



2025

ANNUAL REPORT



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Message from Executive Director John Myers



At Indian Creek Nature Center our mission is rooted in the belief that everyone deserves the chance to connect with nature. This ideal was put into action in a number of ways in 2025! Throughout the year, we:

-  Launched the all-terrain wheelchair program, providing physical access to our entire trail system
-  Acquired a fully-electric bus to sustainably reduce transportation barriers
-  Revamped our website to ensure ease of access for every visitor

We believe that nature is a right to which everyone deserves access. By focusing on these areas, we are enhancing the number of people who are connecting with the outdoors and have the opportunity to become Champions of Nature. Many of these improvements also allow families and individuals to come together and enjoy time with each other.

2025 was particularly special as we recognized that ICNC's Friends Group (formerly known as The Guild) celebrated its 50th anniversary! This group of amazing people was started just a year after ICNC formed, and their mission has been to support the education programs of ICNC. Their members are also ardent supporters of our work, many of them volunteering throughout other areas of the Nature Center as well. We couldn't be successful without this group and all of our volunteers who work hard.

Throughout the year, we also saw great success with our public programs, with many classes selling out and having a waitlist. These opportunities provide varied experiences for people to connect with nature and the outdoors, while celebrating the joyfulness of time connecting with others. This is the magic of the Nature Center — it brings people to connect with nature, and it connects people with each other.

Our Nature Center community is vibrant for so many reasons, and we invite you to join this community as we look to the future. There are a number of ways to engage with ICNC, all of which celebrate the outdoors and give you a deeper appreciation for nature. Throughout this annual report, you will see examples of individuals who contributed to our mission in different ways.

I invite you to join us, and if there is a way we can help you be more involved, please let us know. Accessibility remains a cornerstone of our work, and we will continue this focus in 2026 and beyond!



This publication was edited by ICNC Marketing Manager Eric Hart and designed by Andrea Cernin Design.



Indian Creek Nature Center 2025 Financials

Total Revenues.....\$1,984,783

- Individual & Business Contributions..... \$675,320
- Mission-Related Revenue \$300,660
- Operating & Restricted Grants..... \$410,087
- Endowment & Investments Earnings..... \$139,861
- Special Events & Friends Group Income..... \$138,106
- Facility Rentals..... \$99,133
- In-Kind Contributions\$74,336
- Memberships\$54,440
- Creekside Shop (net sales) \$25,187
- Other Revenue\$67,653

Total Expenditures..... \$1,795,157

- Education & Mission-Related Programs \$534,183
- Land & Property Management \$267,092
- Mission Support \$356,122
- Experiences & Events..... \$237,415
- Development & Marketing.....\$89,031
- Administration \$311,314

Net Income.....\$189,626

- Less Donation to Endowment\$170,000

Net Operating Income..... \$19,626

Depreciation expenses are not included above. CliftonLarsonAllen LLP annually audits ICNC's financials. Due to timing, unaudited financials are included in this annual report. ICNC's annual IRS Tax Return (Form 990) is made available on ICNC's website upon completion of the audit annually.



Year in Review

April Sac and Fox Trail Turns 50

The community gathered to celebrate the 50th anniversary of Cedar Rapids' first trail, which has long been a gateway to the Nature Center.



March

ATW Reservations Begin

A free reservation system opened for the three all-terrain wheelchairs acquired thanks to community support.



February

CFS Teacher Wins Award

Iowa Children's Museum awarded Lead Preschool Teacher Nicole Upchurch with the Dr. Robert E. Yager Active Learning Award.



April & May AmeriCorps Boosts Restoration

A 10-person team spent six weeks assisting the land team with maple syruping, invasive species removal, and prairie burns.



May

Farm Workshop Complete

Opening the new workshop added essential facilities for food production, equipment storage, and educational programming.





September

Indian Creek Clean Up

Volunteers and staff walked our namesake creek to remove trash and debris to keep the creek healthy and clean.



