



CLEAR THINKING

MARCH 2018

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SPRINGTIME, FILLED WITH GROWTH AND HOPE



"The crocuses and snowdrops do not bloom for long. But their mere appearance, however brief, is always a harbinger of hope, and from those small beginnings, hope grows at a geometric rate. The days get longer, the winds get warmer, and the world grows green again." — Parker J. Palmer, *Let Your Life Speak*.

Clear Lake is waking from the cold, wet winter. The buds and new growth also signal the return of friends and activities missing since the Fall season. The longer days remind us of the Conservancy's expanding presence and stewardship as we work together to pro-

tect this land and the clear waters we cherish.

Spring is also our annual reminder to celebrate the volunteers and donors who support the Conservancy's mission, projects and growth. In 2017, we were joined by over 75 volunteers, generously giving many hours of their time.

These gifts ranged from pulling invasive plants to guiding young public school students in environmental programs. Our volunteers wrote and delivered notices for Conservancy events and developed and led engaging programs for Knee-high Naturalists. Our volunteers cleared debris on several of our [sixteen Properties](#) and performed water quality testing in Clear Lake and the ditches draining into it.

We are fortunate to have an energetic and effective volunteer [Board of Directors](#) and talented committee members. Dozens of volunteers planned and produced 2017 events to educate our community on key ecological issues and to raise critical funds to acquire and maintain Properties so we can protect them in perpetuity. In addition to those who gave the precious gift of time, we gratefully acknowledged our 206 financial donors in 2017 in the [January 2018 issue of Clear Thinking](#).

Every one of these volunteers and donors reinforces the hopes all of us have that the Clear Lake Township community and Watershed will be a bright, healthy place of beauty for generations to come. Thank you—volunteers and donors—from the bottoms of our hearts. Want to get involved? Contact Bridget or any Board member.

We look forward to reconnecting with you on the Trails of Clear Lake Nature Preserve, on Kasota Island Nature Preserve, and at Conservancy events as spring gives way to summer, with all the activities that come with it. More details follow in this newsletter and on our website! Join us as we celebrate spring, hope and growth together.

Nancy Webster, Board President
Bridget Harrison, Executive Director



Photo Credit: Missouri Botanical Garden Plantfinder



The mission of the Clear Lake Twp. Land Conservancy is to preserve, protect, and manage the natural environment within the watershed and township for future generations.

Water Quality



The Water Quality Committee and volunteers have been collecting water sampling data from the lake and the four ditches that drain into the lake for most of CLTLC's existence. The overall quality of the lake is in large part determined by what is flowing into the lake; so to capture that flow, volunteers help test the ditches/streams. It's part of the watershed-level approach to lake management. A Water Quality Index (WQI) is calculated using the results of all the testing parameters for samples collected at the ditch inlets—Harry Teeters, Alvin Patterson, Peter Smith, and Cyrus Brouse. The scale is from 0 to 100; refer to the chart for quality levels.

Averaging this index for test results from 2017, the Water Quality Committee reports that the WQI for the Harry Teeters inflow is 67.19 or a Medium rating, the Cyrus Brouse is Good at 73.91, the Alvin Patterson is Medium at 66.51, and the Peter Smith is Good 83.89. It should be noted that the Alvin Patterson samples are collected from a wetland, a low flow area, which decreases dissolved oxygen. The results do not factor that in.

Hoosier River Watch WQI Ratings	
Excellent	90-100%
Good	70-89%
Medium	50-69%
Bad	25-49%
Very Bad	0-24%

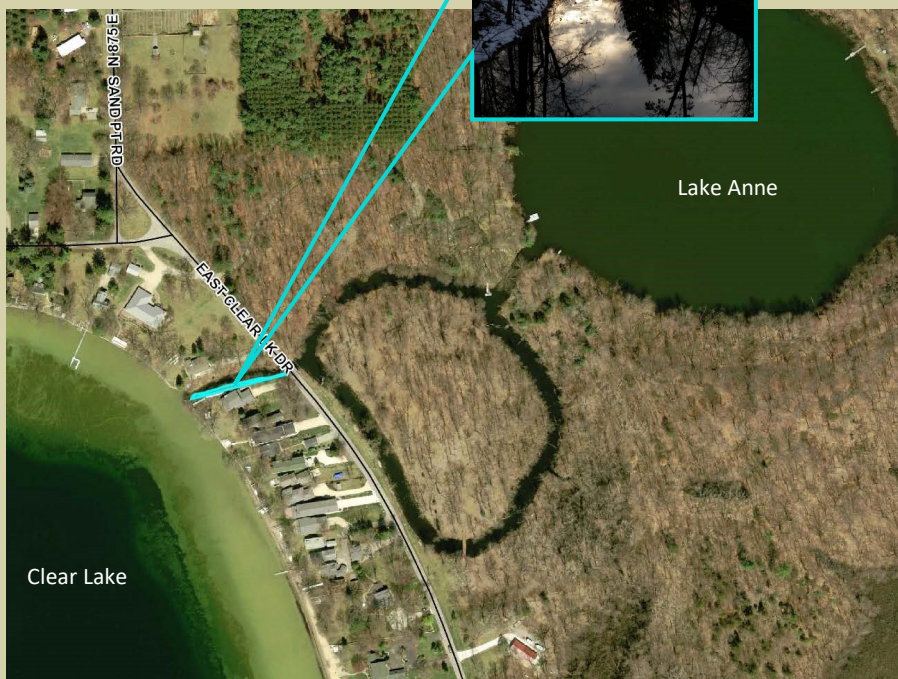
Overall there is still room for improvement and we can all help to make a difference! The Water Quality Committee and the Board will continue to monitor results and recommend or pursue steps to move the scores closer to the top of the range. Our annual testing will begin in May. If you'd like to participate but are not sure how, we will have a volunteer training session this spring. We will announce the date on our website. If you see us out testing, feel free to stop and ask questions!

Natural Area Preservation

Headwaters refers to the original source of a body of water. The term is often used with rivers and streams, but also applies to lakes.

Clear Lake's headwaters are located on the northeast side of the Lake in Lake Anne. The Clear Lake waters are also fed by four ditches—Harry Teeters, Peter Smith, Alvin Patterson and Cyrus Brouse—and by underground springs. The combined waters then flow to Round Lake, into Mud Lake and from there, ultimately into Lake Erie. The Conservancy's mission is to protect the water quality of this flow all the way from the headwaters until the waters leave our region.

The **Headwaters Preserve**, outlined in blue, was acquired by the Conservancy in 2010 and is a small but powerful band of property that protects the channel from Lake Anne from becoming larger which, in turn, could encourage further development. The Conservancy is proud to be a steward forever of this small property at the mouth of the headwaters of Clear Lake.



Environmental Education

You spoke and we listened. Almost all of our properties are open to the public for the enjoyment of nature, open spaces, and exploration but, on many, we do not have signage displaying preserve rules and ownership. The Lands Committee with guidance from the Communications Committee has been drafting a preserve sign, pictured right, and boundary signs, pictured below. After review and approval by the Board, the signs will be printed and installed. To ensure the resources are protected for future generations to enjoy we follow these Nature Preserve Guidelines: Open Dawn to Dusk / Foot Traffic Only / Pets Welcome, Always on Leash / No Dumping, Camping, Fires, or Hunting / Removal or Destruction of Wildlife, Plants, or Natural Features is Prohibited. The boundary signs will help delineate our property from the adjacent properties to prevent trespassing by preserve visitors and to help discourage yard and waste dumping.

This fall with help from the Clear Lake Lutheran Church, we installed No Hunting signs along our Koeneman Lake Nature Preserve boundary. We will continue to assess the need for signage on all of our properties to help protect the natural features of each preserve while encouraging the safe and enjoyable use by all who visit.

We could always use help removing trash and invasive species on our preserves! To adopt a preserve call our office and also check our events page for upcoming volunteer workdays.



Old Town Hall Park

NATURE PRESERVE

Open Dawn to Dusk

Foot Traffic Only

Pets Welcome, Always on Leash

No Dumping, Camping, Fires, or Hunting

Removal or Destruction of Wildlife, Plants, or Natural Features is Prohibited



Help Us Protect This Beautiful Space!

Partner's Spotlight



Many of our accomplishments rely on successful partnerships. In this *Partner's Spotlight*, we highlight **Blue Heron Ministries (BHM)**. Angola-based BHM has been our work-

ing partner since 2014 in the restoration of the Clear Lake Nature Preserve, includ-

ing Brennan Woods and the Preserve's oak savanna and prairie components.

BHM is a non-profit land conservation organization, serving a distinctive mission as an official ministry of the Presbyterian Chapel of the Lakes. It contracts with private and public landowners and other non-profit conservation organizations for a variety of restoration projects with a focus on marshland, sedge meadow, prairie, oak savanna and oak woodland communities.

Nate Simons is the BHM Executive Direc-

tor and is also a registered landscape architect, botanist and specialist in historic modeling of wetland, prairie and savanna communities. You can see his design work at the Fremont Public Library and our very own Spangler Grove. We are grateful to have this valuable conservation expertise available in Steuben County.

Together, we are creating the natural environment important to all of us and the generations following us. We celebrated the Clear Lake Nature Preserve restoration progress with a jointly sponsored hike on March 17th. [See photos online.](#)

THANK
YOU TO
OUR
RECENT
DONORS!*

John & Kathy D'Ettorre
Beverly Maxfield

**Clear Lake Nature
Preserve Restoration &
Trail Building Project:**
Rita Helmuth

Project Learning Tree
Grant; US Forest Service

**Kasota Island Restoration
Project Support:**
The Bloebaum Family

Clear Lake Fund at the
Steuben County
Community Foundation

Lake & River Enhancement
Grant; IN Dept. Natural
Resources

Memorial:

Janice Crawford
From Josie Kramer

*List reflects contributions since our Jan. issue of *Clear Thinking*. We make every effort to be accurate, contact us if you see a mistake.

To get involved or support:

(260) 316-1397 • www.clearlakeconservancy.org

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A few of our upcoming events!

Additional events and details will be included in our next issue and online.

Volunteer Work Days at Clear Lake Nature Preserve & Brennan Woods -

Saturday, April 28th, 10 am - 2 pm

Friday, May 11th, 9:30 am - 2 pm

Native Plant Sale with Martha Ferguson of Riverview Native Nursery -

Saturday, May 12th, 10 am - 1 pm across from the CL Lutheran Church

Knee-high Naturalist program -

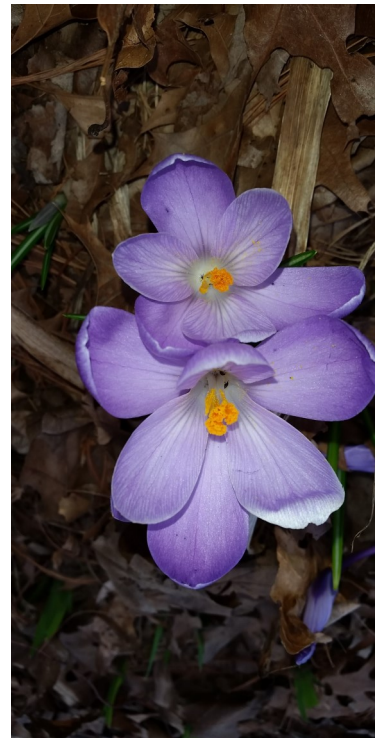
Friday, July 6th, 13th, 20th, and 27th, 10 am - 11:30 am at the Yacht Club

Our Annual Meeting -

Friday, July 27th, 4 pm at Clear Lake Town Hall

Volunteer Training Opportunities for Hoosier Riverwatch testing & Clean Lakes Program testing -

To be announced.



Nonprofit Org.
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