



CITIZENS
FOR
CONSERVATION

CFC NEWS

Saving Living Space for Living Things

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Sam Oliver retires as CFC's Staff Director

by Meredith Tucker

We knew it had to happen sometime, but Sam has been such an integral part of Citizens for Conservation for thirty-one years that I was shocked when she announced her retirement as our Staff Director. This article honors Sam and is our tribute to her, the heart and soul of CFC.

One cannot possibly list all of her efforts and contributions on our behalf, so this piece is a compilation of notes and feelings from a few of the many CFC people who will miss her. It is a subject that touches all of us deeply.

First, here are a few generalities. Sam has long been CFC's face to the Barrington Communities. When we introduce ourselves as CFC board members, the response is usually, "Oh yes, I know Sam." She has represented us at community events and at regional meetings of government and conservation organizations like the Lake County Forest Preserve District, watershed partnerships, and the national Land Trust Alliance. At the same time, she has kept our office running smoothly and been sure to remind the board about upcoming events and responsibilities. She has attended an abundance of Barrington meetings, reporting back to board members who could not attend.

Perhaps those who have been president of CFC most appreciate her (and that is why I am quoting them). We could always count on Sam to keep us current and to provide us with detailed information to help us fulfill the office. She has



Sam Oliver displays her retirement gift from CFC — a Jane Christino original watercolor. Photo by Donna Bolzman.

a mind like a steel trap and never forgets a detail, a person, a historical occurrence. Before I was elected president, I asked then-president Karen Hunter if she would mentor me if I accepted the presidency. She replied, "Oh, don't worry. Sam will help you." She did. Somehow she was able to provide advice before I even knew enough to ask. She was definitely on top of all things CFC and Barrington.

One of Sam's main responsibilities was public relations, so when CFC was in the newspaper or in a local magazine, you can be sure that she had a hand in it. She knew all the deadlines and all the people to whom to send articles, and she prodded committee chairs to get those articles in to her if she didn't write them herself. She was always our connection to the community in one way or the other, the tie that binds.

Most recent past president Peggy Simonsen says what she appreciated most about Sam was her vast knowledge of the history of all our members, friends, and

donors. Peggy called her a walking history book who knew almost everyone in Barrington and had a superb memory for everything CFC.

Patsy Mortimer, former CFC president and go-to person on everything, writes: "CFC is run by many talented, dedicated volunteers, but Sam has kept the organization humming — and I mean that literally as well as figuratively. Sam whistles while she works. It was always so much fun to walk into the office while Sam was busy managing — and staying on top of



Sam Oliver in action in 1987 at the old Station Street CFC office. Photo from CFC archives.

efficiency, internal and external communication were all brought into CFC's *modus operandi*. Sam was the orchestrator. With diligence, vigilance, and ever with grace, she made everyone more productive and attentive to both their own tasks and to other parts of the organization. With her broad network and community experience, she brought fresh ideas about collaborations and outreach. Her always upbeat demeanor made us all glad to be in the office, whether it was for a meeting or just a drop-by.

"Sam is the quintessential behind-the-scenes engine. She reminds, suggests, motivates, questions. I doubt that much at all in the education area, where I have been most active, would have started if we had not been confident that Sam would be there to field questions, respond to ideas, suggest alternatives, keep us organized. She has been a steadfast anchor for CFC and as the face and voice that many newcomers associate with the group, a gracious and effective public relations officer.

— all the minute details of the organization and whistling the whole time. No wonder she is always so pleasant to everyone and such a great ambassador for CFC; she is a happy person even when all by herself."

Karen Hunter says, "Sam has always made us proud. She is kind, considerate, and handles pressure with grace. She also has an uncanny ability to remember not only names and faces, but any kind act or service rendered by an acquaintance. She likes everyone, and everyone likes her.

"Sam has been a terrific Staff Director, extremely well organized, an excellent public speaker, and totally dependable. I will always appreciate how she mentored me in fundraising and supported my actions when I served as CFC's President.

"People will say many things about Sam Oliver, but I'm quite certain I'm the only one who can say I slept with her! That was at the Land Trust Alliance Rally, an annual conservation event (circa 2004), where Patsy, Edith Aughter, Sam and I shared (or should I say jammed ourselves into) a small hotel room with two double beds for two nights."

Another former CFC president Sharon Pasch writes, "Sam encouraged me to network with other environmental organizations and Barrington non-profits, which led to collaboration. She is welcoming and gracious to everyone who comes to CFC — a visiting senator, a child attending a nature class, or me, running in with a last-minute request for copies."

Finally, one of CFC's earlier presidents is Wendy Paulson, well-known for her knowledge of birds and her extensive global influence on environmental conservation. With eloquence she writes of Sam:

"Before Sam came on the CFC scene in 1984, we stored all files in cardboard boxes. Various presidents kept them in home closets. With Sam's arrival — and the establishment of an office (with BACOG) on Station Street — organization,

"There were so many times that I would drop by the office at Station Street and find Sam knee-deep in documents she was organizing, articles she was clipping and filing, calls of every sort she was fielding. I never could figure out how she managed to keep so on top of all CFC business at the same time she was prominently active in a variety of other community organizations. Both big-picture and detail-oriented, she kept tabs on long-term vision as well as day-to-day minutiae. That's a rare talent, and CFC has been blessed to have Sam as its backbone for so many years."

Please note how many of these writers remember Sam as gracious. She has managed to entirely fulfill CFC's needs as Staff Director (and then some) and to do it with kindness and generosity. It is no wonder that the current board, past board members, and all CFC volunteers will miss her so very much, and we send her our very best wishes for a relaxing (not much chance of that) and fulfilling retirement!



Sam Oliver prepares to greet the public at Family Nature Fest in 2011, a precursor to KidFest. Photo by Bob Lee.

The Roses

“A rose is a rose is a rose is a rose.” I learned this poem by Gertrude Stein from my favorite English teacher in high school. I did not understand it then, maybe not fully now. In a



Pasture rose. Photo by Donna Bolzman.

way it illustrates an interesting point about the rose family (the Rosaceae). One native genus in the family (*Rosa*) is very similar in flower and foliage to the garden roses so familiar to gardeners and readers of literature; but it may be surprising that many other local plants, including some widely known ones, are also members of this family.

In earlier reports we have talked about the great success we have had in restoring grasses, composites, legumes, snapdragons, mints and buttercups to the woods, marshes and prairies of our preserves. We still have a lot to learn and a lot of work to do with the rose family. This has been a stubborn group starting with the namesake *Rosa* genus.

We collect huge numbers of the rose hips of the pasture rose each fall. We get proportionately small germination, and if that is not disappointing enough, we have seen almost no flowering of this beauty. Why is that? Does this plant, which is a major bloomer in remnant prairies, need to grow for years before it blooms? Deer love to browse this plant. Do they eat all the blossoms before they open?

We have had even less success with the Illinois rose. We always collect a handful of hips of this vine on our annual Harvard Savanna collecting trip. Only one specimen ever got established, and it was unfortunately eradicated by an overzealous intern who confused it with the nasty non-native multiflora rose. We have the swamp rose growing wild at our natural area Wagner Fen where it climbs on the *Carex stricta* tussocks. Our next challenge will be to introduce it into our restored sedge meadows. Another small shrub that should be in our wet prairie is meadowsweet.

