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- Bridget Harrison
Director

Conservancy Hires Director



Greetings residents & visitors of Clear Lake Township. My name is Bridget Harrison. I recently moved to Steuben County from Chicago to accept the Director position at the Clear Lake Township Land Conservancy. I'm in the process of finding a permanent residence for myself, my significant other, Dave, and our dog, Bunk. We are very excited about our future here and I would like to take a moment to briefly introduce myself.

I was raised with my four sisters in the small, rural town of Goreville in southern Illinois. My childhood home was on the Lake of Egypt, and our summers were spent swimming and boating. I attended Southern Illinois University (SIU) and earned a bachelor's degree in Biological Sciences and Environmental Studies, and a master's degree in Forestry.

My graduate research at SIU focused on watershed management and sediment monitoring. Between undergraduate and graduate school, I lived and worked as a fisheries biologist on commercial fishing vessels in the Bering Sea, off the coast of Alaska. Following graduate school, I volunteered in the AmeriCorps, which brought me to northern California. I worked at Shasta Land Trust as the Conservation Associate. My responsibilities included leading and planning outreach and environmental education efforts, volunteer recruitment and organization, and event planning.

Prior to accepting the Director position, I was working at Cardno Inc., formerly JFNew, an environmental restoration and consulting firm in the southern suburbs of Chicago. While employed there I worked in the field as a restoration technician, and in the office assisting with field crew coordination, permitting, and report writing. In my free time I enjoy reading, kayaking, and hiking and backpacking with Dave and Bunk.

I am very much looking forward to working as the Director of the Clear Lake Township Land Conservancy in the months and years ahead! From what I have learned from the Board, and read on the website, so much great work has been accomplished in the past two decades! After spending only a few weeks here I have come to understand the need and desire to protect the treasure that Clear Lake is and I look forward to meeting you, talking with you, and learning with all of you in the Township to keep the "clear" in beautiful Clear Lake!

CLTLC Mission Statement

The mission of the Clear Lake Township Land Conservancy is to protect and preserve the natural environment and wildlife habitats within both the watershed and township boundaries. This is achieved through research, education, preservation and stewardship, all of which provide the Conservancy with the option to acquire sensitive land through donation or purchase.*

*The Conservancy's programs require funding not available from governmental agencies. Thus, the organization depends upon the tax-deductible contributions of individuals and corporations to accomplish our goal of preserving our natural resources.

A History To Remember, A Future To Celebrate

The Clear Lake Township Land Conservancy was started in 1991 from what former Board President, Paul Federspiel, described as an “inspired idea”. That inspired idea took root when a survey was sent out to residents of the Lake. The survey identified three components that would guide the Conservancy’s activities for the following 24 years. These components: water quality monitoring, natural areas preservation, and environmental education, created cohesion and focus to a collection of hard working dedicated volunteers. Evidence of this hard work can be found in the yellow tinged pages of type-written meeting minutes from nearly a quarter of a century ago.

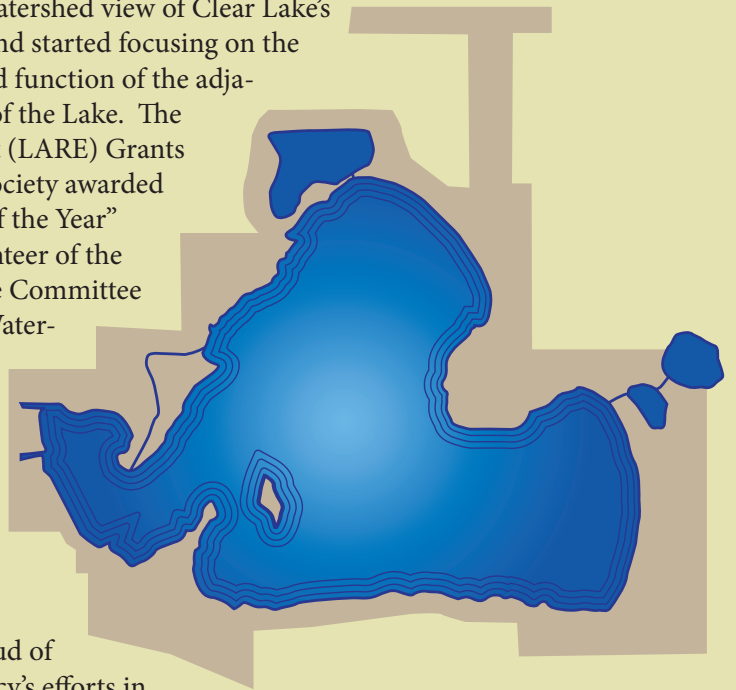


Water Quality Monitoring

In the early years, volunteers Kathy Latz, Ken Goeckel, Dan Hoagland, and Ron Oldsen conducted water quality monitoring to create the baseline data for Clear Lake and the 4 county ditches that drain into it. To increase awareness of water quality issues, brochures and handouts were created and distributed; some might have a lingering refrigerator magnet.

To expand on these efforts, a Water Quality Committee was formed in 2008. Members, Annie Skinner, Mary Jo Fitzenrider, Ken Goeckel, Joann Stanley, Greg Brown, Diane McArdle and Frank Nye took a larger watershed view of Clear Lake’s water quality and started focusing on the importance and function of the adjacent wetlands of the Lake. The

Committee has been awarded three Lake and River Enhancement (LARE) Grants (2009, 2011, and 2013). In 2010 the Indiana Lake Management Society awarded the Committee with “Outstanding Lake/Watershed Association of the Year” and in 2013 Annie Skinner was recognized as the Society’s “Volunteer of the Year.” After establishing a monitoring program for Clear Lake, the Committee contributed its expertise to the creation of the Upper St. Joseph Watershed Management Plan. Active members, Don Luepke, Peg Zeis, Annie Skinner, and Mary Jo Fitzenrider continue these efforts in protecting and enhancing the water in and around Clear Lake.



