

## CALENDAR

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

28820 E. River Rd.  
Remains open dawn  
to dusk, year round

## GINLC EVENTS

*The safety and health of our program participants, volunteers, staff and community is our utmost priority and we support efforts to prevent the spread of coronavirus/ COVID-19. We are evaluating all upcoming spring events and will make adjustments for the safety and health of our community. To stay informed look for us on Facebook at [www.facebook.com/GINLC.GI](http://www.facebook.com/GINLC.GI) or sign up for our email list at [ginlc.gi@gmail.com](mailto:ginlc.gi@gmail.com) or view our web calendar at [ginlc.org](http://ginlc.org).*

### EARTH DAY CELEBRATION CLIMATE CHANGE FORUM

**POSTPONED**  
Sun, Apr 26, 10:00  
Centennial Farm

### MIGRANTS ON THE MOVE

**CANCELLED**  
Sun, Apr 26, 10:00  
Centennial Farm, GBU

# EARTH DAY 50th Anniversary

*On Earth Day, April 22, 1970, 20 million people came out onto the streets across America, an event that to this day remains the largest civic event in human history. April 22, 2020 is the 50th anniversary of the first Earth Day.*

The five intervening decades from the first Earth Day gave rise to most of the world's environmental protection laws and regulations. Unfortunately, many of these regulations are being rolled back, despite the persistence of old problems and the appearance of new ones. Most environmentalists are still filled with the same

sense of urgency that "Earthrise" once inspired, and most are convinced that it will take the collective commitment of all Americans, and indeed, all Earthlings, to respond to the present challenges. Were you there on the first Earth Day? If so, tell us your story. What are your plans for Earth Day this year?

**The planned GINLC Earth Day event has been postponed (page 7) due to the coronavirus situation. Celebrate Earth Day digitally by visiting <https://www.earthday.org/earth-day-live/> and explore hundreds of creative, inspiring events with millions of other Earthlings around the globe.**

## Earthrise

*Taken aboard Apollo 8 by Bill Anders, this iconic picture shows Earth peeking out from beyond the lunar surface as the first crewed spacecraft circumnavigated the Moon. The photo is blinding confirmation that our Earth, floating in a sea of stars, is vulnerable and needs protecting.*



## IN MEMORY OF

**TED ALLER**

*Marcia & Sandra Aller*

**DR. BRUCE & JOAN JONES**

*Scott & Jennifer Brown  
Meyer Family Fndn,  
Kimberley Meyer  
Meyer Family Fndn,  
Susan Eldredge  
Gordon & Blair Jones*

**ART PAYETTE**

*Kathy & Eric Balint  
Gregory & Carol Bollo  
Brian & Lucille Dinwiddie  
Susan & Gary Dusute  
Carol Nankervis  
Dennis & Pat O'Brien  
Charles & Kim Tarabula*



## SPECIAL DONORS

**JOHN C. JACKSON**

*For his generous  
donations*

**DEAN & KATHERINE  
MUSGRAVE**

*For their lifetime  
membership*

*Thank You*

# Reflections From the President

BY PETER KANTZ

During the winter months the GINLC Board of Directors spends much of its time planning for the year ahead. Budgets are developed and approved, equipment and supplies purchased. Events are planned and scheduled and new programs developed.

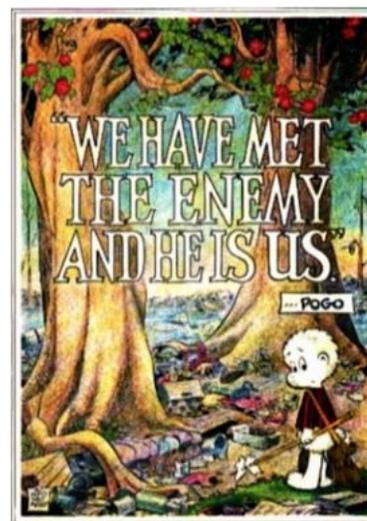
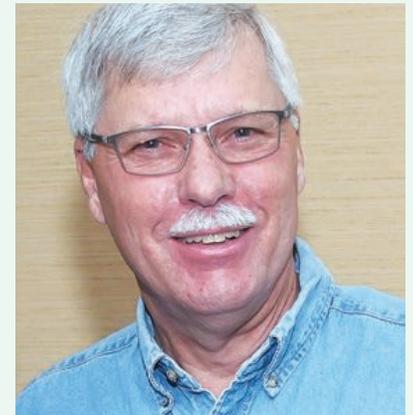
When spring arrives, it's time to turn our plans into actions. Keep in touch with GINLC via Facebook, Constant Contact or visit our website, [www.ginlc.org](http://www.ginlc.org) and take part in our many spring, summer, and fall activities.

