



**Geneva Lake
Conservancy**

Connections

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

Spring 2017

SCHUSTER HONORED AT GLC'S 2016 HOLLY BALL

Businesswoman and Conservationist Sarah Schuster received the 2016 Conservation Stewardship Award from the Geneva Lake Conservancy at its annual Holly Ball fundraiser on Dec. 3 at Big Foot Country Club.

More than 230 guests dined among a “land and water conservation” décor that transformed the dining rooms with buffalo plaid and faux fur reminiscent of a ski chalet or log cabin. The menu included short ribs, mashed potatoes and peppermint ice cream.

For the first time, silent auction bidders used their phones to bid on dozens of auction items, including a sailing trip, dinner for ten, golf packages and numerous goods and services donated by area businesses.

“Holly Ball co-chairs Cari Alberts and Kelly Hirn and the entire committee did an amazing job of creating a magical night for everyone,” said Janet Happ, GLC’s Director of Development.

A highlight of the evening was the presentation of the Conservation Stewardship Award to Schuster.

“Sarah has that special combination of passion, perseverance and the ability to inspire others,” said GLC Board Member Charles Colman in presenting the award to Schuster.

A fifth generation Lake Geneva resident, Schuster traces her roots to her mother’s family farm, the Dickinson-Boyd farm just south of Lake Geneva, which was homesteaded by her family in the 1850s.

After graduating from Badger High School, Schuster attended Northern Arizona University where she began working at an outdoor outfitter’s store that sold Patagonia clothing. There she adopted the philosophy of Patagonia’s founder, Yvon Chouinard, who advocates “to build the (continued on pg. 7)



The Geneva Lake Conservancy’s Holly Ball

Committee included (left to right): Kate Berley, Kim Parker, Kathy Yih, JaNelle Powers, Tracy Lentz, Cari Alberts, Kirsten Larsen, Janet Happ, Karen Hirn, Ursula Grud, Kelly Hirn. (Not pictured: Mojdeh Drobnitch, Grace Eckland, Grace Hanny, Merilee Holst, Barbara Philipps, Leslie Scherrer Pella, Bridget Six, Julie Stout).

Letter from the Executive Director

Dear Members and Supporters:

This year, as part of our 40th Anniversary celebration, we will be honoring the leaders who have contributed to the success of the Geneva Lake Conservancy.

As I read about these men and women, I have learned that their impact is often measured by what you don't see – instead of dense development throughout Walworth County, their contribution has been thoughtful planning and open spaces. Over the years, they have worked to prevent inappropriate development throughout our county.

As a result, almost a mile around the Geneva Lake shore is protected by conservation easements that limit density and almost 2,000 acres of land throughout Walworth County is preserved as open space. Our stately oaks, clear trout streams, healthy lakes and thriving forests all continue to contribute to the beauty of this area.

“Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world,” said the anthropologist Margaret Mead and this is evident with the Geneva Lake Conservancy. It began when John Anderson and Bill Turner were sitting on Anderson's Buena Vista porch discussing their concern that there was no local environmental organization to tackle the issues of pollution and high density development in the Lake Geneva area. They formed the Committee to Save Lake Geneva, which later became the Geneva Lake Conservancy.



Today, Mike Carlson, Executive Director of Gathering Waters, notes:

“Geneva Lake Conservancy has an unmatched track record of land protection spanning 40 years. As one of the earliest local land trusts to form in Wisconsin, the Conservancy has been a pioneer through its focus on watershed health, water quality and community engagement. With a talented, committed board and staff, the Conservancy is well-positioned to build on past successes and continue making a positive, meaningful conservation impact in the future.”

We hope you will join us on July 15 at both our “Tour of the Land Day,” which will open some of our extraordinary easement properties to the public for hiking and touring and our evening celebration at the lakefront home of one of our first easements. We will be honoring our past leaders and presenting our 10-year conservation plan to protect hundreds of additional acres in the County.

We are grateful for your support that continues to inspire us to protect the beautiful landscapes and clear waters of Walworth County for future generations.

Sincerely,

Karen Yancey

CONNECTIONS Spring photo by Jim Frost.
Crocus in Fontana on a early spring day.

2017 Calendar of Events—Celebrate the GLC's 40th Anniversary!

Friday, April 21 - The Day Before Earth Day!

GLC's spring luncheon will feature David Thoreson, sailor, photographer and recently published author of *Over the Horizon*. Thoreson will share his lifelong experiences sailing, from when he was a child on Lake Okoboji in Iowa to his 65,000 nautical mile journey across the globe.

