich natural and cultural history, as well as the many other coastal wetland plants we see along the way.

#### INCREDIBLE INSECTS

Sunday, Sept 11 @ 2:00pm  
Early fall is a great time to explore the Insect world! Join us for this kid-focused, hands-on, insect exploration!

#### AIRPORT NATURE AREA

Open, hosted by GINLC  
Sundays, May 1- Oct 30  
1:00 – 4:00 pm



JEREMY STOVALL

## NATIVE SPECIES OF GROSSE ILE

# Shumard Oak (*Quercus Shumardii*)

BY MADELEINE JONES and BERT URBANI

When we made our first leaf collection books for elementary school science, we were trained to look for the teathed lobes of the red oak leaf and the smooth lobes of the white oak. We routinely looked for the ragged acorn caps of the burr oak. But this one, the Shumard oak, is probably new to you, especially if you are a native Michigander.

As noted in our Spring newsletter, an article by Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge manager John Hartig reported that a 2015 plant survey in the forests of the Downriver area noted the heretofore unknown presence in Grosse Ile's forests of the Shumard oak, listed as a "species of special concern" in the state

of Michigan. Shumard oak was found to be a dominant species among Grosse Ile oaks.

**CHARACTERISTICS:** The Shumard oak is a medium-sized, long-lived tree, reaching 40 – 60 feet in height (some sources say 75 – 100 feet), with a spread of 40 – 60 feet at maturity. It is a moderately fast grower, 13 – 24 inches per year. It is a stately tree with beautiful fall color ranging from brilliant red to red-orange.

**SITES:** The Shumard oak fits well in our local habitat in wet, low woods on clay soils. In its native state, it prefers a habitat on glacial

– Continued on page 9





# Reflections From the President

BY PETER KANTZ

Summer has arrived and Grosse Ile is unsurpassed when it comes to ways for enjoying this time of year. Walk the trails through the wildlife refuge or open space. Kayak on the river or down the Thorofare canal. Enjoy cool breezes off the river at Sunrise Park. Ride, jog or walk the bike paths. Nature is all around you. Watch the eagles, hawks and blue heron as they drift on the air currents in search of their next meal. The days are long and there is plenty of time to enjoy the great outdoors.

Grosse Ile Nature and Land Conservancy owns or stewards many properties, all

of which are open to the public, the following are just a few: 1) Hennepin Marsh Gateway, located on Meridian about a 1/2 mile north of Bridge, contains a boardwalk, observation platform and information signage. 2) The trailhead at Manchester Woods, located on Meridian, north of Rucker, contains a sign kiosk, bike rack, bench and trail access. 3) Intrepid Pond, located at the corner of Meridian and Intrepid, contains a path around the pond with informational signage and many native trees and bushes. 4) The Gibraltar Bay Unit (GBU) of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge, now open 7 days a week from dawn to dusk, located at 28820 East River Road, contains trails, observation platforms, benches and picnic tables. The GINLC has maintained the GBU area for over 20 years. Other areas owned or supported in part by GINLC include; Sunrise Park, Centennial Farm, the Kobiljak Preserve and multiple properties along the Thorofare Canal.



*GINLC volunteers work at the Intrepid Pond on Meridian. Peter Kantz and John Leon (cutting grass), Doug Thiel and Paul Gloor (tree planting) and Eric Michael (whacking weeds)*



Keeping up with the properties GINLC owns and maintains is a year-round task. When the weather warms up, the amount of time required increases dramatically. From cutting grass and planting trees to building new structures, maintaining rock gardens and blazing new trails, GINLC volunteers answer the call. Often times our efforts are supplemented by other groups and volunteers.

Every Monday from 9:00 AM to noon a dedicated group, made up of GINLC members and volunteers, gathers at the GBU to take on maintenance and new construction tasks. So far this year, the Monday morning volunteers have been supplemented by groups from General Motors, Summit Academy and DTE Energy. Without the help of outside organizations and individuals, GBU would not be open to the general public on a daily basis.

If you'd like to become active in GINLC and aid in our mission "To promote for the public benefit the preservation, stewardship and understanding of the natural resources in the Township of Grosse Ile and surrounding area," please email us at [info@ginlc.org](mailto:info@ginlc.org) or call me (734-588-2149) or another board member. We have many opportunities at the GBU and elsewhere for you to become involved.