In general, small trees and shrubs have been hard to restore. Fifty years ago Iowa crab was an abundant plant in Barrington, appearing spontaneously in abandoned pastures or farm fields. Crabtree Nature Center, the pioneer in ecological restoration in the Barrington area, was named after this species. We still have a few specimens of this lovely tree at Farm Trails North and have collected its apples. Why does it not reappear in our savanna restorations?

The same question could be asked of another woody rose genus *Crataegus*, the hawthorns. We have a few specimens of cockspur hawthorn and downy hawthorn at Grigsby, Flint Creek and Bakers Lake, but they are not thriving. Even worse is the *Amelanchier* genus (serviceberry) which, as far as we can tell, has become extinct in our collecting area. Wild plum

and chokecherry have survived better, but even they do not reinvade new sites. Only the wild black cherry still comes up in fallow sites. Is it that its fruits are eaten by birds while mammals spread the larger fruits of apples and hawthorns? Possibly management practices are not conducive to the success of the woody members of this family; perhaps the mature oaks are too shady and the prairies are too frequently burned?

Another well-known fruit-bearing rose is the wild strawberry. This plant is abundant as a remnant at the Baker's Lake preserve and has been well established by accidental transplanting when we rescued plugs of hoary puccoon in mesic prairie and yellow star grass in wet prairie. We have never collected the seeds of this plant. The delicious berry never survives more than a day without being devoured. Only one genus of woody fruit is common at our preserves; both the blackberry and the black raspberry appear spontaneously and seem not to be set back by frequent burning.

The herbaceous roses have grown a little more easily. Tall agrimony has come very well from seed in our savanna plantings. Swamp agrimony came to our restored wet prairie with yellow star grass plugs.

Common cinquefoil is one of the few native savanna plants that routinely survives and does not require any management. Its beautiful relative, the prairie cinquefoil, is a restoration challenge; we pick good quantities of seed and the seed germinates well, but it suffers profoundly from deer browsing and produces very little seed. This is nerve-wracking because our wild sources of seed for this plant are disappearing. It was a fairly common plant in the remnant railroad prairie when we began our restoration effort but has now died out. Possibly no plant would benefit more from a deer fence at Grigsby Prairie than prairie cinquefoil.

Another genus that has one weedy and one conservative species is *Geum*. The wood avens is one of the commonest native savanna plants, and we do not even bother to collect its seeds. Prairie smoke is one of the most spectacular wildflowers in our area. We have two thriving colonies of this stunner on our gravel hills, and each year we collect a few



Prairie smoke. Photo by Donna Bolzman.

seeds and scratch some in on our driest hillsides. This plant is very rare in nature even in its virgin habitat, so we only need to establish a few more colonies.

The rose family teaches us that while we have had great success restoring native plants to our preserves, we still need to keep working to refine our techniques. We want to save space for all of the plant families.

— Jim Vanderpoel

Count is down but not out at Baker's Lake Rookery

by Diane Bodkin and Tom Benjamin

Volunteers conducted the 2015 annual Baker's Lake Rookery nesting bird count in ideal weather on June 9. We count in early June before the fledglings leave to be accurate about the number of nests. This year fledglings of various ages were still "hanging around." The great blue heron fledglings were almost ready to fly.

CFC board members Tom Benjamin and Diane Bodkin coordinated the project. Next year George Pierce, a CFC volunteer, will assume the responsibility. Pierce and photographer Jim Bodkin paddled the canoe carrying Robert Sliwinski of Christopher Burke Engineering to the rookery to conduct the count. Sliwinski is the original engineer of the rookery and has been doing the count since before 2000. After an hour of circling the island, Sliwinski had the nesting numbers he needed.



Robert Sliwinski, Jim Bodkin, and George Pierce conduct the 2015 nesting bird count. Photo by Diane Bodkin.

Comparing 2015 nesting data with Sliwinski's records from 2000 shows the total number of nests in 2015 as 190, down from a total of 299 last year. In

2000, there were eight black-crowned night heron nests, and the highest number since then was eighteen in 2011. This year there were only three nests. The number of great egrets was highest at 183 in 2005. Ten years later we found eighty-four, a significant drop from last year's 116. Great blue herons also declined from eighty-five nests in 2000 to two nests in each of the past three years. Even the cormorant population is down this year to 101 from 177 last year. The highest number was 273 in 2009.

Great blue herons nest in the large wooden nesting frames Sliwinski designed, many of which had been confiscated by cormorants who seem to be taking over from the herons. Night herons like to hide in the cut-outs in the evergreens or in the brush from the Christmas trees volunteers put on the island's perimeter each winter. Egrets nest on the bare tree branches along the shoreline.

This year Sliwinski's recommendations include placing the Christmas trees in patches of greater density but with more space between the patches. He also suggests using more evergreens along the perimeter of the island.

The larger problem with the Rookery is that the wooden nesting structure is breaking apart. Most of the nesting frames are in disrepair and need to be stabilized and adjusted to attract great blue herons. This work includes replacing some of the older frames and reinforcing the newer ones. Telephone poles supporting the structure are still in good condition.

Hopefully improvements to the structure will encourage the herons and egrets to return to Baker's Lake in greater numbers making it an ideal nesting spot as it was fifteen years ago. It attracts some very beautiful birds.



Birds at Baker's Lake. Photo by Diane Bodkin.

Celebrate Oaktober and go nuts for acorns!

by Larry Anglada

The State of Illinois has proclaimed this October to be Oak Awareness Month in recognition of the importance these keystone species play in Midwest ecosystems. This year CFC will continue to promote saving our native oaks by participating in the Cuba Township Fall Festival on Saturday, October 17.

CFC volunteers will be there to collect local acorns for our seedling program as part of our "Acorn Roundup." This year we planted over twenty oak seedlings at Grassy Lake Forest Preserve and a CFC preserve with more planting slated for this fall. The acorns we raised will play a vital role in preserving oak remnants that are in decline. Volunteers helped germinate last year's acorns in private garden beds as did the horticulture classes of John Ardente in the Barrington High School greenhouse. We shared additional acorns with Glacier Oaks Nursery where a growing program is in the works.

We would love to improve on the more than sixty pounds of acorns we collected last year, so please "roundup" some acorns that have no visible holes and pack them in zip lock bags to bring to the festival. Enjoy the festival and visit our table to learn more about oak restoration efforts. Bring the kids, too, as CFC's Youth Education Committee will be there with some fun activities about oaks for the younger crowd.

Finally, CFC's Habitat Corridors project will have a table. Talk with its representative, take some handouts, and perhaps sign up for a home visit.

The Fall Festival will take place from 1:00-4:00 at the Cuba Township District offices at 28070 W. Cuba Road. If you can't make it to the Festival, please refrigerate the acorns you have collected and drop them off at CFC's farmhouse at your convenience.

International Year of Soils: rules for healthy, “living soil”

by Sharon Pasch

Editor’s Note: We print this article to celebrate 2015, the International Year of Soils.