Saturday, July 15 — Tour of the Land & Celebration

Geneva Lake Conservancy's 40th Anniversary celebration! The day will include the opportunity to tour and hike on some of our extraordinary easement properties and an evening gala at GLC's first conservation easement, which is on the shore of Geneva Lake.

Saturday, October 7 — Shore Path Walk

The tenth annual JPPT (John Palmer Personal Training) Lake Walk will benefit the Geneva Lake Conservancy. This fully underwritten event is designed to be a great day of exercise, accomplishment, and fun. Walkers are given a route map and pace guide to keep them on track. Registration opens May 1. All proceeds benefit Geneva Lake Conservancy.

Harvest Dinner

Join us for recognition of GLC's achievements over the last 40 years and its exciting plans for the future. Location and details to be announced.

Saturday, December 2th — Holly Ball!

The Geneva Lake Conservancy presents *Holly Ball* at Big Foot Country Club.

Volunteers Needed!!!

GLC will need approximately 20 volunteers to help with the "Tour of the Land" event on Saturday, July 15 from 10—4 pm. Needed are people to check-in guests at our conservation easement properties, register guests and guide property tours. Contact GLC at (262) 275-5700 or at glc@genevalakeconservancy.org to sign up!

GLC Summer Internship

The Geneva Lake Conservancy is looking for a summer intern who is a graduating college senior interested in conservation and land protection. The intern will help monitor the Conservancy's easement properties, assist on special events, do restoration work on Conservancy properties, develop GIS maps, and assist with other land trust programs and projects. The candidate must be outgoing and have strong interpersonal skills, an environmental background and college degree, be willing to work outdoors, and be flexible in scheduling. A strong connection to Walworth County is preferred. This is a paid internship for 10 weeks in the summer of 2017, which may lead to full-time employment. Interested candidates should submit a cover letter and resume to Karen Yancey, Executive Director at kyancey@genevalakeconservancy.org, by March 15, 2017.

Happ named Director of Development

Janet Happ, Manager of Fundraising and Community Outreach, has been promoted to Director of Development for the Geneva Lake Conservancy.

Since she joined the organization in 2012, Janet has consistently exceeded fundraising goals, built the organization's donor base and helped organize a variety of special events for the Conservancy, including its Holly Ball, spring luncheon and Shoreline Dialogue series.



In her new role, Janet will be responsible for expanding sponsorships and business memberships, organizing major donor programs, increasing membership, instituting new communication tools and implementing special events, including the Conservancy's 40th Anniversary celebration.

"Janet is using her many talents to expand support and membership for the Conservancy as we continue to advocate for and preserve the water and land resources of Walworth County", said Karen Yancey, Executive Director of the Conservancy.

A former commodity trader and substitute teacher in Lake Geneva public schools, Janet has a master's degree in economics from Bowling Green State University and a bachelor's degree in economics and English from Bowling Green State University.

She is a member of the Lake Geneva Garden Club, Samuel Phoenix chapter of the Daughters of the American Revolution, Kishwaukétoe Questers and served as a volunteer for many years with St. Francis de Sales Parish School. A Lake Geneva resident, she enjoys spending time with her husband, Jim, and two grown children, Gregory, and Lucy.

Volunteer Workdays ... Mark your Calendar!

Volunteers gathered on November 19 to work at Hildebrand Woods. Owned by the Village of Fontana, the 11.5 acre woods is open to the public and protected forever by a conservation easement held by GLC. Left, Peggy and Marc Jensen helped clear buckthorn at Hildebrand Woods at the fall GLC volunteer workday. Thanks also to Josh Skolnick, Gail Hibbard and Roy Diblik .



- **Saturday, April 1, GLC/Village of Fontana Work Day, 9 a.m.-noon**, Hildebrand Woods, Fontana, please bring loppers and work gloves.
- **Saturday May 6, Walworth County Parks/GLC 8 a.m. - noon**, White River County Park, bring work gloves for invasive species removal, mulching and boardwalk work.
- **Saturday, Sept. 9, GLC/Village of Fontana Work Day, 9 a.m.-noon**, Hildebrand Woods, Fontana, please bring loppers and work gloves.
- **Friday, October 6, White River County Parks 8 a.m. – noon**, White River County Park, bring work gloves for projects to be announced.

Please email kyancey@genevalakeconservancy to register for these work days. We are thankful for all our volunteers who help us restore the land.

