

THE CURRENT

Newsletter of River Fields, Inc.

January 2025

PHOTO BY **LEILANI ANGEL** ON UNSPLASH

OUT IN THE FIELDS UPDATES WE'RE EXCITED TO SHARE WITH YOU:

DAISY HILL: PROTECTED FOREVER!

Last month we closed on a conservation easement protecting 100 acres of dense, mature forest in Southwest Jefferson County –



forever. The landowners, Deanna Estes-Culler and Everett Culler have devoted their lives' work to acquiring this property for conservation. They have now kindly entrusted River Fields with the task of ensuring that their lifelong work

– fragile forested land acquired and cared for over decades – will remain forest and never become a shopping center office park, parking lot or subdivision. The property, colloquially known as Daisy Hill, is just a quarter mile from Dixie Highway in a highly developed area of Louisville. Located between Iroquois Park and Waverly Park, permanent conservation of this property helps create a corridor

of refuge for wildlife in the area. Further, Daisy Hill's steep slopes form a basin, which will provide incredible storm-water retention benefits in an area of Louisville where it is desperately needed.

River Fields now holds 2300 acres in conservation easements: a permanent promise to keep all these cultural landscapes safe forever and also make our community healthier and more resilient.

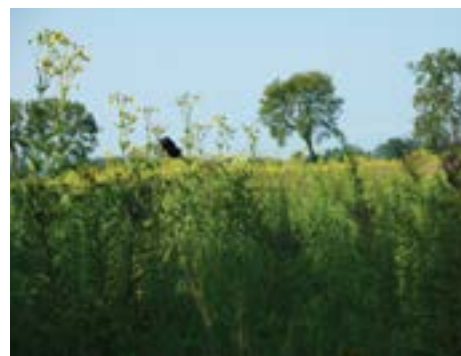


IMAGE BY **JOHN NATION**

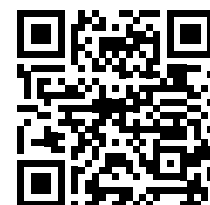
REWILDING AT RIVER FIELDS

We've started an initiative to re-naturalize some of our properties along River Road, replacing Bermuda grass with wildflowers and native grasses. This process will begin with eradication and take time, but will create beautiful habitat to support pollinators, be more flood resilient, and require less mowing.



MAKE AN IMPACTFUL END OF YEAR GIFT!

Support the river, its lands, and the people who depend upon them with a contribution to River Fields! We are an independent nonprofit that receives no taxpayer funding while protecting nearly 2,300 acres of land, providing vibrant nature programming, and speaking up against shortsighted and harmful development. We rely on our generous supporters to continue our work of advocating, preserving, and educating. It's our 65th anniversary this year – we invite you to help us commemorate it poetically with a gift of \$65, \$650 or \$6500 – whatever your budget allows.



YOU CAN MAKE A TAX-DEDUCTIBLE CONTRIBUTION HERE:

<https://riverfields.org/donate/>

PRESIDENT AND CEO'S MESSAGE: **WINTER: A SEASON OF PREPARATION**

December 21 of this year marks the 2024 Winter Solstice. Also known as the hibernal solstice, it occurs

the southern hemisphere. It's the day with the shortest period of daylight and longest night of the

onset of winter, for much of nature, means preparation. Squirrels gather food to store away for the winter, birds heed the instinct to migrate to warmer lands, fur-bearing animals develop thicker and denser coats. Beavers head into their cozy lodges and snakes go into brumation (hibernation for reptiles), seeking out caves, log piles, or other shelters.



