



CLEAR THINKING

CLEARLAKECONSERVANCY.ORG

NOVEMBER 2025 | ISSUE NO.63

OUR LETTER



A LETTER OF GRATITUDE

As autumn settles over the Clear Lake Township and we enter a season of gratitude, our hearts are full of appreciation for you—the volunteers, donors, event participants, and partners who make our conservation work possible.

Every accomplishment, every restored habitat, every young person inspired by nature is the result of this community coming together in service of something greater than ourselves.

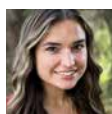
TO THE VOLUNTEERS who showed up time and again—thank you. This year, a total of 114 volunteers have joined us to remove invasive plants, clean local roadsides, place property signage, maintain hiking trails, organize events and more. Our volunteers join the generational legacy of countless individuals who have made our community what it is today. On Page 2, we acknowledge and thank our 2025 volunteers.

TO THE PARTICIPANTS AND ATTENDEES who joined us for educational programs this year—thank you for your curiosity and engagement. Watching you explore our natural environment, ask thoughtful questions, and share moments of wonder reminds us why this work matters. Your enthusiasm energizes us and strengthens our collective commitment to conservation.

TO OUR DONORS who continue to extend generosity and support—thank you for believing in this mission and investing in our community's natural landscapes. Your financial support makes everything possible: the habitat restoration, the water quality monitoring, the educational programming that connects people to nature. You are true partners in conservation, and we are grateful for your trust and generosity.

Conservation is a shared journey. Every act of stewardship—whether giving time, resources, or simply showing up—contributes to a landscape where clean water, healthy ecosystems, and community connection join together. We are honored to carry forward a mission of collaboration and connection to preserve the Clear Lake Township and watershed.

Thank you for being part of this community and for making conservation a collaborative mission. With appreciation,



Caroline Barth
Executive Director



Barb Wenger
Board President

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PHOTO BY CONNOR OILER

SUPPORT FOR THE LONG RUN

Longtime Clear Lakers Jack and Karen Horrell have supported the Conservancy's mission in various ways since its founding in 1991. They believe in the value of annual unrestricted gifts through **Annual Giving**. They have been sponsors of fundraising events such as **Run Day, Fun Day**. The Conservancy will benefit from their estate planning as members of the **Legacy Society**.

As long-term planners, Karen and Jack are also strong advocates of building permanent endowment funds for the Conservancy. This ensures the Conservancy is better prepared to meet its mission of stewardship "in perpetuity".

This long-term commitment has led the Horrells to use the current Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) tax provisions

to fund significant donations to the **Forever Fund** (the Conservancy's permanent endowment) from their IRA retirement accounts.

Jack and Karen added, "We encourage Conservancy supporters to review the RMD possibilities with their financial advisors to see if this is a useful way to support the Conservancy's work—whether as a current unrestricted gift, as a restricted gift for land or water stewardship, or to join us in building the Forever Fund for future generations."

Thanks to supporters like the Horrells, the Conservancy—and the Clear Lake community—wins in the long run.

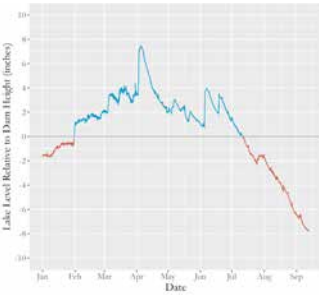
If you have questions regarding the Conservancy's Forever Fund endowment, contact Caroline Barth at director@clearlakeconservancy.org



EXCEPTIONAL VOLUNTEERS

Clear Lake Township Land Conservancy extends heartfelt gratitude to the incredible volunteers who made our mission possible this year. From preserving natural spaces through cleanup initiatives to organizing community outreach and educational events, these efforts make our vision a reality. **Please join us in thanking the following volunteers:**

Shannon Balser	Pete Disser	Shelli Hall	Josie Kramer	Doug Mulvaney	Logan Sattison	Matt Timmer
Mary Ann Barth	Pam Disser	Bill Hanna	Kathy Latz	Koggy Newcomb	Karli Sattison	Kyle Tompkins
Dawn Beatty	Jenny Disser	Dan Hanson	Larry Lillmars	Judy Onstad	Mitchel Sattison	Grant Tompkins
Larry Beatty	Carol Dresser	Mark Hoeffel	Don Luepke	Bill Pepple	Jessica Sattison	David Tonne
Angie Behnfeldt	John D'Ettorre	Katy Hoehn	Jan Matasick	Adam Petruska	Kathy Schenkel	Tom Voigt
Greg Bosler	Kate D'Ettorre	Jim Horein	Bruce Matasick	Lucy Place	Laurie Sellers	Molly Weber
Paula Bosler	Rick Eckert	Jack Horrell	Diane McArdle	Ellen	Ron Sellers	Brian Weber
Julia Buttgen	Rob Ekroth	Karen Horrell	Bridget McArdle	Poffenberger	Annie Skinner	Nancy Webster
Susan Chase	Char Ekroth	Evelyn Hughes	Tim McArdle	John	Chris Slee	Bob Webster
Susie Compo	Brenda Elliott	Annie Hughes	LuAnn McArdle	Rademaker	Conner Slee	Tess
Susan Connett	Rhett Figley	Chris Hughes	Kelly McArdle	Karen	Greg Smith	Wehrenberg
Alex Connett	Andy Fitznerider	Eddie Hughes	Laurie McArdle	Rademaker	Cindy Smith	Dan Wendorf
Bill Culbertson	Bill Geiger	Abrianna Hutter	Jack McArdle	Tim Reith	Tara Stanton	Barb Wenger
Ken Culler	Jimmy Geiger	Alex Jaramillo	Adam Michael	Alison	Nate Striker	Kevin Yackee
Quinn Culler	Kip Gleckler	Tyson Johnston	Amy Michael	Rhinehart	Bailey Temple	Marty Zachrich
Dick DeWert	Judy Greffin	Jodie Johnston	Julie Monson	Dan Rippe	Tilly Tillman	Peg Zeis
Ann DeWert	Bill Greffin	Susan Kramer	Megan Moss	Matt Rippe	Claire Timmer	



