

ECIMN Alumni Meeting Minutes

July 11, 2024, 6:30 PM, Abshire Cabin

At least 48 persons (signatures on the sign-in sheet) attended the July 11 ECIMN Alumni meeting. Most of the 26 members of the 2024 IMN class, who were meeting at Abshire just prior to the Alumni meeting, attended.

Lou Anne Hostetler opened the meeting by welcoming everyone and gave a special welcome to the 2024 IMN class. She invited meeting participants to help themselves to the snacks any time during the business meeting. Board members were introduced by Lou Anne: Chairperson - Lou Anne Hostetler; Vice-Chairperson - Judy Preheim; Treasurer - Steve Shantz; Secretary - Jim Bare; Education Chairperson - Melanie Helmuth; Communication Chairperson - Elma Chapman; Outreach Coordinator Chairperson - Carole Mitchel; Volunteer Coordinator - Lois Oyer. Krista Daniels and Jenna Wait are the Steering Committee.

Volunteer Opportunities

- A list of volunteer opportunities was posted on the table outside and attendees were encouraged to photograph it so they could add the opportunities to their schedules. The list will also be sent by email. The Boot Lake seed collection date will be set when we know the seeds are ready for harvest. It will probably be after our October meeting.

Carole Mitchell reviewed upcoming events where volunteers are needed at the IMN table:

- Green Day at the Fair – July 19, 9 AM to 4 PM.
- Bug Night, Cobus Creek, August 2, 6:30 to 8:30 PM.
- Envirofest, Island Park, Elkhart, August 10, 3 - 8 PM.
- River Fest, River Bend Park, Middlebury, August 24, 3 – 7 PM. No table but volunteers are needed.

State IMN Gathering

Chuck Harvout reported on this event coming on September 27 -29, 2024, at Fox Island County Park in Fort Wayne. Cost is \$75 and attendance is limited to 100 people this year. Advanced IMNs received invitations. The 2025 gathering will be at Brown County State Park in early April. (Chuck also noted that he has IMN swag for sale – hats, license plates, etc.).

Upcoming Meetings

- October 10, 2024, Schrock Pavilion, 6:30 PM. Speaker: Ryan Sensenig on “Prairie Burns”.
- January 9, 2025.

- Potluck February 13, 2025 at Schrock Pavilion (Snow date Feb. 20).
- April 24, 2025.
- July 10, 2025.
- October 9, 2025.

Speakers

Melanie Helmuth introduced our guest speakers – Luke Gascho and Levi Moser. Luke Gascho, now retired, was Executive Director of Goshen College's Merry Lea Environmental Center for 22 years. Levi Moser, 2024 graduate of Goshen High School, has been working with AmeriCorps, part time during the school year and full time this summer. They spoke on Agro-Forestry, with Gascho describing Agro-Forestry on his 2 ½ acres on Kercher Road, and

After a brief history of the land we live on (before the arrival of European settlers), Gascho listed types of Agro-Forestry – Windbreaks, Riparian, Silvopasture, Alley Cropping, Forest Farming and Orchards. His Half-Moon Rising acreage uses Alley Cropping and he showed pictures of the area as it has developed since 2013.

Moser describing recent efforts to re-establish Agro-Forestry at Vista Medical Center in Goshen, and here at Abshire Park. We ended with a walking tour of the established area at Abshire Park.

Minutes submitted by Jim Bare, ECIMN Secretary, July 2024