What does it mean to know a place?

Knowing Nachusa means we name, describe, and, to some extent, understand a beautiful and infinitely complex world.

We see the interdependency of soils, plants, insects, and animals. We learn which plants thrive with certain other plants and how they build a community.

We watch for the arrival of birds; wonder which ones will build nests and what type of plant structures they will build them in.

We discover that quietly moving among us are hundreds of turtles, some older than ourselves, nibbling on spiderwort and silently wintering in sandy dens below our feet.

We learn firsthand how prescribed fire prevents shrubs from overpowering the grasslands.

We observe bison impacting every aspect of prairie life. Each glimmer of understanding yields a new question to be answered.

Knowing is the quiet emotion we feel at dusk in the dimming light, the thrill of rare species thriving, the sense of being at home and at peace. Knowing is the assembly of all this wonder in a place deep inside us; we understand that life is bigger than ourselves.

The sum of our knowing leads to loving. And, loving leads to working for the protection of this landscape. I hope you’ll join me in the privilege of this work.

—BERNIE BUCHHOLZ,
President, Friends of Nachusa Grasslands
December. A month of brown. Tan grasses, amber leaves clinging to branches, intermingling shades of hickory, walnut, and oak leaves in slow decay. Deadfall to be cut, to be stacked, to be burned. Ashes moving into the tawny sandy soil. A brown beverage after the day. A month of brown—with a hint and promise of white.

MARK JORDAN
Steward
For me, January in Illinois used to mean minimal activities outdoors. Nachusa has taught me that winter is a state of mind—winter can be a lot of fun and productive. Clearing honeysuckle helps clear one’s mind. Starting a huge bonfire of hackberry branches kindles great thoughts. And working in the crisp winter air reinvigorates the body. By February, as I’m wrapping up my business activities and getting ready to travel, I’m reminded that Nachusa is like the Eagles’ song “Hotel California”: “You can check out any time you like but you can never leave.” I know I’ll be back in early spring and that’s always exciting.

TIMOTHY NGO
Volunteer

TO-DO LIST
- Cut brush
- Organize and report field data
- Mow willows
- Go for a walk in Tellabs after it snows
I cherish the moment when I notice the absence of distant man-made sounds after a fresh blanket of February snow has fallen over Nachusa and surrounding areas. A winter prairie, seemingly void of life, comes alive with the crisp ti—ti—ti song of a lone chickadee dancing though the branches of a wafer ash. It’s followed by a hair raising whew—whew—whew—whew, whew, whew, whew call from a cautious buck in the distant hills.

JEFF COLOGNA
Steward
“March Madness.” It’s all about getting our spring fire season going!

In the fall, we prepare our fire breaks. As soon as winter seems to be ending, we load our water spraying equipment. Then, we look over a long checklist of tasks. Finally, there is a sunny day with a south wind blowing. We are igniting again! It is exciting, challenging, and feels good when we apply fire to the landscape that responds to it so well. Plants emerge just a few weeks later.

BILL KLEIMAN
Project Director for Nachusa Grasslands, The Nature Conservancy

TO-DO LIST

- Hire seasonal crew
- Ensure equipment and trucks are ready for fire season
- Conduct a mid-March refresher for volunteers and staff who conduct prescribed burns
- Marvel at a landscape blackened by fire, then resurrected into a vibrant, healthy prairie, wetland, or woodland
Ah, the freshness of April! Pristine bloodroot blossoms light up the dark woodland floor. The more prudent fiddleheads tightly curl up in the cool soil, as though snuggled against the chill. By mid-month, the marsh marigolds with their buttery blossoms are the bright sunshine of the fen. Here and there on the prairie the bird’s foot violets provide a feast for the regal fritillary caterpillars. Come month’s-end, the woodlands roll out their carpets of trilliums and Dutchman’s breeches, and the wild ginger buds peek out of their blankets of fuzz. The promise of new life is everywhere as the bison begin to deliver the new year’s irrepressible cinnamon calves.

