



# Geneva Lake Conservancy Connections

Preserve and advocate for Walworth County waterways, natural areas, and working lands

Fall 2016

## Letter from the Executive Director

To our Members and Supporters:

I am delighted to join the Geneva Lake Conservancy as its new Executive Director. With more than 25 years of experience on the board and staff of Wisconsin and Illinois land trusts, I hope to use my expertise to preserve the beautiful land and waters that formed my love of the natural world as a child at my family's Williams Bay summer home.



The clear, spring-fed lakes, majestic oak trees, open meadows and diversity of native plants and wildlife that depend on the rich soils and waters of Walworth County all need to be protected to preserve the quality of life that we enjoy here.

The Geneva Lake Conservancy has succeeded in protecting almost 2,000 acres in our county over the last few decades, primarily through the use of conservation easements – a remarkable achievement.

But studies completed by the Southeast Wisconsin Regional Planning Commission and other conservation groups identify more than 10,000 additional acres in the county that need to be preserved. These remaining undeveloped lands are important not only for ecological reasons, but for recreational opportunities, including hiking, fishing, kayaking, canoeing, bird-watching and other educational and sports activities. Open lands also help to limit density. In addition, study after study affirms the importance of connections to the natural world for our physical, mental and spiritual health.

For these reasons, we hope to work more closely with our public and private conservation partners in the years ahead to ensure that most of these now unprotected lands are preserved in perpetuity. We also will continue to advocate for planning, zoning and lake regulations that support conservation objectives.

As we move forward, it is the stories of the land that I enjoy hearing the most – whether it is Dave Desimone speaking of the Seipp/Petersen family's efforts to preserve the land at Black Point, Al Hermansen's tales of restoring his Lake Como woodland or Charles Colman's commitment to protecting his family's rare oak forest.

For all of us who love the lakes area and Walworth County, it is land gifts like these and the support of our donors and members who inspire us in our mission to preserve and advocate for Walworth County waterways, natural areas and working lands.

I look forward to working with all of you to realize the GLC's important mission in the months and years ahead.

Sincerely,  
Karen Yancey

## Karen Yancey Joins GLC as Executive Director

Karen Yancey has been named the new executive director of the Geneva Lake Conservancy.

Yancey has more than 25 years of experience in serving on the boards and staff of land trust organizations in Wisconsin and Illinois. A member of the board of directors of the Door County Land Trust for the last 12 years, she has helped protect more than 1,000 acres in the county as well as led fundraising efforts and membership events.

While executive director for the Barrington Area Conservation Trust from 2010 to 2014, she increased grant awards by more than 50 percent, doubled the number of easements and land donations and increased both revenues and staff. She also was elected to the Illinois state land trust board. As a board member of Citizens for Conservation in Barrington she helped introduce a conservation program for high school students and was instrumental in managing their education programs.

Yancey is also a writer and most recently served as a reporter for the USA Today Network in Northeast Wisconsin, where she covered environmental issues affecting the Great Lakes watershed. She will be instrumental in bringing new communications ideas and social media programs to the conservancy.

Yancey has a bachelor's degree in political science from Duke University and a master's degree in journalism from Northwestern University's Medill School of Journalism.

Dennis Jordan, Geneva Lake Conservancy Chairman, said "We feel very fortunate to have hired Karen Yancey who has the experience in leading a conservancy/land trust. She is very personable, is a good listener and communicates very well and will be an effective ambassador for the Conservancy. The Conservancy Board and I look forward to working with Karen and staff as we look to expand our role in advocating preservation of sensitive areas in Walworth County."

## Upcoming Workdays—Bring your work gloves, loppers and a smile, and enjoy the fall weather with like minded conservationists!

- White River County Park, 6503 Sheridan Springs Rd., Lake Geneva—**Saturday, November 5, 8 am—noon, meet at the main parking lot near barn. Lunch will be provided at noon. Work will include the removal of invasive trees and brush, as well as trail grooming. RSVP to Colleen Lesniak, at Walworth County Volunteer Services, at 262 741 4223 or clesniak@co.walworth.wi.us.**
- Hildebrand Nature Conservancy, Mill St., south of Porter St., Fontana—**Saturday, November 19, 9 am—noon, meet in the parking lot on Mill Street. RSVP to kyancey@genevalakeconservancy.org.**

## Thank you to our Volunteers!

**Bob Dale • Martha Cucco • Kirsten Larsen • Jim Happ • Jim Frost • Nancy Williams  
Al Hermansen • Charlie Obligato • Helen Johnson • Marilyn Nanna • Mary Leaf  
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# Easement Spotlight: Moelter Wildlife Preserve

by Lynn Ketterhagen

In 2003, the Conservancy welcomed the Moelter Wildlife Preserve, approximately 230 acres of woodland, prairie, wetland and farmland, as its 13<sup>th</sup> permanently protected property. At that time, it was the GLC's largest preserved property.

