



CFC NEWS

Saving Living Space for Living Things

Vol. 25, No. 2, Spring 2006

CFC members and friends celebrate “35 years in 35 minutes” at annual meeting

by Sharon Pasch

Over 100 people celebrated CFC’s 35th year at the 2006 Annual Meeting in February at the Barrington Area Library. Members and guests browsed through photos, displays, and old newsletters as they listened to the music of a string trio and enjoyed refreshments.

The program included twelve speakers who recalled their CFC experiences, covering “35 Years in 35 Minutes.” Tom Vanderpoel presented slides showing “20 Years of Restoration,” which included early pictures of Grigsby Prairie and Flint Creek Savanna displaying the remarkable restoration progress at both preserves.

The Lake Barrington Shores Conservators received the William H. Miller Award for their conservation work since 1993 at Lake Barrington Shores. The Great Blue Heron Award was presented to Lloyd and Mary McCarthy for their inspiring nature photographs taken in the Barrington area, many of which they have donated to the CFC slide collection.

The Waid Vanderpoel Twenty Years of Service Awards were given to Joyce Allen, Wendy Paulson, Ruth Vanderpoel, and Tom Vanderpoel. For ten years of CFC volunteering, Cathy LeFevre, Wes Wolf, John Wagner, and Linda Mrowicki were honored with Shooting Star Awards. Mighty Oaks Awards were given to volunteers who worked 50 hours or more during the past year: Joyce Allen, Donna Ducay, Demmy



Sam Oliver congratulates Mary and Lloyd McCarthy, this year’s recipients of CFC’s Great Blue Heron award.

Giannis, Katherine Grover, Helen Hawthorne, Carol Hogan, Trevor Kevorkian, Cathy LeFevre, Jerry Masino, Gail Vanderpoel, Jim Vanderpoel, and Ruth Vanderpoel.

Eagle Scouts Brendon Dempsey, Eric Hall, Ryan Julian, Matthew Kerchberger, and Austin Reynolds received special Thank You Awards, as did David Johnson of the Wild Bird Center.

Karen Darch, Barrington Village President, presented CFC with the first Key to the Village she has bestowed since her election. She read a village proclamation congratulating CFC on its anniversary.

Inside this issue ...

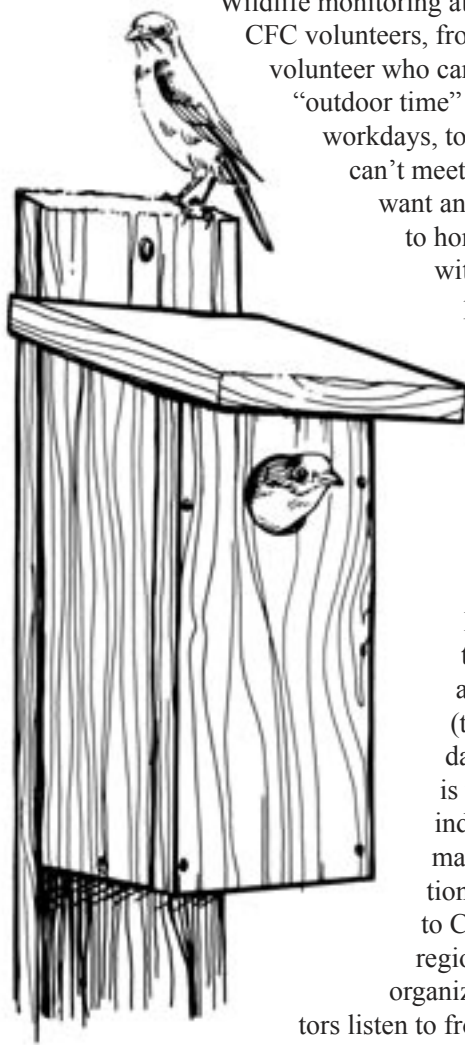
Wildlife Monitoring	2
Flint Creek Watershed Partnership	3
A Good Read.....	3
CFC Neighbor.....	4
Restoration Report	6
From the Staff Director	7
Conservation at Home.....	8

Wildlife monitoring

by Rob Neff

Illustration by Margaret Hudson

The time of year is approaching for wildlife monitoring to kick into high gear. Already CFC volunteers are venturing out to repair and clean out bluebird nest boxes. The first round of frog monitoring and training classes for butterfly monitoring are scheduled for April and May.