**BETTY HIGBY**
Volunteer

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**TO-DO LIST**

- Continue prescribed burns through the 15th
- Look for weeds in newer restoration areas
- Control honeysuckle, multiflora rose, and autumn olive tree sprouts
- Begin watching herd for new baby bison births
Dragonflies and damselflies begin to emerge from the creeks and ponds at Nachusa Grasslands in May. Their transition from ugly nymphs living underwater to colorful aerial acrobats that live only a brief time is one of the marvels of spring. Monitoring the numbers and species of dragonflies and damselflies tells us about the quality of water at Nachusa over time. Plus, it’s a great excuse to go hiking.

CINDY CROSBY
Dragonfly Monitor
What could be more glorious than nature’s palette in June? Pink prairie smoke, pale purple coneflower, yellow coreopsis, purple leadplant with accents of orange, blue spiderwort, and white thimbleweed cover Doug’s Knob with a blanket of beauty. My spirit is refreshed each year when the summer species burst into bloom.

MARY MEIER
Steward
July is an exciting, busy, and beautiful time on the prairie. The weed control season is winding down while the seed collecting season is picking up. No matter how hot it gets, I truly enjoy my time out in the field with the crew.

KALEB BAKER
Crew Leader and Restoration Technician

TO-DO LIST
- Finish spring and early summer weed management
- Eradicate bouncing bet
- Collect seeds of spring-blooming species
- Watch for bison to begin annual rut
- Sit on Fame Flower Knob and admire the coneflowers
The hot bright light of June and July becomes golden in August. The prairie stays in step with the light in this dance of the seasons, reds and pinks and whites giving way to the yellows of silphiums and sunflowers. A rush of cool air from the north breaks the heat, a first taste of the wine days of fall that lay ahead.

JAY STACY
Steward

TO-DO LIST
- Collect prairie wildflower seeds
- Paint and maintain buildings
- Conduct vegetation transects
- Prepare for Autumn on the Prairie festival

*SEED COLLECTION

* EASTERN TIGER SWALLOWTAIL

* COMPASS PLANT
I love Nachusa Grasslands in September. The exquisite autumn colors of the grasses and flower stems mix with the purple and yellow flowers. I find hidden prairie gentians and ladies’ tresses orchids in the oceans of waving prairie grass. Meadowlarks start to sing again, perhaps thinking it’s spring. I thrill over the migrating flocks of geese, monarchs, and dragonflies. The sunsets seem more beautiful in the cool fall than in the summer.

SUSAN KLEIMAN
Volunteer and environmental educator
October. Time to bring in the bison for their annual health checkup. The roundup is a fast paced, hold onto your hat, cross-your-fingers, and hope that all your hard work of planning and equipment doesn’t fail! Our validation on a job well done is given to us at the end of the day if every animal went through our operation without harm. And, like most operations at Nachusa, this couldn’t happen without a great team of volunteers and staff. I’m awfully proud to be part of the roundup and look forward to it each year.

CODY CONSIDINE
Nachusa Grasslands Restoration Ecologist
November is tawny, tending toward shades of smoky, punctuated by leaps of flame as late autumn prairie fires leave ash. Planting follows along in the pale light.

MARY VIEREGG
Steward

TO-DO LIST
- Winterize buildings
- Begin prescribed burns
- Plant seeds
- Appreciate the rich metallic colors of the grasses as autumn slides into winter

COLLECTING SEEDS
July 1, 2015, to June 30, 2016

*PRAIRIE PERENNIALS*
Donors who have given to the Friends of Nachusa Grasslands in consecutive years at the same or a higher level

**RESTORATION BENEFACORS**

$5,000 or More

- Alliance Financial*
  - c/o Frank McGhee, Linda Stone, and John Ayres
- Bloomberg Philanthropies
  - Henry Paulson, director match
- Bobolink Foundation*
  - c/o Wendy Paulson
- Bernie and Cindy Buchholz* +
  - Ralph Burnett*
- Mary Walsh and Dave Crossett*
- Don and Espie Nelson*
- Jay Stacy
- Jim and Mary Vieregg*
- Fred and Martha Wetzel*
  - In memory of Irene V. Santee

