As 2012 starts to wind down, we look forward to spending time with family and friends and to enjoy our wonderful natural surroundings. We are thankful the Geneva Lake area remains a beautiful region. This is due in large part to the diligence of groups that care about the area and are willing to help protect it.

There are three methods the Conservancy uses to guard our natural resources: education, advocacy and land protection. We expanded our groundwater model education outreach program last year, and more than 400 middle school students were involved in an interactive teaching experience during which they saw the effects various contaminants have on our groundwater.

Our Advocacy Representation Program has proved effective in the Conservancy maintaining an informed presence in the community (see page 4 for article). Land protection continues to be a growing aspect of the Conservancy as more lands are placed in permanent easements with us and are protected forever from unplanned development.

As the year comes to a close, look for our year-end appeal in your mail. If you have already given, consider giving again. If you haven’t given already, please do!

The Conservancy relies on the generosity of our donors to carry out our mission of “protecting the environmental character of the Geneva Lakes area.” As the economy improves, the pressure of development will increase, and we will need resources to continue to defend our treasure.

Robert W. Klockars
Chairman, Geneva Lake Conservancy

Thank you to the Lake Geneva Garden Club for a grant that has enabled GLC to purchase five Garmin GPS units to begin our geocache program. As part of our educational outreach program, the geocache sites will provide conservation-based treasure hunts. The program will be designed by Badger High School student Michael Habrel as his senior project.
Are There Enough Piers on Geneva Lake?
By C.L. Colman

Piers and buoys are sensitive topics for property owners on Geneva Lake, as access to the water is what makes lake properties so valuable. Despite this, it is important once in a while to think about the concept of when is enough, enough.

In the last few years, there have been two significant contributors to an increase in piers. One was fear concerning the threat of pier regulations. While this fear has settled down, with recent legislation moving in a less restrictive direction a number of property owners built new piers to “secure” the option for the future.

The second pressure has been the number of properties for sale on the lake, with a good proportion resulting in either new homes or property divisions. When new homes are built, piers expand or are added to accommodate more boats. It’s not surprising. Can you blame anyone for wanting more boating options when property values are so high?

Buoys also seem a problem. There appear to be many mooring buoys that are never used. In a few places these buoys require additional no-wake buoys to steer boats around the mooring buoys. Sometimes when slips are added, the buoys remain in order to “secure the option” for additional boats for the future. Does this make sense?

With pier and buoy density going up, at some point boating safety – on weekends, in particular – will be impaired. If we allow more large developments to gain access to the lake, this will happen faster. If launch ramps are allowed unlimited access, the pressure will go up even more. The beautiful resource we have is not unlimited.

Other than our own good judgment, it seems to me there are two direct indicators of excess with respect to piers and buoys: one is whether they are being used; the other is when rights to slips and moorings are offered for sale or permanent rental. There is currently quite a number of open slips and buoys. Also, I continue to hear about the sale of slips. These are both indications that we are nearing the “enough” stage. I don’t believe Geneva Lake is alone in this regard.

There is no absolute answer to the question, but it is something to think about.

Driehaus Event

The Geneva Lake Conservancy was thrilled the Richard H. Driehaus Charitable Lead Trust granted us a fundraiser at the Driehaus Geneva Lake Estate on Friday, September 28.

The weather was perfect, and guests were treated to a tour of the estate gardens by landscape architect Caren Connolly. She also gave a lecture on the estate landscaping.

Music gently resonated through the home as Loni Gornick, a cellist with the Wisconsin Philharmonic Orchestra, played. John and JaNelle Powers read selections of letters that have been submitted to the Conservancy’s Love Letters to the Lake program.

The beautiful dining room was transformed by a sumptuous buffet, and the home was decorated for the fall season. It was a perfect evening to celebrate the Conservancy’s 35th anniversary!
As the 35th anniversary of the Conservancy comes to a close, so will the summer-long Love Letters to the Lake event.

Launched Memorial Day weekend with selections of letters read at the gazebo in Flat Iron Park in Lake Geneva by John and JaNelle Powers of Lake Geneva, the concept sparked many emotions. Memories shared in the letters ranged from a single experience to those that spanned decades of romance with the lake. Letters were received from summer visitors, lifelong residents, and grade school children and reflected on the unique and beautiful area we call Geneva Lake. Many expressed a desire to protect the area, which the Conservancy will continue to do for a long time.

Thank you to the hundreds of Lake Geneva, Delavan, Fontana, Williams Bay, and Lake Como residents and businesses that participated in this unique event! A special thank you to the Lake Geneva Regional News and editor John Halverson for printing letters throughout the summer.

The Three R’s at the Driehaus Family Estate

Recycling is alive and well at the Driehaus Family Estate. In the most delicious and nutritious way for humans and plants alike.

Mr. and Mrs. Driehaus encourage staff to make everything count.

Leaves and lawn clippings are composted to return nutrients to the numerous planting beds.

Acorns have been known to make their way to a local young man who is raising pigs on a Spanish diet of acorns. (The authors have sampled some of the pork chops and rate them excellent!)

The orchard had a wonderful year. Apples, plums and pears performed beautifully.

Thanks to staff, much of that fruit was transformed into delicious pies, jams, jellies, cider and sauces. The family will be able to enjoy the bountiful harvest, and a taste of summer, throughout winter.

Think global, act local is alive and well at the Driehaus Family Estate.
There is Advocacy and then there is ADVOCACY!