Wildlife monitoring attracts a mix of CFC volunteers, from the dedicated volunteer who can't get enough "outdoor time" during regular workdays, to people who can't meet at those times or want an activity closer to home, to those with a passion for a particular activity. Training is available at annual seminars held at a local forest preserve or from another CFC volunteer.

Monitors go into the field at the appropriate times (the exact time or day, within limits, is usually left to the individual). They make their observations and report them to CFC or to another regional/national organization. Frog moni-

tors listen to frog calls at three times from early to late spring. Breeding bird counts take place at least twice during prime nesting season in June, and the volunteer takes a prescribed path (preferably right after dawn) and marks all the bird species he encounters. Bluebird monitors make weekly treks to bluebird nest boxes along their "route" and peek into the boxes to see what species is occupying the nest and what the current activity is (nest building, eggs, fledglings). With our ten properties and several nearby forest preserves, CFC can usually assign a convenient monitoring location for the volunteer.

Once collected, the data is used by larger regional or national organizations, such as the Audubon Society or Bird Conservation Network. For example, last fall the 15th annual Prairie Invertebrate Conference was held in Chicago at the Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum, and one of the presentations described winter kill mortality of monarch butterflies and the effect on their population. This talk referenced data from the Illinois Butterfly Monitoring Network from over a dozen years, matching it with more recent data from Ohio, and comparing it to Mexican wintering numbers. The conclusion, after thorough statistical analysis, was that the summer monarch breeding season in the Midwest is more important to overall monarch numbers than are the occasionally well-publicized winter kills in Mexico.

We have need for volunteers in almost any monitoring area. Butterfly monitoring would be a good program to start locally. Last year a Boy Scout Eagle project added new bluebird houses to Cuba Marsh while wood-duck houses have been neglected recently. There is also the breeding birds census, frog monitoring, Plants of Concern, and other monitoring projects. These are often family-friendly activities that you can schedule for your own convenience. If you have any questions, visit our website (<http://www.CitizensforConservation.org>) and click on the "monitoring" link, or call the CFC office and leave a message for Rob Neff.

Thank you to...

...the **Oberweiler Foundation**, major funder of our intern program, for a generous contribution to CFC's annual appeal for the land acquisition fund.

...to **Lloyd and Mary McCarthy**, recipients of the 2006 Great Blue Heron Award, for 20 transparencies of birds, all of which can be seen locally except for the Greater Prairie Chicken, which was once a local resident, and the related Sharp-tailed Grouse. A Great Blue Heron is included in the collection.

...to the **Garden Club of Barrington** for their generous contribution for the sedge plugs in our new detention area.

...to **Thomas Contracting** for their generous in-kind donations in helping CFC try to solve its beaver situation.

...to the **Barrington High School Chess Club** and the **Yury Shulman International Chess School** for their donation in honor of CFC's Earth Day activities.

First project for Flint Creek Watershed Partnership is underway

by Patsy Mortimer, Coordinator

Flint Creek Watershed Partnership

Flint Creek Watershed Partnership is comprised of watershed stakeholders dedicated to the preservation, protection and improvement of the Flint Creek sub-watershed of the Fox River. Our mission is to realize a long-term vision for a healthy watershed and educated citizens. Our goal is to educate while building partnerships for projects to improve water quality, reduce flooding, and preserve and restore wetlands, prairies, and other natural features for future generations.