**CONSERVATION CHAMPIONS**

$1,500 to $4,999

- Mike Adolph
- John and Lisa Marie Ayres*
  - In memory of Marge Collens
- Alan Carpenter*
- Steven Diller*
- Jan Grainger*
- Jerry and Linda Hartz*
- Jeff and Joan Meiners*
- Steve and Mary Meiners
- Tim Sherck+
- Judy Rogers and Dale Shriver
- Paul and Carol Soderholm
- Tawani Enterprises*
  - Lisa Ayres, Lincoln Way Inn B&B, employee match
- Daniel Thompson* +
- Vanderpoel Conservation Foundation*

**SUPPORTERS**

$1 to $1,499

- Cindy and Fred Acker*
- Michael Adsit*
- John Albright*
- American Airlines
  - In honor of Paul Swanson
- Keith Anderson
- Barbara and Michael Annin
- Jim Armstrong*
- P McMillen and S Bader
- Joe and Karin Bajko
- Ellen Baker*
- Heather Baker*
- John and Jane Balaban*
- Mark and Gillian Batterman
  - In honor of Betty Higby
- Sally and Max Baumgardner
  - In honor of Erich and Ann Baumgardner
- Renate and Werner Baur*
- David Bendlin*
- Cordelia Dahlberg Benedict
  - In memory of Al and Thelma Dahlberg
- Mary Beth Bengtson
- Pat and Polly Benton, Naperville Rotary Club
  - In honor of Cindy Crosby’s talk
- David Kanzler and Nancy Bingham*
- Bishop Family Fund
- Todd and Tonya Bittner*
- Cindy Blue*
- Liesel Wildhagen and Ray Boehner*
  - In memory of Maurice “Jim” Peckham of Urbana, Illinois
- George and Kathy Bouska
- Barbara Bowers
  - In memory of Titus and Patton, my two Rottweilers, and Magic, my horse
- Wilbert and Dennis Boynton
  - In memory of Betty Higby
- Karla Brandt
- Carol Jean and Bernie Brown
- Jonathan Brown
  - In honor of Carol Jean and Bernard Brown
- Brad Buchholz
- Alice Buyers*
  - In memory of Charles Buyers
- Laura Capaldini
- Angelo Capparella*
- Mike and Marilyn Carr*
- Thomas Cassidy*
- Caterpillar Foundation
  - Pete Fenner, employee match

**HERITAGE HEROES**

Donors who have committed to including the Friends of Nachusa Grasslands in their estate plans

