This spring the Thunder Bay Audubon Society donated the 428-acre Emily Min Hunt Nature Preserve to Huron Pines. Located between Rogers City and Alpena the preserve offers the perfect spot for quiet nature exploration. Just off of Shubert Highway across from Long Lake, the mixed hardwood forest is home to what was once a working apple orchard. The diverse habitat provides open space and forest cover for wildlife.

“As the world changes and people spend more time indoors and in front of screens, it’s clear that there are real benefits to getting outside. Inspiring people to explore, learn from and actively care about nature is what drives our work at Huron Pines,” Brad Jensen, Executive Director of Huron Pines explained. “The Emily Min Hunt Nature Preserve is the perfect place to put those ideals into action.”

Min Hunt will be a great compliment to the Hubbard Lake Nature Preserve, as the two properties offer different ecosystems that allow people to engage in different restoration, stewardship and education initiatives.

According to Thunder Bay Audubon Society President, Karren Tetzlaff, the land was originally donated to the TBAS in 1989, by Paul Hunt in memory of his wife, Emily (Min). The property was named the Emily Min Hunt Nature Preserve in her honor.

The TBAS members went to work enhancing bird habitat by placing bird boxes, brushing trails and cutting grass.

Over the years it became more difficult for the remaining members of the TBAS to maintain the level of stewardship that Paul Hunt intended.

“Thunder Bay Audubon Society felt Huron Pines’ goals of land management — balancing environmental protection with public accessibility — would be a good fit with the intent of Paul Hunt when he deeded the property to us,” said Tetzlaff.

TBAS reached out to Huron Pines in the late summer of 2018 to begin talks about the future of the property.

“We’re grateful to Thunder Bay Audubon for approaching us to be a partner,” Jensen said. “Huron Pines is committed to the long-term protection of the land. We want to encourage public use and recreation opportunities while maintaining the health of the plants and wildlife that inhabit it. Protected natural resources help make our communities attractive places to live, work and play, and we look forward to working with our many partners in the area to continue to build on all the good community conservation efforts taking place there.”

Huron Pines can always use help with monitoring, research, trail and habitat management. If you are interested in volunteer opportunities or programming at Min Hunt, please fill out the online form at bit.ly/interestMinHunt.
Making Hubbard Lake Nature Preserve a Home for Everyone

John and Wendy Frye donate their 80-acre property to Huron Pines

If home is where the heart is, then John and Wendy Frye will always feel at home at the Hubbard Lake Nature Preserve. Their deep affection for their former home and the 80 acres that surround it, are part of what helped them decide that this special place needed to be shared with the community and protected forever.

Thanks to their generosity and commitment to conservation, the Frye’s former home has become the Huron Pines Hubbard Lake Nature Preserve. The preserve, which officially opens to the public on June 20, is home to mature red oak, red and white pine and roughly 1.5 miles of trail that loops over hills and valleys. It’s the perfect escape to relax or recreate.

The Fryes originally purchased their Hubbard Lake home in 2003 when a job opportunity brought them to the Alpena area. John had his heart set on finding a home in the woods.

“I love trees. It sounds simple but it’s something that’s guided me my whole life. I grew up in a stand of red pine surrounded by 160 acres of land that was entirely forested,” John said. “I just loved playing under them and in them; it really is part of my makeup. When we saw the Hubbard Lake property, I knew right away. To me it was as good as it could get.”

After making a home at Hubbard Lake the 80-acre piece of land became a special place to slow down and connect with nature.

“Those woods always gave a sense of peace and inspiration,” Wendy said.

The Fryes enjoyed the property as a home for a few years until new job opportunities brought them to Gaylord. And while they kept the Hubbard Lake property and visited it for hunting camps and family celebrations, they had a sense that the property could have an even greater purpose.

The idea of sharing the property and guaranteeing its long-term protection first started when they learned about conservation easements, legal agreements that can guarantee protections to land for the purpose of conser-
vation. They worked hard to pay off the property in full — a requirement for a conservation easement — and over time their plans started to shift.

**When we saw the Hubbard Lake property, I knew right away. To me it was as good as it could get.**

“Our thinking kind of evolved. If we really wanted to protect the property and also make it available, then a preserve was the best way to do it,” Wendy said.

But they were still waiting to find a group they could trust with their vision for the future of the property. Then, about a year and a half into John’s role with Huron Pines, he found what he was looking for.

“When Brad announced that Huron Pines was going to be a qualified conservation organization, I knew that day, ” John said. “Knowing the staff and the board, the commitment and the resources, I knew instantly.”

In the summer of 2018, John and Wendy reached out to Huron Pines with a proposal to donate their property to be turned into the first Huron Pines nature preserve.

“Now more than ever, people need a place to go to be inspired and quieted by nature,” Wendy said. “We want it to remain inspiring and beautiful, and so leaving it as natural as possible I think will meet that goal.”

John added, “For me the highest level of success for the property is for people to just go out there and respectfully use it and be fulfilled by it and to support Huron Pines. I would also like people to understand that they can do something like this. It doesn’t necessarily have to be 80 acres. Private citizens can have an impact. Doing something is better than nothing. Doing it now when you can, is more important than waiting too long.”

The Hubbard Lake Nature Preserve is rich with natural resources and educational opportunities, which is why Huron Pines is eager to open the preserve to the public this summer — to begin to fulfill the Fryes’ goal of sharing this special place with the world. The preserve will be open for daily use in late June, and Huron Pines will be hosting monthly events through October. Each event will have a different focus so the Huron Pines staff can get a sense of people’s interests as preserve programming continues to develop.

**Now more than ever, people need a place to go to be inspired and quieted by nature.**

Colby Chilcote, Huron Pines Marketing Director, is excited about the possibilities. “We want to inspire people to connect with and care about the natural resources that surround them,” Colby said. “The Hubbard Lake Nature Preserve provides us with endless opportunities to help people do just that.”
# Hubbard Lake Nature Preserve Events

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Time</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>JUNE 20</strong></td>
<td><strong>Grand Opening</strong></td>
<td>Join us for food, drinks and open trails. A short program will start at 5pm. All ages are welcome.</td>
<td>4:00pm - 7:00pm</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>JULY 13</strong></td>
<td><strong>Explore the Outdoors</strong></td>
<td>Learning stations for all ages to explore plants and animals and understand how they connect to healthy habitat and the Great Lakes.</td>
<td>10:00am - 12:00pm</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>AUG 21</strong></td>
<td><strong>Invasive Workshop</strong></td>
<td>Learn how to manage invasive plant species through hands-on training and demonstration.</td>
<td>10:00am - 12:00pm</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>SEPT 14</strong></td>
<td><strong>Trail Run and Yoga</strong></td>
<td>Choose your path and your pace for an open run through the trails followed by a cool down yoga class at 10am.</td>
<td>9:00am - 11:00am</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>OCT 05</strong></td>
<td><strong>Watercolor Class</strong></td>
<td>Capture fall colors in an outdoor watercolor class with artist-in-residence Sarah Tule.</td>
<td>10:00am - 12:00pm</td>
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For more details about upcoming events, visit our website at [huronpines.org/events](http://huronpines.org/events).

Hubbard Lake Nature Preserve events are funded in part with support from Besser Foundation, Community Foundation for Northeast Michigan's Northeast Michigan Women's Giving Circle Fund, Great Lakes Fishery Trust, PIE&G and The Carls Foundation.