Earth Day celebrates its 50th anniversary this year. For those of you who were around in 1970, you may remember the comic strip character Pogo, declaring that "we have met the enemy and he is us" to promote the first Earth Day. The earth is still here and the enemy is still out there. Is the earth in better shape today than it was 50 years ago?

Some will point to local successes such as cleaner lakes and rivers, fewer smoke stacks spewing pollutants, cleaner automobiles and the increased use of renewable energy and say, "yes, the earth is in better shape today." Others will point to oceans filled with plastic waste, "forever chemicals" in our food and water, global temperatures rising and increasingly severe weather events and say, "no, the earth is in far worse shape today." In many areas, progress has been made and we should celebrate those successes.

In other areas we seem to be taking two steps back as new challenges arise to threaten the environment. We can be the enemy or we can be the saviors. We, the people, will decide what happens to the earth and ultimately what happens to humanity.

Grosse Ile Nature Et Land Conservancy is dedicated to protecting the environment. On the global level we are a small organization, and as an individual, you may feel that your impact is insignificant, but the decisions and actions of individuals created the current situation and it will be the decisions and actions of individuals that determine the final outcome. Choose wisely.



*"When Spring arrives, it's time to  
put our plans into actions."*

# GINLC Update on McLouth Steel Site Remediation & Redevelopment

BY DOUG THIEL

The following is a summary of milestones and significant activities that have been achieved over the past three months at both the southern and northern portions of the site.

- It is estimated that 70% of the specified work at the south end of the site has been completed as required by the Administrative Settlement Agreement between the Moroun family business subsidiary MSC Land Co. LLC (MSC), the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), Michigan Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy (EGLE) and the U.S. Department of Justice. This work included the demolition of 45 structures on the property, removal of asbestos-containing materials, wastes and PCBs from all structures before demolition, installation of a fence around the property, removal of water and sludges from 23 subsurface structures, investigation of five areas where PCBs were released, and an assessment and report on options for stormwater management to eliminate uncontrolled flow to the Detroit River.

- EPA estimates that the remedial investigation will start at the south end of the site sometime between July and September 2021, and will take 3-4 years to complete.

- Three Community Advisory Group (CAG) developmental meetings were held by EPA on January 23rd, February 13th and March 12th. During the February 13th meeting the CAG was officially formed. There are approximately 35 members on the CAG representing a variety of community groups, governmental units and citizens at large. Future meetings will be held on the second Thursday of each month. I (Doug Thiel) will be the primary GINLC representative on the CAG and Paul Gloor will serve as our alternate.

- I submitted a Freedom of Information Request on behalf of the GINLC to obtain the analytical results from the groundwater contaminant sampling completed late last fall at the north end of the site. This sampling revealed that numerous volatile organics were detected including acetone, 1,1-dichloroethane, benzene, carbon disulfide, naphthalene, 2,4-dimethylphenol, 3 & 4-methylphenol, 2-butanone (MEK), phenol, toluene and phenanthrene. Regarding inorganics, ammonia and chlorides were detected and the pH of the groundwater ranged from 11.0 – 11.7. In terms of inorganic metals, the following were found in measurable levels: arsenic, barium, chromium, copper, lead, manganese, nickel, selenium, vanadium and zinc. On a positive note, there were no PCBs detected in the groundwater samples collected. An investigation was also conducted by EGLE to determine if the storm sewer on West Jefferson at the northwest corner of the site had been blocked off either accidentally or on purpose by Wayne County. The investigation revealed that it is likely that the sewer has been blocked off by sediments and that was the reason for the standing water on the road that is there on a continuous basis. EGLE collected three samples of the water accumulating on West Jefferson and found the pH to be 7.0 – 7.1 which is a positive finding.

- EGLE and the EPA estimate that the remedial investigation of the northern portion of the site (with oversight by EGLE) is scheduled to be completed by mid-2021.



***GINLC Board member Doug Thiel is a member of the CAG and retired Environmental, Health, and Safety Manager from BASF Corporation. The purpose of the CAG is to provide a way for members of communities and stakeholders potentially affected by the McLouth Steel Superfund Site to:***

- **Receive and discuss up-to-date information regarding the site, including timeframes and action plans;**
- **Get questions clearly answered in ways responsive to community priorities and needs;**
- **Present and discuss their needs, concerns, and priorities related to the site;**
- **Have their input seriously considered and addressed by EPA and EGLE in the agencies' oversight of the site; and**
- **Encourage and promote transparency, disclosure and accountability of all parties involved.**



BRYAN PADRON/UNSPLASH

## NATIVE SPECIES OF GROSSE ILE

# Skunk (*Mephitis mephitis*)

BY BERT URBANI

What's more American than apple pie? Skunks! Skunks are native to North and South America and nowhere else. Various groups of Native North Americans had many names for the animal, and the word "skunk" itself may date back to the 1630s from "squunck" in the Algonquian language. There are 11 skunk species, some with spots and some with stripes, but all with the memorable stink. In 1634 a Jesuit traveling in what was then called "New France" (the Great Lakes region) praised the looks of the skunk, but decried "so foul an odor ... I would not have believed it if I had not smelled it myself. Your heart almost fails you when you approach the animal..." (Editor's note – Most people smelled pretty bad in the 17th century!)

**CHARACTERISTICS:** In Michigan we have the cute striped skunk. Skunks have an average size of 20 to 30 inches long, weigh 4 to 10 pounds, and males are larger than females. Skunks are not about camouflage; their coloring is meant as a warning so they don't have to use their stinky weapon. Skunks are not quick to spray as they carry only enough for five or six sprays. It takes about ten days for their body to produce a new supply. Their behavior when threatened is also a warning. Skunks will go through a routine of hissing, foot-stomping and tail-raising before actually taking aim and spraying. The spray can travel several feet and their aim is surprisingly accurate. The spray is contained in two scent glands on either side of the animal's anus. The spray is composed of three organosulfur compounds and is similar to the chemical utility companies add to odorless natural gas to facilitate the detection of gas leaks. The scent is detectable by the human nose for a distance of 3.5 miles. Skunks do not spray other skunks except males may spray each other during rivalry for mates.

**RANGE, HABITAT & DIET:** The striped skunk has a wide range, almost the entire continental United States, a large portion of southern Canada, and a small portion of northern Mexico. Skunks are found in woodlands and open fields, as well as in human neighborhoods. They are primarily insectivores, favoring grasshoppers, crickets, beetles, and caterpillars, but will add mice, voles, eggs, and the chicks of ground-nesting birds. They will also eat apples and berries in season, and garbage when they can find it. Skunks are also known to prey on honeybees, scratching the front of the beehive and eating the guard bees when they come out to investigate. Their thick fur protects them from bee stings.

*"Skunks are really timid & only spray if they feel threatened"*

**LIFESTYLE & REPRODUCTION:** Skunks are generally solitary animals but will share den space during cold winters for warmth. They mate in early spring and successful males will mate with several females. Gestation takes around 66 days and each female digs or finds an abandoned den in which to raise her litter of 4 to 7 kits. Males do not participate in raising the kits which are born blind, deaf, and covered with fur. Their eyes open at 3 weeks; they are weaned at 2 months, but stay with their mother until ready to mate at one year.

**VIEWING OPPORTUNITIES:** Skunks are usually only observed when a mother is discovered raising her brood under a deck or a dog has had an unpleasant encounter. Our local animal control officer, Julie Cortis-Redfield says, "Skunks are really timid and only spray if they feel threatened. They get a bad rap because of that and being prevalent rabies carriers, but they help clear roadkill and eat vermin." She added her favorite thing to tell people about skunks, "The Great Horned Owl is one of its only predators. They swoop down from the sky undetected. For deterrence purposes, if anybody ever tells me they are trying to keep skunks from coming in their area, I first advise them to get a Great Horned Owl decoy."

– Continued on back cover

# Heritage Tree Loses 200 Years!

BY PAMELA A. FRUCCI



About 15 years ago I did a trip around Grosse Ile with GINLC Founder Bruce Jones (now deceased) and a Lansing forester to identify our big trees. The forester had a tiny bore he would drill into the trees and could count the rings. I distinctly remember the white oak we surveyed on Fifth Street. The owner back then told me that it was a magnificent tree and she wondered how old it really was. The number I remember hearing the forester tell us was 350 years old! That stuck in my memory.

When the tree was cut down in 2015 and Eagle Scout candidate Wayne Sawka approached me for a project, I mentioned this historic tree with only a stump remaining. Wayne worked it out with the renter on the property to cut an eight-inch section of the tree. It became his Eagle Scout project to mount the section on a frame, thanks to the Iversons, and to identify the historic events that occurred during its long history of growth. The question was its true age.

A botanist later told Wayne that it was about 152 years old. Then on June 15, 2017, at the Beautification Council of SE Michigan program hosted by the Grosse Ile Beautification Committee, one of the guests happened to be the Grosse Pointe city forester and knew how to count rings to determine the age of a tree. I sent him to the township hall where Wayne's tree is on display. He reported back to me that he counted 146 rings. My memory of the tree being 350 years old must have faded through the years! Having been a seedling at the time of the Civil War still makes it historic, even though its 350 age has since been disproven.

The GINLC and Grosse Ile Historic Society support the listing and protection of historic trees on Grosse Ile.

**Left: Wayne and Pam pose by his Eagle Scout project — the finished tree stump featuring historic events along its growth rings**

## GINLC High School Photo Contest

*Although in-person learning at schools has been cancelled for the rest of this semester, we are all still able to go outside and enjoy nature on our beautiful island. The GINLC High School Photo Contest is still on, with a deadline of Thursday May 7 at 11:59pm for all photos to be submitted digitally.*

*This contest is open to all local high school students and offers cash prizes and a gallery of winning photos at the Trenton and Wyandotte public libraries in the fall.*

*Categories are Color Tour, Nature's Magic, and Prey & Predators.*

*The 2018-2019 Photo Contest attracted students from 12 area high schools with a total of 173 photos submitted. We welcome every high school entry and urge students to be sure to provide all the information requested on the entry form on our website, [ginlc.org](http://ginlc.org).*

A poster for the GINLC High School Photo Contest. The background is a photograph of a tree-lined path with sunlight filtering through the trees. The text on the poster includes: "TAKE IT OUTSIDE Nature & Wildlife PHOTO CONTEST 2019-2020", "Enter throughout school year Deadline Thurs. May 7th, 2020", "ALL DIGITAL \$445. Cash Prizes 1 photo per category 3 photos max per student", "3 CATEGORIES Color Tour Nature's Magic Prey & Predators", "Enter at [www.ginlc.org](http://www.ginlc.org)", "Click on 'Photo Contest' for entry form and complete details", and "Sponsored by the Grosse Ile Nature & Land Conservancy". There is also a small credit line: "Photo Credit: Joey Gall A Walk With My Dog Grosse Ile".



1



4



2



3

**1** Wildflower and native grass meadow at the Kobiljak Preserve. **2** Volunteers work at Sunrise Park in 2019. **3** The observation deck at the Airport Wildlife Refuge has floated off its foundation. **4** The boardwalk at the Hennepin Marsh Gateway Preserve is underwater.

## 2020 Stewardship

BY PETER KANTZ

This spring all stewardship activities are postponed due to the “stay home, stay safe” order. When the order is lifted, in addition to our regular maintenance duties at the various properties we own or steward for the Township and USFWS, we will be addressing the adverse effect high water levels have had on these areas. The observation platform which overlooks the lagoon at the airport wildlife refuge floated off its foundation last summer. We plan to relocate the observation deck to higher ground. High water washed out the patio at Sunrise Park. We were able to save the bench located on the patio before it washed away but the brick and boulder patio will need to be disassembled and relocated. The spotting scope at Sunrise Park will also be relocated to higher ground.

Hennepin Marsh Gateway Preserve on Meridian north of Bridge is wetlands. Most years it is vernal wetlands, meaning it dries out during the summer. For the past few years however, it has remained wet year-round, so wet that on occasion the boardwalk over the wetlands has been underwater and the observation platform overlooking the marsh inaccessible. It is unlikely we’ll be able to rectify these issues, but we do plan to address the invasive honeysuckle located between the wetlands and the road.

The Kobiljak Preserve, located on Thorofare, has been affected by high water. The wildflower garden that was planted several years ago close to the canal was submerged last year and no longer exists. To replace it, we are planting a wildflower and native grass meadow on the slope leading down to the canal. Our properties along the Thorofare Canal in the area of Gregory have also been affected by the water level. These properties however have no improvements on them and will not require special actions to address water level issues.

Dr. Lauren Fry, technical lead for Great Lakes hydrology at the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Detroit District Office (USACE), gave a presentation on Great Lakes water levels at our Annual Membership Meeting in November (see page 8). Although there is hard science behind predicting water levels on the Great Lakes, in the end, it comes down to the amount of precipitation the Great Lakes watershed receives. Predicting the weather 6 months to a year in advance is difficult at best. So far in April the USACE says Lake Erie is 12 inches higher than this time last year and it is expected to rise another 2 inches by May 3. Estimates can change depending on precipitation and temperatures. Our stewardship plans for 2020 are based on continuing high-water levels.

# EARTH DAY

## 50th Anniversary

From the *earthday.org* website:

### BUILDING ON THE EARTH DAY LEGACY

The first Earth Day in 1970 mobilized millions of Americans for the protection of the planet. On April 22, 1970, 20 million Americans – 10% of the U.S. population at the time – took to the street, college campuses, and hundreds of cities, to protest environmental ignorance and demand a new way forward for our planet. The first Earth Day is credited with launching the modern environmental movement.

Earth Day is now recognized as the planet's largest civic event and it led to passage of landmark environmental laws in the United States, including the Clean Air, Clear Water and Endangered Species Acts. Many countries soon adopted similar laws, and in 2016, United Nations chose Earth Day as the day to sign the Paris climate agreement into force.

"Despite that amazing success and decades of environmental progress, we find ourselves facing an even more dire, almost existential, set of global environmental challenges, from loss of biodiversity to climate change to plastic pollution, that call for action at all levels of government," said Denis Hayes, the organizer of the first Earth Day in 1970 and Earth Day Network's Board Chair Emeritus.

"Progress has slowed, climate change impacts grow, and our adversaries have become better financed," said Earth Day Network president Kathleen Rogers. "We find ourselves today in a world facing global threats that demand a unified global response. For Earth Day 2020, we will build a new generation of environmentalist activists, engaging millions of people worldwide."



### GINLC Climate Change Program for the High School is Cancelled

The GINLC had arranged a Climate Change Forum for Grosse Ile High School to be held on April 23. It was to feature Paul Grosse, Channel 4 meteorologist and nationally recognized expert on Climate Change. Unfortunately, the program had to be cancelled due to the shutdown of the Grosse Ile Township schools. Mr. Gross's Climate Change presentation to the Birmingham Unitarian Church can be found on [youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=efKdgEvc6Fk&t=5s) at: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=efKdgEvc6Fk&t=5s>.

### GINLC Earth Day to Present "The Science of Climate Change" **POSTPONED**

We plan to celebrate the 50th Anniversary of Earth Day with an informative program about "The Science of Climate Change" at Centennial Farm on a date to be determined. The speakers will be two professors, Linda Brandt, M.S., Biology Instructor, Henry Ford College, and Dr. Craig Donahue, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Chemistry, UM-Dearborn. GINLC board members John Leon and Bert Urbani attended a Climate Change Forum at the Henry Ford College last year and were impressed with Brandt and Donahue's presentations.



Brandt and Donahue bring a wealth of knowledge and experience in presenting the current state of scientific knowledge about climate change.

# Annual Meeting 2019

BY PAUL GLOOR AND JOHN LEON

GINLC members gathered on Nov. 9, 2019 at Grosse Ile Golf & Country Club to learn about the organization's 2019 accomplishments, elect board members, celebrate the Conservationist of the Year, and hear our guest speaker, Dr. Lauren Fry.

## GUEST SPEAKER

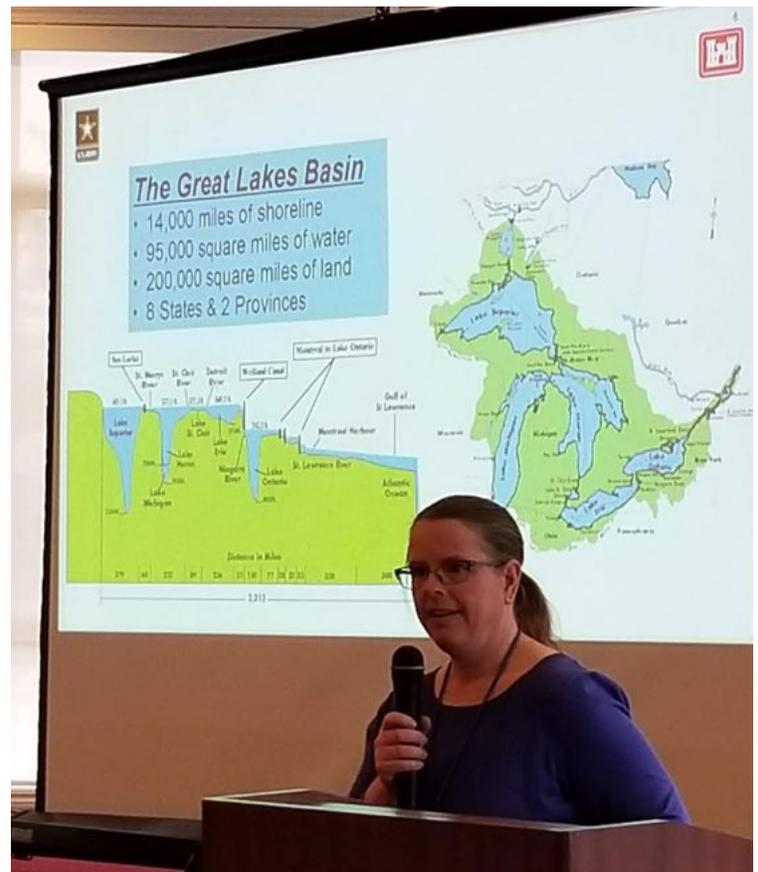
Dr. Lauren Fry, Technical Lead for Great Lakes Hydrology with the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), spoke on the topic of "Water, Water, Everywhere - Monitoring & Forecasting Great Lakes Water Levels." Dr. Fry is an environmental engineer trained in sustainability and water resources, with experience in hydrologic modeling, geographic information systems, and interdisciplinary research. Her focus recently has been hydrological modeling in the Great Lakes basin, including basin-wide runoff estimation and watershed modeling.

Dr. Fry explained how the USACE has been measuring water levels in all the Great Lakes for over 100 years. The Great Lakes contain about one-fifth of the world's surface fresh water. Water levels across the lakes fluctuate over time, influenced mainly by three factors: rain and snowfall over the lakes, evaporation over the lakes, and runoff that enters each lake from the surrounding land through tributaries and rivers. Runoff is directly affected by precipitation over land, snow cover and soil moisture. The flow into and out of the lakes and human interventions are relatively minor. Water levels seasonally fluctuate during the year as the snow pack accumulates in the winter but melts and runs off in the spring. Summer warms the water leading to increased evaporation in the autumn. High winds can cause local, short term variations called seiche events. The USACE is engaged in using mathematical models to predict water levels on a monthly and yearly timeframe.

In May 2019, new high water level records were set on Lakes Erie and Superior, and there has been widespread flooding across Lake Ontario for the second time in three years. These events coincide with persistent precipitation and severe flooding across much of central North America. However, as recently as 2013, water levels on most of the Great Lakes were very low.

The 60-month period ending October 31, 2019 was the wettest in 120 years of record for the Great Lakes Basin. The water level variations are becoming more pronounced. The current record high water levels were preceded by a decade of record low levels.

People can expect temporary seiche events, high winds,



*“The 60-month period ending October 31, 2019 was the wettest in 120 years of record for the Great Lakes Basin.”*

and some shoreline erosion. “You have these kinds of impacts at all water levels, but when we’re at high water levels, those impacts are much more significant,” she said.

Future water levels can be estimated for various scenarios. Since long term weather predictions are somewhat uncertain, we can use historical data from the past 100 years to calculate lake levels for dry, wet, and average precipitation levels. Fry showed that even if we experience lowest observed precipitation levels the lake levels will still remain above average for the next 12 months. If we experience wet years, we will set new, even higher, record water levels.

Dr. Fry answered many questions from a very engaged audience. Many thanks to Dr. Fry for such an interesting and timely talk.



## CONSERVATIONIST OF THE YEAR

BY JOHN LEON

At our annual meeting in November, the Conservancy awarded the 2019 Conservationist of the Year Award to JOHN C. JACKSON. John was recognized for his unparalleled generosity that has resulted in the implementation of many important conservation projects for the enjoyment of nature for all Grosse Ile residents, present and future. John's help started in 2016 with the building of the Photo Blind at the Gibraltar Bay Unit of the International Wildlife Refuge. Next was the Salmon in the Classroom project at GIHS and supporting the Sturgeon Project at Shumate Middle School in 2017. Then Phase 1 of constructing the beautiful North retaining wall at Sunrise Park in 2018 and the building of the kayak slide. This was followed by Phase 2 in 2019 of the construction of the South retaining wall. This beautiful structure, with Boxwood and Little Henry Sweetspire bushes above the wall, now protects the slope on each side of the stairway which descends into the park. John has also committed to Phase 3 of the park improvements in the coming years. All of this work has enhanced the quality of life on Grosse Ile. I have had the pleasure of working with John on all of these projects, and extend my personal thanks, as well as the gratitude and appreciation of the entire GINLC organization, to our neighbor, friend, and champion of nature, John C. Jackson.

## ELECTION OF BOARD MEMBERS

*We welcomed the return of three board members, Alan Cavrell, Susan Harrison and Steven Schweickart for an additional 3 year term and elected one new board member Gloria Abundis-Cavrell.*

**GLORIA ABUNDIS-CAVRELL** is a Michigan native who earned her undergraduate degree from Michigan State and her Master's degree from the University of Michigan, both in education. She moved to Grosse Ile with her family over nine years ago when her son was starting middle school.



Gloria has just retired after 28 years of teaching K-5 in the Detroit and Bloomfield Hills School systems. She continues with her love of education through tutoring.

Gloria feels very strongly that children in Michigan need an understanding of the Great Lakes ecosystem, its sustainability, and the environment in general. However, during her career, she was struck by the lack of a comprehensive curriculum associated with these topics. She would like to work with the Conservancy to increase this awareness with students in the Grosse Ile School District.

Aside from her passion of education, Gloria enjoys a good book, antiquing, traveling, and watching movies of all genres. And she has a vast knowledge of "who's who" and "who's done what" in Hollywood.

## THANK YOU TO OUR "RETIRING" BOARD MEMBERS

**GINLC thanks retiring board members Courtney Solenberger-McNeill and Denise Zielinski for their dedication to Grosse Ile's natural environment. Both Courtney and Denise have made, and continue to make, enormous contributions to the quality of life on Grosse Ile.**



— Annual Meeting Continued

## The State of the Conservancy

*GINLC President, Peter Kantz reviewed the state of the Conservancy and described several accomplishments including:*

- **Constructed Retaining Wall and Landscaped above the Wall at Sunrise Park, South of Stairway**
- **Sold GINLC's Interest in Wright Woods to GI Open Space and a portion of Daly Preserve to the Adjacent Property Owner (Look for GINLC acquisitions in 2020!)**
- **Held Sunday Afternoon Meet & Greets at Wildlife Refuge (May –October)**
- **Conducted Various Stewardship Events throughout the year including Monday morning Stewardship at GBU Wildlife Refuge**
- **Monitored the remediation of McLouth Site and published a position paper. Remained engaged with US EPA and EGLE**
- **Conducted More Than a Dozen Educational Programs including programs at GI Elementary Schools with USFWS and Metro Parks**
- **Conducted High School Photography Contest (173 entries from 12 High Schools)**
- **Awarded Dr. Bruce Jones Student Scholarship to Margaret Holmes**
- **Held Earth Day Event at Centennial Farm**
- **Sponsored 1 Completed Eagle Scout Project with 2 more in progress.**
- **Participated in Islandfest Parade and Exhibition, Paint the Town Red, and World Wetlands Days**
- **Updated "A Guide to the Natural Areas of Grosse Ile" in collaboration with Open Space**
- **Published 3 Editions of the Voyageur GINCL newsletter**

### "VANDALISM" AT SUNRISE PARK

Myra McInerney called and alerted us to some activity she observed at Sunrise Park. One of the trees has been noticeably damaged, or vandalized! Our guess is this vandal is probably about four feet tall, weighs about 60 pounds, has long reddish-orange teeth, and brown fur. Yes, beavers have discovered Grosse Ile's small jewel on the Detroit River!



Beavers reappeared on Grosse Ile around 2014, after being absent from this region for nearly 100 years due to habitat loss from agriculture and over-trapping. They are known to be present at the Airport Nature Area and have been seen along the Thorofare Canal. While all nature lovers welcome the return of this furry engineering marvel, we acknowledge the threat they can pose to human landscapes. We can co-exist! The Beaver Institute recommends placing 2" x 4" mesh fencing around trees that homeowners wish to protect. For details visit: <https://www.beaverinstitute.org/management/tree-protection/>



UPPER LEFT: MAX SAELING/UNSPLASH, BOTTOM: PIXABAY



## LAWN CARE - Don't Overdo It!

With all the "stay home" time we're having this spring, Grosse Ile is likely to have DIY lawns that rival golf course greens. But don't overdo it! Have a *Healthy Lawn* this Spring. Stay away from toxic chemicals. You may not be able to have your lawn tested to see if it really needs nutrients, so stay on the safe side and assume that it doesn't. If you do fertilize, use only **NO** or **LOW PHOSPHORUS**, only **SLOW RELEASE**, do not use **WEED & FEED**, and **STAY AWAY FROM THE RIVER (15-25 feet)**. Mowing - **CUT IT HIGH (3") & LET IT LIE** (Leave the clippings on the lawn.) **WATER** between 10am & 2pm, 1/2 to 1 inch per week. **DO CORE AERATION, DO NOT DE-THATCH!** Reduce the amount of turf grass to what your family needs to play on, and plant native plants instead. If you still have an itch to do yardwork, help out a neighbor whose lawn care company is sidelined until the health crisis is over.

