

An aerial photograph of a long, narrow forested ridge. The ridge is covered in dense trees, many of which are showing autumn colors in shades of yellow and orange. Several small, shallow ponds are scattered along the length of the ridge. To the right of the ridge, a sandy beach and a body of water (likely a lake) are visible. The sky is a clear, pale blue.

sanctuary

Fall 2018

A Newsletter of The Ridges

Development

"Building relationships with members & donors"

From the Nature Center

The mission of the Ridges Sanctuary is to protect the Sanctuary and inspire stewardship of natural areas through programs of education, outreach and research.



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Cover photo:
The Ridges Sanctuary, Douglas Sherman



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Why The Ridges?

So why does The Ridges exist? This is a HUGE question that can be answered in a number of different ways. To some, it's to preserve orchids. To others it may be to protect a fragile ecosystem from development. It may even be to preserve the history and physical structures of the Range Lights, or to educate all of the importance of taking care of the environment. The Ridges' mission is to *protect the Sanctuary and inspire stewardship of natural areas through programs of education, outreach and research*. How does this speak to you? Why do think The Ridges is a crucial organization? Simon Sinek, British-American author, motivational speaker and organizational consultant states – "People don't buy what you do, they buy why you do it." Now he is talking about for-profit

sales strategies, but the same sentiment applies to non-profits.

Development

What does development mean? Is it money? Is it loyalty? Is it relationships? Time? It's all of these things and it is how The Ridges, like most non-profits, exists. Since 1937, The Ridges has relied on donated funds to support its mission. But why does it need donations in order to exist?

In this issue of the Sanctuary, we hope to shed light on what development is and why it is critical for our existence as an organization.

Steve Leonard, Executive Director
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Ram's Head orchid



Nature Preschool



Summer Camp

*To protect the Sanctuary
and inspire stewardship of
natural areas
through programs of
education, outreach and research.*

...the journey begins.



From “visitor” to “member”.

Introductions and connections made

From the start, the mission of the organization must be clearly communicated and conveyed with passion. The goals of the non-profit must be evident as soon as the **visitor** walks through the front door. This inspires the visitor and establishes the starting point for the relationship.

From there, the staff and volunteers must reinforce the mission and begin to solidify the relationship. They must be passionate about the organization and knowledgeable about why it exists. Can they explain the purpose of the organization, get others to understand it, and inspire the visitor to step into the experience? If so, the journey continues...

Relationship formed and developed

There are several ways in which an **individual** can choose to engage with the non-profit. They may introduce others to the organization, they may choose to volunteer or to become a member, or even donate money to the cause. Some choose to do all of the above.

At this point, the individual begins to believe deeply in the mission. They gain a better understanding of the need for visitors, members and volunteers. They learn how the organization operates and how the donated dollar is critical to making it work.

Investment is made in the organization

The journey has led the **member** to a deep personal commitment to the non-profit and its staff, volunteers, and mission. Now, they are volunteering, partaking in programs, and increasing their annual contributions as they begin to further invest in the organization. This transition and belief in the mission is how The Ridges could even begin to exist in 1937, how it exists today and how it will continue to exist into the future.



Donations

How are donations managed?

There are three main ways to donate to The Ridges: Undesignated, Designated, and Endowment. Let's unfold these a bit.

Undesignated or unrestricted contributions are used by the organization in any matter of greatest need. Typically, these funds go to offset operational expenses. For The Ridges, operational expenses include categories such as utilities, office and program supplies, staff salaries, trail maintenance, marketing and technology. These items make up the majority of expenses, making undesignated gifts critical to the operation.

Designated or restricted contributions are utilized for specific initiatives. They are NOT to be used for anything outside of the scope of that project or initiative. It is important for the organization, as well as the donor, to understand this. For The Ridges, such initiatives include the "Restoring the Range Light" campaign for the Upper and Lower Range Light and the "Orchid Restoration Project", a nationally recognized research initiative to preserve our existing orchids and to restore those that have disappeared over the decades. This also includes our land fund, where contributions are set aside in preparation for future land acquisition.



Upper Range Light Restoration

Undesignated

- Contributions used to offset operational expenses.

Designated

- Contributions utilized for specific initiatives.

Endowment

- Funds created to ensure contributions are available in perpetuity.