Pull a carrot fresh from the garden, and you might think about the soil that helped it grow, but we don’t often consider the billions of organisms that create each handful of that soil. Healthy soil is full of life.

Bacteria and fungi convert dead plant material into organic matter that feeds plants. The microbes themselves become food for nematodes and protozoa, which in turn feed insects, earthworms, and small animals. All of that activity — digging, feeding, secreting and excreting — creates a soil structure with pores that allow water, nutrients, and oxygen to penetrate. It builds soil aggregates — the crumb or tilth in good soil.



Healthy soil. Photo by Sarah Tucker.

“Living” soil supports plant growth for nutritious food and healthy ecosystems. It filters water, reduces flooding, and sequesters carbon that might otherwise accelerate climate change. Here are some steps to protect and build healthy soil, a precious resource:

Avoid compaction. Using heavy equipment (like mowers) or repeatedly walking on soil can crush soil aggregates, reduce water-holding capacity, and destroy soil organisms. Establishing paths will limit damage to one area. Stepping

stones distribute weight so there is less compaction. Don’t walk on wet soil because it compacts easily.

Don’t rototill or turn over soil. This exposes and harms soil organisms, disrupts soil structure, and releases carbon dioxide into the atmosphere not to mention bringing weed seeds to the surface.

Add organic matter. Organic matter increases the populations of soil bacteria and fungi. It can begin to restore compacted soil and prevents nutrient depletion of soil used to grow crops. Leaf litter left on the ground, grass clippings left on the lawn, and compost added to garden beds all increase organic matter in the soil.

Keep the soil covered. Mulch bare areas around trees and plants. Use cover crops during non-growing seasons. This protects and feeds soil organisms, helps soil retain moisture, reduces erosion, and adds organic matter.

Avoid monocultures. A diversity of plants provides a range of nutrients to support a wide array of soil microbes. This

helps keep the soil active through changing weather and seasons. Some microorganisms may be dormant while others thrive. Try to replace grass with a garden of native plants, rotate crops each season, or interplant two different vegetables.

Don’t use pesticides. Pesticides harm soil organisms. A broad variety of microbes is better able to degrade pollutants and provides nutrition for plants. Plants grown in healthy soil filled with life can more easily tolerate

pests and pathogens. Helpful bacteria and fungi encrust plant roots, making it more difficult for harmful bacteria to attach and infect the plant. Healthier plants produce more of the chemicals that repel insect pests. They can compete with weeds for water and nutrients.

2015 is the International Year of Soils. Observe the occasion by improving your soil at home. Let dead leaves remain under trees and shrubs, put extra leaves on the vegetable garden (a blanket for the winter), and resolve not to dig your gardens or around trees and shrubs ever again!

CFC's 4th of July float promotes saving the monarch

by Tom Crosh



CFC's monarch butterfly float in the 2015 Barrington 4th of July parade. Photo by Tom Benjamin.

The plight of the monarch butterfly, not exactly a cause for a parade, is a manifestation of environmental manipulation and is only too evident in the loss of its larvae's primary food source — milkweed. The monarch population once was estimated to be in the billions, but new estimates have removed a few zeros. How could this be?

In the name of progress and profit, giant chemical companies have produced chemical cocktails designed to enhance crop production with little regard to side effects. In this case the only plant on which the monarch relies for reproduction is being destroyed, the milkweed. The creators of genetically modified seed go hand in hand with Dow Chemical and their toxic herbicides.

For its July 4th parade entry, CFC decided to call local attention to this issue by building a giant monarch butterfly happily floating above a patch of life-giving milkweed, a sight once common in Barrington. In the spirit of Barrington's Sesquicentennial, CFC chose to "Roll Back the Clock through the decades" with two grand horses pulling a carriage carrying our intern-created parade entry. Of course we had signs saying, "Save the Monarch; plant milkweed" which our contingent chanted while parading through town clad in CFC



Parade crew. Photo by Ralph Tarquino.

T-shirts with the slogan "Let Monarchs Fly." While we did not win a coveted parade award, we did garner the attention of the masses! We hope folks buy native milkweed plants at our sale next spring and join the thousands of others planting to save the monarch.

Gift differently: Give a membership to Citizens for Conservation

by Jane Christino

Gift giving can be difficult; that's why re-gifting is rampant. How many recipients really appreciate the birthday, Mother's Day, Father's Day, Valentine's Day, or anniversary presents they receive? As a member of Citizens for Conservation, you are demonstrating an appreciation of what it means to give. Your belief in "saving living space for living things" is truly a gift of a different sort.

Consider honoring friends and loved ones with a gift by sharing that belief. Give a membership!

Who would appreciate the gift of membership?

- a brother-in-law who loves birds,
- a neighbor who needs help assessing how to landscape her yard,
- a mother who has all the scarves, tchotchkes, and scented soaps she will ever use,
- a child who harbors stray critters found near a creek,
- a friend who has always been supportive.

Who knows, a gift of CFC membership might be the first step in someone's commitment to protecting the land, providing wildlife habitat, and improving water quality.



Sandhill crane. Watercolor by Jane Christino.

Welcome, New Members!

Pamela Barrett
Beaubien Family
Gary Castagna
Karen and Jared Devich
Gary and Carol Elliott
Norma Freier
Zach Hall
Susan Haskins
Mary Karaua
Laurie Lantz
Recycled Charm
William West

Upcoming Events

Community Education Programs

Advanced notice of our Winter Series: All programs will be held at the Barrington Village Hall at 10:00 a.m. on Saturdays.

January 9 - "Native Bees in the Garden" with speaker Adrian Fisher.

February 6 - "Mosquito Abatement at Home" by Midwest Pesticide Action Center.

March 5 - "A Wealth of Possibilities for Native Shade Gardens" with CFC speaker Peggy Simonsen.

April 9 - "Plant Conservation in a Changing World" by Dr. Kay Havens.

Youth Education Class

Saturday, November 7 from 1:00 to 3:00 at CFC's Headquarters "Raptors: Birds of Prey." The class is presented by Dawn Keller of Flint Creek Wildlife Rehabilitation and will feature hawks along the trail of CFC's Flint Creek Savanna Preserve.

Make A Difference Day

Saturday, October 24 from 9:00 a.m. to 11:00 a.m. CFC will harvest seed at Grigsby Prairie.

Festival of the Oaks

Saturday, October 17 from 1:00 to 4:00 at Cuba Township District Office. See article in this newsletter.

Birds Walk with Wendy Paulson

Monday, October 5 at 8:00 a.m. at Beese Park. Free and open to the public. Check the CFC website for last minute changes.

Natural History Society of Barrington

All meetings will be at Lake Barrington Woods at 7:00 p.m.

Thursday, September 17 - "A Birder's Trip to Cuba" by Roberta Asher. The presentation will highlight many of the birds as well as enchanting scenery, rich culture, spectacular architecture and alluring music.

Thursday, October 15 - "Appreciating Hymenoptera" by Mark Jusko. See hymenoptera (bees, ants, and wasps), including their life cycles, gardening preferences, sex lives, slavery, family life, and child care.