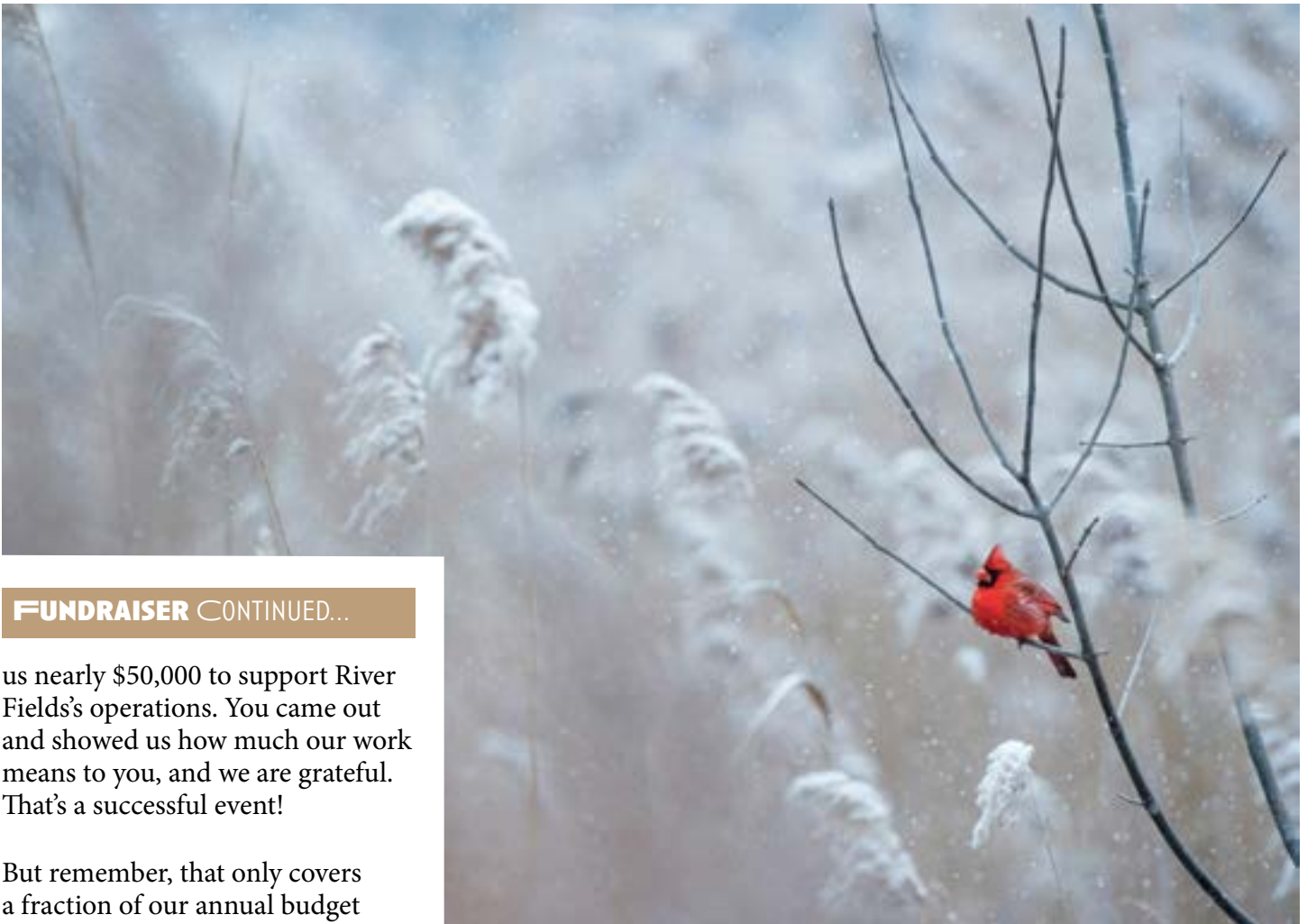
Even the trees are preparing in other ways than dropping their leaves: they alter the fluids within their cells to prevent them from expanding and bursting when frozen. Nature shows us a whole textbook of lessons about how to prepare for and get through winter safely and comfortably: stock up on supplies, find cozy places, and cover yourself warmly. Prepare. But remember that winter itself, too, is one of nature's gifts. If fall is universally the season of celebrating the harvest, winter is often the occasion for commemorating light, renewal and fresh beginnings – and cultures all over the world celebrate this. Have you had trouble learning to rejoice in winter? Let's make this year different. Appreciate the bare bones of the woods and the subdued color palette and look for our birds that overwinter – you can see them better with no leaves on the trees. Know that winter is the next step to spring. We at River Fields wish you a year full of experiencing nature and peace. And I'm always happy to hear from you at: kristin@riverfields.org

--Kristin Faurest, Ph.D., President and CEO, River Fields

when either of Earth's poles reaches its maximum tilt away from the sun. This happens twice yearly, once in the northern and once in

year, when the sun is at its lowest daily maximum elevation in the sky. Besides being the shortest day, it means that winter is upon us. The

PHOTO OF WINTER LANDSCAPE BY **ALEXANDRA, UNSPLASH**



FUNDRAISER CONTINUED...

us nearly \$50,000 to support River Fields's operations. You came out and showed us how much our work means to you, and we are grateful. That's a successful event!

But remember, that only covers a fraction of our annual budget for protecting 2,300 acres of conservation easements, stewarding 65 acres, and serving as a voice for conservation, preservation, and advocacy. We are grateful for all who supported our event so generously! But we also have to keep bringing in more public support so we can continue the work we do for you to protect historic sites, prevent development on delicate natural landscapes, and provide engaging educational programs on the natural and historic wonders in our care.

Please consider making a tax-deductible donation to River Fields at whatever level is comfortable to you, to help ensure we start 2025 in a strong place to protect, conserve, advocate, and educate. Thank you!

--Kristin Faurest, Ph.D., President and CEO, River Fields

PHOTO OF CARDINAL IN WINTER BY PHOTO OF CARDINAL IN WINTER BY
RAY HENNESSY, UNSPLASH

OUT IN THE FIELDS CONTINUED...

KEEPING THE BYWAY SCENIC

River Fields is excited to be working with Different Strokes Golf Course in mitigating the visual impact to the River Road Scenic Byway from some planned construction there. River Fields is always happy to be a helpful partner in protecting the scenic beauty that benefits us all.

BUDS AND BARK: HOW TO ID TREES IN WINTER

Signups are open for our winter tree walk with Renee Frith – secure your place today, because these go quickly! Go to www.riverfields.org to register as a member or non-member.

DON'T MISS AN UPDATE!

Keep up with River Fields by following us on Facebook and signing up on our website for regular updates. <https://www.facebook.com/riverfieldsky>





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THE CURRENT

ANNUAL FUNDRAISER - **THANK YOU!**

October 25 was a gorgeous autumn night with pleasant temperatures, a light breeze, and peak fall color at Locust Grove. Perfect conditions for a great party to celebrate 65 years of stewardship! We had delicious food thanks to Farm to Fork, great music from Carly Johnson, and a lively auction featuring extraordinary wine and exciting travel adventures. Thanks to everyone's generosity, the event's tickets, Raise the Paddle donations, and auction sales netted



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