The Monarch Mission

Geneva Lake Conservancy launches Monarch conservation plan

The beautiful orange and black Monarch butterflies are symbols of summertime in the Midwest. With their delicate wings and tiny bodies, they seem to float at the whim of the breezes. But they're actually summer visitors from thousands of miles away. The lovely Monarchs winter in large numbers in central Mexico and wing their way north to breed and dine in the summer months. Unfortunately, the number of Monarchs summering in the central US has been in serious decline over the past several years. There are a number of reasons experts cite for this problem, but the main culprit seems to be the decline in milkweed, a common but critical plant in the Monarch lifecycle. Monarch lay their eggs on the underside of milkweed plants and the emerging Monarch caterpillars eat only milkweed to survive.



Milkweed plants used to be found in abundance along the roadsides and in fields all over the Midwest. In addition to milkweed for the caterpillar stage, adult butterflies need nectar from native plants to thrive. More recently, however, housing sprawl, weed trimming along roadsides and use of chemical sprays has greatly diminished the numbers of these native plants. And the number of Monarchs that are able to survive this change has also greatly diminished.

But we can do something to help. Many people are planting milkweed and other native flowering plants to create Monarch waystations in their backyards.

Common milkweed plants, in the *Asclepias* family, are actually easy to grow and can be a lovely addition to our gardens. There are four main varieties of milkweed common to the Eastern US; some grow best in hot sun and other varieties prefer less sun and more moist soil conditions.

Common Milkweed—*Asclepias syriaca*

Butterfly Weed—*Asclepias tuberosa*

Swamp Milkweed—*Asclepias incarnate*

Whorled Milkweed—*Asclepias verticillata*

To help with this project, the Geneva Lake Conservancy is launching a local Monarch Mission with the sale of locally grown milkweed plants. You can order milkweed plants below or go to our website. The deadline to order is April 1.

GLC Milkweed Order Form

Yes, I would like to order milkweed plants to help Monarch butterflies. Please indicate the number of each plant below. (Plants will come in 2-½" pots with planting instructions.)

___ Common milkweed. (Flowers are purplish white, easiest and fastest to grow.)

___ Swamp or marsh milkweed (rose or pink flower, fragrant, likes moist soils)

___ Butterfly weed (orange flowers, likes dry and sunny location)

Each milkweed plant is \$5.00. Proceeds will benefit the prairie restoration at White River County Park, through the Friends of the White River County Park. Deadline for ordering is April 1. All plants can be picked up at the Geneva Lake Conservancy garage, 398 Mill Street, Fontana, Wisconsin between May 15 and May 31.

You may order from our Web site or please send your check made out to the Geneva Lake Conservancy and this form to 398 Mill Street, Fontana, WI 53125. For questions, call Kelley Happ at 847-404-3957.

Name: _____ Email: _____

Cell phone: _____ Check amount: _____

Seminar Presents Benefits of Municipal Conservation Easements

Approximately 20 municipal officials attended the Geneva Lake Conservancy's Conservation Easement Education Seminar on October 25 as part of the Walworth County Intergovernmental Cooperation Council's monthly meetings in Elkhorn.

"What is a conservation easement and what are the benefits to a municipality of placing an



Panelists, Angela Curtes, Rodney Walker, Peter McKeever, Karen Yancey, Lynn Ketterhagen and Don Parker.

easement on parks and other publicly owned property?" were some of the questions covered by a panel of experts on conservation easements.

The panel included Peter McKeever, attorney and vice-chair of the Capital Area Regional Planning Commission; Don Parker, board of directors of the GLC and former Williams Bay village trustee; Angela Curtes, owner of Grounded LLC and former director of the Yggdrasil Land Foundation; Rodney Walter, director of habitat protection for the Nature Conservancy; and Lynn Ketterhagen, GLC manager of land protection and operations. Karen Yancey, GLC executive director, served as moderator.

The panelists discussed the importance of a conservation easement to ensure that the open space provided by public parks and other publicly owned land is protected in perpetuity. They also shared information about conservation easements that the GLC has completed with the Village of Williams Bay and Town of Linn.

Merilee Holst, vice chairman of GLC, gave an overview of conservation easement movement in Walworth County. Today, there are approximately 40 properties protected with conservation easements, ranging in size from two-tenths of an acre to 450 acres, for a total of approximately 2,300 acres.

These conservation easements are held by private landowners as well as municipalities and protect the conservation values of a variety of landscapes from working farms to oak savannas, woodlands, prairies, parks and waterfront property. The GLC currently has 28 conservation easements protecting land throughout Walworth County.

To learn more about conservation easements go to <http://genevalakeconservancy.org/conservation-easements/> or call the Conservancy at (262) 275-5700.

Thank you to our Volunteers!

