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Bridget Harrison  
*Conservancy Director*

Contact:  
(Office) (260) 316 1397  
clearlakeconservancy.org  
info@clearlakeconservancy.org



## Conservancy Board View

These are exciting times for the Clear Lake Township Land Conservancy! I am honored to serve as the new President with a committed group of Board trustees who share your passion for Clear Lake and the township. Like you, we want to preserve this area for future generations.

We all owe Jim Skinner a round of applause for the stewardship he has led over the past seven years as Conservancy President. In those years, the CLTLC's funds and land assets have greatly increased. The future is bright! And thank you to all who attended our public meeting last month.

Top priorities for the Board start with building working partnerships with all Clear Lake Township residents, especially neighboring landowners. Our work will begin with the Board creating a 5-year strategic plan, building on the excellent work already done by prior and current board members and other volunteers. We will also expand public information about the Conservancy's mission, its valuable assets and our educational programs through a regular communications program, including this Newsletter.

We invite you to join us for programs and to invest in the CLTLC by generously supporting the projects and programs you will read about here. The 2016 Calendars will bring your thoughts to Clear Lake no matter where you spend the winter! Buy several and support the work of the Conservancy while enjoying Don Luepke's beautiful photography.

Contact us with your ideas for building the Conservancy. We value your support.

Nancy Webster, President



## Director's Update

Greetings! It was a busy month here for CLTLC. Our 3-pillar focus of water quality monitoring, natural areas preservation, and environmental education continues to guide my daily efforts. Spangler Grove received a trim at the road intersection and more work is planned in September to take the taller vegetation out and extend the turf grass. The Lake and River Enhancement (LARE) Grant dredging project has been moving slowly but steadily along and we will host open public meetings as we iron out more of the details. The Knee-High Naturalists enjoyed four hands-on sessions in July.

It was a pleasure to meet new Conservancy friends at the July public meeting and I look forward to meeting even more of you. Feel free to contact me with any questions or ideas and like us on Facebook!

Bridget Harrison, Conservancy Director

## 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.

## Water Quality

The Water Quality Committee and volunteers have been collecting water quality data for almost the extent of CLTLC's existence. Over the next few newsletters, this section will describe testing parameters and what the implications of each test result might be. CLTLC tests the four ditches that drain into the Lake and towards the center of the Lake itself. Each test is very subjective. Best practice is not to consider the individual test result but instead study the results over time.

Water temperature is the first testing parameter. Put simply, higher water temperature can be a sign of poor water health. The temperature will naturally change with the change in seasons; however, if the water temperature creeps up too high, it can directly impact dissolved oxygen levels (DO) and the metabolic rate of aquatic organisms. Colder water can hold more DO than warmer water; thus colder water will have higher macroinvertebrate (like crayfish, mayflies, or stoneflies) diversity. Lower DO can have an impact on fish health and survival. Higher water temperatures affect aquatic organisms' metabolic rates.

Think about when there is gardening to be done. We do not wait until the hottest part of the day to complete our work because it's difficult to work in the heat. We can seek cooler temperatures in the comfort of our homes. If the water is too hot, aquatic animals cannot survive or seek cooler refuge elsewhere. The temperature can be influenced by the loss of shading trees or heated runoff from roads and driveways. Water temperature testing is a key parameter.



## Natural Areas Preservation

CLTLC owns and maintains over 40 acres. In this section we will highlight our properties and discuss the maintenance and restoration projects. Koeneman (KAY-ne-man) Lake is our first featured property!

Clear Lake is the gathering spot for most of the water which falls in our 4,419 acre watershed. Four County controlled drainage ditches--Cyrus Brouse, Peter Smith, Alvin Patterson and Harry Teeters--collect water, sediment and other nutrients from 2,456 acres and direct all of it toward Clear Lake. The Lake needs the water, but not the matter that often comes along for the ride. One way to reduce the amount of hitch-hikers is to provide a pond upstream of the Lake to slow the water, allowing the particulate matter to settle out while passing the water downstream.

Koeneman Lake, located south of the Lutheran Church, is Clear Lake's settlement pond and has performed its function well for the last 60 years. It runs along the Harry Teeters Ditch just upstream from the Indiana Department of Natural Resources

public access and boat launch. This ditch drains 887 acres, mostly farmland. The Conservancy purchased the Koeneman Lake parcel in 2002. Since then, Koeneman has captured large amounts of sediment, organic matter, nutrients and chemicals—a good thing. However, Koeneman is now almost full and needs to be dredged to allow it to continue to do its job of filtering the water before it reaches Clear Lake.

Another part of the Koeneman Project is to address the dam that forms this man-made lake. The dam is showing its age and needs to be widened to ensure it can withstand the water pressure in heavy rain events. One design change being considered is to eliminate the spillway that serves to meter the outflow of the lake and replace it with an overflow drop structure that should do the same job, but will require less maintenance.



