



## CONSERVANCY PROTECTS 40-ACRE BROMLEY WOODS

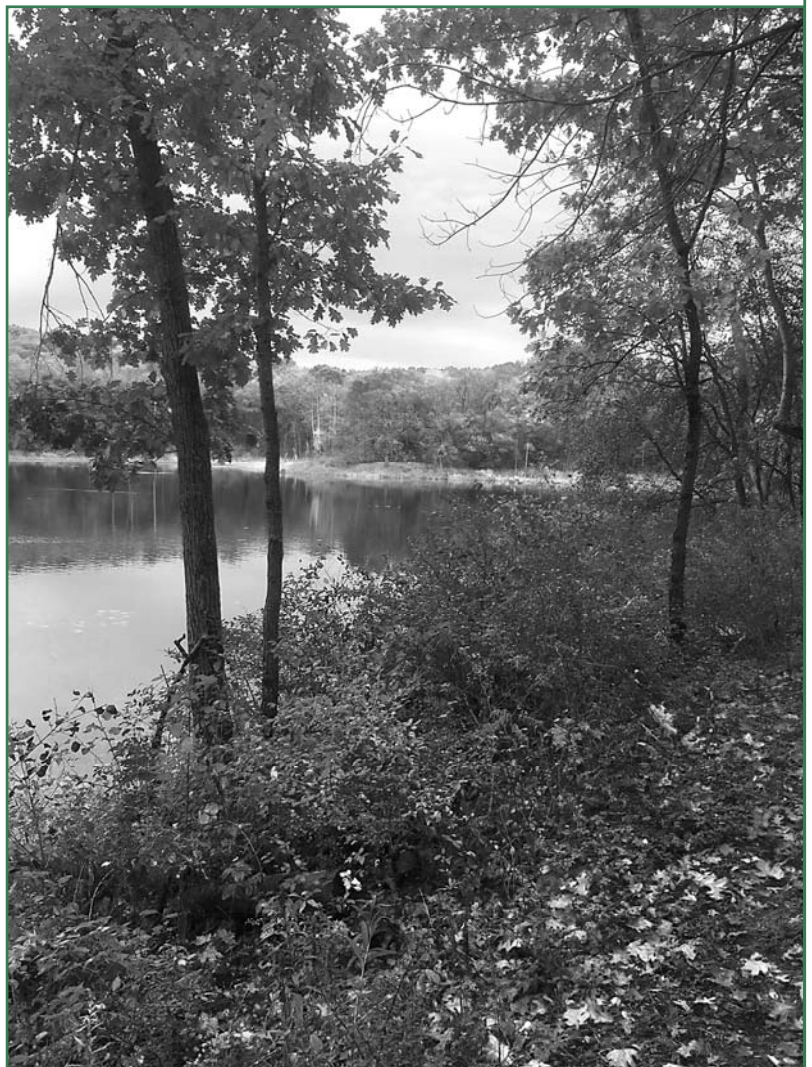
Great horned owls, Cerulean warblers, wood ducks and red-headed woodpeckers are just some of the bird species that hikers may see on the two miles of hiking trails at Bromley Woods, the Geneva Lake Conservancy's newest nature preserve.

The GLC purchased 32 acres of the Bromley family's oak forest and kettle pond on October 8. The purchase was made possible by grants from the DNR's Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program and Pheasants Forever as well as individual donations.

In addition, the Bromley family donated an adjacent eight-acre oak savanna to the Conservancy that contains 200- to 300-year-old oak trees.

"Preservation of this property for future generations is particularly significant because oak forests and savannas have become one of the rarest landscapes on the planet," said Kevin Brunner, Geneva Lake Conservancy Chairman. "We are grateful to the Bromley family and all of our donors who worked for more than two years to ensure that this important wildlife habitat was protected forever."

The Bromley family has owned the property since 1844 when William and Martha Bromley arrived from England after spending 7 years in New York. Four years later, Wisconsin became a state. Over the years, the family has hosted many friends and school groups on the property. The oak savanna has been the site of a community 4<sup>th</sup> of July picnic and softball game since the 1950s.



The Kettle Pond that has been enjoyed by the Bromley Family is a rare landscape feature. The pond is habitat to turtles and newts, the latter an indicator species of a healthy environment.

Cont. on page 2



## BROMLEY (Continued from page 1)

The property is near the old Potawatomi trail between Milwaukee and Madison and the family has found numerous arrowheads and other Native American artifacts on the site.

