

The **Spring Lake Walk** will take place on **May 17, starting at 8:00 AM.** The Lake Walk will bring awareness to the Conservancy's work in preserving the natural benefits and cultural quality of the lake. The Lake Walk also aims to promote local, mid-week patronage of the lake and its surrounding businesses. Please see the flyer included in this newsletter for additional information.

Congressman Paul Ryan visits the Geneva Lake Conservancy

By James V. Celano III

Congressman Paul Ryan visited the Conservancy on March 24th at our invitation. In attendance were several GLC board members, its executive director, a representative from Gathering Waters, the Congressman and one of his staff members.

The purpose of the visit was to introduce Mr. Ryan to our organization and our mission and to discuss a very real threat to both. The Joint Committee on Taxation (JCT) of the Congress has released a report containing recommendations that would severely reduce or eliminate existing tax deductions available to those who voluntarily choose to help conserve our land and water resources. As a result of a few easement valuation abuses in the East, this committee has recommended punishing all those in the future who might want to help in conservation efforts nationwide.

Mr. Ryan was informed of our local efforts to conserve the land and water as well as efforts on a regional and nationwide basis. One of the principal tools land conservation organizations often use is the Conservation Easement. For many, this decision is carefully considered and studied at length, just as we do here at the Conservancy. To subtract from those efforts by eliminating fair and reasonable provisions in the tax code is wrong headed and counterproductive. We explained this to the Congressman and his associate and asked for their assistance with preventing this misdirected effort from going forward.

Mr. Ryan was impressed by our discussion and offered some helpful suggestions. Further, given his role as a member on the House Ways and Means Committee, where this issue will have to pass in order to become law, Mr. Ryan explained the process this will likely face and he also offered to monitor this issue and keep us informed about where it may be headed and what we can do to change or prevent it. A large part of that effort will come from you our supporters.

Please, feel free to call us about this very important matter or visit the Land Trust Alliance web page to learn more about this issue and what simple things you can do to help at www.lta.org/publicpolicy/ppc.htm

Did You Know:

National Public Trails Day is June 4, 2005. For more information please visit:

<http://www.americanhiking.org/events/ntd/index.html> *American Hiking Society*

Governor James Doyle has declared June 2005 Wisconsin's first annual Invasive Species Awareness Month.

For more information, please visit: <http://www.ipaw.org/events/ISAM.htm> *Invasive Plants Association of Wisconsin*



Conservancy Corps

The GLC Wish List:

1. Volunteers – To help with the spring clean up and the Garage Sale, date to be announced.

Donations are always greatly appreciated.

Geneva Lake Conservancy
P.O. Box 555, Fontana, WI 53125
Phone: (262) 275-5700
Fax: (262) 275-0579
E-Mail: GLC@genevaonline.com
Web: www.genevalakeconservancy.org

Board of Directors:
Chuck Ebeling - President
Charles Colman - Vice President
Thomas Ramsey - Treasurer

Grace Eckland	Sharon O'Brien
Michael Ferro	Steven Pope
William Gage Jr.	Rudy Rasin
Grace Hanny	Thomas Santefort
Denis Jordan	Glenn Solheim
Thomas Kabler	Edward Weed
Robert Klockars	David Weinberg

Staff:
 James V. Celano III – Executive Director
 Lynn Ketterhagen – Land Protection Specialist
 Katie Sullivan - Administrative Assistant

Updates from the Mill House

By James V. Celano III

Yerkes Observatory has become a matter requiring attention for many. The Conservancy has received calls from across the country asking what we have heard about the possible sale of this truly historic site to a developer from the east coast. While we have not been privileged to any of the specifics, we do know that the University is considering an offer.


With this in mind, the Conservancy is interested in hosting open and far-reaching discussions among the many civic and charitable organizations interested in the observatory. We believe this approach presents the best opportunity to arrive at a thoughtful and well-reasoned course of action for the future of this fine institution and the preservation of its historic setting. Keep in touch with the Conservancy for further updates on this very important issue.

In other minor matters...

We are thrilled to report that we were successful in our search for a new Administrative Assistant here at the Conservancy. Katie Sullivan joined us on March 1st and dug right in to her new job. Lynn Ketterhagen has been promoted upstairs, literally. Lynn is our new Land Protection Specialist working out of our second floor office. See our web site to learn more about Katie and Lynn and their new jobs.

Finally, when you call the Conservancy, you will be using our new phone system. No longer will we have to guess who is on what line or if anyone is on the phone at all. With this system, we now have the technology to conference calls, access voice mail and even someday soon utilize Voice Over Internet Protocol (VOIP). A special thanks to Vigansky TelCom Inc. for donating a significant portion of the voice mail expense to the Conservancy.

Donate and Become a GLC Member for 2005!