**Clear Lake Township  
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[info@clearlakeconservancy.org](mailto:info@clearlakeconservancy.org)

To properly plan this project, the Conservancy is engaging an environmental company with experience in drainage, dredging and dam maintenance and rebuilding. The company will survey the problem, design a solution for Koeneman Lake, and provide a project plan and budget estimate we can submit to IDNR to get a permit to do this work. The final and longer term stage of the Koeneman Project involves repairing or replacing the Teeters drain to deliver less sediment for Koeneman Lake to catch.

The Conservancy will need significant funding for this key project and readers will hear from the Board about how Clear Lake Township residents can help advance this project to keep the “clear” in Clear Lake.



### Environmental Education

We want to thank Soarin’ Hawks Raptor Rehab for such a wonderful program earlier this summer. Adults and kids of all ages gathered at Memorial Woods to enjoy the viewing of a bald eagle, a red-tailed hawk, a red shouldered hawk, owls, and kestrels. We learned fun facts about the various birds of prey and we were able to see them up close and personal. The event can be summed up best, in terms of creating curiosity, when a small boy raised his hand and asked, “where are his red should-ers?” while the red shouldered hawk was being presented. We are glad that many of you attended and we hope to continue to bring these types of educational opportunities to our community. If you have ideas for a speaker or educational event, please share them with Bridget.

### THANK YOU TO OUR RECENT DONORS!

Erich Frankhauser, Jim & Annie Skinner, Daniel & Madelyn Coughlin, Karen & Jack Horrell, Clear Lake Association, Julie Waterfield, David & Barbara Schwain

## Partner’s Spotlight

Many of CLTLC’s accomplishments rely on successful partnerships. In this Partner’s Spotlight we would like to highlight some of our very important working partners. Our first spotlight is shining on the St. Joseph River Watershed Initiative (SJRWI). This non-for-profit organization was founded in 1998 with the mission to improve water quality in the St. Joseph River Watershed by promoting economically and environmentally compatible land uses and practices. CLTLC’s Water Quality Committee members Don Luepke and Annie Skinner volunteered to serve as members of a steering committee tasked with creating a watershed management plan. Over a three year period the committee

discussed local water quality issues and best management practices within the Upper St. Joe River Watershed, the watershed that Clear Lake contributes to. Of all the meetings and field trips, Don and Annie really enjoyed the bus/boat tour, A Day On The Lake. Stakeholders came together to learn about the ongoing research to identify the causes of the harmful algae blooms and invasive species in Lake Erie. Aboard a research vessel, Don and Annie, were able to see the impact of pollution draining from the watershed into the Lake. With the creation of the watershed management plan the St. Joseph River Watershed Initiative can apply for federal 319 grants. This is important for CLTLC and the Clear Lake area because funding sources may be available for projects that can help protect and enhance Clear Lake. Recently CLTLC has been advertising for a cost-share

program available for the purchase of a rain barrel, installing a rain garden, and/or completing shoreline landscaping and restoration with the installation of native plants and glacial stone. Money is still available and if you missed the recent “Lakescaping Your Yard for Water Quality” workshop hosted by Sharon Partridge of the SJRWI and Martha Ferguson of Riverview Nursery, CLTLC has information for interested homeowners.

Thank you SJRWI for partnering with CLTLC to bring funding and education to our area to help protect and enhance Clear Lake!



## Volunteer Or Donate:

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



# 2016 CONSERVANCY CALENDAR

## Order Soon!

What is your favorite season at Clear Lake? Is it summer with its swimming, sailing and island visits? Fall with the quieter times and colorful leaf changes around the Lake and the township roads and fields? Perhaps it's the silent snowy landscapes of winter or the burst of colorful flowers in spring.

Which Clear Lake Township Land Conservancy (CLTLC) property do you enjoy visiting most? Koeneman Lake with its waterfalls and diverse foliage? Spangler Grove and its natural prairie? Maybe you recall walks in the Hanna Nature Preserve.

Scenes from all seasons are covered and many CLTLC properties are featured in the 2016 Conservancy Calendar, using the wonderfully detailed photography of our Clear Lake neighbor and CLTLC supporter, Don Luepke.

The 2016 Calendars will be available before Labor Day. The price of \$20 each directly benefits the mission and work of the Conservancy. Order your calendars soon by emailing Conservancy Director Bridget Harrison at [info@clearlakeconservancy.org](mailto:info@clearlakeconservancy.org) with your name and number of copies desired. Checks payable to CLTLC and orders can be dropped off and calendars can be picked up at the Conservancy's office at 111 Gecowets Drive.

Take Clear Lake with you throughout 2016 and share copies with family and friends! Your purchase supports CLTLC's mission of protecting and preserving the natural environment and wildlife habitats of the Clear Lake Township and watershed through research, education, preservation and stewardship.

Find Us On Facebook!  
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Clear Lake Township Land Conservancy, Inc.  
111 Gecowets Drive - Clear Lake  
Fremont, Indiana 46737