The current generation, including Becky, Tom, Jean, Maggie, Mark, and Janet Bromley all grew up skating on the kettle pond, playing games in the woods and hiking the numerous trails. When it became apparent that most of the next Bromley generation would not be living in the area, the children and their in-laws (Jerry Gapinski, Lisa Bromley, Pat Bromley, and Karl Olson) approached the Conservancy.

"It was our father's wish that when it came time to sell the property that it remain a nature preserve," said Janet Olson, the youngest of the Bromley siblings. She now lives in Whitewater. Mark Bromley and his wife, Pat live in the family home on Greening Road, built in 1854 to replace the original log cabin.

"The Bromley family has been a good caretaker of this land for 175 years and we are honored that they have entrusted the Conservancy to carry on this tradition," said Karen Yancey, GLC Executive Director.

The property is located on Greening Road in the town of LaGrange and borders Kettle Moraine State Park on its north and east side. It will be opened in early 2020 for hiking, cross country skiing, bird watching,


hunting and trapping.

The Conservancy is working with the Bromley family to protect an additional 40 acres of oak forest adjacent to the new preserve.



Mark Bromley is holding the sign that marks the Bromley Woodland Trust that was formed by his parents, and that the Bromley children are honoring with their donation of the property to the Conservancy.

The GLC thanks the following individuals whose donations made this purchase possible:

The Bromley Family  
Greg and Amy Brown  
Kevin and Nancy Brunner  
Doug and Lenore Cameron  
The Chuck & Barbara Taylor Charitable Fund  
Sarah and John Cobb  
Charles and Dianna Colman  
Elizabeth Cox  
Roger and Wendy Fisher  
Jordan and Tiera Gray  
Al and Dorothy Hermansen  
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Scott and Christie Lyons  
Knowles-Nelson Stewardship Program  
Elissa and Frederick Morgante  
Tom and Janet Nickols  
Don and Kim Parker  
Pheasants Forever Walworth County Chapter #53  
Pheasants Forever, Inc. S.E. Wisconsin Chapter #190  
Rob and Suzette Rowe  
Jennie Bishop of Studio Gild Bishop  
Susan and John Major Donor Advised Fund   
Dean Taylor  
Chris and Cindy Todd  
Boyd and Beth Whiting  
George and Carol Zimmermann



Hikers enjoy a fall day on the two miles of trails in Bromley Woods.

## CONSERVANCY TO OFFER CONSERVATION@HOME

To improve the ecological health of our lakes and land, the Conservancy is introducing Conservation@Home. Under the program, property owners can have their land certified as an ecologically healthy landscape and learn how to implement environmentally friendly practices.

Beginning next spring, a team of two trained volunteers will visit a property for 1-2 hours and evaluate it and make suggestions for native plants and trees, removing invasive species, improving wildlife habitat and managing storm water runoff.

“With more than 90 percent of the land in Walworth County privately owned, these property owners can make a major difference in the ecological health of our lakes and land,” said Janet Happ, GLC Director of Development.

In addition, the team will encourage property owners to become phosphorus free by eliminating phosphorus fertilizers and/or sending a letter to their lawn care company asking them not to use phosphorus and other chemicals on lawns. Homeowners will also be asked to set their water softeners to appropriate settings and use road salt sparingly.

Property owners who meet the program requirements will receive a Conservation@Home sign to place on their mailbox post or in their yards. Those that don't meet the requirements may ask for second visit to demonstrate that they have implemented better ecological practices.

The Conservation@Home program was started by The Conservation Foundation in Naperville, Illinois, and is now used by land trusts in Illinois, Michigan and Indiana. The Conservancy is the first land trust in Wisconsin to offer the program.

The program is free to GLC members and \$50 for non-members. Property owners may sign up on the GLC Website and a volunteer will contact them in early 2020 to set up an appointment. The Conservancy would like to thank Dr. Gerri Green, Kathleen Renowden, Rebecca Ellis and Joan Rost for providing their expertise to this program.



Homeowners who meet most of the criteria for an ecologically healthy landscape will be given a special sign, like the one above, for posting on their mailbox or in their yard.