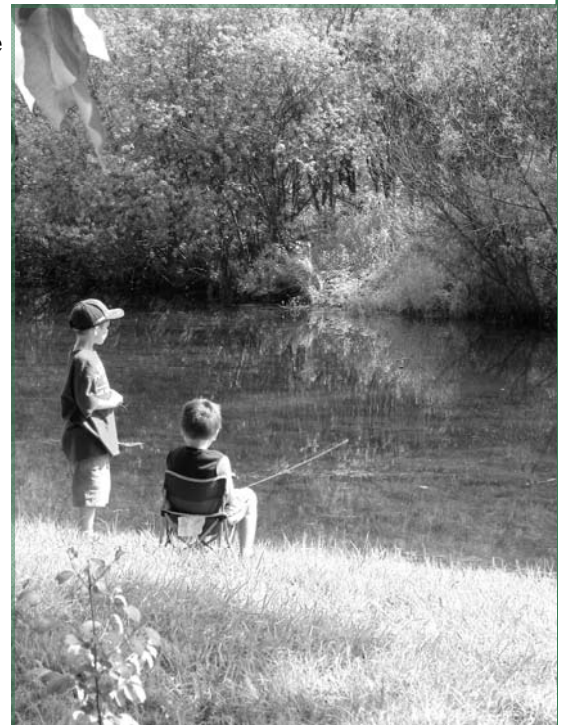


A quiet moment before the scouts arrive to go canoeing.

The Moelter property offers opportunities and conservation values that our other properties do not. In early spring of 2005, the property was discovered by a local Boy Scout troop. Two years later, this property would be the site of the Boy Scouts first Family Camp. This past summer, was the 10<sup>th</sup> Family Camp at the property. The Moelter Property offers a magnitude of opportunities and experiences for the young scouts and their families as they set up camp for the weekend. The Family camp is only one event for the scout troops. They are fortunate enough to have access to this gem throughout the year. The education of our local youth to learn from the natural wonders on this property are experiences of a lifetime, that they will never forget.

Walking into this property, the noises of everyday life melt away as you work your way into the pine forest. The soft bed of pine needles below your feet and the smell of fresh sap take any of life's every day stresses away. The heart, pride and effort that has gone into this property goes beyond the norm. As a professional in Mother Nature's office, I know what it takes to keep a property of this magnitude up and maintained. There literally has been blood, sweat and tears shed in the making of what this property is today. Over the past 11 years, trees have been planted, ponds dredged, buckthorn removed, trails blazed, ponds stocked with fish, and funds raised for the construction of the structure on the property for the scouts.

The GLC celebrates its 13<sup>th</sup> protected property, representing 11.7% of our organization's protected land. We thank the Moelter Family for having the foresight to protect this property for future generations to come, and for sharing their property with the local scouts and education groups to further their learning and knowledge of the natural world through the protected conservation values of their property.



The Moelter conservation easement helps create lifelong skills and memories.



## Like and Follow GLC on FaceBook!

GLC is actively posting on FaceBook. Click "liked" and "Get Notifications" to learn when a new post occurs. Posts will be about current happenings at GLC as well as conservation-related facts.

We have over 800 likes—help us reach 1,000!



## 2016 Shore Path Walk

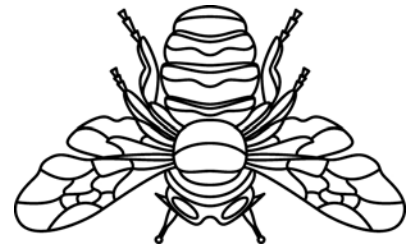
The 9th annual Shore Path Lake Walk was a great success thanks to John Palmer Personal Training who organized the event. More than 30 adults and children began at the Town of Linn pier with many walking the whole 9 miles to Williams Bay to raise money for GLC. The weather was cool and cloudy and the scenery along the walk was fantastic. Thanks to all the participants for a great Fall Day! Join us next year on Saturday, October 7.