Thursday, November 19 - "Wildlife Research in Cook County's Forest Preserves" by Chris Anchor, Senior Wildlife Biologist with the Forest Preserve District of Cook County. Chris will discuss new research his group is doing on birds.

NHSB Outings

Tuesdays, October 6 & 13 at 8:00 a.m. - Fall Bird Walks at Crabtree Nature Center. Meet in the Crabtree parking lot off

Palatine Road, west of Barrington Road. Walks last about 2 hours.

Barrington 220 Educational Foundation presents its fourth annual Alumni Legends event on October 1 at Barrington High School. "Seeker of Stars and Keeper of the Sea" features distinguished alumni Dr. Laura Lopez '00 and Dr. Wallace J. Nichols '85.

Kids, sunshine, and butterflies: what a summer day!

by Gail Vanderpoel

On August 1, CFC Youth Education held a butterfly class at Flint Creek Savanna. Ten students and many parents attended. Julia Martinez taught the class. While Larry Anglada and Bonnie Albrecht assisted teaching, Jim and Tom Vanderpoel helped spot and identify butterflies. The day was sunny, warm and slightly breezy, perfect weather for butterflies to be active.

Julia began with a discussion of monarch butterflies, their life cycle and migration. She had collected monarch eggs and caterpillars and raised butterflies throughout the summer. Julia provided a butterfly tent which the children could enter to experience butterflies flying around them. They got some up-close looks.

Children then viewed pictures of common butterflies of the Midwest and took a hike to look for eggs and adults. They spotted seven species of butterfly with monarchs the most prevalent. Others were tiger swallowtail, black swallowtail, black morph of tiger swallowtail, pearl crescent, eastern tailed-blue, and silver-spotted skipper.

After the hike, the children created butterfly wings and learned how the insides and outsides of the wings differ so that butterflies can camouflage themselves. They made the forewing blend in and the hind wing showy to startle predators. At the end of class each child received a caterpillar and milkweed leaves along with care instructions so that they could view the chrysalis stage at home and then release their own monarchs. What could be more fun than spending the afternoon with such beautiful insects?



Monarch butterfly spotted at the butterfly class. Photo by Diane Bodkin.

Summer program continues to inspire interns

by Ralph Tarquino

During the summer of 2015, Citizens for Conservation (CFC) provided college students majoring in the environmental sciences a hands-on learning experience through our Summer Internship Program. For a ten-week period, four interns actively participated in the ongoing restoration of CFC properties. The interns experienced innovative restoration techniques being undertaken at various stages of the land management/restoration cycle.

Interns also assisted in the CFC children's education program, working and engaging with young children from the area in activities designed to inspire and encourage the involvement of future environmentalists.

The Oberweiler Foundation provided funding for the 2015 program through a grant as they have for many years. Citizens for Conservation is grateful for this support as we could not accomplish our mission without the assistance of organizations like the Foundation.

CFC plans to sponsor the intern program again in 2016. Candidates should be currently enrolled in college with preferred area of study in environmental science or a related field. Interested candidates should email a resume to cfc@citizensforconservation.org Attn: Intern Chair Ralph Tarquino.

My internship with Citizens for Conservation was a pleasure due to the importance of the work and my exceptional coworkers. Although the work was often physically demanding, I never felt it was useless or mindless labor. Each task was important to sustaining and/or restoring the environment, ranging from herbicide spraying of harmful species such as crown vetch, which will forever be my arch-nemesis, to picking seeds from high-quality plants to sow later, allowing the plant's population to grow. Tom Vanderpoel explained every task in detail, from the process to its ecological importance, allowing me a greater perspective on such work. It was always gratifying to see the results of our work and to know that we were doing our part to aid environmental restoration.

I also found the other workers and volunteers at CFC more than enjoyable company. Tom Vanderpoel was a fantastic leader, and his ability to identify almost any plant was

amazing. Ralph Tarquino and the other volunteers were also a pleasure to work with. They were passionate about the work and enjoyed to the fullest whatever task needed completing on volunteer workdays. Besides the volunteers, my coworkers Jessica, Rachel, and Stephanie were a delight and lightened the hard work with good humor and good work ethics.

Thank you to the many people at CFC for a wonderful internship and for their continued efforts to sustain the environment for future generations.

Christian Groenhof
Elgin Community College



2015 summer interns at the 4th of July parade. L to R: Jessica Stengel, Stephanie Ruesch, Rachel Jorgensen, Christian Groenhof. Photo by Ralph Tarquino.

Citizens For Conservation provided a brilliant opportunity to experience how much work it takes to bring areas back to natural conditions. We did a variety of tasks in this internship, making it interesting and allowing the interns to try a variety of things. There was also the opportunity to meet and work with wonderful people who are passionate about conservation.

Throughout this internship, I saw habitat restoration sites in a variety of stages. CFC had recently obtained some areas, and they required lots of attention using herbicide to remove invasive species, allowing the desired plants to thrive. CFC has maintained other properties for many years, and those had fewer unwanted plants. Even in these

areas CFC takes steps to keep invasive species in check. It was more difficult to find invasive plants at the older sites.

We collected loads of seeds, which was good fun because it encouraged people to go out and search. It became a scavenger hunt to find as many seeds as possible. We also helped prepare it for planting.

There are an incredible number of people from CFC who have a passion for conservation. They enjoy the company of others and have many good stories to tell and lots of experience to share. CFC sites were wonderful places to work this summer.

Rachel Jorgensen
UW-Whitewater

When I was a child, my grandfather told me I would be a scientist like him. While he was a herpetologist and studied deceased specimens, I gravitated towards living creatures. I am on my way to a career working with animals or in a related field. While that goal may shift slightly, it was critical that I learn about land restoration, and that is why I wanted to be a CFC intern this summer.

Previously I didn't understand the connection between animal conservation and land restoration. Now I know that in order to protect our native animals and to help sustain endangered species, we have to maintain their natural habitats. Citizens for Conservation's internship gave me a closer look at land restoration and its significance.

One of the people who enlightened me is Tom Vanderpoel. Tom is recognized in the field and is very dedicated to his work. If you were to ask him 100 questions about native plants, odds are he could answer 99.5 of them.

The first week of the internship we were miserable after herbiciding for the first time. We were all so weak that we could barely carry one pack! Now we have no problem going through two. One of the first times we sprayed reed canary, an intern was supposed to check the packs to make sure everything was in working order before we left headquarters. After all the packs were filled and we had hiked to the location, I found that my pack's pump was broken! I was livid that I had to hike back to the barn to get a working pack. That day I learned a valuable lesson: we were all responsible for checking equipment, and it never hurt to double check. Herbiciding was the most physically demanding job Tom assigned us.

One of the most frequently recurring tasks was wicking cattails. By the end of the internship we pretty much loathed wicking because it was too hot out, and we hated the blue dye. Once when we were scouting cattails and purple loosestrife, I decided to follow the water that led to the patch we were hunting. Rachel was far ahead, Chris was far behind, and Jessica was luckily somewhere closer. Suddenly I found myself knee deep in mud, unable to move without going deeper, and reed canary towered three feet over my head. Thankfully Jessica heard my cries and came to my rescue! She grabbed the herbicide bucket from me, yanked me out of the mud with two arms; then we laughed it off. I had to wash my socks three times that night to get all the mud out. It was not one of my finer moments.