July

ICNC Hosts 10th Monarch Fest

ICNC's annual celebration of all things pollinators has now been inspiring meaningful action through family fun for a decade.



September

New Special Event

The inaugural Barn to Farm Bike Ride brought cyclists to Etzel Sugar Grove Farm for breakfast, live music, and a chance to meet the chickens.



November

Website Adds Accessibility Features

Thanks to generous donors, ICNC made accessibility upgrades to the website that improve the experience for all.



October

AmeriCorps Leaves Impact

A new AmeriCorps crew built a shelter, removed countless invasive species, and harvested organic produce.



June

ICNC Leads Nationally

Executive Director John Myers was elected to serve a two-year term as Board President for the Association of Nature Center Administrators.



October

Eagle Scout Trail Project

Eagle Scouts led a project to mulch and remove invasive sumac on the trail along the east side of Bena Brook.





Friends Group Celebrates 50 Years!

By Eric Hart, Marketing Manager

For the past 50 years, Indian Creek Nature Center has been supported by a group of volunteers - The Friends of the Nature Center.

The group, originally named The Guild, was formed in 1975 with the goal “to aid the Nature Center through several fund-raising events each year.” And, wow, have they come through!

Since their first event, Harvest Fest, in September 1975 the group has hosted annual fundraising events which have evolved over the years. Recently, the group has been hosting two annual events: the Spring Plant & Art Sale and Nature’s Noel.

Through hosting these events, the Friends (as staff affectionately call them) raise tens of thousands of dollars every year to support Indian Creek Nature Center’s environmental education programs and land restoration projects.

While the group was recognized with a Benjamin Franklin Award from the Association of Fundraising Professionals Eastern Iowa Chapter in 2021, it’s truly impossible to measure the profound impact the group has had on the Nature Center’s mission.

As the Friends begin their sixth decade of hosting events, they look forward to many more years of volunteering in a terrific group of people working hard to host fun events that bring the community together at Indian Creek Nature Center.



“The Guild presidents I followed were wonderful, innovative, and creative, and always supportive. The people that work with the ICNC Guild are great in a special way – loving nature, plants, flowers, and our present and future environment. These relationships made all of us grow in knowledge.”

Beth Allsop
1981 Guild President

“The week before Nature’s Noel is just magical. You smell the evergreen when you walk into the barn, and there are all these people and all this stuff we’ve collected, or that’s been donated. And all these people just working, and making beautiful things. It’s really neat.”

Kathy Severson
2025 President of the Friends of the Nature Center

THANK YOU, VOLUNTEERS!

In 2025 alone,
783 volunteers contributed
11,000 hours to the Nature Center!



Day of Caring

Day of Caring, a large-scale, community-wide volunteer event organized by the local United Way chapter, brought multiple volunteer groups out to Indian Creek Nature Center to assist with mulching trails, removing invasive plant species, and other land restoration projects.

Project FeederWatch

Project FeederWatch volunteers meet twice a week during the winter months to record the bird species visiting the bird feeders as part of a continent-wide research project, coordinated by the Cornell University Lab of Ornithology, that collects data on migratory bird patterns.

Corporate Volunteer Groups

Corporate Volunteer Groups that contributed to land restoration projects in 2025 include Alliant Energy, Collins Aerospace, Cedar Rapids Bank & Trust, Cedar Rapids Area Association of Realtors, Frontier Co-op, TransAmerica, Van Meter, TrueNorth, PepsiCo, CLA, International Paper, ITC Midwest, IFF.



**You can make an impact
on our mission as a volunteer.**

Visit indiancreeknaturecenter.org/volunteer
to start making an impact.



The AmeriCorps Impact

By Nick McGrath, Trail Coordinator

Indian Creek Nature Center was the host site for two AmeriCorps NCCC teams in 2025. Their collective work has made a tremendous difference as we continue to restore native habitat and enhance infrastructure both for accessibility and aesthetic beauty.