## Guess what? Bug Zappers Don't Kill Mosquitoes!

Millions of bugs get killed every night in backyard bug zappers which combine a UV light to attract them and a low electric current to electrocute them. Trouble is, studies show that the percent of female mosquitoes (the biting ones) that are killed is extremely low, ranging from 0.22% to 4%. Meanwhile, the bugs that do die are frequently beneficial insects that feed fish and other wildlife.

Mosquitoes are attracted to the carbon dioxide that every living creature exhales, not to light. But even newer carbon dioxide/octenol (a pheromone) traps are deemed ineffective (and expensive). They may even attract more mosquitoes to your yard, while trapping very few.

Many people spray their yards, or hire companies to do that. There can be risks to humans and pets from the chemicals used, particularly if an untrained person is doing the spraying. Also, the use of insecticides kills pollinators like bees and butterflies and other beneficial insects such as dragonflies, damselflies and spiders.

The best way to avoid mosquito bites is to remove standing water breeding habitat around your yard in planters or bird baths, and to use EPA-recommended bug repellent on exposed skin. For more info, visit <https://www.thoughtco.com/do-bug-zappers-kill-mosquitoes-1968054>



## CALENDAR

### GINLC EVENTS CONTINUED

**AIRPORT NATURE AREA**  
Open, hosted by GINLC  
**POSTPONED**  
Sundays, May 3 – Oct 25  
1:00 – 4:00 pm

**TAKE IT OUTSIDE PHOTO CONTEST DEADLINE**  
Thurs, May 7, 11:59 pm

**FROG SURVEY**  
**CANCELLED**  
Fri, May 15, 5:00 pm, GBU

**ISLANDFEST**  
Parade May 30 @ 9:00 am  
GI High School parking lot  
**POSTPONED**  
May 29, 30 & 31,  
Airport Hangar

**AMAZING AMERICAN LOTUS**  
Sun, Aug 16 @ 1pm, GBU

### DETROIT RIVER INTERNATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE EVENTS

**GRAND OPENING VISITOR CENTER & GATEWAY**  
Sat, May 9,  
10:00 am – 4:00 pm  
**POSTPONED**  
5:00 pm  
Trenton

**15TH ANNUAL DRIWR BENEFIT DINNER**  
**NEW DATE:** Sat, June 13,  
5:00 – 9:00 pm  
Bentley Banquet Center,  
Wyandotte

*Due to the ongoing situation with the COVID-19 virus, all events are subject to postponement or cancellation. Please check with us on Facebook, email, or our website to confirm.*

# 2

## Easy Ways to Give



### 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.  
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.

LEFT: BRYAN PADRON/UNSPLASH, RIGHT: FREEPIK



# Essential Wisdom about Skunks' "Essential Oils"

**CLOSE ENCOUNTERS:** The Humane Society urges people to move slowly and quietly away from a skunk, and to restrain dogs. When that fails, the traditional remedy for skunk spray is a tomato juice bath, but the Society says that does not neutralize the odor. They recommend this safe concoction of 1 quart of 3-percent hydrogen peroxide (available at any pharmacy), 1/4 cup baking soda, and 1 teaspoon liquid dishwashing soap. Wearing rubber gloves, wash with the solution as soon as possible after



the spraying incident. Healthy skunks rarely bite, but skunks can carry and transmit rabies. Don't be overly concerned about spotting a skunk in the daytime, unless it is staggering, acting extremely aggressive, or unusually tame. Don't approach the skunk; call Julie at 734-552-7436.

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

## SPRING 2020

*We are emailing this issue to comply with Michigan's "Stay Home, Stay Safe" order.*

*We apologize to members who do not have email. We hope to make up for this with a larger Summer printed issue.*

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

### OUR MESSAGE:

In these frightening and uncertain times during this public health crisis, GINLC board members send our best wishes for health, safety, and peace to our neighbors, family, friends, to everyone with whom we share this beautiful island and this beautiful planet.

To all essential workers – everyone in the health care field, our first responders for police, fire, and EMS, our postal employees, our teachers, transportation workers, the vast food production and distribution system workers, all the many delivery people, our public servants at the local, state, and national level, and our military – we express our deep gratitude to you and your families for your hard work and sacrifice.

We on Grosse Ile are blessed to be surrounded by nature which can restore our spirits and soothe our frayed nerves. Please try to get outside to enjoy the sights and sounds of Spring, while practicing appropriate physical distancing. Visit our lesser-known trails if other paths are too crowded.

*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*



P.O. Box 12  
Grosse Ile, MI 48138  
734-552-8950  
[www.ginlc.org](http://www.ginlc.org)

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