My favorite task was cleaning seed. We set up shop outside of the upstairs seed room to enjoy the fresh air. In addition to cleaning seed, the team spent a good amount of time collecting it. This was a challenge because a plant's appearance changes as the weeks pass. For instance, one day Tom wanted the crew to gather seed of pale spiked lobelia and only told us it was in the same location as the white-eyed grass. Although we had seen the cute flower in bloom, it was so hard to locate that the group started picking shooting star seed instead. Standing on a hill, I tried to google on my phone what the plant looked like without its flower. When that was unsuccessful, I stopped and thought about the plant's specific characteristics; single stalk, up to 2.5 feet tall, and multiple blooms. At that moment I found the white-eyed grass at my feet and managed to pick half a bag.

Working with Citizens for Conservation was an experience that I will take with me to my future jobs. I know the maintenance we accomplished will help in the years to come. I will be back next year to see how our work has benefited all of

the sites. There is no greater feeling than seeing your work pay off. The knowledge I gained from working as an intern for CFC will benefit me as long as I do restoration, and the memories will last me until I'm old and gray. Thank you CFC not only for educating me but for giving me the opportunity to do what I love.

Stephanie Ruesch
College of Lake County

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Citizens for Conservation's internship this summer made an immense positive contribution towards my education, development, and growth as an individual. I have sweated in the heat and gotten gallons of rain poured on me. I gained a lot of muscle, a killer tan, and some great friends and mentors in the process.

I will definitely not miss wearing the white chemical-resistant onesie meant to keep out herbicide. It was never a good look for me. On the other hand, all of the interns got a kick out of Chris's triple extra-large suit that covered his whole body and made him look like a fantastic Pillsbury dough boy. Through the course of the summer we got hundreds of mosquito bites. No matter how much we sprayed ourselves, they came in swarms. Luckily we had only a limited number of ticks.

My favorite activity was seed collecting. I learned the scientific names of many native plants. Some of my favorite seeds to collect were: porcupine grass, toadflax, wood betony, and shooting star. We interns had friendly competitions to see who could collect the most of each type of seed. I enjoyed planting the sedge plugs and pulling garlic mustard as well. I also loved working on the Fourth of July parade float with Stephanie, creating the monarch butterfly, signs, and tie-dyed shirts. Another highlight was working with the kids at the nature camp, instilling a love for nature in the younger generation.

Thursday and Saturday workdays were my favorite days. I enjoyed seeing all of the familiar volunteers. I got to know wonderful people, including Gene who was helpful and kind to the interns. He quizzed us on plant names, told us ways to control non-natives, including his top-notch, two-handed tactic for pulling sweet clover. He also taught us fascinating Barrington history.

This internship gave me an understanding of the time and effort it takes to restore native habitats. I was part of the multi-step process of removing invasive plants like buckthorn, garlic mustard, sweet clover, cattail, reed canary grass, purple loosestrife, and the worst of them all, parsnip. It's rewarding to see the work past interns have done and the work we are doing for the future of restoration. It's incredible to get out in nature and make this earth a better place.

I hope to take what I learned during this internship and apply it to my future work in environmental science. I will continue to restore native ecosystems. I am thankful to my fellow interns: Rachel, Stephanie, and Chris who pushed me to do my best and provided great company.

Jessica Stengel  
Bradley University

# Young naturalists at CFC experience total biome immersion

by Gail Vanderpoel

CFC's five-day camp for twelve children, our maximum class size, ages four and five, was filled with delightful discoveries for parents, teachers and our summer interns as well as for the children. Each day centered on a different type of living thing such as plants, birds, or insects. Daily activities included exploration time with hands-on experiences, circle time to discuss what we would look for on our daily nature hike, snack time with a nature story and songs, journal time to draw or write about things we observed, and a daily nature craft.

Monday, June 8, was Plant Day. Children learned about the beautiful, blue spiderwort flowers blooming along the Flint Creek Savanna trail. Campers discovered huge oaks and measured the circumference of one trunk at 118 inches; it took the arms of five children to stretch around it. The children wore flower and grass hats and made their arms into tree branches to simulate the three main types of plants we observed. They decorated clay pots and planted milkweed seeds and a marigold to ward off deer and "bad" insects.

Tuesday was Insect Day, and the children found bugs everywhere. They learned that insects have three main body parts, antennae and compound eyes. They used special glasses to see things from an insect's point of view. They ate leaves (spinach) like a grasshopper, sucked blood (ketchup) like a mosquito, and drank nectar (honey) like a butterfly. On our walk they used bug-viewers to see daddy longlegs, spittle bugs, milkweed beetles, damselflies, dragonflies, ants, bees, and butterflies. Finally, each child built a butterfly habitat and received a painted lady caterpillar to observe through its metamorphosis. One parent reported that the butterflies emerged from their chrysalises in ten days.

Wednesday was Bird Day. We were excited to have Wendy Paulson, a renowned naturalist and board member for many national conservation groups, lead our class. She helped develop the Beginning Naturalist Program on which our camp



Wendy Paulson (left) leads the Bird Day class. Photo by Sarah Hoban.

is based. The children examined nests and discussed pictures showing features like crests, coloring of male and female birds, and bird habitats. Bird observations started in our garage where barn swallows are nesting. We also saw red-winged blackbirds, purple martins at the "Bird Motel," cormorants, great white egrets, and robins. Children identified calls of the robin, red-winged blackbird and mourning dove. We served a special bird snack of gummy worm dirt cakes to celebrate a birthday, and we painted wren houses constructed by volunteer Larry Anglada.

Thursday was Water Day. Larry Anglada, who teaches Life Sciences and Environmental Studies at Zion Benton High School, was our instructor. Larry helped children discover things that live in water. The children put together puzzles of various aquatic macroinvertebrates. He showed them



Children discover things that live in water. Photo by Tom Benjamin.

damselfly nymphs, tadpoles, caddis flies, and other specimens he had collected in jars. This hike took us to Flint Creek where the children sat on the rocks and observed, scooped up specimens, and then returned for circle time. Crafts included making fish prints and river otter finger puppets. Every day the children visited the resident frogs living in the wet propagation beds near the silo.

Friday, our last day, was Mammals Day. Mother Nature brought a little rain, but the children were still anxious to take a nature hike. They found various mammal bones along the way and observed a deer munching plants near the trail. Children learned about skeletons and skulls, examined our mammal pelts, and made footprints from clay. They heard the story of a bat named *Stellaluna*, and made a bat finger puppet.

The children left talking about all the things they had observed in nature. Sharing outdoor experiences with enthusiastic young people is a great way to spend a week in June! Next year the CFC Youth Education Committee hopes to expand camp to cover two age groups, reaching out to more beginning naturalists.

Thanks to Doe Crosh for daily assistance and to our four interns who helped prepare class materials and worked with the children.

## A Regional Initiative

A movement gaining strength in the Chicago area is called Backyard Habitat Corridors. It germinated at a session led by Stephen Packard at the Chicago Wilderness Wild Things conference in January. It has started to grow with leadership from two Wild Ones members and input from CFC about our established Habitat Corridors program.



Douglas Tallamy, who has promoted the idea of a “backyard national park,” was the keynote speaker at West Cook Wild Ones’ native landscaping conference in May where a group

formed which is interested in creating more local programs like the Conservation Foundation’s Conservation@Home, McHenry County’s Wildflower Preservation and Propagation Committee’s mentoring program called Natural Garden in Your Yard, and CFC’s Habitat Corridors. The goal is to encourage homeowners in the whole Chicago area to expand healthy habitat by planting native plants in their yards and to map progress.

A wildlife corridor is being developed in Oak Park, connecting natural areas with improved habitat in homeowners’ yards. It may be a research area for Emily Minor, Associate Professor of Urban Ecology at UIC, who has been studying the impact of backyard habitat on birds, bees and butterflies. Quantifying success will help the movement gain national attention.

Meredith Tucker, who heads CFC’s Habitat Corridors program, is in demand as a speaker for groups around the area who want to create similar programs in their towns so that we know there is interest by homeowners who need advice on how to reduce the size of lawns and eliminate invasive species and replace them with native plants that attract and support wildlife. We are mapping healthy properties that have had Habitat Corridor visits as recognition of the positive results in CFC’s corridor of restored land in the Barrington area and beyond. The regional program intends to do the same kind of mapping for the whole area. Individuals or groups that want more information or to be involved should contact Pam Todd at [pamtodd5@comcast.net](mailto:pamtodd5@comcast.net). For the communities around Barrington, contact Meredith Tucker at [cfc@citizensforconservation.org](mailto:cfc@citizensforconservation.org).

Tallamy has written that there is more land in yards in the United States than the total acreage in national parks. If more homeowners reduce lawn and expand use of native plants, we can create a Backyard National Park!

— Peggy Simonsen

## Partnership promotes land preservation in Lake County

by Meredith Tucker

Earlier this summer, Jim Anderson, Director of Natural Resources for the Lake County Forest Preserve District (LCFPD), met with CFC’s Restoration Chair Tom Vanderpoel and then with CFC’s Board of Directors. Rebekah Snyder, Executive Director of the Preservation Foundation of the Lake County Forest Preserves, joined him. These meetings strengthened the already solid partnership existing between CFC and the District.

Anderson explained an upcoming initiative to develop a Green Infrastructure Strategy and Model focused on conservation, people, and education. Through it, LCFPD hopes to establish three 10,000-acre ecological complexes in Lake County. Besides natural lands, the initiative focuses on water resources, including Spring Creek and Flint Creek, and capturing data about lakes, grassland birds, wildlife, forestry and soil.

The initiative will be tied closely to Chicago Wilderness’ Green Infrastructure Vision (GIV) which provides a roadmap for conservation in the Chicago region.

The purpose of Anderson’s and Snyder’s attendance at a CFC board meeting was to ask that we partner with them on this initiative. When the board asked what the District wanted from CFC, the response was twofold. They want a partner in our area with ecological expertise to advise on landscape values. Clearly no one supersedes Tom Vanderpoel in reading landscapes. He has agreed to advise on the best plan to follow.

Secondly, Ms. Snyder explained that the Preservation Foundation exists to support the work of LCFPD and that while the cost of this project is \$100,000, only \$60,000 is budgeted. With a \$40,000 shortfall, they are approaching other organizations for donations. During its board meeting later in the evening, CFC approved a donation of \$15,000 toward the project. This initiative will bring additional natural, undeveloped land to the Barrington communities, and CFC strongly supports it.

Finally, in June, CFC received a letter of appreciation from the Preservation Foundation thanking Citizens for Conservation for its donation to support the Green Infrastructure Model. Ms. Snyder indicated that with our help “the Forest Preserves will lead a collaborative effort to bring the GIV concept (of Chicago Wilderness) down to parcel-level ... detail .... Your generosity will make a significant impact ....”

More information about this partnership and its plans will be forthcoming in future issues of *CFC News*.



TOGETHER. ACHIEVING MORE  
FOR OUR FOREST PRESERVES.

## Notable Natives

### Common oak sedge

Sedges belong to a family of grass-like plants and include numerous species that are challenging to identify. One of their distinguishing characteristics is the triangular shape of the main stem. One frequently hears the “sedges have edges” quote as a way to identify them.



*Penn sedge under bur oak. Photo by Meredith Tucker.*

The fine-textured *Carex pensylvanica*, common oak or penn sedge, is likely the most well-known sedge in this area and is prevalent in dry oak savannas, primarily on slopes. The leaves are about 1/8" wide and appear to be less than one foot tall. They have a soft, arching habit.

This sedge is one of the earliest-blooming species in the spring and is monoecious, having both male and female reproductive parts on a single plant. Its reproductive spikelets rise above the foliage. The sedge has a creeping habit and spreads largely by rhizomes. (It is difficult to start from seed.) A mature colony of common oak sedge will form a ground cover that looks like green waves in dry shade. Although the individual leaves of the sedge may grow to a length of two feet over the growing season, the height of the plants will remain about eight inches due to the gentle arching of the leaves.

For people who utilize burns as a restoration method in the woods, this sedge provides some fuel for the burn (the main fuel being oak leaves). It is an important matrix plant in our oak woods. At home it makes a good lawn substitute in shady places with little foot traffic, needing only a late winter mowing to maintain it as lawn. It is deer resistant and helps control erosion.

Try *C. pensylvanica* under the oaks on your property. The trees love it since it won't compete for rain water as does lawn grass. It will hold the soil and grow beautifully and kindly with early native wildflowers interspersed between the plants.

— Carol Rice

### Seasonal Tip

## Is your home a mini-superfund site?

Do you know what is in your driveway sealer? Could it be coal tar?

Coal tar is an industrial waste. In 1992, the United States Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) ruled that it would not be classified as a hazardous waste even though it had all of the necessary toxic characteristics. They reasoned that it

could be “recycled” for various uses including coating asphalt. Thus steel mills did not have the expense of disposing of coal tar, the left-over sludge from coking coal in steel production, as a hazardous waste. Instead they could sell it as a driveway sealant.

Coal tar is a known carcinogen. The World Health Organization, International Agency for Research on Cancer, EPA's Integrated Risk Information System, National Institutes of Health, and many international organizations all classify coal tar as carcinogenic.

The problem is that coal tar and its toxins don't stay on the driveway. Not only do these sealcoats give off toxic volatiles for months, but sunlight and vehicle traffic wear down the sealant. Wind and rain blow and wash away the flakes, contaminating soils, ponds, streams, lakes, and homes. Dust contaminates homes when tracked in on shoes or by pets or blown by breezes. Children under six are especially at risk.

Coal tar harms aquatic life. In streams and rivers aquatic life is affected by the accumulation of toxins in the sediments, resulting in marked declines in fish, amphibian and other aquatic populations. Impacts on living organisms include stunted growth, difficulty in swimming, balance and/or orientation, liver issues, DNA and reproduction problems, tumors, mutations and death.