**Kirsten Larsen • Jim Frost • Al Hermansen • Charlie Obligato • Barbara Adams
Becky Valadez • Mary Leaf • Alicia Valleskey • Alison Bestler • Kevin Williams • Kelley Happ**

The 2016 Holly Ball Committee

Cari Alberts, Kate Berley, Mojdeh Drobnitch, Grace Eckland, Ursula Grud, Grace Hanny, Karen Hirn, Kelly Hirn, Kim Hirn, Merilee Holst, Kirsten Larsen, Tracy Lentz, Kim Parker, Leslie Scherrer Pella, Barbara J. Philipps, JaNelle Powers, Bridget Six, Julie Stout, Kathy Yih.

Holly Ball (continued from p. 1)

best product, cause no unnecessary harm, use business to inspire and implement solutions to the environmental crisis.”

“Lake water runs in my veins as it does many of yours. Whether you’ve been here for generations or just ingested gallons of water this summer, we are all here tonight because we are hooked . . . hooked on the lake, the land around us and the trees that protect us,” Schuster said.

Schuster was also the leader in forming the Friends of Big Foot Beach State Park and served as its president helping to improve both its facilities and its land. A member of the board of directors of the Conservancy for several years, Schuster helped lead it during a time of rapid growth in the number of easements held by the Conservancy, according to Colman.

“Perhaps Sarah’s biggest contribution to conservation in Wisconsin and Illinois is the leadership role she took with several other Wisconsin and Illinois residents, to form the Hackmatack Wildlife Refuge,” said Colman. “After eight years of diligent grass roots efforts, the first bi-state and urban wildlife refuge was established along the Wisconsin and Illinois border in 2012.”

“Learning to collaborate is the key to success in conservation efforts,” Schuster said. “When people are passionate and fired up about protecting the environment, stoking those fires gets results.”

Principal sponsor of the 2016 Holly Ball was Ventas and sustaining sponsors were Carol Bernick, Patrick and Shirley Ryan and Jeff and Molly Keller. The GLC would also like to thank charter sponsors Barnes & Thornburg LLP, BMO Harris Bank and Mercy Health Systems as well as its partner sponsors, including Daniel’s Sentry, First National Bank and Trust, Geneva Cabinets, Gordy’s Lakefront Marine, Inc., Ernie and Karen Hirn, Don and Merilee Holst, John and Janis Notz, PSG, Inc., Roger and Wendy Fisher and Rosemarie and Dean Buntrock.

The Geneva Lake Conservancy’s annual Holly Ball is the largest fundraiser for the Conservancy, which is celebrating its 40th Anniversary in 2017. The Conservancy has protected almost 2,000 acres in Walworth County through conservation easements, land donations, and other land protection tools. It currently has more than 800 members and preserves and advocates for the waterways, natural areas and working lands of Walworth County.



Sarah Schuster
and Charles
Colman.

2016 Holly Ball Sponsors

Principal Sponsor



Sustaining Sponsors

*Carol Bernick Jeff & Molly Keller
Patrick G. and Shirley W. Ryan Foundation*

*Rosemarie & Dean Buntrock
Roger & Wendy Fisher
Ernie & Karen Hirn*

Partner Sponsors

*Daniel’s Sentry
Geneva Cabinets
Don & Merilee Holst
PSG, Inc.*

Charter Sponsors

*Barnes & Thornburg, LLP
BMO Harris Bank
Mercy Health System*

*First National Bank and Trust
Gordy’s Lakefront Marine, Inc.
John & Janis Notz*



NONPROFIT ORG
US POSTAGE
PAID
LAKE GENEVA, WI
PERMIT #10

Board of Directors

Dennis E. Jordan, Chairman

Kevin M. Brunner

John D. Cobb

Charles L. Colman

Wendy Perks Fisher

Merilee M. Holst

Joseph F. Madonia

John K. Notz, Jr.

Donald J. Parker, Jr.

Peter J. Scherrer

Staff

Karen Yancey
Executive Director

Janet Happ
Director of Development

Carolyn Knop
Accountant

A 40TH ANNIVERSARY EVENT

2017
The
SPRING
LUNCHEON

FEATURING PHOTOGRAPY AND NARRATIVE BY
DAVID THORESON

11:30AM GATHERING / 12:00PM LUNCHEON / PRESENTATION
FRIDAY, APRIL 21

MABEL CRATTY HALL, GEORGE WILLIAMS COLLEGE • 350 CONSTANCE BLVD, WILLIAMS BAY, WI
\$75/PERSON • RESERVE ONLINE AT WWW.GENEVALAKECONSERVANCY.ORG OR CALL 262-275-5700

Geneva Lake Conservancy • 398 Mill Street • Fontana, WI 53125 • 262 275 5700 • 262 275 0579 fax

www.GenevaLakeConservancy.org