## GLC Annual Meeting

**Saturday, December 14, 2018**

**10 a.m. to 11:30 a.m.**

**Horticultural Hall**

**330 Broad St, Lake Geneva**

**Coffee and holiday treats.**

**Come learn more about our new public preserves, our Advocacy efforts, phosphorus reduction program, Conservation@Home and more!**

**RSVP: 262-275-5700 or [glc@genevalakeconservancy.org](mailto:glc@genevalakeconservancy.org)**

## HERITAGE OAK CONTEST WINNERS

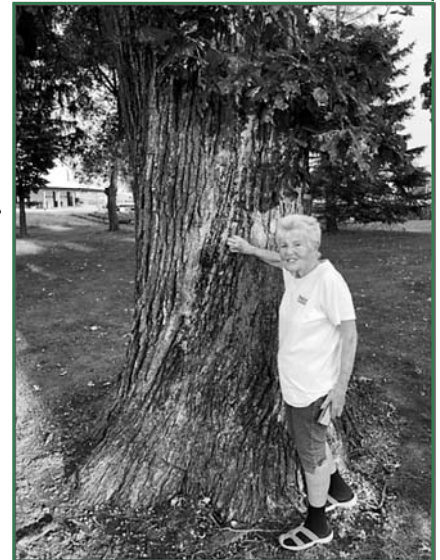
Thank you to all of the contest participants! The enthusiasm and love of our members for their oak trees is inspiring. There are three contest categories: Oldest Oak Tree, Most Beautiful Oak Tree, and Oak Tree Associated with the Best Story. Winners will receive a plaque at the Conservancy's Annual Meeting on December 14, at Horticultural Hall and a certificate for one-hour free consultation from a tree expert on their oak tree. Enjoy the following pictures and stories! Honorable Mentions will also be recognized at the meeting.

### OLDEST OAK TREE

Entrants provided the age and circumference of their oak tree, 3 feet from the ground.

#### FIRST PLACE Mary Ann and Robert Pearce

The circumference of the Pearce's oak, three feet from the ground, is 166.5" - 13.9 feet!! Located in the Pearce's back yard, the tree is documented in Pearce family historical photos of the home, which was built in 1863. Conservatively, the Pearce oak is over 150 years old!



Mary Ann Pearce, with the winning oldest oak tree.

**HONORABLE MENTION: Chris Brownstein** for submission of oak measuring 147".



Mark Bromley, with the tree that won Most Beautiful.

### MOST BEAUTIFUL OAK TREE

#### FIRST PLACE: Mark Bromley

Mark is standing next to his oak tree in the picture to the right. This unusual tree has a double trunk. The Bromley family has owned Bromley Woods since 1844 and treasures the oaks in the woods. By transferring of ownership of their 40 acre parcel to the Conservancy, the family has ensured that the oaks will be cared for and preserved forever.

**HONORABLE MENTION: Michelle and Robert Pearce**

Visit the Conservancy's website to see more entries and to read the stories that received Honorable Mentions.

## WINTER SOLSTICE CELEBRATION at WHITE RIVER COUNTY PARK—SATURDAY, DECEMBER 21

In 2018, 300 people enjoyed this unique celebration at the White River County Park. Hosted by the Friends of the White River County Park and the Conservancy, there will be candlelight hikes and a magnificent bonfire. Hot dogs and hot chocolate will be available. The \$10 suggested donation per family will be used to purchase native oak trees for the oak savanna.



## TREE ASSOCIATED WITH THE BEST STORY

### FIRST PLACE: *An Awesome Tree* by Burly Brellenthin

My wife Donna and I bought this property and built our home in 1956. In the backyard is what is believed to be an Indian Marker tree. I have included pictures for you to see.

The base of the Oak tree measures 8'6" three feet up from the ground. The bent arm measures 5'6" and the second arm is 6'9". The arms are 26' long. They used to be longer, but over the years we cut them off to take some load off the tree.

We have an awesome tree and feel it is also part of history to be saved.



Wondering what an Indian marker tree is? According to [www.wideopenspaces.com](http://www.wideopenspaces.com), "Indian marker trees were young trees that were made to mark trails and landmarks in their home areas. ... Native Americans were known to bend and reshape young trees so their odd growth would mark certain trails and landmarks... historians are identifying and preserving these native works of art in an effort to provide a history and chronicle the "living archeology."

## TREE ASSOCIATED WITH A STORY HONORABLE MENTIONS

*Our Grandpa Tree* by Cindy Milojevic

*A Tale of Two Oaks* Julie Maher

*Under the Limbs of the Mighty Oak in the Summertime* by Victoria Gillio

The Conservancy would like to thank the Griffith Family and an anonymous donor for sponsoring the Heritage Oak Program.

## 'KEEPING IT BLUE' REQUIRES YOUR HELP

As extreme storms with record amounts of rain battered Walworth County this summer, several lakes and ponds are experiencing blue green algae blooms this fall due to excess phosphorus runoff from these storms.

To address the increasing amounts of phosphorus in Walworth County lakes, the Conservancy is partnering with Geneva Lake Environmental Agency and the Walworth County Conservation Office. A seminar for stakeholders was held in May 2019 to provide information needed to begin reducing this pollution.

