



**From the Executive Director**

When I started working at CLCF back in early 2017, I wanted to get a better understanding of what land was potentially available for conservation.

To that end, I compiled a list of parcels in the area that might be of interest to CLCF from a conservation standpoint. At the time, the total was approximately 3,500 acres. Five years later, that total is now 2,800, for a decline of 20%. During the intervening five years, over 550 acres were sold and/or developed (or are slated for development), while about 150 acres were conserved by CLCF. In other words, of those 3,500 acres, only about 2,800 remain.

Type of Land	Acres
Potential Available Land (2017)	3,500
Sold and/or Developed	550
Conserved by CLCF	150
Net, Remaining (2022)	2,800

What this means is that during the past five years, 3.7 times as many acres (more than 550) were sold and/or developed versus those that were conserved (150 acres). As a result, when we say at CLCF that we are in a race to protect open space, we mean just that. We are in a race to protect the land you love.

The Cedar Lakes region of Washington County, Wisconsin has always been an attractive place to live, with its scenic and rural character, its community spirit, its schools, and its proximity to Milwaukee. The pandemic appears to have only increased this appeal, by providing people the ability to work remotely in a beautiful setting, while remaining close to Milwaukee and/or Chicago.

At CLCF, we recognize that land is a precious resource and that we really have only one opportunity to protect it. As I have often said during presentations, once land is bulldozed and paved over, it is really gone forever

from a conservation standpoint. Hence, we really are in a race for open space.

Over the past 48 years, with your support, CLCF has been able to help protect nearly 2,600 acres of land. We currently have four projects totaling over 200 acres in the pipeline. Assuming that all four come together, CLCF will have conserved over 2,800 acres of land—well on our way to our Strategic Plan goal of 3,000 acres.



Of the four transactions that CLCF is currently working on, three are agricultural land conservation easements. In 2019, CLCF applied and was awarded, in partnership with the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District (MMSD), a \$1.5 million cost-share grant as part of the Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) of the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS).

As a result of this grant award, each farmland conservation project that CLCF enters into and is approved by NRCS, NRCS will match up to 50% of the cost up to a total of \$1.5 million. This is a wonderful opportunity for CLCF to leverage its conservation efforts and to protect more land than CLCF would be able to do on its own. The cost of land has increased significantly over the past several years, and even with this cost-share grant, CLCF’s out of pocket cost for these projects will approach \$2 million.

A number of farmers in the West Bend area are nearing retirement age and are weighing their options regarding the future of their land. Several of these farmers have approached CLCF about land protection options. The RCPP conservation easement program not only helps farmers to keep farmland in the family but also provides a more affordable option for heirs or beginning farmers to purchase the land once the development rights have been sold.

We are very excited to be working with farm owners in the Cedar Lakes region. In many cases, the land has been in the same families for generations, and we are grateful that we can help these families realize their wish of keeping the land as farmland into the future. We also recognize that the time for this land protection is now. If we aren't able to help farmers conserve their land, it will most likely be sold for development. And,

once that occurs, the rural character of the area—the fields dotted with iconic barns—becomes a thing of the past.



### **The Big Cedar Lake Dam**

In early 2020, CLCF contacted the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (WDNR) regarding the establishment of an Inspection, Operation and Maintenance Plan (IOM Plan) for the BCL Dam. During the first half of 2020, CLCF's staff and Executive Committee worked to draft the IOM Plan, and as part of this process, CLCF contracted with raSmith for an inspection of the dam, which was completed in May 2020.

The inspection noted that repairs should be made to the abutments within 24-36 months. CLCF decided to move forward with these repairs as soon as practicable. In March 2021, CLCF signed an engineering contract with raSmith, and in May 2021, CLCF began the permitting process with the WDNR for the repairs. In August 2021, the dam repair project was put out to bid, and in October, CLCF contracted with Terra Engineering and Construction and applied for a Shoreland Zoning Permit from Washington County. Repair work began on November 1 and was completed on November 12. The total cost of the project was \$66,331. CLCF is currently working on an Emergency Action Plan, which will bring the total cost to \$68,331.