The partnership received start up funding for 2005-06 from Barrington Area Development Council and Citizens for Conservation; Lake County Stormwater Management Commission (SMC) recently awarded it a Management Assistance grant for 2006-07. Our first project is to update the 1994 Watershed Management Plan to current standards for federal grant eligibility. Grants help defray the cost of projects as diverse as stream bank restoration along the creek as well as detention and wetland upgrades throughout the watershed. The first step of the project will be a stream inventory this summer by SMC interns. They will survey both Cook and Lake County portions of the creek starting at the mouth in Lake Barrington where Flint Creek enters the Fox River and working upstream toward the source of the north branch of the creek in Lake Zurich and the main stem sources in Barrington and Inverness. The inventory will take about five weeks during the summer. We will notify homeowners when we have definite dates.

Current partners include BADC, CFC, Barrington Area Council of Governments, Barrington Hills Conservation Trust and village and township governments. The partnership meets at 10 a.m. the 4th Monday of each month at different locations in the watershed. Any landowner on the creek or in the watershed is welcome to attend. Please contact the watershed coordinator, Patsy Mortimer, at 847-381-8663, pmortimer@earthlink.net if you have any questions.



Don't miss CFC's
Annual Native
Plant & Shrub Sale!

Saturday, May 6
9a.m. - 12p.m.
at the farmhouse

Preorders available for pick up
Friday, May 5 from 1-3 p.m.
(Order by April 17)

Volunteers welcome!

Native landscaping resources are available
at CFC for those interested

A good read

Water, A Natural History

by Alice Outwater, 1996

Water is the unforgettable story of the symbiosis that once existed between our country's water, land and two particular animals – prairie dogs and beavers, both shapers of the land and contributors to its health. Because it is a real pleasure to read, my elementary school aged children enjoyed this book as much as I did!

Water is divided into two parts: Dismantling the natural system and Engineering the waterways. We're taken back 500 years to the fur trade as *Water* presents fascinating facts and traces the direct impact of people on our nascent country. The disappearance of the beaver sets into motion a sad series of environmental events, the effects of which we see today. Next, the assault on the woods and plains also dramatically affected the land and water.

In 186 pages which read more like a novel than a scientific discourse, Outwater makes a case for restoring our water ecosystems to the way nature originally intended, recreating a land with living streams with defined edges, public lands with millions of beaver-built wetlands, and prairie dog towns that increase the amount of rainfall percolating to the groundwater.

As CFC deals with current beaver issues at Flint Creek Savanna and other properties, *Water* is especially timely and insightful and a MUST-READ for all CFC members.

— Jo Seagren

CFC neighbor fully committed to caring for critters in need

by Meredith Tucker

There's nothing like passion to fuel one's capacity to work for a cause with energy and resolve. CFC's volunteers regularly demonstrate the power of passion as they strive to maintain healthy native ecosystems and so does our neighbor Dawn Keller who devotes her time, resources, and enthusiasm to healing injured wildlife.

The founder of Flint Creek Wildlife Rehabilitation, a not-for-profit organization, Dawn followed a circuitous path to her destination of helping sick and injured wild creatures. She earned a B.S. in chemical engineering from the University of Illinois, followed by a masters in finance. For seventeen years she was also volunteering with domestic animal rescue organizations. Her persistent desire to help animals eventually influenced Dawn to turn her attention to helping wildlife. The defining moment came when she spent many hours on the phone trying to locate help for an injured opossum and discovered an urgent need for rehabilitators who would help more than just one particular species and who would take animals from any geographic area. Dawn has completed an internship program at a wildlife rehab center, volunteered 900 hours at two other centers, and completed rehabilitation courses offered by the International Wildlife Rehabilitation Council. She also received training about toxicology in wildlife through Brookfield Zoo. Thus prepared, she opened her facility to serve creatures in need regardless of their species or location (with the exception of rabies-prone species which are regulated by law).

One of Dawn's most important projects helps songbirds that hit Chicago skyscrapers during spring and fall migration. While working in downtown Chicago for many years, she drove her car into the city very early each day so that she could accept injured songbirds picked up from the sidewalk. Volunteers with Chicago Bird Collision Monitors picked up most of the birds and delivered them in paper bags and boxes to Dawn who received birds at her office in the morning and throughout the day.