The Geneva Lakes area inspires protective feelings. We don’t want to see any changes, but they occur. The GLC Advocacy Committee has instigated two processes that help us keep in touch with local developments – the Advocacy Representation Program (ARP) and a 2013 Advocacy Strategic Focus.

Many times the changes first surface at the municipal level, and that is the best time to provide input. Implementing ARP has proved effective in alerting us to issues we wish to have our voice heard on.

Timely information gathering and dissemination are the crux of the ARP program. At the end of each month, a master calendar is compiled that details upcoming meetings held by local municipalities and the county government.

As agendas become available, they are sent to GLC board and staff members. Discussion ensues over items that may be of concern. Regardless of the agenda items, a representative from the GLC is usually in attendance.

ARP has benefitted the GLC in several ways. The awareness of local issues has been heightened within the GLC organization, allowing for well-thought-out positions. The strategic nature of ARP ensures timely and deliberate responses to issues before they have escalated into problems.

The Advocacy Committee has developed a 2013 Strategic Focus, which encompasses a wide variety of topics from shoreland zoning to easements to personal environmental practices. Recently the committee spent an afternoon drafting the Strategic Focus (see photo insert). Topics were discussed, then grouped, and then regrouped. It was a dynamic process and is updated yearly!

GLC has fine-tuned our Advocacy Program with effective results. Cochairs Merilee Holst and Charles Colman and committee members Peter Scherrer and Joe Madonia are committed to looking after the Geneva Lakes area!

Thank You to our recent volunteers

The great success of the Driehaus event was due volunteers who were able to help at a moment’s notice with assembling the invitation for mailing. Many thanks to volunteers Lael Vandenburg, Laurie Weed, Bridget Six, Leann Surz, Katie Miller and Rickie Wetzel.

We are grateful to others who have done volunteer work:
Mikey Habrel – for help with a mailing and the Mill House gardens.
Al Hermansen – for help with the restoration work in Hermansen’s Woods.
Richard Boniak – for a terrific seminar on fall lawn care.
John and JaNelle Powers - for reading selections of letters submitted to our Love Letters to the Lake program.
Fred Noer – for his copyediting of the articles on each of our newsletters.
Dianna Colman, Bridget Six, Kelly Clow, Leslie Scherrer and Margaret O’Regan for their help preparing the Keepin’ It Green—Holly Ball Invitations.
America’s great outdoors: HACKMATACK National Wildlife Refuge
(from the Department of Interior Press Release)

U.S. Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar has announced the authorization of the establishment of the Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge in southeastern Wisconsin and northeastern Illinois, according to a press release August 15 from the U.S. Department of the Interior.

The refuge eventually will provide up to 11,200 acres of habitat for wildlife as well as outdoor recreational opportunities within easy driving distance for millions of people.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will establish the refuge on land or conservation easements purchased from willing sellers. Ultimately, the refuge is expected to include land on both sides of the Wisconsin-Illinois border between Milwaukee and Chicago.

The refuge will provide for restoration of wetlands, prairie, and oak savanna habitat and provide a home for 109 species of animals and plants that are of concern. The list includes 49 birds, five fishes, five mussels, one amphibian, two reptiles, and 47 plants.

With the purchase of 12 acres in McHenry County by the Friends of Hackmatack, the refuge is officially on its way!

What does this exciting news mean for the GLC? The GLC Land Protection Committee is actively working with Openlands, McHenry County Conservation District, and Friends of Hackmatack to see what role GLC can play in placing properties in the National Wildlife Refuge. Sarah Schuster, GLC Board member, and Lynn Ketterhagen, GLC Manager of Land Protection and Operations, are investigating sources of funding to facilitate land purchases in the Wisconsin portion of Hackmatack.

Share the Vision and Donate Now. Become a Member in 2012!

Enclosed is my tax-deductible Membership donation:

- $30 Naturalist
- $60 Steward
- $100 Advocate
- $150 Protector
- $250 Guardian
- $500 Benefactor
- $1,000 Stewardship Society
- $5,000 Preservation Society
- $________________ Other

Donor(s) _________________________________________________________

Address ___________________________ City, State, Zip ___________________________

Summer or Winter Address ________________________________________________

City, State, Zip _________________________________________________________

Credit (Visa, M/C or Discover) ___________________________ Ex ______

Yes, I would like to be a volunteer:

- Call me when you need help
- Mill House restoration and maintenance
- Mill House Gardens
- Data Entry
- Educational programs
- Event volunteer

We need your email addresses so we can keep you up to date with the latest GLC news!

Email: ___________________________________________________________________

Please mail to: Geneva Lake Conservancy | P.O. Box 588 | Fontana, WI 53125 | Phone: (262) 275-5700 | Fax: (262) 275-0579

Email: GLC@genevaonline.com | visit our website at: www.genevalakeconservancy.org
Repairs to the Mill House

The Conservancy officially kicked off a multiyear Mill House renovation project with the acceptance of a $1,200 donation from the Fontana Garden Club for window replacement.

The Mill House or the Douglass-Stevenson House, as it is listed on the National Register of Historic Places, was built in 1857 and is located in downtown Fontana. The building is one of the oldest remaining houses in Walworth County and has been home to the Conservancy since 2006. The house is of massive-stovewood construction, a very unusual type of vernacular structure.

Heartfelt thanks to the Fontana Garden Club for its continued support!

Pictured from left to right: Barb Riley, garden club treasurer, Conservancy managers Lynn Ketterhagen, and, Janet Happ, Garden Club program chairs Debbie Jacobson, and Jan Williams, and Garden Club member Jerry Ferguson.

Visit us at www.GenevaLakeConservancy.org