In Lake-in-the-Hills, United States Geological Survey researchers found coal tar dust from sealed driveways contaminated with extremely high levels of the toxin benzo[a]pyrene — a level 5,300 times higher than what triggers an EPA Superfund cleanup at polluted industrial sites.

Homeowners should choose driveway sealants carefully. Many retailers have already taken positive steps, no longer carrying coal tar-based sealants or providing options. Home Depot, Lowe's, Menard's and Ace Hardware sell sealants that do not contain coal tar. Please read the labels.

Homeowners using a service should specify an asphalt emulsion sealant, which is somewhat similar in performance and price, with only a fraction of the polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons, the primary toxins. When in doubt, homeowners can request the specification sheet of the sealant materials. If the Chemical Abstracts Service numbers for coal tar pitch – 65996-93-2 or coal tar – 800745-2 or coal tar distillate – 65996-92-1 are on the ingredients list, do not use. These are all coal tar and are known to be human and animal carcinogens. Shoppers can check to be sure the numbers are not on the sealants they buy as well.

Most residents are unaware of the dangers of coal tar driveway sealants and often do not even know what is being used on their driveways. Please talk with your neighbors. Spread the word!

For more information, see <http://pubs.usgs.gov/fs/2011/3010/pdf/fs2011-3010.pdf>; <http://coaltarfreeamerica.blogspot.com/>

— Faye Sinnott and Robert Cantwell

## Volunteer Portrait

### John Pasch

John Pasch is part of the burn crew awarded Citizens for Conservation's Great Blue Heron Award at this year's annual meeting for their "dedication



John Pasch surrounded by Joe Pye weed. Photo by Sharon Pasch.

to this most difficult, dangerous, and important of CFC's restoration tasks." Indeed, John takes this task very seriously. After participating in his first burn at Wagner Fen about fifteen years ago, John researched, asked questions, and attended a burn seminar to learn more about burns and now uses that knowledge as a crew leader at CFC burns.

John posed this question himself, "What's the secret to a good burn? Situational awareness." He continued to explain, "Understand what's going on, know potential problems like a wind shift, have good, dependable volunteers with everyone looking out for each other and make sure everyone understands where the escape hatches are." He also complimented CFC's burn leader Tom Vanderpoel for his calm in a crisis. "He doesn't get rattled; therefore, no one else gets rattled." Good volunteers like John are part of the reason that CFC is able to burn safely so many properties in the short burn window in the spring with CFC often conducting five to six controlled burns in as many days.



John Pasch uses a drip torch to burn reed canary grass during a controlled burn at Flint Creek Savanna in 2011. Photo by Neil Mortimer.

When John isn't burning, including his own prairie in his Lake Zurich backyard, one can find him crewing on sailboats on Lake Michigan or inland lakes. He and former burn volunteer Bob LeFevre share a common interest in woodworking. "Bob and I always had something to talk about." John's fortes are jewelry boxes and children's building blocks. Ten years ago he retired from a food sciences career mainly with General Foods in product development and plant startups. He and his wife Sharon, a force to be reckoned with on her own as a past CFC president, welcomed their first grandchild in July, starting another generation of future CFC volunteers.

— Patsy Mortimer

## Seining class nets fun and fish

by Gail Vanderpoel

Saturday, June 13, Citizens for Conservation held its annual seining trip. This year our fish expert Tom Vanderpoel took us wading in the Des Plaines River which we accessed at Independence Grove in Libertyville. Although we often seine in smaller creeks and streams, we chose the Des Plaines River this year because it is loaded with game fish such as bluegills, bass, crappie and Northern Pike.

Eleven children and their parents as well as three CFC Youth Education volunteers attended, and several helped drag nets through the river to see what fish were swimming there. We caught seven varieties of fish: largemouth bass, black-striped top minnows, sand shiners, bluegill, sunfish, northern pike, and rock bass. We also caught a crayfish and found some mallard eggs on a small island in the river.



Parents and children work the nets. Photo by Diane Bodkin.

A seine is a long net (eight feet long or more) with wooden handles at each end. One stretches it across the river's current and then lifts it to examine the catch. It has floats on top and weights on the bottom to keep it vertical in the water. When the current is strong, it takes muscle to pull it upstream, so we appreciated the dads who helped. As adults pulled the seine up from the water, children were able to put the fish into jars of water for better viewing.

It was a beautiful day to get wet and learn about Illinois native fish. While many of the children just enjoyed getting soaked in the waist-high water, Tom told everyone how these fish indicate a healthy river system with good biodiversity. It is an amazing revelation to cross a busy state highway and step into a natural area with blooming wildflowers and a river providing homes for fish, dragonflies, frogs, turtles, and crayfish. The crayfish had lost one claw, which prompted stories about what might have happened to him. He still managed to pinch his captor with his one good claw! The younger children participated from shore, looking at the fish that were shuttled to them in gallon jars. Then they got to release the fish gently back into the river.

Citizens for Conservation holds this class every summer, so be sure to check our Youth Education schedule for Summer, 2016.

## From the Staff Director

### Final Report

As I leave the position of CFC Staff Director after thirty-one years, I find great satisfaction in the words, notes and quotes from members of the community. I have always enjoyed sharing those messages, and as I prepare to sign off, I will share the words we received recently from a volunteer; they sum up what we do so well at Citizens for Conservation.



She wrote, “I am in the process of moving out of state so will be unable to help this year. I have so enjoyed the plants and bushes purchased at CFC over the years and the wildlife they attract. I thank CFC for all they contribute to the Barrington community — conservation, education, and a wonderful example of leadership through service for the good of all.”

For my part, I am grateful for the richness of experiences, all the things that we have learned together, and the many people that I have met as we’ve worked together Saving Living Space for Living Things. I will continue to enjoy a role as CFC liaison with some of the community groups that have been long-time partners.

I am excited to be moving on now to regional projects that are of great interest to me, and I am certain that Gail Sheehy is correct when she writes, “The courage to take new steps allows us to let go of each stage with its satisfactions and to find the fresh response that will release the richness of the next.”

With appreciation for our time together Saving Living Space for Living Things,

— Sam Oliver

**Editor’s Note: If you wonder why we have quoted CFC’s mission statement twice in this brief article, it is because Sam made a significant contribution to the final wording of that mission statement, another part of her legacy with CFC!**

### Thanks from ...

Jill Franklin, Librarian, in a note to Meredith Tucker:  
“Thank you for the wonderful Earth-Friendly Yards presentation you gave at the Northbrook Public Library June 16. The segment on Habitat Corridors was fascinating, and the practical information and advice on invasive species and food and habitat for small animals was well-received by the attentive audience.

“Your passion and knowledge combined with your down-to-earth manner made for an inspiring program for 55 engaged people. I hope the honorarium of \$250.00 enables Citizens for Conservation to educate and motivate many more individuals to rip up their lawns and plant native, wildlife-friendly trees and shrubs ....