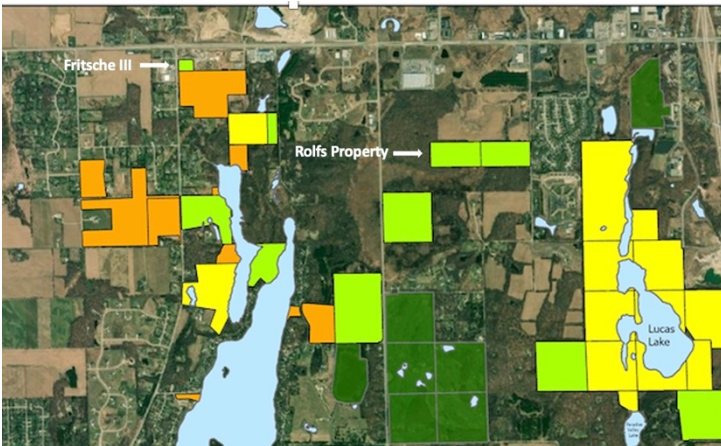
In order to do the repairs, CLCF needed to lower the level of Big Cedar Lake by six inches or approximately 152 million gallons. CLCF's Dam Committee worked closely with the Little Cedar Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District (LCLPRD) to coordinate the lowering of Big Cedar Lake. CLCF is incredibly grateful to the LCLPRD for its help during this process. Once the BCL Dam repairs were complete, CLCF replaced the boards in the dam, and by early January, BCL was back to normal levels. CLCF thanks the Big Cedar Lake Protection and Rehabilitation District (BCLPRD) for its financial contribution toward the BCL Dam repair project.

### Recent Acquisition: Fritsche III (Dec 2021)

As the name implies, the Fritsche III property is the third conservation transaction that CLCF has done with the Fritsche family.

This 2.71-acre Fritsche III property lies immediately north of the 44-acre Fritsche II property, which is owned by the BCLPRD and on which CLCF holds a conservation easement. Fritsche III adds to CLCF's significant land conservation efforts around Gilbert Lake. Due to its unique plant and wildlife communities and its strategic importance as the headwaters of Cedar Creek, the area around Gilbert Lake is a high priority at CLCF for conservation.

Currently, Sauve Terre farm rents both Fritsche II and Fritsche III and grows hay for cattle. The grasses grown for hay provide perennial groundcover which helps to minimize erosion and runoff, which is especially beneficial on a property such as Fritsche III where the land slopes toward a sensitive waterbody.



### Recent Donation: Rolfs Property (Feb 2022)

Thanks to a generous donation from the Thomas J. Rolfs Family Foundation, CLCF recently acquired the 40.4-acre Rolfs Property, located off of Scenic Drive in the Town of West Bend. This property includes part of the County Road Z wetland complex which contains over 100 acres of uninterrupted forest and wetland, making it an important area for wildlife habitat and water quality.

The Rolfs Property contains a variety of landscapes, including wetlands, mature hardwood forest, successional forest, and agricultural fields. These forests contain exemplary tree diversity for the area, and some



*Green Ash and Sugar Maple Trees on the Rolfs Property*

of the largest Basswood and Blue Beech trees found on any of CLCF's Preserves.

Notably, the creek that drains the entire County Road Z wetland complex crosses through this property on its way to Silver Creek. Protecting this property from development and other adverse land uses will ultimately protect water quality in the Milwaukee River and Lake Michigan watersheds.

Over the next three to six years, CLCF's land management plan for this property prescribes some proactive management actions. One of CLCF's primary objectives is to gradually reforest the agricultural fields on the property in order to reduce sediment and nutrient runoff into the Silver Creek watershed and to improve overall plant and wildlife habitat. In addition, CLCF will work to manage a relatively small population of Common Buckthorn that lies in the floodplain forest on either side of the creek.

CLCF is incredibly grateful to the Thomas J. Rolfs Family Foundation and the Rolfs family for their continued support of CLCF's efforts to conserve land in the Cedar Lakes region.

### Staff Update – Jaron Cook

There is quite a bit of staff news at CLCF this spring!

We are sad to see Jaron Cook depart CLCF but are excited for him as he embarks on his next adventure.

Jaron has been accepted into the Conservation Sciences Graduate Program at the University of Minnesota where he will be studying for an MS in Conservation Science. Jaron's research will focus on assessing trophic interactions among pollinators, ground nesting birds, and flowering plants on the prairies of western Minnesota and the Dakotas.

Jaron will be greatly missed as his efforts over the past year and a half to grow and improve CLCF's stewardship program have been both impactful and significant. Jaron worked to reverse habitat degradation on some of CLCF's most ecologically significant preserves, he modernized CLCF's easement and fee simple monitoring program through the implementation of Landscape Conservation Software, and he shared his tireless passion for the beauty and magic of Wisconsin's flora and fauna with many of you during Stew Crew events and his Walks & Talks on CLCF Preserves.

We will miss Jaron but wish him all the best!



Abby transitioned to become CLCF's Land Conservation Coordinator in March of 2022. In her new position, she will be splitting her time between CLCF's land protection transactions and CLCF's stewardship projects in the field. Some of you may have met Abby during the Oak Release project at Timmer's, recent buckthorn work at West, or the hauling of brush at the Thoma Preserve.

In her free time, Abby enjoys running, reading, and mountain biking.