After work she packed them into her car and took them to her Barrington facility for continued care and life support. She received and treated about 600 birds a year suffering from these collisions. One spring weekend last year, Dawn received 100 birds on Friday and 127 on Sunday. She accepted the 127 songbirds in twenty minutes, incredibly experience diagnosing and providing care for so many fragile, injured individuals at once.

Beginning this year, Dawn has an agreement with the Chicago Park District to use part of a building at the former Meigs Field as a rehab facility for victims of building collisions. It will be staffed by volunteers trained in rehabilitating injured birds; during migrations Dawn will be there almost every day to help. She hopes eventually to have a full-time staff rehabilitator and educator.



This Northern Goshawk was recently released from Flint Creek Wildlife.

— Photo courtesy of Phil Hampel

As terrible as the present statistics are, the "lights out" program in Chicago has helped to reduce the number of bird/building collisions as well as the number of fatalities. Volunteers find that there is a higher than average number of window strikes when a building fails to dim its lights. Everyone can help by urging building managers to practice "lights out," especially during spring and fall migrations.

The first priority for injured birds is to decrease their stress and to meet their dietary needs. Dawn tries to provide food that closely duplicates their natural diet. She and her volunteers feed meal worms, mosquito larvae, earthworms,

freeze-dried flies, and fruit. For birds in long-term rehab, she tries to provide native berries by hanging sprigs in the cages. Allowing the birds to pick at the fruits as they would in nature helps them recuperate. Dawn always appreciates friends' and neighbors' donating native berries.

Another of Dawn's rehabilitation services has her accepting calls and injured animals at home in the Barrington area. First, she tries to help callers on the phone, but if necessary, the injured creature is brought to her facility. She cares for squirrels, flying squirrels, rabbits (very difficult to save if babies' eyes are still closed), opossums, and the occasional white-tailed deer. Numerous patients are birds, often birds of prey. Dawn says that many of her hawks and owls have been hit by cars and have broken bones. Some are juveniles that are not hunting successfully. She has had excellent success rehabilitating these birds and releasing them, but she finds appropriate homes for those that can never be released. When she does liberate a mature bird or mammal, she always returns it close to the site where it was found. It has a greater chance of surviving if it is released in an area it recognizes and where it already has an established territory. She will relocate juveniles into any appropriate habitat since they have not yet established territories. One of her successes is a barred owl with a badly broken femur (wing). It fully recovered and was able to hunt in her flight cage. (All birds must survive in the flight cage and build up their strength before she releases them.) She drove 2 ½ hours to release the owl in his own territory, in the area where he had been found. Watching these formerly injured birds fly away, strong and healthy, is Dawn's greatest reward!

When she receives a call about wildlife in an attic or under a porch, Dawn gives the caller methods for convincing the animal to move out on its own. It is always best if the animal is "driven out" rather than trapped and removed; both the homeowner and the animal have better experiences in this case. In terms of baby animals, if possible, let mom raise them. If a storm brings down a nest and the babies are on the ground with the mother screaming nearby, one can buy a nest box and install it in a nearby tree with the young inside where mother can see and hear them; allow her to raise her babies as she's most fit for the job.

Dawn rehabbed over 1100 animals in 2005 making her one of the largest rehabbers in the Chicago area. Even so she feels that her facility limits her ability to grow. She needs more space to accommodate more creatures. She's open to almost any option including leasing or accepting a donated facility. She will consider even short-term opportunities.