MONITORING LOW LAKE LEVELS

Clear and Round Lakes are experiencing low water levels this year. By using real data from our Watershed Diagnostic Study, we see how and why our water level is temporarily low.

The dam at Round Lake controls outflowing water and serves as the reference point for lake level measurement. Typically, we see the highest lake levels in early spring to mid-summer and the lowest levels from mid-summer to winter. In 2025, the lake dropped over 14 inches from the highest level in April to its current level, shown in the graph.

The current low lake level is a result of two main factors: less rainfall and more evaporation. Steuben County has been in varying levels of drought conditions since September 2025 with little to no rain. Our inflowing ditches have brought less water, and warmer fall temperatures have increased evaporation rates of the lake's surface water.

The lake level should return to normal in early spring as snowmelt and seasonal rains bring in more water. Additional resources for low lake levels and drought monitoring are available on our website.

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

Scott and Margaret Ekroth

The Greater Toledo Community Foundation on behalf of the Fankhauser Family Fund

Mike and Megan Henfling

Jim and Jody Horein

David and Kirstin Reeves

C.J. Getz and Laura Szynal

Kevin and Mary Tonne

HONORARIUMS

H: The Clear Lake Community Rory and Amy Kramer

H: Joe and Linda Sorg Anna and Pete Cozzone

MEMORIALS

M: Terry Cochran
Jim and Jody Horein
Pam and Tom Reith

M: Chris Gimre
Arcadia Beach Association

M: Joan Hansbarger
Kim and Melanie Henkener

M: Robert Heller
J Lowry Family

M: Dan Holland
The Kramer Family
at Willow Hollow

M: Eugene Kramer Jr.
The Kramer Family
at Willow Hollow

M: Harry Winch
J Lowry Family

KASOTA ISLAND
Brianna Slee

WATER QUALITY
Susie Compo

IN-KIND SUPPORT
Essentially Clean & More

CONSERVANCY SUSTAINERS
Alex and Susan Connett

Susanne Cusick with employer match
from AbbVie

Zach Dean

Jack and Karen Horrell

The Kramer Family at Willow Hollow

Kathy Latz

Tim and LuAnn McArdle

Doug Mulvaney and Jennifer Nielsen

Terry and Koggy Newcomb

Tom and Jenny Parker

Bill and Kim Pepple

Elijah and Jolene Stewart

Nancy and Bob Webster

GRANT SUPPORT
Land Trust Alliance

H: = Honorariums **M:** = Memorials



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GLOSSARY TERMS TO KNOW

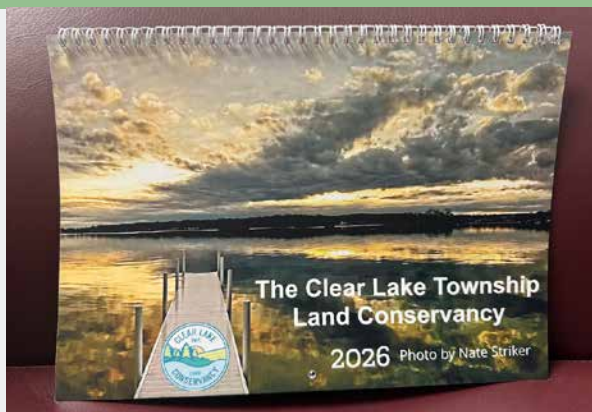
HYDROLOGICAL CYCLE (WATER CYCLE): Movement of water above, below, as well as on the surface of the Earth. Water cycles through various atmospheric, geological, and biological systems by a number of processes including evaporation and precipitation.

MISSION STATEMENT

We preserve, protect,
& manage the natural
environment within the
Clear Lake Watershed
and Township for
future generations.

VOLUNTEER | CONTACT | DONATE

clearlakeconservancy.org
or call (260) 527-1072



PHOTOS BY

Bill Culbertson
Erin Fankhauser
Tracy Hughes
Alex Jaramillo
Rory Kramer
Don Luepke
Bridget McArdle
E.G. McArdle
Nate Striker

2026 CONSERVANCY CALENDARS

**GIVE THE GIFT OF
CONSERVATION THIS SEASON!**
Our office has 2026
calendars, mugs,
sweatshirts, sun shirts,
t-shirts, caps, and flags for
all of your gifting needs.

CHECK OUR WEBSITE
FOR MORE DETAILS OR
**SCAN THE
QR CODE**