 Geneva Lake Conservancy		<h3>Membership Application</h3>	
<h3>Share the Vision</h3>		<p>Donor(s) _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>City _____ State _____ ZIP _____</p> <p>Phone(s) _____</p> <p>E Mail _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I give permission to send occasional emails regarding land use issues.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> I would prefer to receive my newsletter via email when it becomes available.</p> <p>www.genevalakeconservancy.org</p> <p>Please mail to: Geneva Lake Conservancy P.O. Box 588, Fontana, WI 53125 Phone: (262) 275-5700 Fax (262) 275-0579 E Mail: GLC@genevaonline.com</p>	
<p>Enclosed is my tax-deductible membership check.</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$25 Naturalist</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$50 Steward</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$100 Sponsor</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$250 Guardian</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$500 Benefactor</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000 Friend of the Conservancy</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$5,000 Conservancy Founders Society</p>		<p><input type="checkbox"/> Yes I would like to be a volunteer:</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Outdoors <input type="checkbox"/> Indoors</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Technical Support</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Please send more info on _____</p> <p>Credit Card Payment - # _____</p> <p>Expiration date _____ Billing address if different from above _____</p>	



“Common Ground. Community Character. Natural Resources.”

VOLUME 42 ISSUE 1

WINTER/SPRING 2005 NEWSLETTER

President's Letter

By Chuck Ebeling

“FIRST, DO NO HARM TO THE LAND OR THE LAKE.”

That was the headline of a full-page ad the Conservancy ran in a local newspaper in this year's opening days, reflecting its concerns that conserving the natural resources of the 718-acre Geneva Ridge annexation by the City of Lake Geneva be a first priority when plans for residential development of that land begin to take shape.

The Conservancy has been assured by the developers, in their own advertisement and in direct discussion that they will work with the Conservancy, as well as the City, to do so. We are following this closely, and want to work with the City and the developers to assure that this large project becomes a model of good land conservation practices.

As residential development pressures increase in southeastern Wisconsin, some have asked us, what is the Conservancy's policy on development issues and what is your geographic area of service?

The Conservancy's Board and staff deliberated carefully to bring clarity to these matters in recent months, and here are the resulting policies the Board adopted in March:

Policy on Development

As a fundamental principle implied by its mission statement, the Geneva Lake Conservancy supports environmentally appropriate development and development that is in keeping with the character of Walworth County communities. “Environmentally appropriate” is defined as development that is farsighted, good for the area, environmentally responsible, and economically beneficial to the community as a whole.

Service Area

The Geneva Lake Conservancy will address any issue in southern Walworth County that it seems to be consistent with its mission and not in conflict with the efforts of another conservancy organization.

These policies relating to development provide the context in which the Conservancy will view specific questions and issues about development

“Promoting responsible stewardship of the region's land and water resources.”

SAVE THE DATE: THE SECOND ANNUAL MAI-TAI NO-TAI PARTY IS JULY 23, 2005

Last year we introduced you to the Mai-Tai No-Tai Lake Luau. The evening was held along the water front at the Lake Geneva Yacht Club and featured great music and a wonderful Caribbean-inspired dinner. Guests raved about the evening and expressed the hope that we would carry on the tradition. So this year, we are turning it up a notch. Board Members and Event Organizers, Steve Pope and Sharon O'Brien are carrying the 'torch' for another year. "It is actually not a torch, but more of a tiki lamp," states Pope. Sharon and Steve add, "We are trying to create one of the more unique events on the lake. Everyone's social calendar fills up quickly, so we want you to know that this is a night you don't want to miss. Name another Lake Luau you can drive or boat to, enjoy such a unique meal and dance under the stars to a great band?" They conclude by adding, "and while you may wake up the following day wondering why you are wearing a grass skirt, you will feel immediately better with the knowledge that you helped a great local charity!" Invitations to be sent in June. See you on July 23rd.

Annual Monitoring of Protected Lands

By Lynn Ketterhagen

Land Protection Specialist

With spring weather here, the time has come for the annual monitoring of Geneva Lake Conservancy's protected lands. Every year the Conservancy walks the properties on which we have voluntary land protection agreements. This is done to insure that the land is being protected properly and that there have been no violations from the original agreement when the easement was granted to the Conservancy.

In conjunction with the annual monitoring, the Conservancy is going to take this opportunity to update the baseline documentation report on each property. This will include updating maps and photos. The updated baseline documentation will help future monitoring of the properties by having more thorough, up to date information on each property. The Geneva Lake Conservancy remains committed to utilizing the latest land protection standards and practices in the field of conservation.

President's Letter (con't.)

going forward. Our goal is to address development in terms of its potential regional impacts in our defined service area, as well as within individual communities and districts.

We are in the process of reaching out to developers and builders to share ideas and expertise for conserving natural resources. We are reaching out to city councils and planning commissions to encourage strong, state-of-the-art conservation practices. We are reaching out to educate and communicate with concerned citizens on how to strive for and achieve responsible protection of the lands that our children and grandchildren will inherit.

When we ask for support from the community, in the form of financial contributions or volunteer support to advance these objectives, we are asking YOU to stand tall for conservation in Walworth County and the lakes area. We are solely supported by private contributions, and receive no government funding. We are a lean, focused local land protection organization that can help you project a big, persuasive voice on conservation matters. We will work to give power to your conservation concerns and creative ideas in our local communities, and even at the state and national levels where decisions effecting us our made.