- Susan Cerny
- Mark and Betty Kirk Chernansky
  - In honor of the “Repeat the Sounding Joy” Initiative
- Karen Hayes and Jim Coffin
- Kathleen Cole*
- Leslie Coleman
- Mary Coleman
- Lewis and Marjorie Collens
- Sean and Kristen Collins-Stapleton
- Jeff Cologna*
- Cody and Angie Considine
- Douglas and Elizabeth Considine
  - In honor of Cody Considine
- Kathy and Alan Cooper
- Susan and Brent Coulter*
  - In honor of Mary and Jim Vieregg
- Ann and Barry Cousins*
- Preston and Barbara Crabill
- Ron Cress*
- 15 HIKE IN TELLABS
Jack Crisham, D.M.D.
In memory of Larinda Heller
David, Laura, and Michelle Crites
Michele and Don Cronin
Cindy and Jeff Crosby
George Crossett
Loretta Crow
Daughters of the American Revolution – Rock River Chapter
In memory of Caroline Colton
Kaletka
David Davidson
Jon and Emily Dempsey
Ann Dervis
In honor of Mary Vieregg
Ron Deters
In memory of Jasper our beloved Blue Heeler
In honor of Jay Stacy, Jeff Cologna, and Dee Hudson
Brenda Dorsey
In memory of Mary Vieregg
Harry and Beth Drucker
Chris Boebel and Glenna Eaves
Lynne and Greg Ekdale
In honor of Alan and Mary Meier
Helen Evenson
Exelon’s Dollars for Doers Program
In honor of Pete Oliver
Bill and Laurie Faller
DeWayne and Donna Fellows
Pete and Sally Fenner
Sally Bowers and Howard Fenton
Conrad and Carol Fialkowski
First Presbyterian Church
God Seekers
In honor of Mike Carr
Robert Fisher
In honor of Sarah Ryerson
Lee Foley
Guy Fraker
Leslie Frane
In honor of Annette Kleinman
William D. Fruin
Martha Garcia
In honor of John and Lisa Ayres
Lorraine Gawlik
Don and Vicki Gladfelter
Jacquelyne Gleason
In honor of Uncle John Perl
Candice Glover
Cynthia Gray
Victor and Jean Guarino
John and Janet Gundy
Kirk and Katie Hallowell
Michael Hansen
In memory of Carl and Betty Hansen
Harold M. and Adeline S. Morrison Family Foundation
On behalf of Bruce and Beth Boyd
Hamill Family Foundation
On behalf of Nancy C.H. Winter
John Heneghan and Tricia Lowery
Heritage Square
Roxy W. Hey
James and Betty Higby
In honor of the Bison herd
Mark Hinueber
Ann Holt-Harris
Donald and Cherril Homer
Carolyn Hotchkiss
Gene Hotchkiss
In honor of Nancy Hotchkiss
John and Ingrid Hotchkiss
Terry and Janie Houchin
In honor of Mary and Alan Meier
John Huck
In memory of Roxana Huck
Jim and Kathy Huffman
Betsy and Marlon Huls
Illinois Audubon Society – McHenry County Chapter
Ronald D. Ingraham
Carla Johnson
In honor of Kris and Jon Swedlund
Chris and Barbara Johnson
Mark and Patti Jordan
In memory of Jack and Doris Jordan
Keith Kauffmann
Connie and Dennis Keller
Tim and Carolyn Keller
Holly Keltner
Jack and June Kiburz
Bill, Susan, and Leah Kleiman
Jeffrey Klocek
Clifford Knapp
Mickey Collins and Aki Knezovic
Mark Krusis
John and Toni Landgraf
Emmylou Studier and Charles Larry
Kent and Kathy Lawrence
Tom Lawson
In memory of Annette, Russell, and James Lawson
Ray and Linda Layton
In honor of Mark Jordan
Lee County Homemakers Education Association
Datuk Robert F. Inger and Datin Tan Fui Lian
Lee and Janice Lockwood
Charlene Loescher
Ann Lowry
Clark and Pam Lumsden
Nancy Chadbourne Maze
Gordon McGrew
Richard and Deborah McNeil
In honor of Annette Kleinman
Alan and Mary Meier
Clyde Meier
In memory of Mary Ternmont Meier
Paul and Linda Meier
Michael Mekeel
Lisa and Gerald Moore
Morton Arboretum Education Staff
In honor of Bernie Buchholz
Penny Ward Moser
In memory of Donald Moser
Melissa Murphy
In honor of Lisa Murphy
Natural History Society of Barrington
In honor of John Heneghan
Peter W. Nichols MD
Randy and Melissa Nyboer
Heritage Square
Kevin and Linda O’Neill
Pete Oliver
Clara Orban
In honor of Sheri’s birthday
Oregon Healthcare Pharmacy Services Inc.
c/o Marc Mongan, President
Drs. Anna and Ralph Orland
In honor of Carolyn Hotchkiss

In-Kind Donation
Patagonia Chicago Mag Mile

Heritage Heroes Not Listed Above
George and Marylou Farnsworth+
Robert J. Miller, Jr.+

Anonymous
In honor of Bob Nagle
and Ron Deitz

Eastern Amberwing Dragonfly
Laura Adamovicz, DVM, Ph.D. graduate student, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. Dr. Adamovicz will conduct complete veterinary physical exams, collect mouth and cloacal swabs for disease detection, and evaluate blood samples from ornate box turtles at Nachusa. The goal is to measure the health of the population which should help direct conservation strategies for the species at the preserve. This data will also serve as baseline data for use with other populations of this species in other preserves. ($1,960)

Nicholas Barber, Ph.D., Northern Illinois University. This study will focus on the recolonization of dung beetles following prairie restoration and examine the potential effects of bison on the diversity of these functionally important insects. Specifically, this study will further document the species of dung beetles present at Nachusa, construct a picture of how dung beetle communities shift with plant restoration, and determine if the abundance and diversity of the beetles differs in the presence of grazing bison. ($500)

Ryan Blackburn, master’s degree graduate student, Northern Illinois University. Mr. Blackburn will be studying bison habitat preference and diet in addition to their effect on vegetation structure. One methodology he will use will be stable isotope analysis of bison hair and the collected leaves of thirteen species of grasses and five dominant forb species to look for dietary patterns. Secondly, he will use aerial imagery to map areas of the preserve of similar ages with and without bison impact. ($1,500)

Julia Brockman, master’s degree graduate student, Southern Illinois University. This is a continuation of Ms. Brockman’s study of bison habitat selection at Nachusa. She is collecting hourly GPS location data from collars on seven bison cows and overlaying that data on maps of remnant and restored plant communities, burn data, and locations of human activity. Using mapping and statistical programs, she is determining the importance of different habitat and management variables on bison habitat selection. These observations should help managers develop strategies to optimally plan human/bison interaction, restoration goals, and burn schedules. ($2,000)

Bethanne Bruninga-Socolar, Ph.D. graduate student, Rutgers University. Over the last three years, Ms. Bruninga-Socolar and Sean Griffin have built a data set focusing on the bee populations in the restored areas of Nachusa and surrounding alternative land use areas. This study will use that data set as a baseline to study the effects of bison reintroduction on bee communities. Their previous studies at Nachusa have shown that bee abundance and richness increased with restoration age to the target level of remnant prairie within the first two-three years after restoration began and continued at that high level thereafter. ($3,340)

Angela Burke, master’s degree graduate student, Northern Illinois University. This continuing project is quantifying how changes in fire intervals and the presence or absence of bison affect small mammal populations in restored and remnant prairie. Ms. Burke is using live capture-mark-recapture methods to measure small mammal diversity, abundance, and seasonal fluctuations in matched pairs of differently aged restoration sites and in remnant sites varying in bison presence/absence and fire frequency. ($1,500)

Karley Chantos, master’s degree graduate student, Northern Illinois University. This study will evaluate the geochemical and microbial changes brought about in prairie restorations by the reintroduction of bison. This study will build on the previous three years of soil sampling done by Drs. Barber and Swingley in the study sites. The goal is to quantify any measurable differences in the geochemistry and microbial diversity in prairie soil over time with and without the influence of bison feces. ($1,500)
Heather Herakovich, Ph.D. graduate student, Northern Illinois University. This is the third year of a study of grassland bird density in restored plots of varying age as well as remnant control prairies. Ms. Herakovich is attempting to quantify the effects of bison reintroduction, prescribed fire, and restoration age on grassland bird populations at Nachusa. ($1,700)

Richard King, Ph.D., Northern Illinois University, Thomas B. Anton and David Mauger, independent researchers, and Monika Kastle, master's degree graduate student, Northern Illinois University. This research will build on the previous work done by Anton and Mauger at Nachusa which identified certain areas of the preserve as centers of activity for the state endangered Blanding’s turtle. This study will use trapping and radio-telemetry to learn more about the animal’s movement patterns and habitat use. ($3,500)

Jodi Vandermyde, aquatic ecologist, Illinois Natural History Survey. This project will establish baseline stream conditions such as water temperature, water level, and macroinvertebrate populations and then initiate systematic sampling protocols for long-term stream monitoring at Nachusa. The goal is to study the effects of bison grazing and fire on stream water quality and aquatic diversity over time which may prove useful in assessing land management strategies. ($2,500)

MARY VIEREGG, Science Grants Chair and Friends Science Committee
Our Heritage Heroes initiative offers the opportunity for you to make a lasting contribution to prairie restoration by naming Friends of Nachusa Grasslands in your will or estate plan. This legacy program has been enthusiastically received. In less than two years, eleven individuals or families have made the commitment.

Meet Heritage Hero Tim Sherck

**Home:** Andersonville area of Chicago  
**Education:** Northwestern University and Harvard Law School  
**Career:** Tax attorney, Mayer Brown  
**Commitment to Restoration:** Tim’s parents were avid birders. He fondly remembers visits to Schaefer Prairie, a TNC preserve in central Minnesota. Tim has continued his interest and commitment to preservation throughout his career. During an early visit to Nachusa, he met with steward Jay Stacy and promised he would return. Jay had his doubts about the Chicago-based attorney, but was delightfully surprised when Tim became a regular volunteer.  
**Other interests:** Tim also serves on the board of The Night Ministry, which provides housing and support services to homeless youth in Chicago.