The spring project team focused heavily on removing invasive species along Bena Brook and at the Penningroth Barn between the Sugar House and sugar bush. Huge amounts of honeysuckle and autumn olive were cut, and sight lines were restored across the creekbank and ravine.

Equally exciting, this group was able to learn about

After this year's **prairie burns**, finding a shooting star and wild indigo flowers were welcome signs of a healthy prairie.



Hazelnut Hideaway, a certified Nature Explore outdoor classroom, is used daily by both Creekside Forest School and the general public. Trail Coordinator Nick McGrath, volunteers, and AmeriCorps NCCC team members collaborated to build a shelter in Hazelnut Hideaway.



and practice prescribed fire around the property. Five separate burns were completed, aiding our efforts to subdue invasive species, promote native prairie biodiversity, and further enhance the soil quality.

Not to be outdone, the fall project team spent a great deal of time at the Penningroth Barn and Lynch Wetland, working along banks and around buildings to remove invasive and undesirable species. Spaces that were once home to black locust, honeysuckle, sumac, and Japanese knotweed now host newly-planted native shrubs that will better support the larger ecosystem.



This group also took on the ambitious project of constructing a new shelter in Hazelnut Hideaway,

adjacent to the base of the Cedar Overlook Trail. It may have been a welcome break from invasive species removal, but this project required entirely different skill sets and provided new learning opportunities as they worked through parts lists and diagrams, problem solved on the fly, and labored with concrete footings. With assistance from a few outstanding volunteers, this shelter went from parts to completion in rapid succession and stands as a testament to their great work.



Forging Young Leaders

It's always rewarding when a project is finished. Especially when it's led by a teenager.

Scouts regularly demonstrate a commitment to volunteering for their community. To become an Eagle Scout, they need to go further by demonstrating leadership skills through the completion of a project they lead.

For any Eagle Scout project at the Nature Center, staff, volunteers, and the Scout themselves work together to develop and implement a plan. We set objectives, scout sites, and gather tools and equipment. We problem solve, fundraise, and recruit volunteers.

Then, on project day, volunteers look to the Scout to lead. The Scout explains the project, provides guidance, and supplies the tools needed to complete the goal. Helping these young people on the cusp of adulthood take the reins of a project from start to finish is enriching for all participating.

Eagle Scout projects often involve ecological restoration (such as planting hundreds of trees) or infrastructure improvements (such as repairing the stump spiral in the outdoor classroom).



In the end, we get more than a healthier ecosystem for wildlife or more enjoyable outdoor spaces for visitors seeking time in nature. We get a visual and lasting reminder of how each Scout went from serving to leading.



A **sugar bush** is a type of woodland primarily composed of maple trees and is tapped to harvest sap for syrup production. ICNC taps four small sugar bushes: around the Penningroth Barn, along Indian Creek, the east end of Wood Duck Way, and at Vecný Woods.

If you have tackled invasive species at any scale, you know that before and immediately after photos can (and should) be both stark and exciting. However, you also know that it can be (and often is) temporary as the invasive species try to fill this new void. This is sometimes disheartening without patience and long-term perspective. In a unique turn of events, two members of the spring project team were able to return with the fall crew.



They found it exciting that, despite having to return to sites previously cleared, the invasive plants were significantly smaller and fewer than what they encountered in the spring. It was exciting to share that progress with the team, fostering not only morale but a real appreciation for our natural spaces and the work that goes into maintaining them.



In 2025, the **Bluebird Trail** supported 9 active nests and 26 bluebird babies that successfully fledged. Bluebird box monitoring is one of the many land projects made possible by volunteers.



Workshop Improves Everyday Tasks

by Jean Wiedenheft, Director of Land Stewardship

The new workshop at the farm has been a tremendous success by making many of our routine tasks easier, safer, and more efficient. It also makes special projects possible.

It's hard to know where to start, but I will start with the AmeriCorps NCCC team members. Every day, they had a place to check out tools and put them back; they had a place to use the restroom and store their lunches. They learned how to use weedwackers and drills. They were able to wash their hands and learn about food safety.