Dawn has about ten regular volunteers helping her in shifts throughout the day and night. In the spring when babies abound, she brings in more people to help with feeding

schedules since most babies must be fed every two hours. Dawn handles most night feedings herself. She does have need for volunteers to help with construction and to donate fruits and vegetables from their gardens. She uses massive quantities of acorns, especially bur oak acorns, and hickory nuts. Some ladies sew for her, making quilted pads for the incubators as well as baby mammal "pockets." Dawn uses large quantities of organic dandelion plants in the spring and native seed heads, thistle heads, and sunflower heads in the fall. She prefers to feed seed heads rather than loose seed so that the birds can peck and feed naturally. (If you don't know what to do with those dandelions and thistle heads, here's someone who will appreciate receiving them.)

It is clear that Dawn's life is dominated by her passion to help injured wildlife; she is a true soul mate of those CFC members who contribute an all-consuming amount of time and effort to save living space for the critters Dawn rescues.

Note: You can reach Dawn Keller at (847) 602-0628.



Barred Owl

Henry Lane site readied for renewal next fall

by John Schweizer

Restoration work has begun at CFC's newly acquired parcel along Henry Lane in Lake Barrington. A ½-acre knoll was cleared of noxious buckthorn and black locusts in several hours, thanks to The Care of Trees arborists. Add two workdays that hardy volunteers spent hand-cutting, herbiciding, dragging and stacking the gnarly invasives in piles for burning and the progress is readily apparent.

Restoration director Tom Vanderpoel is eager to restore the degraded six-acre parcel into productive habitat. Expanding Flint Creek Savanna southward to Henry Lane, habitat will consist of dry prairie running down into moist sedge meadow and to the creek. There's also a small savanna.

"The idea is for the piece to be 'operative' for restoration work next fall," he says. "We'll have follow-up herbiciding by our interns and volunteers from May onward, right through fall in preparation for November seedings."

A detention pond is to be constructed by the developer of adjacent residential real estate after which it will be planted by CFC volunteers.

"We'll put in thousands of conservative sedge plantings," says Vanderpoel. "This'll expand the foraging ground of our resident sandhill cranes. We could see meadowlarks, savanna sparrows, and maybe a sora rail."

The Henry Lane parcel is particularly strategic for an unexpected reason: it provides us with access to the beaver dam on Flint Creek in our preserve. The amazingly well-engineered and strong structure has created an impoundment extending upstream and inundating the floodplain beyond the preserve. During the recent spring melt and heavy rain, the water approached neighboring homes.

To remedy the situation, CFC will lower the spring high water level by bringing in a contractor to put a notch in the dam. Then a conduit with a flow control valve will be installed through the dam to accommodate the full flow of the creek during normal (non-flood) conditions. The objective is to shrink the beaver pond without destroying the beaver's habitat.

Early spring is CFC's primary season for setting fires to acres of dead and dry vegetation. These controlled burns rejuvenate the soil and are just what our native prairie, meadow and wetlands plants need to prosper, and the fires knock back invasives. We burn on cool days early in the season so that amphibians and reptiles aren't impacted.

As of newsletter deadline, volunteers had registered successful burns at Baker's Lake Savanna in Barrington, Grigsby Prairie in Barrington Hills, and on land being burned for the first time, Flint Creek Savanna along Route 22.

CFC fundraising goal plus 18% for 2005

In December, 2005, Citizens for Conservation mailed a solicitation to members and friends to help pay for our newly purchased land adjacent to Flint Creek Savanna. We're pleased to report CFC surpassed its fundraising goal. As outlined in the appeal, we set goals of raising \$125,000 in both 2005 and 2006. Our year-end 2005 solicitation resulted in donations totaling \$148,000 including memorials that Ruth Vanderpoel's family designated for land acquisition.

"The purchase of the Henry Lane property underscores the need for our acquisition fund," commented John Wagner, chair of CFC's real estate committee. Indeed, if CFC had not raised money the previous three years for a land acquisition fund, we would not have had the cash to respond the moment the property became available.

While we're very pleased to have achieved our first year goal, we're also cognizant of the fact that we're only halfway there and need to repeat these results again this December. Our entire Board of Directors sends a heartfelt thank-you to everyone who generously contributed.