Left: The photogenic House Wren, Bottom Left: Natalie picks garlic mustard deep in the forest at the Hennepin Gateway Preserve. Bottom Right: An American Bull Frog, typical of those heard during the Frog and Toad Survey.



ALAN D. WILS

## Education in Action

BY NATALIE CYPHER, *Interpretive Naturalist*

This spring we hosted several great educational events. Beginning in late April and through June we held weekly Frog and Toad surveys within the Gibraltar Bay Unit and the adjacent Grosse Ile Municipal Airport property. Species heard included Western Chorus Frog, American Toad, Green Frog and American Bullfrog.

During the peak of spring bird migration in early May a great group of folks came out for our Birds of the Bay program. We saw and identified over 20 species of birds that morning, including several male Yellow Warblers battling for territory, a group of Bufflehead ducks in the bay, and a very cooperative House Wren who posed for some photos.

Our 3rd annual Garlic Mustard pull was a great success, with a small but hardworking group of volunteers removing approximately 400 pounds of Garlic Mustard from the Hennepin Gateway Preserve! Garlic Mustard is an invasive plant species that grows aggressively and outcompetes many of our native species. Although edible and nutritious for humans, none of our wildlife eats the plant, so it severely disrupts our local food webs. Thanks to everyone who helped out that morning!

Please consider joining us for one (or all) of our upcoming summer and fall programs – all are welcome! For more information about educational programs please contact Natalie Cypher at [GINLC.education@gmail.com](mailto:GINLC.education@gmail.com) or 734-624-7993.

## NO MORE COAL TAR!

BY BERT URBANI

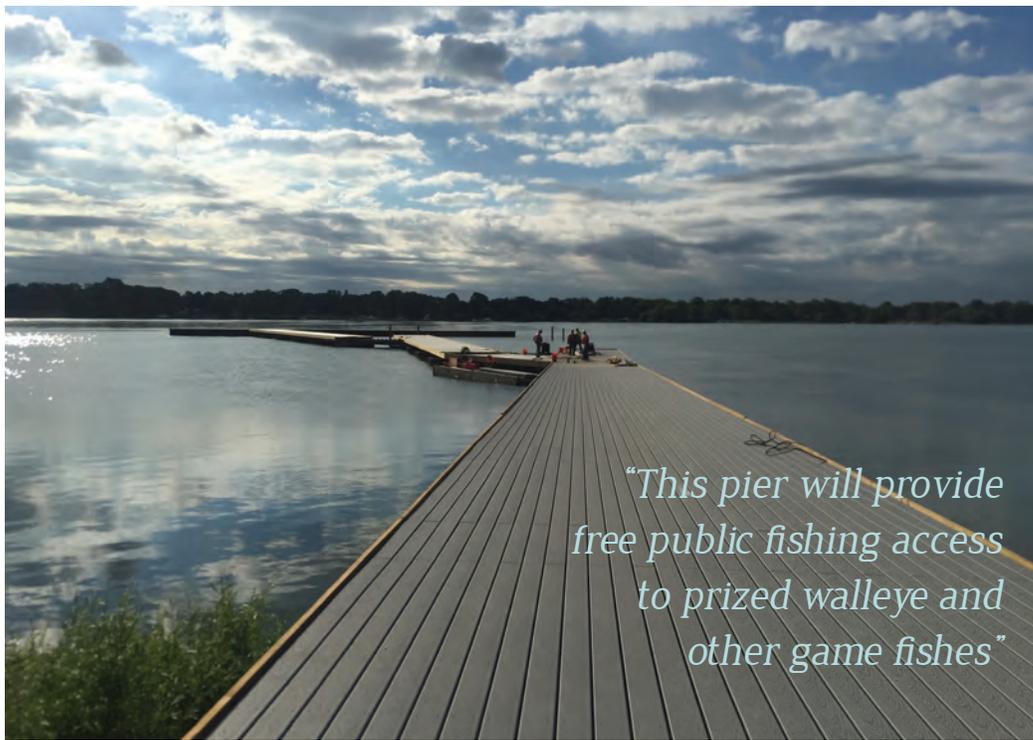
As much as we all love summer, we have to admit it brings some annoyances, some unpleasanties, and some downright hazards. There are orange construction barrels, mosquitoes, and coal tar-sealed driveways. Recently, all over Grosse Ile, people, businesses, and even the EPA have had their driveways and parking lots coated with sealants that contain up to 35% coal tar pitch, a known human carcinogen.