Natural Areas Preservation

Over the last two decades CLTLC has actively preserved ten properties; one within the Lake and nine around it. Current



President, Jim Skinner, is proud of the Conservancy’s efforts in the past few years. One of the Conservancy’s land project goals is to help residents understand the importance of taking a watershed level approach to conservation by looking at sensitive resources beyond Clear Lake. Skinner states, “Wetlands are the kidneys of Clear Lake, and we’re all about protecting them.” Currently the Conservancy protects over 40 acres of sensitive areas that directly impact the water quality of Clear Lake. These successes highlight the Conservancy’s commitment to land preservation.

Environmental Education

The most important aspects of the Conservancy’s continued growth are the environmental education programs. Some of these efforts are manifested in



**Clear Lake Township
Land Conservancy, Inc.**

e-Newsletter:

To signup for our new e-newsletter email:
info@clearlakeconservancy.org

CLTLC's Knee-High Naturalists Program. In 2006, Josie Kramer and her niece, Megan Morris, pitched the idea to Angie O'Neill, a member of the Board at the time. CLTLC embraced the educational opportunity. That summer, and every summer since, children have gathered on Wednesday mornings in July to learn about birds, bats, fish, frogs, native vegetation, invasive species, wetlands and water quality. Last year Dana Buehrer accepted the responsibility of coordinating the environmental escapades of the Knee-High Naturalists.

Realizing the importance of environmental education for individuals of all heights, Don Luepke started the "Neck-High Naturalists". A program for adult naturalists which hosts speakers and presenters that are experts on water quality topics. "Each generation needs the Conservancy to foster its love of the natural wonders and the safe-keeping of Clear Lake!" says Josie Kramer.

Future

The Conservancy has been organized and led by volunteers for almost 24 years. Some have come and gone, others have been involved since the beginning, and some have recently joined our team. This organization is successful because of them. Their time, talent, commitment, and passion have grown the Conservancy and paved the way for our future success! This is an exciting time for Clear Lake Township Land Conservancy. As we celebrate our volunteers and past successes, we look to the future. The Conservancy is happy to welcome our first full time employee and Director, Bridget Harrison. Our focus will remain on the continued growth of our three pillars: water quality monitoring, natural areas acquisition, and environmental education.

Thank you for your support! Please join us in celebrating our volunteers and our many accomplishments over the past 24 years!



**Mark Your
Calendars!**

Saturday August 1st: 8:00-11:00am

Join us for pancakes and coffee at Koeneman Lake. RSVP by July 25th to bridget.harrison@clearlakeconservancy.org (260) 316-1397

The Raptors Are Returning to Clear Lake

On July 5th at noon, Clear Lake Township Land Conservancy, Inc. is happy to welcome back, by popular demand, Soarin' Hawk Raptor Rehab at Memorial Park. Come join us as the volunteers show off these beautiful birds. Jefferson, an immature bald eagle, was injured by a power line. Ruby, a red-tailed hawk, had an injured

crop (part of her digestive tract). Peabody, a barred owl, had an injured wing. What do all of these birds have in common? An injury and a second chance at life because of Soarin' Hawk Raptor Rehab. Soarin' Hawk is an all-volunteer organization that has specialized in helping injured and orphaned raptors and restoring them to the wild since 1996. Every year the organization treats around 130 raptors. Birds like Jefferson, Ruby and Peabody were all injured to the point that they could no longer survive in the wild. They,

along with several other raptors, have become education birds. Their mission is to accompany Soarin' Hawk volunteers into the community for educational programs that help to educate the public on birds of prey. Bring your family and guests to Clear Lake Memorial Woods, next to Point Park Dr., to enjoy this exciting and educational experience. There is a video of their last visit on our website; www.clearlakeconservancy.org. **Donations of whole frozen fish are welcome to feed the birds and support Soarin' Hawk!**

**July 5th at
12:00 p.m.**



Volunteer Or Donate:

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

KNEE - HIGH NATURALISTS

SUMMER 2015

Join us at the Clear Lake Yacht Club as we kick off a summer of exploration! All programs run from 10 a.m. until 11:30 a.m.

Knee-High Naturalists is a program for children sponsored by the Clear Lake Township Land Conservancy to promote an understanding and appreciation of our lake environment. All are welcome!



Wed., July 8th- ON A WING AND A PRAYER: BEAUTIFUL BUTTERFLIES!

This session will focus on the amazing transformation from caterpillar to butterfly, and the many challenges a butterfly faces to survive- from natural predators, deforestation, pesticides, and climate change. We will also learn about what we can do to help. Eco-friendly art activity included.



Wed., July 15th- WILD ABOUT WILDFLOWERS!

Come meet and greet Bridget Harrison, Director of the Clear Lake Township Land Conservancy! During this session, we will be learning about and planting Native Wildflowers!



Wed., July 22nd - BATTY ABOUT BATS

In this session we will identify the physical characteristics of bats and identify their behaviors. This session will also try to dispel the many myths about bats, which are an important part of our ecosystem. Over half the bats in the U.S. and Canada are threatened or endangered.



Wed., July 29th- TERRIFIC TREES!

Nate Simons, from Blue Heron Ministries, will be our guest. In conjunction with the Clear Lake Township Land Conservancy they are working to restore Brennan Woods to its pre-settlement oak savannah woodlands. Come hear an update on the project, learn more about our terrific trees, and end the program with a hike of Brennan Woods, a Conservancy owned property! If you are joining us for the hike, please wear appropriate shoes and insect repellent is suggested.

FOR MORE INFORMATION, PLEASE CONTACT DANA BUEHRER @ (914) 500-7938.

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