Endowment funds are created to ensure contributions are available in perpetuity. An endowment is an investment fund established by an organization that makes consistent withdrawals from the earnings of the investment. So, if \$100 was invested and after 3 years it increased to \$110, The Ridges would get \$5 or so from that investment (Interest). It would never touch the initial investment (principle)...ever. As the fund grows, so do the earnings, thus an increase in the amount returned. The Ridges endowment was established in 1985 and grew past the one-million-dollar mark through a major campaign in the late 1990's and early 2000's. Today the Endowment Fund totals around \$2.2 million and contributes approximately \$100,000 - \$105,000 to Ridges' operations on an annual basis. Endowments are essential to the longevity of a non-profit.

The Ridges' endowment funds will now have naming rights as well as specific areas of focus for future gifts. For those that choose to leave their legacy in the form of an endowment gift, any gift \$10,000 or more can now be named. Also, those that give to the endowment in any amount can make that contribution to one of 4 categories: General/Undesignated, Education, Research, or Land Maintenance.

It is up to the donor, but as you can see all three ways to donate are critical to the organization's success. And it takes a balance every year to make it all work.

Other donation options

Capital Campaigns (designated)

When the fundraising began for the Cook-Albert Fuller Nature Center and its adjoining properties in 2011, it launched the largest Capital Campaign in The Ridges' 74-year history. Through hard work, precision planning, dedicated and passionate donors, and skilled craftsmanship, the Center was opened just 3 short years after the first donations arrived.

The roughly \$4.5 Million dollar campaign was kicked-off by a one-million-dollar lead gift from Chester Cook. Similar to restricted funds, gifts were raised strictly for the building and related costs. From there an additional \$3.5 million was raised through private donations and grants. Although there isn't a current capital campaign at The Ridges, there are always goals and a vision that see further opportunities to deliver the mission.

Planned Giving & Bequests

Have you seen the following sentence: "*Have you considered [organization name] in your will or estate planning?*" It can be in email tag lines, the back page of a newsletter, or even in a general mailing. The Ridges' Albert Fuller Society members have committed to leaving money to The Ridges through their will. It can be one of the best ways for an individual or a family to leave their legacy, and the organization can benefit greatly from these types of gifts.

Talking about what to do with funds after death can be a difficult discussion. However, through detailed planning the donor can ensure their legacy after life. The Albert Fuller Society is 26 people strong, but it's critical for us to grow this number and to know all who have us in their will. Planning together ensures the moneys donated will go to the area you are most passionate about.

Annual Appeal (undesignated)

The Ridges, like most other non-profits, conducts an Annual Appeal. This is the largest fundraiser for The Ridges and provides nearly half of all contributions for the year. It not only relies heavily on all who receive the mailing to donate but for those people to contribute as much as they can. We are confident that we are excellent stewards of the donation and can continue to grow because of it.



Albert Fuller-Cook Nature Center



Possibilities

What can we accomplish together with passionate donors delivering on our mission?



Backpack Adventure Camp

Education

What if every 4, 5, and 6-year-old in Door County was introduced to and visited The Ridges? What if we established a Nature Preschool that had its own Education Center and focused on a nature-based curriculum for 3- and 4-year olds? Every year, the total expenses related to education total around \$115,000. Some of these funds come from program revenues, but most are offset from donations.

With enough funding, The Ridges could provide adult education with leading experts in the a variety of fields on a regular basis. These could include day long or multi-day field classes. We could strengthen our role as a resource for environmental education in Door County. What if we had 2-3 full-time education staff to ensure we never had to say no to those that wanted a field trip, multi-week program or for us to enter their classroom for environmental education? What could happen if that amount doubled? Imagine a \$100,000 endowment gift contributing \$5,000 year toward education...forever. What about \$1 million?

Research

In the 1930's and 1940's, Albert Fuller, one of The Ridges' founders, documented 26 different species of orchids amongst the ridges and swales. Nearly a half dozen of these species do not exist today on our property. We have seen a decline in the Ram's Head Orchid and we are dedicated to ensuring it doesn't disappear. Today, through the Orchid Restoration Project, we have been able to propagate and successfully reintroduce over 5,000 individual orchid seedlings into the Sanctuary.