Tips for Legacy Giving

The Friends Endowment for Nachusa Grasslands is managed by the Community Foundation of Northern Illinois (CFNIL), our trusted partner. Founded in 1953, CFNIL manages more than $90 million for area nonprofits. CFNIL offers planning tips for legacy giving in support of our Heritage Heroes initiative. If you would like to obtain a copy of this one-page summary please visit the Nachusa Grasslands website at nachusagrasslands.org/donate. For more information about becoming a Heritage Hero, please contact Bernie Buchholz at nachusagrasslands@gmail.com or Jon Bates, President of CFNIL, at Jbates@cfnil.org.  
—Kirk Hallowell
Friends of Nachusa Grasslands

OUR MISSION
The mission of Friends of Nachusa Grasslands is to preserve, protect, and advocate for the restoration of the tallgrass prairie ecosystem—birds, bison, small mammals, wildflowers, grasses, insects, reptiles, and amphibians—that is Nachusa Grasslands.

Friends of Nachusa Grasslands is a leader in restoring one of the world’s most endangered ecosystems: the tallgrass prairie. Founded in 2008, we are achieving our mission by building endowments that will help defray the cost of natural areas management; conducting and encouraging stewardship; and supporting education and scientific activity at the preserve. Hundreds of concerned people have invested thousands of hours protecting and restoring remnant prairie at Nachusa, which is one of the most successful restorations in the world. We are now providing for its long-term survival.

Build Endowed Funds
We are one-third of the way toward our goal of three million dollars in principal for our two endowments. The endowments will permanently help defray stewardship costs, support scientific research, and encourage volunteering and education at the preserve. We can’t do it without you! Every donation helps. Support us through checks, credit card, or monthly gifts. In return, we’ll send you our annual report with updates on our work. Friends is a 501(c)3 organization. For more information, please visit nachusagrasslands.org.

Encourage and Conduct Stewardship
Volunteers are the heart and soul of Nachusa. Our volunteers harvest seed, manage invasive species, clear brush, and plant new prairie. They monitor species: from blooms to insects to birds. Volunteers give programs and lead guided hikes on the prairie. Others share their photography, art, or writing skills, or they conduct prescribed burns. E-mail us at nachusagrasslands@gmail.com for a volunteer opportunity that will fit your passion and have an immediate impact.
## Financial Results

### 2016

**7/1/15 - 6/30/16**

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<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Percent</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<td><strong>Balance Sheet - June 30, 2016</strong></td>
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<td>Funds Balance</td>
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<td>Total Assets</td>
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<td><strong>Total Liabilities</strong></td>
<td>$ 25,394</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
SAVE THE DATES

Friends Science Grants Announcements: February 1, 2017
Friends Prairie Potluck: June 17, 2017
Friends Annual Meeting: July 29, 2017
Autumn on the Prairie: September 16, 2017

RECOMMENDED READING

A Natural History of the Chicago Region by Joel Greenberg
A Sand County Almanac by Aldo Leopold
Bringing Nature Home by Doug Tallamy
Buffalo for the Broken Heart by Dan O’Brien
Grass Roots: The Universe of Home by Paul Gruchow
Journal of a Prairie Year by Paul Gruchow
Nature’s Second Chance by Steven Apfelbaum
The Tallgrass Prairie Center Guide to Prairie Restoration in the Upper Midwest by Daryl Smith, et al
The Tallgrass Prairie Guide to Seed and Seedling Identification in the Upper Midwest by Dave Williams
The Tallgrass Prairie Reader edited by John T. Price

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With grateful thanks to our writers, photographers, and illustrator who contributed to this annual report. Each copyrighted photo or illustration is marked with a symbol indicating the photographer’s or illustrator’s name.

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✴ Betty Higby  ☞ Charles Larry
❖ Dee Hudson  ☆ Timothy Ngo

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Background photos by Dee Hudson, Charles Larry and Timothy Ngo

All background illustrations by Betty Higby

Front cover photo and back cover photo: Charles Larry
To-do lists: Bill Kleiman and volunteers

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