### Staff Update – Mackenzie Franz

In early April, Mackenzie Franz joined CLCF as Land Stewardship Coordinator.



Mackenzie graduated from UW Whitewater with a BS in Environmental Science. She began her environmental career as an Aquatic Invasive Species Intern with Washington County, spending hours in the Cedar Lakes region. She has since been a crew member for Prairie

Future Seed Co. where she restored and maintained native prairies in Wisconsin. More recently, she has been an Assistant Grower in the propagation department at Johnson's Nursery where her Wisconsin native plant knowledge has expanded. In her free time, Mackenzie enjoys growing her own native perennials, kayaking and cross stitching. She is excited to get her hands dirty working on CLCF's Preserves!

Mackenzie has a passion for native ecosystems and lake health and is looking forward to meeting CLCF's Stew Crew volunteers in the coming weeks.

### Staff Update – Abby Brostrom

CLCF is happy to announce that Abby Brostrom has joined CLCF as Land Conservation Coordinator.

Abby is a recent graduate of UCLA with a degree in Geography and GIS (Geographic Information Systems). Abby grew up in Wisconsin with a love of outdoor spaces and began volunteering at CLCF in the fall of 2021. She helped work with Jaron on a number of Stew Crew events and has more recently been revamping CLCF's mapping system.

## CLCF's Legacy Circle Planned Giving Program

During the spring of 2021, CLCF kicked off its Legacy Circle Planned Giving Program with a unique Bequest Challenge. As part of the Bequest Challenge, two anonymous couples created a \$20,000 fund, of which \$1,000 would be released to CLCF's operating budget for every family who joined CLCF's Legacy Circle and filled out a non-binding Bequest Challenge Notice of Intent.

By late October 2021, CLCF had received 20 signed Bequest Challenge Notice of Intent forms. Because of this success, both anonymous couples agreed to offer another \$20,000 Bequest Challenge.

We are incredibly thankful to these two couples and to all of CLCF's Legacy Circle Members for their commitment to CLCF's future.

Thank you. These planned gifts will allow future generations to delight in the breathtaking beauty of the rolling hills, glacial lakes, mature woodlands and prairies of the Cedar Lakes Region. If you would like more information about CLCF's Legacy Circle Planned Giving Program, please feel free to call Linda Mutschler at (414) 614-5084 or send an e-mail to [lmutschler@theclcf.org](mailto:lmutschler@theclcf.org).



### CLCF's Legacy Circle Members

Anonymous (4)

Gary & Jean Britton

Robert P. and Marie E. Bucholtz Charitable Fund

Mary Beth Carr

Susan Crowley

Teri & Rich Czarnecki

Miriam Dani

Mary & John Emory

Denise Goergen

John & Carol Harmon

Jeff & Bev Kenkel

Ken & Kathy Klein

Linda Mutschler

Chet & Maribeth Nielsen

R.W. Phelps

Emmy & Mike Robertson

Jack & Cindy Rusher

Lori Steinbach

### Legacy Circle Donors – Teri and Rich Czarnecki



Teri and Rich Czarnecki have been supporters of CLCF since 2001. At that time, they began their history of volunteering to help establish the newly planted prairie at the Fox Hill Nature Preserve by doing monthly maintenance.

Their dedication to stewardship has continued through annual contributions to CLCF and active support of Stew Crew events focused on regular maintenance of CLCF's properties.

According to Rich, "Our support of and recreation on CLCF properties over the years led us to reflect on how much we have enjoyed the natural areas around Big Cedar Lake and how we could assist in conserving them for future generations. One way we felt we could ensure the legacy of these lands and waterways was to list CLCF as a beneficiary in our trust."

CLCF is grateful to Teri and Rich for all they do to help preserve the natural beauty, clean water, and biodiversity of the Cedar Lakes region for generations to come.

## CLCF's Earth Day Talk – *Attracting Birds to Your Yard*

CLCF welcomes back Janet Raddatz on Earth Day, Friday, April 22, 2022 at the West Bend Country Club at 5:30 pm. Janet's program "Attracting Birds to Your Yard" will focus on ways to turn your yard and garden into a haven for your favorite birds.

Many of you remember and have enjoyed Janet's past programs for CLCF, including *Bats & Humans Need Each Other* and *Cranes of Wisconsin and the World*. You won't want to miss this one! Go to:

<https://www.conservecedarlakes.org/activities-events/2022-attracting-birds-to-your-yard/>  
before April 15 to reserve your spot.