According to scientific studies, coal tar releases toxic emissions, called Polycyclic Aromatic Hydrocarbons, or PAHs, which pollute the environment. That awful smell? Toxic molecules are entering your family's lungs. PAH-laden dust contaminates our shoes and our pets' bare paws, is tracked into our homes and washed into the Detroit River.

Asphalt sealants do not pose the same environmental and health risks of coal tar. They are used exclusively in the western U.S. and are available locally. In fact, Grosse Ile Township uses asphalt sealants to repair the bike paths. Van Buren Township passed an ordinance in December 2015 banning the use of coal tar sealants in the township, and a bill has been introduced in the Michigan legislature for a state-wide ban. These products have been banned in Minnesota since 2013. For more information, see the enclosed brochure or visit [epa.gov](http://epa.gov).

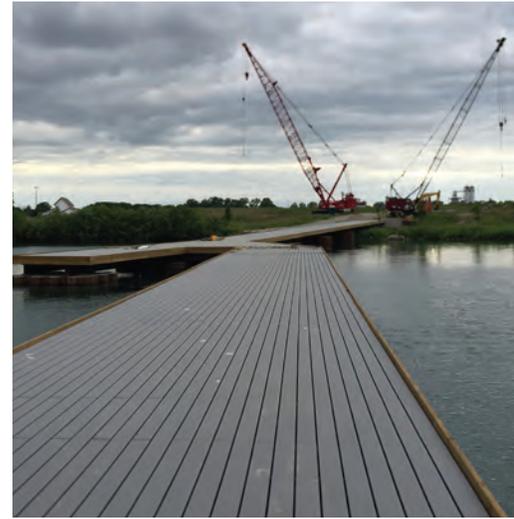


US GEOLOGICAL SURVEY



*“This pier will provide free public fishing access to prized walleye and other game fishes”*

Construction of a 700-ft boardwalk with a 200-ft fishing pier is well underway at the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge Gateway on W. Jefferson in Trenton.



## FISHING PIER UPDATE:

# Construction Continues at the Refuge

BY ROBERT PRIMEAU, *Landscape Designer, Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge*

Where once only water flowed, a meandering boardwalk over 700 feet long now reaches into the Detroit River as construction continues on the Fishing Pier and School Ship boat dock at the Refuge Gateway in Trenton, future headquarters of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge.

Construction began late in December of 2016. Workers from E.C. Korneffel Co., a marine construction firm based in Trenton, started by building a series of 19 piers, steel towers filled with stone anchored into the riverbed. At the end of these piers sits a 200 foot-long breakwater: the fishing pier. Underwater construction of the pier concluded in mid-March to prevent disturbing fish spawning activity in the area.

With the underwater portion complete, work has shifted to the steel and lumber framing that sits above the river. Workers have nearly completed installation of composite decking, locally sourced from Trenton-based Mans Lumber, that runs the length of the boardwalk.

When completed, this pier will provide free public fishing access to prized walleye and other game fishes, as well as views of the shore previously only available to boaters. The pier's boat dock will be the home port to the Michigan Sea Grant's School Ship, providing environmental research opportunities for area schoolchildren. Completion is slated for December of 2016.

*Location,  
Location,  
Location!*

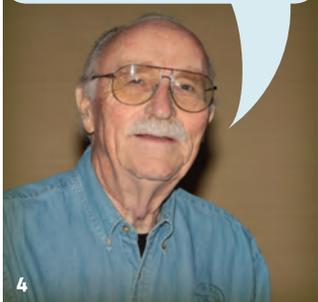
## MORE PROPERTIES FOR THE CONSERVANCY

BY INGO HASSERODT, *Vice President of Land Acquisition*

Thanks to the generous donation by Mrs. Kathleen Wright of three wooded lots on Marlborough Street, the Conservancy in conjunction with Township Open Space now protects nearly one mile of woodlands along Thoroughfare Canal. Mrs. Wright of Riverview was concerned that her property on the water would be changed by development and selected the Conservancy to keep it in its natural state. We are grateful to

Mrs. Wright and also to Michigan Title Insurance staff for preparing the paper work, including the title transfer.

The protection of these riparian woodlands is a major goal of the Conservancy. Too many have been lost with detrimental consequences to wildlife and water quality. We are proud of what we have accomplished so far and appreciative of the citizens who have generously contributed to this goal.



# Take It Outside Contest Winners

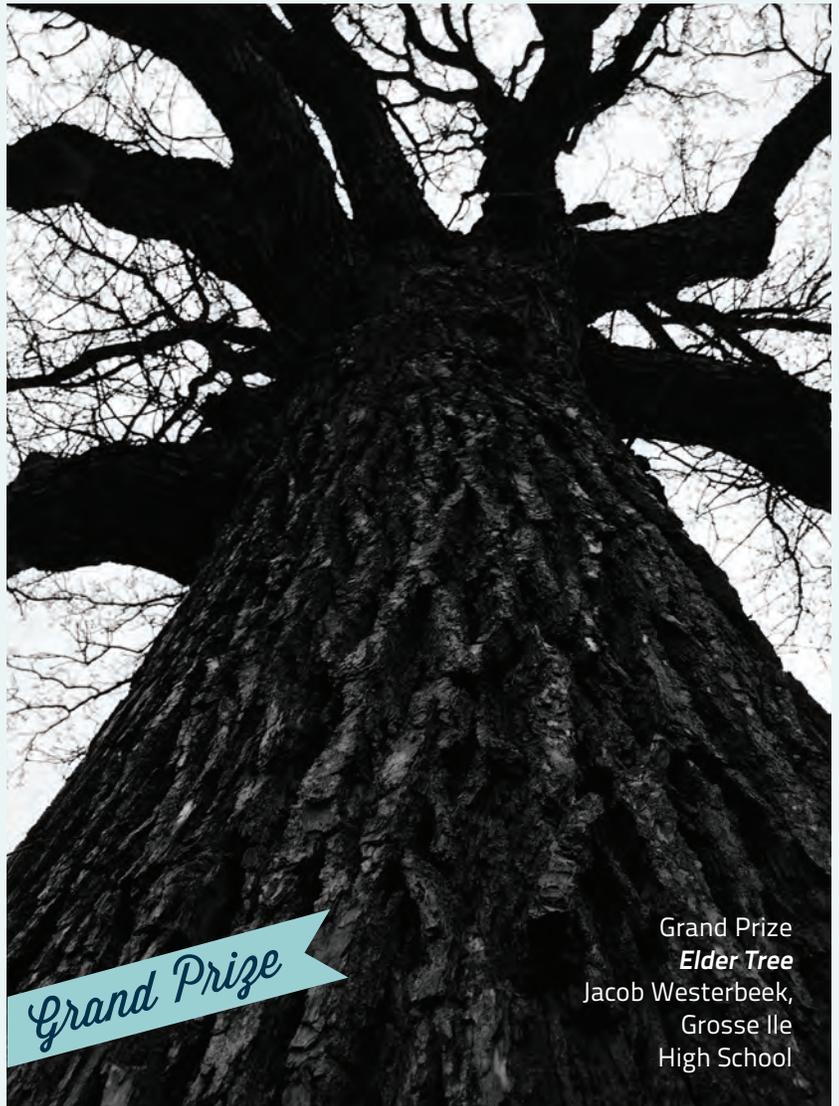
BY BARBARA THAYER

The GINLC photo contest for 2016 is judged. The photos are ready to be enjoyed. They certainly speak for themselves.

GINLC annually sponsors the photo contest, Take It Outside, to encourage high school students to appreciate nature. Looking through the camera lens slows you down, and reveals interesting details and perspectives. We had 103 photos submitted from eight area high schools. Ten winners were selected, one grand prize and 1st, 2nd, and 3rd prizes in three categories, Waterways, Patterns in Nature, and Fragility and/or Strength in Nature, as well as 13 Honorable Mentions. Cash prizes were awarded to the winners. The winning and honorable mention photos were on display at IslandFest in May. Look for them at the Bacon Memorial Library in Wyandotte in October and at the Trenton Veterans Memorial Library in November and, of course, on our website, [www.ginlc.org](http://www.ginlc.org).

The judges were E.L. Conley and Sean P. Cook. Although high school students can enter independently, teachers have been so important to the success of this contest. We thank our judges and the teachers who supported their students and our contest. Our thanks also to a Trenton business, The Framery and Gallery, which helped GINLC with the mats for the photographs.

*Two of our winners, Elena Maria Farmer from Riverview and Alyssa Farnham-Jenkins from Trenton celebrated at IslandFest and posed by their pictures. Elena is shown with her grandmother.*



Grand Prize  
**Elder Tree**  
Jacob Westerbeek,  
Grosse Ile  
High School



## THANK YOU, JUDGES!

**E.L. CONLEY** is a well-known professional photographer, with more than 30 years' experience, with successful freelance work combined with photojournalism in the Downriver community newspapers. He is the winner of six Michigan Press Association awards. He has photographed social events and hard news, as well as portraits of notable community figures and national politicians such as Hillary Clinton and President Barack Obama.

**SEAN COOK** is a native Detroiter who has been photographing ever since he could push the shutter on his mother's Nikon film camera. His expertise has been sought after by the Ford Motor Company, the Detroit Red Wings, and the NFL, among others. Sean's advice to young minds behind the lens: "Experiment and learn as much as possible and always remember to capture what makes you happiest."

PHOTO  
CONTEST

RIGHT: 1st Place // Fragility in Nature  
*A Prayer for Something Higher*  
Elena Maria Farmer,  
Riverview High School

CENTER RIGHT: 1st Place // Waterways  
*Into the Abyss*  
John Cameron,  
Grosse Ile High School

BELOW: 3rd Place // Waterways  
*Untitled*  
Mary Miller,  
Wyandotte High School



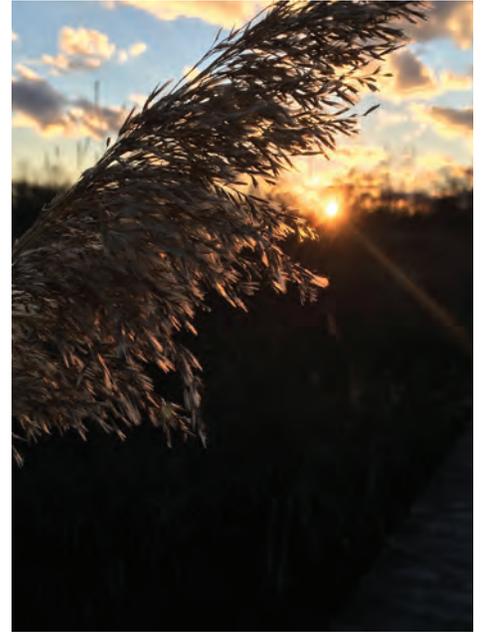
LEFT: 3rd Place // Fragility in Nature  
*Flower*  
Nicole Parvin,  
Grosse Ile High School

RIGHT: 3rd Place // Patterns in Nature  
*The Past, the Present & the Future*  
Adeline Ficek-Rea,  
Riverview High School

BELOW: 1st Place // Patterns in Nature  
*Walk With Me*  
Alyssa Farnham-Jenkins, Trenton High School



BELOW: 2nd Place // Patterns in Nature  
*Whispers in the Wind*  
Kassidy Wilson,  
Flat Rock High School



CENTER:  
2nd Place //  
Waterways  
*Island Life*  
Emily Walsh,  
Grosse Ile  
High School

LEFT:  
2nd Place //  
Fragility in Nature  
*A Touch of Beauty*  
Alyssa Farnham-  
Jenkins,  
Trenton High  
School

## GINLC Awards Scholarships

The Grosse Ile Nature & Land Conservancy annually awards a scholarship to a graduating Grosse Ile High School senior. The scholarship is presented in memory of one of the Conservancy's founding members, Dr. Bruce Jones, whose passion for nature was only matched by his passion for educating and inspiring young people to care for the natural environment.

This year, GINLC awarded not one, but two, scholarships to worthy students. On June 2, during the high school scholarship recognition event, the GINLC presented a \$500 scholarship to **Allison Crowley Johnson** and a \$250 scholarship to **Cody Docherty**. Allison spent two of her high school years in Brazil where her activities included starting an eco-club and working with the school's Global Issues Network on a service project to "help Brazil's ecosystem and the local community of Salvador Brazil." Cody was presented with a scholarship for his Eagle Scout project on Grosse Ile. He constructed a small wood chip pathway around the Intrepid Pond retention basin. He oversaw all construction and planning, using Grosse Ile Township's excess wood chips. He also placed signs around the pathway to educate walkers on some of the local plants and encourages them to "Take nothing but pictures, Leave nothing but footprints." Congratulations, Allison and Cody, and best wishes for future success.

## FROM GROSSE ILE TO BRAZIL TO PURDUE: Ally Crowley Johnson's Story

BY LIZ HUGEL

Allison Crowley Johnson will be attending Purdue University in September, with a little help from the GINLC. Her application for the Conservancy's annual scholarship included information about her two years of high school in Brazil, which amazed the judges. While in Brazil, Ally started an eco-club and worked on an environmental service project. Along with five friends she decided to help a local ecological reserve, Parque Das Dunas, which was under threat of being destroyed to create a cargo airport.

This reserve is home to 1,300 native plant species including 8 endemic species. *Ameivula abaetensis*, a lizard species found only in this reserve, is of special interest. Its DNA is being studied for a skin cancer cure. The group decided it was critical to increase awareness of the reserve; only 5% of their fellow students knew about the dunes and no one realized its ecological importance.

They started an in-school service club: "DUNES," i.e. Don't Underestimate Nature's Ecological Services. They educated their fellow students with field trips to the park and implemented an action plan to help sustain the ecological reserve. They engineered a rainwater recycling system to help with financial sustainability. A worm farm helped to create fertilizer for the native plant species. They held bake sales to pay for a large water reservoir, tubing and a new roof for the worm farm. Two Saturdays were spent at the reserve installing the water recycling system. The service project was so impactful that it was chosen as a finalist in Harvard's Social Innovation Collaborative "Village to Raise a Child" competition. Ally noted in her essay that she has developed into someone with "much greater care and concern for our environment." She looks forward to continuing to work on environmental projects when she begins her studies at Purdue. Good luck, Ally!

*"They educated their fellow students with field trips to the park and implemented an action plan to help sustain the ecological reserve"*



Continued from cover

lakeplains complete with large and small streams. It is often found growing at elevations higher than 1,600 feet.

**RANGE:** Although this oak species is found widely in the Atlantic Coastal Plains, (from North Carolina to Florida and west to Texas), it was recently discovered in southeastern lower Michigan during a meandering survey. As of May 2016, records show there was one Shumard in Monroe County (1986), three in Macomb County (2005), and four in Wayne County (2006).

**HUMAN USES:** A moderately fast grower, foresters have discovered that the Shumard Oak also adapts well in urban areas and can tolerate a broad range of soil moisture and air pollutants. Due to the high survival rates and steady growth, the Shumard oak is often used for reforestation. The wood is hard, close-grained, and strong, and is used for furniture, flooring, veneer, cabinetry and lumber.

**WILDLIFE USES:** Deer, squirrels, songbirds, wild turkeys, waterfowl and other animals love its plentiful small acorns.

**VIEWING OPPORTUNITIES ON GROSSE ILE:** The Shumard is an excellent producer of acorns, which explains the appearance of more than the documented eight native trees growing in our Downriver area. Take a look at the photos of the leaves and acorns. You may find a “state imperiled” Shumard oak growing in one of our forested pockets of open space and be able to add some “find” numbers for the state record book.

**CONCERNS:** Unfortunately, the Shumard, also known as the southern red oak or swamp red oak, is often attacked by oak wilt fungus, a disease that invades the water-conducting vessels and plugs them. As water movement is slowed, the leaves wilt and rapidly drop off the tree. (See Oak Wilt article on page 10.)

## THE FRIENDS OF GROSSE ILE NATURAL AREAS – Sign Up Today!

BY BERT URBANI

The Grosse Ile Open Space Committee and the Grosse Ile Nature & Land Conservancy have recently partnered to create the Friends of Grosse Ile Natural Areas. The Friends are volunteers who do a variety of tasks to assist in the stewardship of Grosse Ile’s natural treasures, such as planting trees, placing wood chips, helping to build and maintain the trails, monitoring



the Open Space and Conservancy properties for Oak Wilt disease, illegal dumping, vandalism, and hazard trees, and staffing the biannual Dump the Junk events.

“There are only 7 members on the Open Space Committee, and 566 acres of Open Space to oversee. We felt it was important to engage the community, as well as recognize

the many citizens who are already doing this work on their own, hence the creation of the Friends group,” said Open Space chair Cliff St. Pierre.

Although technically, there are significant legal differences between Grosse Ile Open Space land and the properties owned by the GINLC, Nature does not recognize artificial man-made boundaries. And those boundaries are invisible on the ground. “Many GINLC properties are adjacent to Open Space land, so if a volunteer wants to steward the combined space, we think that’s great,” said GINLC president Peter Kantz.

For more information and/or to sign up as a Friend of Grosse Ile Natural Areas, visit the Grosse Ile Open Space website [http://www.grosseile.com/community/open\\_space/index.php](http://www.grosseile.com/community/open_space/index.php) or the GINLC website, [ginlc.org](http://ginlc.org). Sign up forms are also available at the Grosse Ile Township office.

*“There is nothing better than a friend, unless it is a friend with chocolate.” — Linda Grayson*



### KROGER CARDS

Enroll your Kroger Plus card to benefit the Grosse Ile Nature & Land Conservancy! Go to [www.kroger.com/communityrewards](http://www.kroger.com/communityrewards) to enroll or re-enroll (you have to renew every year). Thanks!



### AMAZON SMILE

Don’t forget to smile — Sign up for Amazon Smile! Select Grosse Ile Nature & Land Conservancy as your charitable organization, and then 0.5% of the purchase price of eligible products will be donated to GINLC.

*“Residents are urged to be vigilant about monitoring their privately owned oak trees”*

# Oak Wilt

BY MADELEINE JONES

## WHAT IS IT?

Oak wilt is an easily spread fungus which usually enters a healthy oak tree through a trimming or storm damage wound. Sap forms around the wound, attracting picnic beetles which may bring fungus from nearby infected trees. Oak wilt fungus is widely distributed throughout Michigan and is responsible for the untimely and quick death of native and cultivated oaks. Red oaks are especially susceptible and can die within weeks of infection onset. Fortunately, Oak wilt has not been found on Grosse Ile yet, according to Open Space Committee member Pat Nielson.



## WHAT CAN YOU DO TO STOP THE SPREAD?

Do NOT prune oak trees once warm weather arrives: April 1- October 15. (Dr. D. Roberts, MSU Extension)

If your oak suffers storm damage during this warm period, trim immediately and seal the wound to prevent beetle entry.

Be cautious using mowers, weed trimmers and other equipment that might damage the bark of the oak tree.

Put off construction projects around your oaks until the end of summer.

Do not move fire wood cut from possibly infected trees.

Seek professional help to remove any oak wilt infected trees. The fungus can also be spread root to root from an infected tree to nearby healthy oaks.

**Poems are made by fools like me, but only you can nominate your Heritage Tree**

BY BERT URBANI

The GINLC and the GI Historical Society are still working to renew the island’s Heritage Tree Program. The goal is to identify the special trees on Grosse Ile that should be protected for posterity because of their rarity, size, historical significance or because they are memorial trees. Visit the GINLC website for information about the criteria and the nomination form, or call Pamela A. Frucci at 734-671-0170 or Eric Michael at 313-995-6580.

## WHAT ARE OAK WILT SYMPTOMS?

Oak wilt can be recognized first by the rapid wilting of leaves beginning at the top of the tree. Leaf edges turn brown. The trunk bark may have a slight swelling and a vertical crack as spore pads rupture the bark. The tree’s health decline is sudden., death can occur in weeks or months.

Other indicating factors to consider: Did your tree undergo pruning or storm damage within the last year? Are there other dead or dying oaks in the area?

## SHOULD YOU PANIC ABOUT YOUR HEALTHY MAJESTIC OAK?

No, according to research, trimming is the major cause of oak wilt infections in Michigan today. Avoid the risk. Spread the word. Prevention is the key.

**ONLY PRUNE OAKS WHILE THEY ARE DORMANT AND THE BEETLES ARE INACTIVE!**

Pat Nielson of the Grosse Ile Open Space Committee began researching this issue last year and organized the committee and volunteers to survey the Township’s Open Space areas for signs of oak wilt. None were detected in 2015, and surveys are continuing. Pat urges residents to be vigilant about monitoring their privately owned oak trees, and to assist in the surveys of public trees. This is one of the tasks available for the Friends of Grosse Ile Natural Areas (see page 9).

On a related note, Brian Hill, head of DTE Energy’s Line Clearance department, states that the company does not conduct routine pruning of oak trees during the risk period. Oak trees are marked by a spot of white spray paint and work is done after October 15.



# IslandFest – With a Message!

BY BERT URBANI

The GINLC participated in the IslandFest parade again this year, but this time our float had a HEALTHY LAWN message. Accompanied by Conservancy members, Girl Scouts and a trio of GIHS seniors, the float featured GINLC treasurer John Leon sitting atop the lawn mower we use to maintain the grass at Intrepid Pond on Meridian and the Gibraltar Bay Unit of the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge. He was joined by “Puddles the Blue Goose,” the mascot of our partner, the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, and assorted grandchildren and dogs.

The question on the float, “Is Your Lawn Safe for Your Family and Pets?” refers to our ongoing educational program about how to have a lush, green lawn that is environmentally friendly and safe for your whole family (human and animal).

We passed out small (6”) wooden rulers to help people measure the correct height for mowing their lawn. If you would like a free ruler, send a self-addressed, stamped envelope to GINLC, PO Box 12, Grosse Ile, 48138.



## A HEALTHY LAWN HAS:

**PROPER FERTILIZING** – do a soil test to find out if your lawn actually needs any fertilizer, if so, use the right kind – NO or LOW Phosphorus, only SLOW RELEASE NITROGEN, NO WEED & FEED, and STAY AWAY FROM THE RIVER! (Leave a 15 to 25-foot buffer zone with no fertilizer by any waterbody.)

**PROPER MOWING** – CUT HIGH & LET IT LIE, cut your grass to 3” high and leave the clippings to decompose and fertilize your lawn, never mow when the lawn is wet, never cut more than 1/3 of the grass blades at a time.

**PROPER WATERING** – maximum watering of 1/2 -1” /week during growing season (late winter to early spring, late summer to late fall), water between 10am and 2pm, do not overwater.

**CORE AERATION** – is one of the best things you can do for your lawn, it reduces soil compaction and thatch, and increases oxygen and beneficial microbial activity. Golf shoes are not effective.

**NO DE-THATCHING TOOLS** – they cut through the rhizomes (underground) and stolons (above ground) connectors from the parent grass plants to the baby grass plants.

Top Left: The GINLC trailer with John Leon and friends. Top Right: GIHS seniors Emily Frucci, Ola Latala, and Laila Al-Jerdi carry the GINLC banner. Center: Board member Eric Michael gives our Girl Scout companions their marching orders. Bottom: Many thanks to GIHS student Colin Colwell, who joined us as Puddles, the Blue Goose.



Naturalist Gerry Wykes (far left) describes the beaver actions to the attendees while young Joey Auger reads from Gerry's book.

**Come to the GBU on Sundays from 1-4 pm & see where the beavers live on Grosse Ile!**

## Earth Day Update

BY BERT URBANI

The Conservancy celebrated Earth Day this year with a presentation about beavers from naturalist and author/illustrator Gerry Wykes and a hike in the Gibraltar Bay Unit and Airport Property to see where Grosse Ile's own beavers live and "do their thing" (devour and fell trees). Gerry's book, *A Beaver Tale: The Castors of Conners Creek*, was published in March by Wayne State University Press. The book is about the first beavers seen on the Michigan side of the Detroit River in more than 100 years. They made their home at DTE Energy's Conners Creek Power Plant across from Belle Isle, and have since been appearing at many locations up and down the river, and inland as well. Gerry's presentation included many interesting facts and stories about beavers, told in a fascinating and entertaining way. Attendees also learned about the many programs that GINLC offers and after the presentation, everyone went and saw the chomped on trees along the road and paths at the GBU and Airport Natural Area. *A Beaver Tale* is available for \$20 at <http://www.wsupress.wayne.edu/books/detail/beaver-tale>, on Amazon and through the International Wildlife Refuge Nature Store.

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



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

To make a donation call, JOHN LEON 734-671-0125

Non-Profit Organization  
U.S. POSTAGE  
**PAID**  
PERMIT NO. 99  
GROSSE ILE, MI

*To Promote for the public benefit the preservation, stewardship and understanding of the natural resources in the Township of Grosse Ile and surrounding area*

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