



# CLEAR THINKING

SEPTEMBER 2018

ISSUE No. 20

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Education  
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## Do You Believe in Magic?

What a magical place we share! Every summer seems better than the ones before it! The Conservancy celebrated its 27<sup>th</sup> summer season in 2018. It takes **people, resources, and planning** to sustain our mission so that future generations enjoy this magical place as much as we do.

**PEOPLE.** People bring the Conservancy's mission to life. At our Annual Meeting in July, we celebrated service from five retiring Board members. We recognized **George Schenkel** (Treasurer; Finance Comm.), **Rick Eckert**, **Dan Oberst**, and **Julie Waterfield** (all on Lands Comm.) and **Mary Jo Fitzenrider** (Water Quality Comm.). Each accepted a Clear Lake photo by Don Luepke to remind them of our gratitude. All expect to remain active in Conservancy work.

We also welcomed new Board members **Brandy Brown** (Lands Comm.), **Brenda Elliott** (Communications Comm.), **Dan Rippe** (Water Quality Comm.), and **Laurie Sellers** (Education Comm.). All were elected to 3-year terms ending 2021.

Officers were also elected for 1-year terms: **Nancy Webster**, President; **Karen Horrell**, Vice President; **Bruce Matasick**, Secretary; and **Terry Newcomb**, Treasurer. We appreciate the leadership and service from our Board, Officers, and Committee members. It was great to see a full house for the Annual Meeting.

**RESOURCES.** Financial resources are critical to any mission. The CLTLC community has been incredibly supportive over our 27-year history. We saw another example of this generous support with the addition of the 7.8-acre **Borton Wetland Nature Preserve** on August 1. (Read more on page 2.) We are awed by the fast, generous response to protect this beautiful undeveloped land for future generations. We now protect and preserve over 60 acres in the Clear Lake Watershed. **Forever.**

**PLANNING.** How do we sustain this momentum? The Board spent significant time in 2018 listening to you and identifying priorities and funding needs for the next 5-10 years. You'll hear more from us in the coming months about Operating Endowment (to produce income for fixed expenses), Land Acquisition Fund, and Annual Giving and Planned Giving programs. We invite you to be part of this planning with your ideas, questions and support. Community support has made the difference for 27 years.

Your unrestricted gifts are **welcome anytime** and are **vital** to our mission day after day. Please continue to be generous as you reflect on the spectacular 2018 Clear Lake sunsets, hikes and good times on the clear water with friends and family. Your gifts maintain the magic.

Looking ahead, the 3<sup>rd</sup> phase of the Kasota Island Shoreline Restoration Project begins this Fall. We'll post regular updates on the [website](#), including views of the open landscape and low-maintenance native plants we'll see next summer. We were impressed with the respectful treatment of Kasota during the Project work this summer. Thanks for your help.

As always, we are grateful for your support of CLTLC in **every** magical season.

Nancy Webster, President  
Bridget Harrison, Executive Director



Photo credit: Don Luepke

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.

## Natural Areas Preservation - Borton Wetland Nature Preserve

We are thrilled to announce the addition of 7.8 acres to our protected properties within the Clear Lake watershed. This project, outlined in blue on the map, may seem familiar to you. Over the last few years, the Conservancy, with the help of many of you in the community, expressed concern to the SC Board of Zoning Appeals about the development of this property with several garage condominiums. This parcel, located along county road 875 E, serves to capture, slow, and filter water before entering the lake, on the east side, through the county-regulated Alvin Patterson ditch. The shallow water table creates soils that are saturated much of the time, providing home to a variety of plants and animals that thrive in a wetland ecosystem.

We were delighted when the opportunity to protect this property became available earlier this summer. As soon as the 'For Sale' sign appeared, Tracy Hughes and Judy Johnston were rallying support by sharing the importance of protecting this property with neighbors, friends, and family. Eighteen individuals and families recognized the importance and donated funds needed for the purchase in record time. If 875 E is part of your walking, jogging, or biking route, pause and enjoy this protected, open space. Thank you for making this project possible!

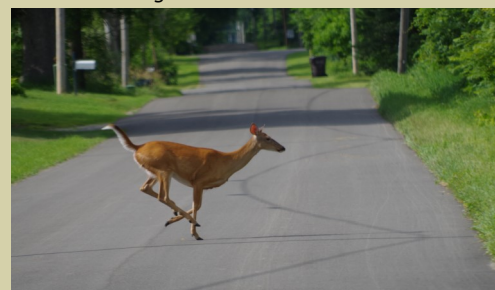


The name is a dedication to Charles Borton who purchased his Clear Lake property farm in 1899 on what was then called Sand Point Road. According to his great granddaughter, Judy Oxenger Johnston, Borton's ancestors were believed to be the first distillers of peppermint in America. This parcel once grew mint for the distilling process. He constructed a peppermint press very near what is now called East Clear Lake Drive in front of the home currently owned by his great-great grandson, Tyson Johnston. The peppermint press was described to Judy by Bob Federspiel as a "very loud contraption" that when in use created the "most wonderful smell of peppermint" that permeated up and down the shore bringing delighted children of all ages to watch the process.

We are able to extend protection to almost 8 acres and the water flowing through this parcel into Clear Lake. This preserve provides wildlife habitat for deer, turkey and a variety of other animals, educational opportunities for the community, and the protection of important wetlands and open space, for generations to come! We look forward to hearing your ideas on possible recreational and educational opportunities on this preserve!