The tractor is inside. The tractor attachments, now on concrete, can be hooked up or unhooked by one person. Tilling the beds to plant the organic garlic this fall was a smooth operation.

AmeriCorps NCCC team members had a place to prep the cloves and the landscaping fabric to prevent weeds, despite inclement weather outside.

Chicken feed and egg cartons are stored inside in a clean environment. The electric fence supplies, instead of being stored in three separate locations

across the farm, have a home in a drawer. That fencing is critical to protect the chicken flock from foxes and protect the organic orchard from deer.

There is a refrigerator to put the organic eggs in from the 180-hen flock. There is a place for the garlic and squash to cure, and a place for next year's anticipated expanded harvest to be stored. The wash bay allows us to clean up the totes we use for harvesting vegetables and transporting eggs.

As more tools become battery operated, the workshop provides adequate capacity to charge those batteries. Weedwackers, chainsaws, leafblowers, and small power tools need battery charging stations, not mixed fuel stations. It is a cleaner operation, but requires outlets. We now have a workbench at the farm that enables us to take on small projects and repair things.

2025 was a year of organizing and establishing processes in the workshop. We are looking forward to using the space in 2026.





"At the end of the day, it is this community who we're growing for."



What We Harvest

By Omar Salinas, Farm Coordinator

My name is Omar Salinas. I started as the Farm Coordinator in late September. Originally from Pharr, Texas, I came to Iowa to study Outdoor Conservation at Mount Mercy University. My hope is to turn Etzel Sugar Grove Farm into a sustainable cornerstone of our community.

When volunteers show up to wash eggs or plant garlic, I want them to feel they are contributing to a supportive organization that gives back to the local food system and the land.

We harvest what we plant, and at Etzel Sugar Grove Farm that goes beyond fruits and vegetables. The effort, care, and intention put into the farm end up shaping the people around it.

When you plant patience, learning, and respect for the land, that's exactly what you harvest. The 'why' behind our farming practices is just as important as the healthy produce we grow, because at the end of the day, it is this community who we're growing for.



The organic orchard had a **fruitful year**, as we harvested our first certified organic sweet cherries. Our chestnut trees and apple trees bore their first fruit in 2025. As you visit throughout the year, make sure to check the Creekside Shop for sweet cherries (and hopefully chestnuts and apples) from the farm.



Volunteers are essential to the success of Etzel Sugar Grove Farm by helping with regular chores, like feeding the chickens and mulching the trees, as well as bigger projects. 2025's big project involved volunteers installing a 3-D electric deer fence around the organic orchard and permaculture field.



Ebbs & Flows

By Andria Cossolotto, Education Manager

Each year, certain programs see spikes in interest while others may slow. After seeing an increased interest and excitement for In-Service Day Camps in 2024, our education team regrouped and figured out a way to expand those offerings during 2025.

16 In-Service Day Camps were held over the school year, with 168 children attending these camps. Only two had been held in 2024! On a day off of school, when most kids may be stuck in front of a screen, these children were enjoying six full hours in nature.

One of my favorite things at camps is seeing kids being kids and the excitement they show as they learn something new, make new friends, and overcome fears.

Thank you to all of our guest speakers, leaders, and volunteers who allowed for these programs to happen!



Memories made in 2025 included:

- Riding the electric bus to Bass Farms where we learned about their sustainable practices and enjoyed the many fall activities
- Studying and banding real song birds
- Surprising guest appearances from several tarantulas
- Seeing a live turkey vulture up close
- Tapping maple trees, boiling sap, and sampling real maple syrup
- Catching frogs and other critters
- Digging shells out of the sandy beach on a nice March day
- Most importantly, kids were being kids, forming friendships, and learning through natural curiosity





Educational Encounters



By Emily Roediger, Senior Naturalist

Our education animals are teachers too. Close encounters with the live resident animals help people make connections with those animals and nature.