**This event is sponsored by:**

**LAND & LEGACY GROUP**  
LAND | FARM | RESIDENTIAL

## Somewhere in Time 2022 – *Race to Protect Open Space*

**Please mark your calendar!**

**Somewhere in Time 2022**

**Saturday, June 18, 2022, 5:00 pm**

**West Bend Mutual Insurance Company's Prairie Center**

5:00 pm – Cocktails / Open Bar

6:30 pm – Dinner / Complimentary Wine

7:30 pm – Program

8:15 pm – Raise-the-Paddle

9:00 pm – Entertainment / Cash Bar

Attire: Prairie Chic / Black Tie

Ticket Price - \$200 / Person

RSVP by June 1, 2022

<https://www.conservecedarlakes.org/activities-events/race-to-protect-open-space/>

CLCF has protected nearly 2,600 acres of open space and has a goal to reach 3,000 acres by 2024.

2022 began with a donation of 40 acres of land from the Thomas J. Rolfs Family Foundation for which CLCF is incredibly thankful.

Get in the race with CLCF on June 18th to support the conservation of an additional 200 acres.

Join us to Raise-the-Paddle in person or in advance online.

All donations up to \$100,000 will be doubled by a matching grant.



## Annual Kayak Tour – Cedar Lake Hills Park

**Save the Date! Saturday, June 11 at Cedar Lake Hills Park / Big Cedar Lake**

CLCF will be hosting its Annual Kayak Tour and launching kayaks at Cedar Lake Hills Park on Saturday, June 11, 2022 from 9am-noon. Bring your own kayak or use one of ours. If you aren't interested in kayaking, we would still like you to join us for coffee and doughnuts to learn about CLCF. You may even win a ride in a vintage Amphicar! For more details and to RSVP go to:

<https://www.conservecedarlakes.org/activities-events/cedar-lake-hills-kayak-tour-june-11/>



## CLCF's Race for Open Space – 5K and 10K Trail Run and 1-Mile Family Walk

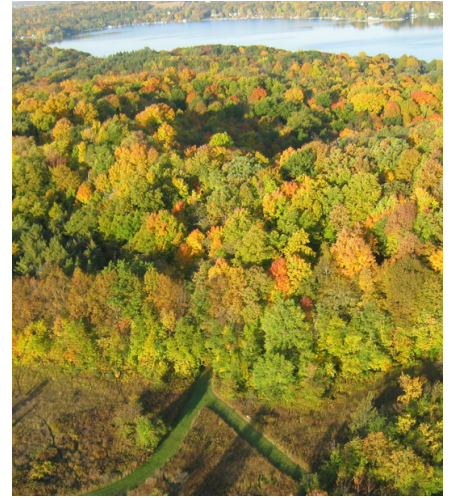
**Save the Date! Sunday, October 16 at the Fox Hill Nature Preserve**

On Sunday, October 16, 2022, CLCF will be hosting its first 5K and 10K Trail Run and 1-Mile Family Walk at the Fox Hill Nature Preserve. We hope that you will bring your family and join us out at the Preserve for this fun fall event.

Online sign-up for the *Race for Open Space* will start in early May. Look for an email and Facebook post from CLCF with a link to the sign-up page to take advantage of early-bird pricing during the month of May.

CLCF is very grateful to the West Bend Mutual Insurance Company and the Orthopaedic Hospital of Wisconsin for their early sponsorship commitment of this exciting family-fun event.

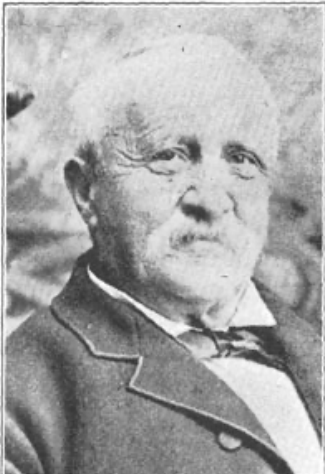
There are still sponsorship opportunities available. If you would like to be a sponsor, help with planning or be a volunteer on race day, please contact Abby Brostrom at 262-353-4866.



This event is sponsored by:



## CLCF's History Talk – *The History of Baruch Schleisinger Weil and the Weil Family of Big Cedar Lake*



CLCF's Annual History Talk and get-together is scheduled for **Thursday, October 20, 2022 from 5:00 - 8:00 p.m. at the West Bend Country Club**. You are invited to get a glimpse into the lives and stories of the Weil Family.

Baruch Schleisinger came from France to Washington County in about 1843. Baruch added Weil to his last name when he married into the Celestine and Moses Weil family of West Bend. Over the next 50 years, Baruch was by turns a farmer, a merchant, a real estate agent, a politician, and a brigadier general in the Wisconsin Militia. He is best remembered today as the founder of Schleisingerville, better known as Slinger. While controversy often followed Baruch in his political career, he was considered "the grand old man of the Assembly" when he retired from elected office in 1881 at the age of 78.

This event is sponsored by:

