



CLEAR THINKING

MARCH 2019

ISSUE No. 23

OUR MISSION

is to preserve, protect, and manage the natural environment within the watershed and township for future generations.

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We ♥ Our Volunteers!

We regularly feature our Conservancy partners. In this *Clear Thinking*, we put the **Partner Spotlight** on our volunteers. We are consistently awed by our volunteers because we know they make our mission come to life. You'll see their contributions as you read the **2018 Annual Report** included later in this issue.

A group's mission is its reason for existing. CLTLC's mission is to "preserve, protect, and manage the natural environment within the Clear Lake Watershed and Township for future generations". We are grateful and proud to share how volunteer community members made the Conservancy's mission come alive in 2018.

Our mission starts with **land preservation**. You may remember our [2018 story celebrating Borton Wetland Nature Preserve](#) as the latest Conservancy Property, protected forever. Protecting Borton took an army of volunteers, including fundraisers, donors, Lands Committee members, and the Board. Each volunteer acted with quick, quiet determination to ensure that almost 8 acres of environmentally significant prairie and wetlands are now part of the Conservancy to be enjoyed for generations to come.

Our mission also includes **land and water management**. Volunteers made this promise come to life by putting on work boots and gloves for 2018 Workdays. Volunteers of all ages built trails, pulled invasive weeds, planted hundreds of native plants, and crafted benches. Others made lunches, loaned and operated equipment, installed new Property signs, and picked up trash. Several performed testing and analysis of water samples from Clear Lake, Round Lake and the four Ditches feeding the lakes. All of us benefit from these mission makers.

We have a special place in our hearts for volunteers who give money to support our daily operations and our longer term drive towards **financial sustainability**. "Cash is king" for any organization's mission, even for non-profits. Thank you to well over a hundred supporters who sent checks throughout the year.

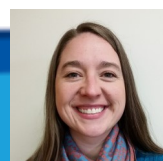
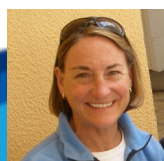
Other neighbors contributed items from our Wish List to help us advance the mission, especially our land management activities. Spring is a traditional time to clean out your storage room and garages. You, too, can be a valuable volunteer and make us smile by passing along unneeded wheelbarrows, shovels and rakes!

This year offers two NEW ways to volunteer with CLTLC. The mission grows through **environmental education**. You already know about the Knee-high Naturalists Program. We also get regular requests for tours of our properties. The Education Committee is finalizing a new program to train volunteers to lead guided tours of CLTLC properties. Property Docents will serve as knowledgeable experts and guides for our diverse properties. Interested in learning and sharing Conservancy background? Give us a call. Training begins in May!

We rely on volunteers for **community events** like **SummerFest ☀️ 2019**. We'll need artists, sponsors, auction items, and strong shoulders for this June 22nd gathering that promises to be the "best ever"! A Save the Date Card is included. Put the date on your calendar and reach out to Bridget or any Board member to get involved.

You are warmly invited to join the fun and satisfaction that comes from working productively in glorious natural settings with community members and neighbors. Volunteer with us in 2019!

Nancy Webster, President
Bridget Harrison, Executive Director



2018 ANNUAL REPORT



TOGETHER in 2018 we:

- Permanently protected properties covering 63 acres and added one new property, **Borton Wetland Nature Preserve** (see photo below). Funded by 18 generous individuals and families, Borton's 7.8 acres contain wetlands along the Alvin Patterson ditch that flows directly into Clear Lake.
- Made significant progress in the prairie restoration and trail building at the 46-acre **Clear Lake Nature Preserve** with the help of community volunteers and groups from Fremont Middle School and Phi Kappa Theta fraternity at Trine University.
- Completed Phase II and began phase III of the Kasota Shoreline Restoration Project. Bioengineered seawalls of glacial rocks, native plants and natural canvas now encircle the **Kasota Island Nature Preserve**, with eight access points constructed along the sandy beach shoreline. East shore plantings will be installed in the spring. Planning began for the remaining landscape project.
- Installed signs at all CLTLC properties, welcoming public visitors to most and identifying appropriate use for each property.
- Partnered with Steuben County Lakes Council to host 40 participants in the Steuben County Life program for Clear Lake tours and an overview of the Kasota Shoreline Restoration Project.
- Invested **870 volunteer hours** in testing water quality, removing invasive plants, planting natives, trail building, land maintenance, sign installation, community education and outreach, and other Conservancy work.
- Engaged **997 community members** in educational programs, including guided property tours, Knee-high Naturalists, Invasive Aquatic Weed identification, Hoosier River Watch training, Fremont Middle School students, Youth Conservation Field Day and Duck Day programs at Pokagon Park, and a Native Plant sale.
- Received the 2018 "Community Education and Outreach Award" from the North American Lakes Management Society for our "ASK BRIDGET" and Knee-high Naturalists programs.
- Updated the Conservancy's Strategic Plan for 2019-2022 (posted on the website) and added a Development Committee to six other active Board Committees to advance CLTLC's mission.
- Received gifts and donations of \$195,483 from 113 contributors, including generous responses to the first Annual Giving and Wish List programs. THANK YOU!

***Thank you for protecting the
beauty and water of Clear
Lake Township in 2018 and
forever.***



2018 INVESTMENT AND FINANCIAL REPORT (January 1 – December 31, 2018)

ASSETS / NET WORTH

Value of Nature Preserves	\$4,118,188
Bank Accounts	\$ 109,577
Restricted Accounts and Endowments*	\$ <u>255,937</u>
TOTAL	\$4,483,702

*Does not include two funds totaling \$332,708 held at Steuben County Community Foundation for the benefit of Clear Lake Township Land Conservancy.

REVENUES / EXPENDITURES+:

Restricted / Unrestricted Gifts (113 donors)	\$195,483
Grants (public and private) from 9 funders	\$115,386
Other revenue (interest, other)	\$ 22,327
TOTAL REVENUES	\$333,196
TOTAL EXPENDITURES+	\$ <u>90,069</u>
NET REVENUES	\$243,127

+ Under current financial accounting standards, purchases of land and permanent land improvements are shown in financial statements as capital assets and additions to capital assets, not as expenditures.

To get involved or support:

(260) 316-1397 • www.clearlakeconservancy.org
111 Gecowets Drive – Clear Lake • Fremont, IN 46737

Natural Areas Preservation - COMING SOON! The Three Rings of Kasota

On a hot, sunny weekend in 2018, Conservancy volunteers carefully placed three rings of native plants into the south, west and north bio-engineered glacial rock wall now surrounding the Kasota Island Nature Preserve Shoreline. The plants will be a colorful and low-maintenance part of the island-scape in the summer of 2019. Best of all, the plant roots will hold the Shoreline in place over future years, stopping (or slowing) the steady 3-4 inch shore erosion we've seen year after year.

Inside Ring: Showy Black-eyed Susan



Bergamot



Ohio Spiderwort



Middle Ring: Common Wood Reed



Common Mountainmint



Blue-Joint Grass



Lakeside Ring: Blue Flag Iris



Fox Sedge



Woolly Sedge



Wherever you are this winter, close your eyes and call up an image of summer 2019 visits surrounded by these three colorful and valuable Kasota Rings. The east shore restoration was completed in November and will be planted in the late spring. Join us for the planting party! Details will be posted on the [Kasota Project Page](#).

Photo Sources: Missouri Botanical Garden and Illinoiswildflowers.info

**THANK
YOU FOR
YOUR
SUPPORT!**

Debra Hench

Grant Support:

AmazonSmile
Thrivent Financial

**Kasota Island
Restoration Project:**

Lake & River Enhancement Grant;
IN Dept. Natural Resources
FishAmerica Foundation & Brunswick Public Foundation
Nick & Lindsey Ruskowski

Bob & Nancy Webster

Memorial:

John Dresser
From Jim & Jody Horein

Al Huntermark
From Larry

Dean Family @ Clear Lake
Maley Family
Paula Quatman

Ann Shirmeyer Topping

From Angie O'Neill
Sandi Shank

George & Kathy Schenkel
Sarah Wilson

Wish List:

Rebecca Cileo

In-kind Support:

Moody & Crew

*List reflects contributions since our January issue of *Clear Thinking*. Contact us if you see a mistake.

e-Newsletter: To sign up for our e-newsletter email: info@clearlakeconservancy.org

A few of our upcoming events!

Check our website periodically for more details and additional events.

Native Plant Sale with Martha Ferguson of Riverview Native Nursery -

Saturday, May 25th 9 am - noon across from the CL Lutheran Church

SummerFest ☀ 2019 -- tickets on sale soon! -

Saturday, June 22nd 6 - 11 pm at the CL Yacht Club

Knee-high Naturalists Program -

Friday, July 5th, 12th, 19th, and 26th 10 - 11:30 am at the CL Yacht Club*

**Unless noted otherwise on the flyer.*

Our Annual Meeting -

Friday, July 26th 4 pm at the CL Town Hall





Clear Lake Township Land Conservancy
111 Gecowets Drive - Clear Lake
Fremont, Indiana 46737

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Return Visitors Seasonal residents begin returning to Clear Lake (Town, Township, and Watershed) in April and May each year. They are joined by large flocks of American Coots (*Fulica americana*) who stop here briefly on the northern leg of their annual migration to summer breeding grounds.

Coots resemble ducks but are members of the Rallidae family. They serve as an unpaid cleaning crew for us as they devour floating lake vegetation. You can recognize them by their dark bodies, bright white bill, unusual yellow lobed feet and the distinctive running-on-water flight starts. We'll see them heading south in Oct. and Nov.

Resources: Allaboutbirds.org; Audubon.org; Ducks Unlimited (photo)