All of the resident animals are native species to Iowa. While we take care of them, they are different than pet animals. Having them here to teach programs, or just be visible for visitors, helps connect people to wildlife. Their homes inside the Nature Center are designed to give them opportunities to do natural wildlife behaviors, such as the tiger salamanders digging into the dirt,

or the painted turtles alternating between sunning and swimming.

One of the most obvious connections people make to our live animals is learning about different types of animals. Most of our live education animals are reptiles and amphibians, and meeting them helps teach about the characteristics of reptiles and amphibians and

creates the opportunity for comparing and contrasting those characteristics.

However, our animals don't just teach about animal characteristics. They also help teach about other topics, like the various habitats they live in. Some live in forested habitats, while others live in wetland or prairie habitats. Animals like the toads

and tree frogs also help teach about seasonal changes, and the Ornate Box turtle helps teach about protected species.

The animals also get to teach a variety of different people, from our Creekside Forest School students to the many school field trips that visit us. Summer campers also often meet animals, and some of our adult group field trips include animals, too. Even when our animals are just on display, stopping to see what they are doing is a highlight of many programs and for casual visitors.

Encountering the live animals gives people chances to see things they might see outside, like a painted turtle swimming in a pond, if they're lucky. Wild animals outside often remain elusive for their own reasons. The painted turtles that live in the indoor turtle pond are almost always either swimming or basking under their heat lamp inside — unless they're out teaching a program!

It's not just about the facts. Close encounters with our education animals are also a meaningful experiential memory of nature for field trip students, campers, and other visitors to take home with them. Getting to see them up close, or even touch (if they choose to), can make a difference not just in what people know about the animals, but how people view those animals and the wild spaces that they need to survive. In the end, it helps create Champions of Nature.

In February, we hosted our first-ever nature-themed trivia night, putting the participants' knowledge of Iowa's natural world to the test. Teams tackled questions about Iowa's waterways, maple syrup, and other Iowa-based nature topics, sparking friendly competition and plenty of laughter.



Birding enthusiasts of all ages gathered at ICNC in April for a special two-part experience with professional birder and author Dorian Anderson. During an evening presentation, Dorian shared stories from his *Birding Big Year by bike*, and the following morning he led guided birding walks on the Nature Center trails.



Lucille, an Ornate Box turtle that resided at ICNC for more than 20 years, passed away in 2025 after helping educate countless visitors about native species, endangered wildlife and habitat restoration.



Seemingly Small: Year Five of Creekside Forest School

By Nicole Upchurch, Lead Preschool Teacher



Moms are special. This is a subject we circle back to often in early education.

“I miss my Mom.”

“I hear you. Thank you for telling me. Would you like a hug? Should we gather a bouquet for your mom today?”

Children inherently understand the beauty in seemingly small acts of kindness, like gifting a dry bouquet of fall prairie plants. Creekside Forest School students are no exception, and they remind us daily of this truth.

But moms are not the only special people in our school community. Dads, aunts, uncles, grandparents, nannies, and family friends all make it happen through volunteerism, assisting with pick up/drop off, making donations, mending teachers’ gear, giving kind notes, and sharing funny anecdotes that remind us of the joy found in time spent with preschool-aged children.

Family Nights bring us together each season. Being year five of Creekside Forest

Creekside Forest School students regularly learn from ICNC naturalists through in-house field trips that explore a wide variety of nature-based topics. Lessons with expert naturalists help students gain hands-on knowledge and a strong sense of curiosity for the natural world.



School, these gatherings are often reunions of former CFS students whose siblings are now in our program. They run around until their faces flush with fresh air and exertion. We roast marshmallows and share stories. We hike and let the kids show us what makes this land so special.

“What do you hope to see on the trail today?”

“Deer!” “Turkeys!”
“Bones!” “Rosehips!”
“Unicorns!”

At Family Nights and during school, we often find footprints or feathers along the trail. For some, these findings are an epiphany that we share this land with other creatures. For others, these signs are more of a remembering - the way one looks at an old photo and feels safety, comfort, joyful nostalgia.