This fall you can help reduce phosphorus runoff to our lakes by:

- Requesting information from the Conservancy and talking with a lawn care company about installing a rain garden of native plants to catch rain water and filter it before it runs into lakes and streams.
- Calling the DNR Hotline at 1-800-TIP-WDNR (1-800-847-9367) when you see people blowing or raking leaves or lawn waste, which contains large amount of phosphorus, into a lake or stream. This winter, the Conservancy will be asking municipalities to adopt fines for dumping leaves and lawn waste into waterways.
- Stopping erosion on steep slopes by planting native plants and trees to slow runoff and adding buffer strips of native plants along the lakefront of your property or your homeowner association's property. Call the GLC office for lists of native plants and trees and grant opportunities.
- Testing your septic systems to be sure that it is working properly. Water testing in the Lake Geneva area shows evidence of human waste entering streams that flow into the lake.
- Urging your local golf course manager or owner to attend the GLC's seminar in February 2020 on becoming an Audubon-certified golf course. The seminar will provide information on how to improve the environmental health of a golf course.
- Writing your state representative to ask them to enforce regulations regarding manure spreading on farm fields. Water tests throughout the state show that manure spreading is a contributor to phosphorus pollution.

Finally, if you do see an algae bloom in a lake, report it to the DNR or the Conservancy and don't allow people or pets to swim in the lake. There have been reports of dogs dying after swallowing blue-green algae.

## Conservancy welcomes back Kiera Theys

Kiera is a 2019 Graduate of the University of Wisconsin-Whitewater, majoring in Environmental Science. She has joined the GLC as our new Land Protection Specialist, originally serving as the summer intern for the Conservancy in 2018. She is originally from Des Plaines IL, but has now moved to the Lake Geneva area as a full-time resident. Kiera is familiar with the Lake Geneva area. Her family has had a summer cottage here since 1923 that her great-grandparents built. She will be assisting the Conservancy with monitoring of easement properties, community outreach, special events, managing the Helen Rohner Children's Fishing Park, and helping out with land protection projects. She enjoys being outside hiking, fishing, and hanging down by the lake on her pier.





## Special moments with GLC supporters



Ken Jacobsen shares his thoughts during the dedication on June 1 of the 4-acre Delevan Lake lakefront property that was donated to the Conservancy by his family through the Stevens Family Land Trust. They will receive the Conservation Stewardship award at Holly Ball on December 7 for their generous donation, love of nature and community-minded spirit.



In support of the Hackmatack Wildlife Refuge, the Conservancy partnered with Kettle Moraine Land Trust and hosted a seed gathering at the Turner Tract on September 14. Pictured above, left to right, are Adrian Czajka, Jim Michels, Sue Heffron, Program Manager for Kettle Moraine Land Trust, Kiera Theys, GLC Land Protection Specialist, and Joe Theys. Mark your calendar for seed gathering next year on Saturday, September 26.



The Conservancy planted a native serviceberry tree and placed a plaque at Hermansen Woods this summer to honor the recent marriage of Al Hermansen and Dorothy Sullivan. Hermansen Woods on South Como Road is one of the Conservancy's nature preserves with a beautifully restored mixed hardwood forest and more than a half mile of hiking trails.

### Foxconn Update



Kevin Muhs, Executive Director Southeastern Wisconsin Regional Plan Commission, spoke on the environmental and economic effects of Foxconn. The September 12 event was co-sponsored by the Seno Racine/Kenosha Conservancy and the GLC.

### Crazy About Cranes event



Buddy Huffaker, Aldo Leopold Foundation Executive Director, shared the amazing increase in the Wisconsin sandhill crane population from the time Aldo Leopold documented 50 breeding pairs in the 1930's to a population of 90,000, today. Land trusts like GLC, have contributed to this increase through preservation of open space.

Left, speaker Buddy Huffaker. Right, Conservancy Board members, Dennis Jordan, past Chair, Chris Danou, Kevin Brunner, Chair and Tom Nickols, Vice-Chair.

## Thank you to our supporters who have made provisions for the Conservancy in their estate plans.



Mark and Karen Braden  
Charles and Dianna Colman  
Chris Danou and Kate Meredith  
Al and Dorothy Hermansen  
Susan Kiner and Jack Modzelewski  
Dennis and Diane Jordan  
Lisa Luedtke  
John and Karen Yancey

CONNECTIONS fall photo by Jim Frost. Special thanks to Jim for his assistance with photographs.



# Geneva Lake Conservancy

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Our mission is to preserve and advocate for Walworth County waterways, natural areas and working lands.



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COCKTAILS, DINNER  
AND DANCING TO THE SOUNDS OF

***One Night Band***

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