The increasingly familiar bywords of the Conservancy – Common Ground, Community Character, Natural Resources – are not about some neat theory of conservation, but are about engaging real local conservation issues in our lake-land community, now, when it matters most.

Why Should You Give to the Geneva Lake Conservancy?

• Because you care about the lakes area

The Geneva Lake Conservancy is one of the very few organizations in the lake area committed to helping retain the community character of southern Walworth County and specifically the Geneva, Delevan and Como lakes area.

• Leading the fight against unplanned and unbridled development

Uncontrolled development can significantly hurt our lake area. It can cause overcrowding, overburden the tax base, cause excessive runoff into the lakes and at the very least, spoil the green spaces that give our area its unique character. We want to encourage development that is well planned economically, uses good land use practices to conserve green spaces and watershed areas and maintains the character of the communities in which we live.

• Creating Political Awareness

The GLC is in the business of creating awareness for options that improve the area without giving up the natural beauty of the land, the watershed and the water itself. We promote land protection and development concepts that preserve what is best about a piece of property for the long term whether it is shoreline, watershed, wooded acreage or farmland.

• Professionalism

Jin Celano, Our new Executive Director, along with our Board, is promoting improved professionalism in the organization. He is making sure our land protection efforts are up to the very best standards of the land protection community. He also intends to be responsive to our constituents. Call us and you will get a quick, professional response.

• Enhanced Organization

We have hired two new people in the office supporting Jim. Lynn Ketterhagen will be our Land Protection Specialist and Katie Sullivan will focus on administrative assistance supporting Jim. They will handle everything from writing easement baseline documents to handling your enquiries to helping bring the communities together to understand what is affecting the lake area. They will support you. If you want to make a donation or develop an easement, they will respond to all your special requests or needs.

• Because your dollars will be put to work

Every dollar invested in the Conservancy goes directly toward activities that support the local area. While our annual budget is about \$250k, the vast majority of it is related to direct services to the community. We are building momentum and every dollar helps continue that momentum.

• Because you care about your family's investments in the lake area

You have invested a lot in the area by way of your home, your business as well as your fun time. An investment in the GLC is the best investment you can make to protect your future. We are watching out for you.

Charles L. Colman

Vice President

Chair – Fundraising Committee

Fill out the box at the end of this newsletter to see how you can help!

The Conservancy Honors Melita Grunow

By Grace Hanny



On December 4, 2004, several hundred people gathered at Big Foot Country Club for the Holly Ball, the Conservancy's annual holiday party. The festive evening included an open bar, elegant dinner, live and silent auctions, dancing to the sounds of the Park Avenue Band and the presentation of the Conservation Stewardship Award to Melita Grunow. The Conservancy presents this award to an individual who has shown a commitment to protecting the natural resources of the Geneva Lake area through personal action.

Melita has lived in the Geneva Lake area for almost 50 years. She and her husband Bill have raised three sons, two of whom still live nearby. The family has grown to include seven grandchildren. For 35 years, Melita helped Bill in his business, the Majestic Ski Area. When she retired, she returned to her childhood love of horses and trail riding, becoming acquainted with the property that would become the Town of Linn Community Nature Park. She recognized its natural features, rolling hills and unspoiled beauty as a habitat for deer, fox, turkeys and a wide variety of birds.

In 1999 the Geneva Lake Conservancy bought this property, which had been, at one time, slated for a golf course and subdivision development, and held it long enough to put a conservation easement on the land. Through a gracious donation by Melita Grunow, the Town of Linn bought the property from the Conservancy. Through the cooperation and partnership between the Conservancy, Linn Township and a private individual, Melita Grunow, Linn's nature park exists for generations to enjoy. Because of Melita's love of nature, this property, instead of being developed, is permanently protected open space.

Upon accepting this award, Melita urged everyone to visit the park and walk through its nature trails. The Town of Linn Community Nature Park is located at the corner of South Lake Shore Drive and Maple Ridge Road, south of the Reek School.

At past events, the Conservancy has honored William Turner, Ernest and Bernice Styberg, William Gage, Marie Kropp, Philip Harvey, and John Anderson, the first recipient of the Conservation Stewardship Award. We are very grateful for Melita's generous contribution to this special place we call "Geneva Lake."

“Blossom by Blossom spring will come”

By Sharon O'Brien

After this long winter, Poet A.J. Swinburne's reassurance of spring's appearance is welcome news. To observe of this "Rite of Spring" the Geneva Lake Conservancy invites you to join us Friday, May 13 for our annual spring clean-up and garden party at the Conservancy Headquarters, on 398 Mill Street in Fontana. Bring gloves and a rake. Work time is 9:30 until noon and we'll offer energizing refreshments to all participants.

In addition to our garden renovation, we are organizing programs about conservation to present to local schools and organizations. We are establishing a docent-training program for guided lake tours and tours of some the natural areas within our Conservancy.

Our volunteers are the life's blood of this organization and your donation of time and energy make it possible for us to continue to implement our mission to protect and preserve our open space, ecology and history. Give us a call at 262-275-5700. You really can make a difference and influence the future of this beautiful lake and the surrounding land that we all cherish.

See you May 13th. Rain date May20th.