Birthdays are a special time for Creekside Forest School students. To mark this momentous occasion, students bring in photos of themselves and their families to share with their classmates. They then get to “circle the sun” the number of years old they are while holding a globe, as their class sings to them. It is a ritual that students (and teachers) really look forward to!





“Mapache the raccoon was here last night!”

On chilly days, we make tea with a kettle purchased anonymously for our program. Students help gather sticks. I build a small fire to heat the water. We talk about how it smells.

“I like the smell.”
“I think it is stinky.”
“I like unicorns.”

We remove our mugs attached by carabiners from our backpacks and circle up. We’ve added rosehips from the trail to our hibiscus tea. We love adding lots of honey harvested by bees at the Nature Center. We blow on our tea and feel the heat, wait for it to cool. Waiting is hard.

“I like it! Yum!”
“I don’t like it.”
“The color is pretty.”

At pick up, parents & caregivers are often met with dry bouquets and other small wonders. I imagine their homes decorated with collections of bones, stones, and feathers scattered on windowsills and leaves, moss, and exoskeletons caught in dryer lint traps.



In a world that is go, go, go, CFS teachers know the importance of helping students slow down. A hammock village in the woods has become a favorite outdoor classroom space and the perfect spot to take a pause and observe the sights and sounds of nature.



At the end of each school day, I pause to appreciate my hat filled to the brim with sincere gifts of mountain mint, turkey tails, and tiny fistfuls of moss. There is so much beauty in seemingly small things.



No Matter the Weather We Flock Together

By Sarah Botkin, Amazing Space Manager

Special events during 2025 had some memorable weather moments. The warm weather contributed to a record number of people attending the Maple Syrup Festival. A brief rain shower had attendees getting cozy under tents at Trailside Tastings. The lack of bad weather on the weekend of Nature's Noel was something to be truly thankful for because the weekend before saw record snowfall, and the weekend after experienced record cold!

Arguably, one of the best weather days occurred at the Barn to Farm Bike Ride. This first-time event had participants bicycle from Penningroth Barn along the Sac and Fox Trail and Cedar Valley Trail to Etzel Sugar Grove Farm.

It was a beautiful morning for riders to experience the local bike trail system and tour our organic farm. Riders were treated to live music and breakfast, which featured fresh eggs from our chicken flock! If you missed out on this event, don't fret. You have plenty of time to get your bike tires pumped up so you can join us in September 2026.

The one thing we can always count on, no matter what the weather brings, is that our supporters will show up like the true Champions of Nature that you all are!



Our musicians at the Barn to Farm Bike Ride were our lead preschool teacher, Nicole Upchurch, and her husband, Benj Upchurch. Both are members of the local bluegrass group The Feralings.



Nature's Noel

THANK YOU TO OUR 2025 SPONSORS:



Backcountry Film Festival

THANK YOU TO OUR 2025 SPONSORS:



Women in Nature

THANK YOU TO OUR 2025 SPONSOR:





Maple Syrup Festival

THANK YOU TO OUR 2025 SPONSORS:



Barn to Farm Bike Ride

THANK YOU TO OUR 2025 SPONSORS:



Monarch Fest

THANK YOU TO OUR 2025 SPONSORS:



Field Trips

THANK YOU TO OUR 2025 SPONSORS:



Trailside Tastings

THANK YOU TO OUR 2025 SPONSORS:



Farm to Table

THANK YOU TO OUR 2025 SPONSORS:



Practice in the Prairie

THANK YOU TO OUR 2025 SPONSOR:



Indian Creek Cleanup

THANK YOU TO OUR 2025 SPONSOR:



Creek Camps & Trail Trekkers

THANK YOU TO OUR 2025 SPONSOR:



Why Accessibility Matters To Us

By Sarah Halbrook,
Director of Development & Marketing

In 2025, we introduced all-terrain wheelchairs that allow individuals with mobility impairments to explore the land beyond our sidewalks and truly immerse themselves in nature. This investment reflects a core belief we hold deeply: everyone deserves the chance to connect with nature.