This past September, with help from several regional universities, the Smithsonian Environmental Research Center and the North American Orchid Conservation Center, The Ridges hosted an Orchid Symposium at the Cook-Albert Fuller Nature Center. This full-day event featured morning presentations by leading experts in the field and an orchid-focused afternoon guided hike by Ridges staff and volunteers. We are the leaders in Ram's Head research and have been tasked with ensuring its survival in Door County.

So what other species could we save from extinction? The Federally Endangered Hine's Emerald DragonFly calls The Ridges home. What could we do to ensure this species is around forever? How could help support other researchers with housing or laboratory space? Could we have a Ridges Research Center of our own?

Today over \$15,000 is dedicated to research on an annual basis. Think of what we could accomplish if we had a research had a \$1 million endowment that contributed \$50,000 a year...forever?



Orchid Restoration Project

Land

The Ridges protects just over 1,600 acres of land in and around Baileys Harbor. This takes tremendous resources to manage, assess, and protect. This land will never be sold or developed. It has taken over 80 years and hundreds of thousands of dollars to get to this point. And we have much more work to do.

As land in our areas of interest becomes available, we do everything we can to purchase and protect it. The most recent was the Parent property in 2015. This 67-acre tract now forms the northern boundary of The Ridges. This property provides vital foraging habitat for many species of animals. It is also part of a high recharge potential area which contributes groundwater to Hine's Emerald dragonfly habitat. It is also suitable to support populations of other rare species, including the federally-threatened Dwarf Lake Iris.

Today, over \$70,000 a year is dedicated to manage land we protect. An additional \$35,000 has been contributed to a restricted fund for land purchasing. What if it doubled? What if we had \$100,000 or even \$500,000 in a restricted fund for future land acquisition?



Logan Creek in Fall

Development Committee

This year, The Ridges board created a Development Committee. Chaired by Cynthia Crock, this committee will, in partnership with the Development Director and Executive Director, be responsible for the long-term fundraising success of The Ridges. The Committee is responsible for raising funds and will provide guidance and council on fundraising strategies, goals and needs. The Committee will work with all who are responsible for raising and managing contributions, including capital (as needed) and endowment.

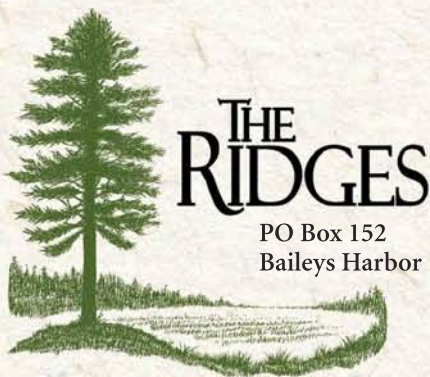
More specifically, this group of staff, board members, and members-at-large will focus on creating annual development plans and budget goals, raise money, work with planned giving strategies, and refine fundraising policies and procedures. This group of dedicated volunteers will help shape the future of fundraising for The Ridges.

The possibilities are endless. Success and sustainability requires both a strong and dynamic organization and passionate and committed donors. **If you would like to discuss how to make a donation, join the Albert Fuller Society or have any questions about our ongoing initiatives, please contact Drew Richmond, Development and Marketing Director, at 920.839.2802 or drew@ridgessanctuary.org.**



Improvements at Logan Creek





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How Can You Get Involved?

DONATE

• **Orchid Restoration Project** – This is the largest orchid restoration project in the history of The Ridges. We have documented 16 of the 26 orchids originally found on our property; we need your support to conduct our research and to save the Ram's Head orchid.

• **Upper Range Light** – Fundraising has begun to restore this Baileys Harbor landmark. We have completed Phase 1: replacement of the roof and renovation of the exterior Light room. Phase 2: A full renovation of the building needs your help to begin.



• **Planned Giving** – Please consider the lasting impact of a Planned Gift. If you'd like to know more about including The Ridges in your estate, call us to request a copy of our brochure The Albert Fuller Society: Leaving a Natural Legacy.

• **Endowment** – Funds contributed to The Ridges Endowment ensure long lasting, regular contributions to help offset operational expenses.

VOLUNTEER

Volunteers are the backbone of The Ridges and the core of many of our important programs. Over 100 dedicated individuals assist our staff in a number of different areas. Visit our website or call to find out how you can be a part of the team.



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