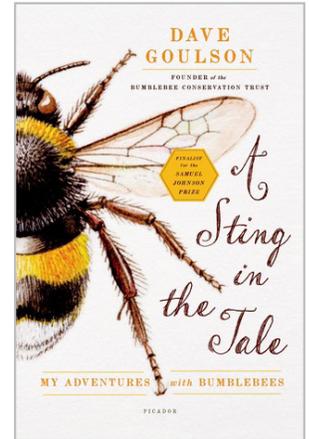
“... Thank you again for an inspiring, informative program.”

## A Good Read

### A Sting in the Tale: My Adventures with Bumblebees

Dave Goulson

I highly recommend this very readable and informative book about the life of a British entomologist and his study of various bumblebee species. Although the species are different than those we have in North America, the science applies.



Not only does Goulson discuss his early life with nature, some of it a bit ghoulish (note the pun on his name), but he also informs the reader about the anatomy, ecology, and natural history of bumblebees. His science is fascinating if you like these furry little creatures, and even if you are not a bumblebee *aficionado*, you will learn how important they are as pollinators and how interesting as well.

It comes as no surprise that these bees are in trouble and that most of their population contraction is due to man’s activities. Goulson touches only briefly on pesticides and competition from honey bees, concentrating instead on the effects of globalization and the commercial use of the bees. Rearing bumblebees in Europe to pollinate tomatoes in greenhouses is a prime example of man’s meddling with nature without considering the dreadful consequences.

Goulson says, “Mass-rearing of bumblebees provides a great environment for the multiplication of disease .... All diseases spread more quickly when their hosts are packed closely together. Taking bees reared at high density and then shipping them thousands of miles to places where the bees themselves and any diseases they might be carrying do not naturally occur is an incredibly risky strategy.”

All the news is not bad. Since habitat loss may be the most serious problem the pollinators face, CFC volunteers will appreciate that the way to help bumblebee species is to increase the number and size of “wildflower rich meadows” as Goulson would say. We advocate restoring prairies and putting native wildflower gardens in many, many yards.

Please try this book. It’s a quick read and full of fascinating facts and science.

— Meredith Tucker

### Thanks to ...

Kevin Richardson, President of the Village of Lake Barrington, who attended a conference for mayors at which attendees received an iPad mini to use at the conference and were asked to donate it to a nonprofit in their community. We appreciate Mr. Richardson’s choosing CFC for the donation.

# Introducing Juli LaRoque, CFC's Administrative Manager

by Juli LaRoque

*To share an experience is to see twice the beauty.* My parents were educators sharing all the world's wondrous gifts with their children. I am Juli LaRocque, sixth in a family of nine kids growing up in Lake County, enjoying and learning about the great outdoors, playing like a sports team, gardening like a crew, and exploring like scientists.



Administrative Manager Juli LaRocque. Photo by John LaRocque.

Many of my siblings are educators today, but I wanted to be different. I earned a B.S. in Meteorology at NIU to research and fight air pollution. I met my husband Bill in the geography building; we married and moved to Texas. During the long summers Bill taught me to sail, and soon we were racing catamarans nationally.

Moving many times, I had diverse learning experiences with countless interesting individuals. My understanding of each local environment (ecosystem) grew with each new address. When we were in Columbus, Ohio, our son John was born; we eagerly returned to share him with family in Illinois.

Now part of Citizens for Conservation, an awesome opportunity I truly see as an honor, I'm surrounded by dedicated, passionate leaders called to support and serve a cause very dear to me. I will continue to learn, grow, and hopefully share with others.

Please stop by CFC's office; I'd enjoy hearing your story. There's always more to share.

# BMO Harris *(continued from back cover)*

receive valuable experience. Wendy Paulson joined Youth Ed chairperson Gail Vanderpoel and trusted committee member Doe Crosh for the whole day creating an impressive instructional group. These volunteers love teaching and helping CFC. Judging by the excited shouts from the kids, it was a smashing success.

In addition, three volunteer photographers took pictures of both events and of three volunteers working to fix the broken water pump near the nursery beds.

The BMOs were among the best corporate groups we have ever had. They were hard working, careful, and fired up over the project and our property. Some workers from two years ago were encouraged to see the advancement in the ecosystem. They asked many questions, thanked us for the opportunity to help, and praised the organization of the event. One of their leaders said "We should come out monthly." There was even one water bearer who quoted from "Gunga Din," the legendary poem and movie.

Tasks we accomplished that day include:

- We planted more than 1000 plugs, the most ever planted in a single workday.
- Interns not only cheerfully guided BMOs out of our parking lot to the cul-de-sac but also guided parents in and out of the lot to make their experience safe and easy. All four interns shared time with the camp.
- Two giant oaks along the back ridge are dead, and those dead warriors served as an example of why planting thirty new oak trees is so important.

This is the beginning of a much larger CFC effort with baby oaks. Eventually we plan to have enough so that Habitat Corridors can give oaks as gifts, and each camper can receive a baby oak.

Two-year old oaks from our acorns will be raised by a nursery and sold back to us at a reasonable price to offer at the CFC plant sale and as additions to our restorations. Students at Barrington High School will raise some of the oaks. This was the first oak-planting day CFC has ever planned and begins a new type of workday for us.



Baby oaks. Photo by Bob Lee.

Finally, a self-described proud CFC member, Ray Mau of BMO Harris sent this memo to his bank colleagues later: "Thanks for taking the time this morning to help with the various projects at Citizens for Conservation.... Whether you were working in the savanna, the wetland, or the barn, you helped BMO make a positive difference in the local environment. Hopefully you had some fun doing it too!"

This is who CFC is. We had a big day with a whole lot of people stepping up. Well done!

# BMO Harris workday with Citizens for Conservation

by Tom Vanderpoel and John Schweizer

A steamy Wednesday morning in mid-June was one of the best workdays CFC has ever had. Thirty-eight employees led by portfolio manager Ray Mau from the Barrington office of BMO Harris Bank joined our regular volunteers for a restoration workday. After Restoration Chair Tom Vanderpoel welcomed the group and explained the plan for the day, we divided the BMOs into four groups.



BMO Harris volunteers with CFC board members and volunteers. Photo by Bob Lee.

CFC Director Ralph Tarquino and five volunteers planted wetland plugs in the shaded swale in Hospital Grove. Larry Anglada gathered five volunteers who enthusiastically planted thirty oak seedlings he had grown from acorns collected last fall. Twenty-three BMO employees followed board members

Tom Crosh, Gene Branson, and Tom Vanderpoel to the far wetland where they divided into three groups to plant plugs.

CFC Director John Schweizer and five more volunteers worked in the shed on several less physical projects. Among other things, they labeled seedlings for the Native Seed Gardeners and for plants in the cold frames.

Fortunately, John had the idea of having the BMOs park in the cul-de-sac in Savannah subdivision improving efficiency and safety in our parking lot. Many participants missed that message, but our interns quickly turned the cars around and got them out of our lot and to the cul-de-sac because the BMO corporate day of service occurred during CFC's Youth Ed Camp week,

and both events started at the same time. We adapted on the fly. We kept the BMO volunteers on the south end of the lot and got them into the field so that we did not disrupt the camp and arriving parents.

The Youth Ed camp was having another big day. More kids attended this year than last, allowing two interns to help and

*(continued inside back cover)*



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*Saving Living Space for Living Things*

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