We also made important — though less visible — accessibility improvements to our website. Through support from key donors, including Nancy and Tom Lackner, and grant funding from ACT, we enhanced the site to ensure a more inclusive digital experience by optimizing our pages for screen readers and other assistive technologies, adjusting the website layout for keyboard navigation, and providing descriptive image text and color contrasts to accommodate the visually impaired.

These updates matter. Age-related vision loss and impairments such as macular degeneration and cataracts affect a significant number of adults. Improving color contrast ratios, reducing visual clutter, and enhancing overall readability help ensure that more people can engage with our content and connect with the Nature Center, regardless of their level of vision.

What's next? One project we're still seeking funding for is a narrated, descriptive video designed for visitors who are blind or have low vision. It would guide listeners through the Nature Center experience, pairing vivid descriptions of what others see with the natural sounds of the space.

The need for this became especially clear during a 2023 professional development session with Molly Wuebker, the Iowa ADA Liaison, when our team was asked to watch a video with our eyes closed. All we could hear was the musical soundtrack



With deep appreciation, we honor Nancy Lackner for her 25 years of dedication and impact at Indian Creek Nature Center. Nancy fostered strong connections within our community, ensuring the Nature Center's mission thrived. We are incredibly grateful for her years of service and wish her all the best in this next chapter!

— none of the visual story was accessible to us. It was a powerful reminder of how limited the experience can be for those who rely on audio alone when engaging with our digital content.

We wanted you, our loyal supporters, to see what happens behind the scenes at your Nature Center and understand the importance of this work. Thank you for all you make possible.



Expanding Access to Nature

Many of the 75 guests who used an all-terrain wheelchair in 2025 were so touched by the opportunity to explore nature that they shared their stories and photos with us.

"My husband Ron and I used your all-terrain vehicles today for a hike with our son and daughter-in-law. We would not have been able to walk it at all and we had so much fun. We are looking forward to doing that again! Thank you so much!" — Genie Schwertfeger

"Thank you again for the opportunity to hike as a family on Monday. I love hiking and have never been able to go with my whole family. It was so amazing to be able to do something we both love, and we now get to experience and access this all the time." — Krista Sigel

"I hadn't gotten to do anything like that before. It's something I couldn't have done in my wheelchair, so it was an experience I didn't know I'd ever get to have." — Rylie Erbacher

Endowment Donors

Indian Creek Nature Center has mission-focused endowment funds at the Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation. We are deeply grateful to the donors who contributed to these funds in 2025, as well as the legacy donors whose past generosity continues to inspire gifts that will benefit ICNC for generations to come.

Indian Creek Nature Center Endowment Challenge II Fund

2025 Donors: Marcia & Tony Bedard, Stephen & Kristy Halbrook, Kathleen & Bill Hanes, Jo Miller, Susan Ovel

Indian Creek Nature Center General Operations Fund

Legacy Donors: ICNC Founders - BB Stamats & the Jean O'Donnell Family (Michael & Tiffany O'Donnell, Ann O'Donnell Ilten)

Indian Creek Nature Center General Operations Friends Fund

Legacy Donors: Jeanne & Robert Blahnik (in memoriam), Cedar Rapids Garden Club, Harriet & Robert Eckard

2025 Donors: Sara & Jim Sauter

Indian Creek Nature Center Land & Facilities Fund

Indian Creek Nature Center Land & Facilities Friends Fund

Legacy Donors: Carl & Doris McClain, Lynne Stimple Family (in memoriam)

Indian Creek Nature Center Education Fund

Legacy Donors: Metro High School, Mrs. Paul (Sigurd) Lynch, Richard Schultz (in memoriam), Robert G. Worley (in memoriam)

Creekside Forest School Endowment Assistance Fund

Legacy Donors: Oglanian Family Early Education Fund, Esther Wilson Education Endowment Fund

Indian Creek Nature Center Education Friends Fund

Legacy Donors: Ella Johnson Miller, Helen Troxel (in memoriam)



In addition, Indian Creek Nature Center is grateful for endowment distributions received in 2025 from these funds at the Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation.