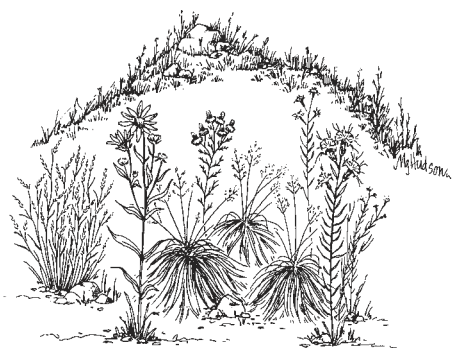
— Karen Hunter



CFC is looking for wildflower rescue sites

Citizens for Conservation is looking for locations having spring wildflowers that may be destroyed due to construction. Properties slated for construction that have stands of oaks and are relatively free of brush often include wildflowers we can rescue.

Residents are asked to call the CFC office at 847-382-7283 if they know of a possible site. Callers should leave their names and phone numbers and be specific about the location. CFC will check the site and request permission to rescue the plants. Thanks to the help of the public in identifying sites, CFC restoration volunteers have rescued thousands of wildflowers which they have transplanted in local preserves.



From the Staff Director

“There’s something unique going on here.” When I heard those words recently I realized that they also apply to Citizens for Conservation. At our annual meeting celebrating CFC’s 35th anniversary, it was clear that participation in this organization affects people personally on many different levels.

Steve Packard, Director of Audubon Chicago Region, has referred to CFC as one of the most successful examples in the country of a conservation group involved in the community as a saver, restorer and community involver. As board member Tom Vanderpoel says, “That is a tradition worthy of the greatest effort to continue.”

An example of one who gives such great effort is Karen Hunter, who recently concluded her three year tenure as president of CFC. During that time she also served as development chairman and chairman of the annual native plant sale, now a community tradition that she established. Fortunately, she will continue her work as chairman of both of these areas crucial to CFC’s mission. We thank Karen for her exceptional efforts and accomplishments as leader of the organization.

Exceptional efforts continue even as members move from this area, yet remain involved with CFC, making special trips back or arriving for workdays when they are in town. We marvel at the tug that this organization has on all of us. Aldo Leopold wrote, “That land is a community is the basic concept of ecology, but that land is to be loved and respected is an extension of ethics.”

Perhaps this is part of what binds us together and helps makes certain that all of these efforts carry forward.

— Sam Oliver

In appreciation...

CFC would like to thank the following donors of Memorial Gifts that were received since the printing of the annual report.

In memory of

Janet Johnson

William Johnson

Marcia Bouseman

Marilyn and Roger Jackson

Robert and June Jackson

Bob and Rosalie Stacy

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Robert P. Vanderpoel

John Wagner

Donna Bolzman

CFC to introduce conservation at home

In early summer Citizens for Conservation will introduce a new program, "Conservation @ Home," which encourages landowners to become actively involved in the conservation effort. Goals of the program include:

- Encouraging the use of native plants in residential yards and gardens,
- Protecting and restoring high quality natural areas,
- Promoting good water conservation practices (rain barrels, rain gardens),
- Rewarding landowners who practice good conservation measures,
- Educating landowners about how they can improve habitats,
- Providing a visible sign of good residential conservation design and implementation.

To be eligible for the Conservation @ Home Programs, residents' yards must meet certain criteria, such as providing clear evidence of controlling invasive species and including native plant components for the benefit of water conservation and/or wildlife. In addition, property along creeks, rivers, ponds or lakes should be managed to reduce erosion and pollutants.

The program Conservation @ Home was developed by The Conservation Foundation in Naperville, and CFC is partnering with the Barrington Hills Conservation Trust (BHCT) to implement the program in the Barrington area.

If your land management style meets our criteria, for a modest fee representatives from CFC and the BHCT will conduct a yard assessment. We'll share landscaping tips and methods to improve habitats and conserve water. A certified landowner will receive a Conservation @ Home plaque to post proudly in his yard, a certificate of achievement in environmentally friendly landscaping.



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