*Ironweed and wool grass, pictured left and middle, are a few native plants found on the preserve. Below, from Judy Oxenger Johnston, a deer is crossing 875 E into the Borton Wetland.*



**To get involved or support:**

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



## Water Quality & Environmental Education

The Water Quality (WQ) Committee and volunteers have collected water sampling data from the lake and the four ditches that drain into the lake for most of CLTLC's existence. The Education Committee partners regularly with the WQ Committee to host public workshops on topics important to maintaining clear and clean water in our watershed.

Fifteen interested people gathered August 5<sup>th</sup> to get hands-on experience in **identifying aquatic plants** found in Clear Lake. Scott Banfield of Aquatic Enhancement & Survey (AES) led the workshop with assistance from Beth Schroeder. Copies of AES slides are [posted on the CLTLC website](#).

Before heading out to collect plants, Banfield introduced the three major groupings of aquatic plants: **Free Floating**; **Floating-leaved and Emergent**; and **Submersed**. **Free Floating** plants are often called “pond scum”. **Floating-leaved and Emergent** varieties include water lilies. Some **Submersed** varieties are invasive while many others offer benefits for fish and macro-invertebrates (“fish food”) habitats.

The workshop participants gathered and identified about a dozen different aquatic plants from Clear Lake. Happily, they were native to this area and beneficial when present in reasonable amounts. While none were raked up for study at this workshop, a few invasive (or “exotic”) plants are also present, including Eurasian water-milfoil and curly-leaf pondweed, based on data collected in a 2013 study.

Many participants were surprised to learn that “Pond Scum” isn’t always a bad thing! Several native aquatic plants such as **Duckweed**, pictured below, serve as cover for fish and macro-invertebrates, reduce water temperature, and are a food source for waterfowl. Duckweed is not algae, but shares a similar green color. Duckweed can be seen in the channels along West and East Clear Lake Drive, pictured to the right.

What’s next? Once we can identify aquatic plants, we need to know how to manage the control or removal of invasive or nuisance aquatic plants. Another workshop will be planned for 2019. You can also check out the [AES materials on our website](#).



### THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT!

Clear Lake Lutheran Church  
Bonnie Brown & Don Crapo  
Suzanne D’Ettorre & Emilie Kanitz  
Marilyn & Tom Lindenberg  
Terry & Koggy Newcomb  
Steuben County REMC  
Bob & Nancy Webster

**Clear Lake Nature  
Preserve Restoration &  
Trail Building Project:**  
Bonnie Brown & Don Crapo

**Kasota Island Restoration  
Project:**  
Bonnie Brown & Don Crapo

**Land Acquisition:**  
Dave Bauerle  
Brett & Dana Buehrer  
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Katy Hoehn  
Jim & Jody Horein  
Chris & Tracy Hughes  
Gary & Judy Johnston  
Josie Kramer  
Devon & Trey McArdle  
Tim & Luann McArdle  
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Dave & Judy Russert  
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Tom & Wendy Voigt  
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**Honorarium:**  
*Patty Griest*  
From Jack & Karen Horrell

*Karen Horrell*  
From Kris Sullivan

*Bill & Kim Pepple*  
From Jane McMaster

**Memorial:**  
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From David & Laura Rowan

*Gibson & Elizabeth Fenton*  
From Nancy Fenton & Richard  
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Karlsson

*Tom Kaiser*  
From Amy & Adam Michael

*Loella Pepple*  
From Bob & Nancy Webster  
Jack & Karen Horrell

*Hugh Taylor*  
From Kay Armstrong  
Thomas & Helen Jones  
Karen & John Rademaker  
Joanne & Mark Sweeney

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Terry Dalrymple  
Lisa Franks  
Ken Goeckel  
Bruce Matasick  
Tami Mosier  
George Schenkel  
Bob Webster

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

**e-Newsletter:** To sign up for our e-newsletter email: [info@clearlakeconservancy.org](mailto:info@clearlakeconservancy.org)

## More Summer Bird Visitors - Ring-billed Gulls

People weren't the only Clear Lake Watershed visitors this summer. Beginning in February, flocks of seagulls, mainly Ring-billed Gulls (*Larus delawarensis*), land on Clear Lake and other Township lakes and fields for short stopovers to rest, feed on fish, grain and insects and then continue north to breed during the spring and early summer months. Some flocks are as large as 500 birds. Many breeding destinations are around the Great Lakes.

The travel reverses beginning in June as gulls leave the upper Midwest breeding grounds for a more leisurely journey to southern climates along the Atlantic and Gulf coasts. Larger lakes, including Clear Lake, are popular landing sites in late afternoons after morning and midday visits to farm fields and perhaps a Walmart parking lot. Gulls stay longer on the southerly stopovers and are especially notable on Clear Lake starting in late July.

Gulls reduce the insect population for us, but are often perceived as nuisances because of copious guano deposited on lift covers and docks. Nevertheless, many Midwestern birdwatchers enjoy these common birds as a sure sign of summer's coming and going.



Photo credit: Cindy King



**Photos Wanted!** The new Property signs are now installed on almost all Conservancy properties! As you check out the signs, will you take snapshots of scenes at your favorite Conservancy properties and send your photos to Bridget to expand our photo library? You'll help us share the magic year round in *Clear Thinking*, on the website and in social media posts. Shots of wildlife, sunsets/sunrises, plants, trees, etc. are welcome too! As always, photo credit will be given.



Clear Lake Township Land Conservancy  
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Fremont, Indiana 46737

Nonprofit Org.  
U.S. Postage PAID  
Fort Wayne, IN  
Permit No. 760

*~8 additional acres  
protected, forever!  
Details inside.*

*Email: [info@clearlakeconservancy.org](mailto:info@clearlakeconservancy.org) to receive this in your email!*