On October 1st, over 30 people gathered to enjoy the Geneva Lake Shore Path

## Pollinator Gardens, GLC's Summer Event

Northwind Perennial Farm, Burlington, was the site for GLC's summer *Pollinator Gardens* event in July. Guests were escorted through the working section of Northwind where over 300 varieties of plants are grown and weathered prior to sale to wholesalers and to customers of Northwind. Upon arrival at check-in, guests were encouraged to take a walking tour of Northwind's inspiring demonstration gardens. Roy Diblik, co-owner of Northwind and creator of the "Know Maintenance" approach to gardening, spoke to the gathering, encouraging all to look at their garden designs with fresh eyes. Diblik has created a series of grid plant combinations which can be used with ease by landscape designers to create a perennial garden that will be visited by pollinators.



## GLC Celebrates the 35th Annual Holly Ball on December 3

Holly Ball is GLC's significant annual fundraiser held before Christmas. It includes a live band, dinner, silent auction and announcement of the Conservation Stewardship Award recipient. A long favored Geneva Lakes area tradition, 2016 marks the 35th Holly Ball. Details are on the back page of this newsletter. Hope you are able to join us!

### GLC Sustaining Sponsors

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# An Elegant Evening at the Richard H. Driehaus Estate

GLC was fortunate on September 22 to have an event at the Driehaus estate on Geneva Lake. Guests entered the Snake Road property through a stunning entrance flanked by brick pillars and a flower garden in the center. As they drove down the half-mile drive, they were treated to a well-thought-out landscape that still retains the influence of the Olmsted Brothers. The focus of the evening was Jens Jensen, a renowned Danish American landscape architect, who is credited with city park design work in all parts of Chicago.

Jensen had influence in the Lake Geneva area as well, creating the landscape designs for the Forest Glen and Allview estates, as well as others. The documentary film “Jens Jensen The Living Green” which follows Jensen’s career, was available for guests to watch.

Carey Lundin, director and co-producer of the award winning film, spoke on Jensen’s contribution to conservation. “The part of Jensen’s message we’re hearing today is that nature is a right, not just an amenity,” said Lundin. “Recent brain research demonstrates that our brains and bodies react to nature, they automatically de-stress. We now know that property values go up with nature.”

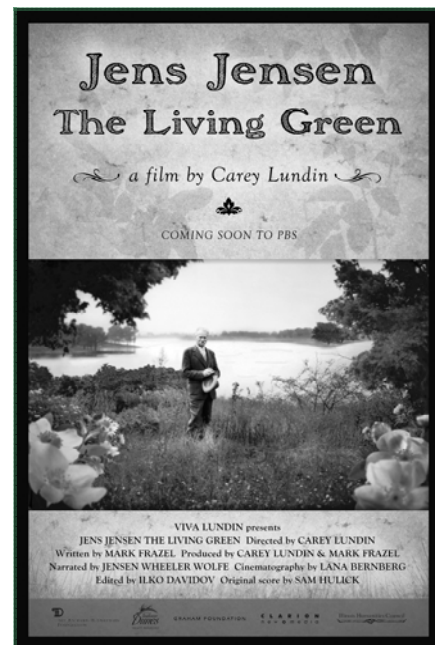
“We have always known this, deep in our bones. In retrospect, we can trace how our cities favored the wealthy with nature and literally planned it out of working class neighborhoods, the very places where we have the most poverty and violence,” she said. “So to increase the quality of life, we must increase the access to nature. Jensen knew this a century ago and only now are we catching up to those insights.”



Carey Lundin, speaker at the Driehaus event.

Lundin recognized GLC’s mission to preserve and advocate for Walworth County waterways, natural areas and working lands. “You all know at the GLC that we’re in this for the long haul - it takes time and unrelenting dedication, just like Jensen demonstrated, to bring nature to the people,” Lundin said.

Lundin’s message rang true with GLC supporters and the film was intently viewed. In response to inquiries, GLC is offering the video for sale for \$20. Contact GLC at (262) 275-5700 for more information.



*Jens Jensen The Living Green*, may be purchased at GLC for \$20.

An Elegant Evening at the Richard H. Driehaus Estate was made possible through the generous support of The Richard H. Driehaus Charitable Lead Trust

CONNECTIONS photo by Jim Frost.



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