Alex Strait Memorial Fund for Indian Creek Nature Center

2025 Donors: Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation Bill & Lu Barron Donor Advised Fund, Chris Keeran, Mary James, Tom & Becky Pardonek, Deborah & Fred Walk

Betty and Meril Geuder Land Care Fund

David and Chris Kubicek Endowed Fund

Dorothea and Joseph Hall Gift of Wonder Fund

Dorothea E. Garberson Wildflower Project Fund

Etzel Sugar Grove Farm Endowed Fund

Gayle Ann Wallace Fund

Gladys Bock Children's Fund for Indian Creek Nature Center

Indian Creek Nature Center Joy Kim Fisher Memorial Fund

Jay G. Sigmund Fund

Norm and Floy Erickson Endowment Fund

Patterson Family Indian Creek Nature Center Fund

Paul Christiansen Memorial Fund

Paul Morf and Jennifer Merryman Endowed Fund for Indian Creek Nature Center

Robert W. and Elizabeth M. Allsop Endowed Fund

Roger and Thea Leslie Endowed Fund IV

Ruth M. and Clifford M. Altermatt Fund

William B. Quarton Unrestricted Fund

Tribute Trees and Benches

*Bench in honor of Sheila Hahn
Bench in honor of Nancy Lackner*



A new tribute bench, in memory of long-time Nature Center friend and volunteer Sheila Hahn, now offers a resting place for hikers along the Bluebird Trail.

Granting Organizations

Indian Creek Nature Center gratefully acknowledges the following foundations and granting organizations that awarded grant funding to support our mission.

- Aegon Transamerica Foundation
- Alliant Energy
- Athletic Brewing Company
- Blooming Prairie Foundation
- City of Cedar Rapids Hotel-Motel Fund
- City of Marion Hotel-Motel Fund
- Collins Aerospace, an RTX business
- Delta Dental of Iowa
- First Federal Credit Union Foundation
- Giacoletto Foundation
- Greater Cedar Rapids Community Foundation
 - Bloomhall Family Endowed Donor-Advised Fund
 - Diamond V Corporate Fund
 - GreatAmerica Employee Advised Fund
 - GreatAmerica Financial Services Corporation Donor-Advised Fund
 - Organizational Support Fund
- International Paper Foundation
- Iowa Tourism Industry Partners (iTip)
- Linn County Legacy & Community Attraction Fund
- National League of Cities
- UFG Insurance

Supporting Organizations

Indian Creek Nature Center is grateful for the organizations that invest in our mission in a multitude of ways. Thank you for your support!

- Cedar Rapids Garden Club
- Cedar Rapids Optimist Club - Tuesday Noon
- Clean Energy Districts of Iowa
- CR Retired Teachers
- IBEW/NECA
- Mount Vernon Road Tire
- OPN Architects Inc
- Peoples Church Unitarian
- St. Pius X Parish
- The McIntyre Foundation



New 2025 Lifetime Members

- | | | |
|--------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Anonymous | Kaitlin Byers | Megan Ryan |
| David Adams | Kathleen Hanes | Jenni Semelroth |
| Susan Adams | Hedy Hustedde | Tim Semelroth |
| Tom Barker | Jill Jamieson | Claire Smith |
| Athena Bosch | Jo Ann McNiel | Laurie Tauber |
| Ryan Bosch | Jo Miller | Terri Wendler |



5300 Otis Road SE
Cedar Rapids, IA 52403



Mission Statement:

Indian Creek Nature Center's mission is to promote a more sustainable future by nurturing individuals through environmental education, providing leadership in land protection and restoration, and encouraging responsible interaction with nature.



Stay in touch with
your nature center!

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