



Raptors of the Great Lakes Region!

All are welcome to attend this exciting all-ages presentation! Christian Cold is a licensed falconer and maintains a fleet of educational animals – some of which he'll have with him at the FOECLA Annual Meeting on Saturday, July 15.

Annual Meeting

**Saturday, 9 – 11, July 15
Barnes Town Hall**

First, we'll meet to review the status of FOECLA, including a financial overview of the organization. The meeting should last about 60 minutes, 9-10 am. We'll have a quick coffee break after, 10-10:15 am.

Second, experience a fabulous all-ages presentation from Christian Cold, a retired wildlife technician and educator for the Wisconsin DNR. Mr. Cold will present *Raptors of the Great Lakes Region* which will help you identify hawks, owls, ospreys, and eagles and better understand their behavioral habits, habitats, and the roles of raptors on the landscape. You'll see some fascinating birds up close and personal!
10:15-11:15 am

Join Us to Celebrate 50 Years of Environmental Stewardship!

Dear Neighbors,

Our spring-fed lakes and sandy soils produce superb water clarity and pristine woodland settings, making our beautiful area a highly desirable location for property owners, visitors, and local businesses alike. **But these same conditions create shorelines and lake bottoms that are extremely delicate.** They are subject to rapid shoreline erosion, uprooting of desirable aquatic plants and the spread of aquatic invasive species (AIS). These threats can cause undesirable and permanent changes to area lakes, lower property values, limit how we enjoy the lakes, and harm the wildlife that live in and around the lakes.

Our unique ecosystem is fragile. Our programs, supported by our members' **financial contributions** and our members' **volunteer efforts**, are the means by which we carry out our mission "to protect, preserve and improve the environmental and the aesthetic qualities of the Eau Claire Lakes Area watershed."

With your financial support, we contributed **\$10,000 in 2022 to support AIS population control and management plans.** In addition, to encourage future generations to take up and carry on our mission, we donated more than **\$10,000 in 2022 to fund scholarships for graduating high schoolers and to fund our Lake Ecology Education Program (LEEP).**

We urge our members to volunteer as Boat Landing Monitors, Shoreline Monitors, and on the BAISS Pontoon Boat. And we remind all watercraft users to observe Slow/No Wake zones within 100 feet of shore (200 feet for personal watercraft). By doing so, we limit churning of phosphorus-laden sediment and promote safe and responsible boating practices to protect our families, our delicate shorelines, and the wildlife that live and nest there.



President, Friends of the Eau Claire Lakes Area

Starry, Starry Night

by Stephen Wilbers

Middle Eau Claire Lake

“How many people will never experience the night sky in their lifetimes?” my dad would ask on our Boundary Waters canoe trips. “How many children will never see the Milky Way?”

One night, as if on cue, we stopped paddling to gaze in wonder at the heavens above, our wake stirring the stars below. It was a magical evening.

It’s only a three-and-a-half-hour drive from the Eau Claire Lakes to the Sawbill Canoe Outfitters, where you can see the largest of our planet’s

fifteen International Dark Sky Sanctuaries, so designated by the International Dark-Sky Association (IDA). But to marvel at the wonders of a dark northern night, you don’t have to go to Minnesota’s Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness. And you don’t have to go to Newport State Park on the tip of Door Peninsula of Lake Michigan to see Wisconsin’s only IDA-designated Dark Sky Park. You can see the night sky in all its glory right here in the Eau Claire Lakes region of Northwestern Wisconsin. For now at least – and for years to come if we make the right choices – you’re already there. Just step out onto your deck or into your clearing or down to your shoreline. And look up.

So why should we care about dark, starry skies? Or maybe I should ask the question this way: What do bats, grasshoppers, coral reefs, sea turtles, dung beetles, and you have in common? According to Johan Eklöf in *The Darkness Manifesto: On Light Pollution, Night Ecology, and the Ancient Rhythms that Sustain Life*, we are all affected by light pollution. And as Lisa Abend points out in her *New York Times* article, “A Manifesto for Loving the Darkness, and Not Metaphorically,” light pollution disrupts human circadian rhythms in ways that can lead to increased insomnia, depression, cancer, and obesity.

And the answer to my dad’s question? Only 1 in 100 Americans can see the night sky in all its splendor. That means the vast majority of U.S. children will never see the Milky Way. Imagine. Ninety-nine percent of the U.S. population now living under light-polluted skies will never witness the celestial awe-inspiring beauty that reminds us so simply and beautifully of our place in creation.

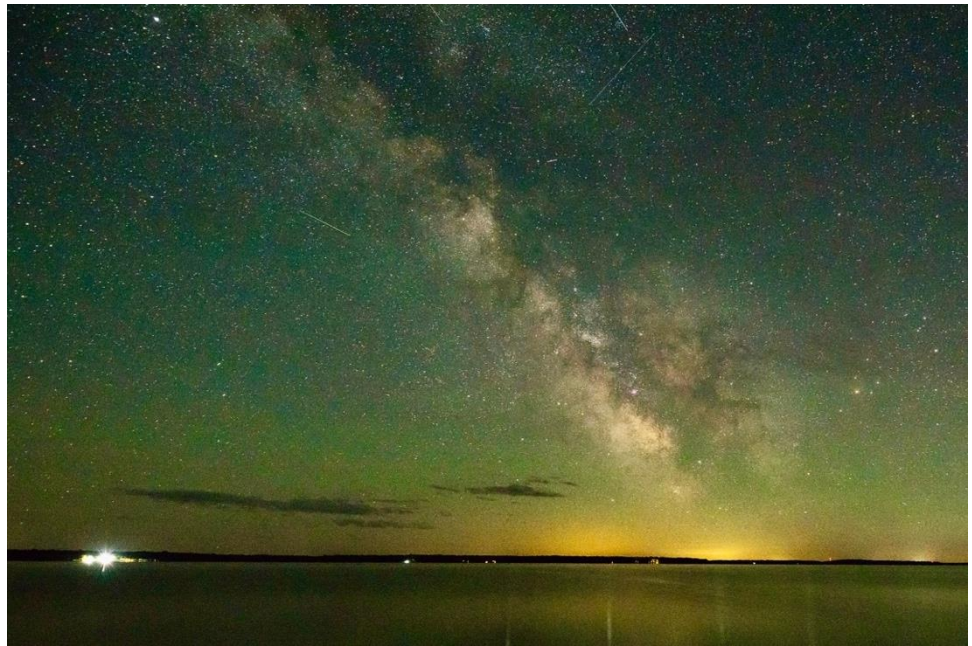
To keep the night sky dark, Todd Burlet (former aerospace engineer and current president of Starry Skies North) suggests that you (1) use light only *when* you need it, (2) shield light sources so that your light shines only *where* you need it, and (3) rather than sleep-interfering bluish-white lights, use warmer color lights around 3,000 degrees in the Kelvin-scale color temperature scale.

And what about crime? Don’t we need artificial light to both feel safe and be safe? Is more light necessarily safer? “Which is a more effective deterrent,” Burlet asks, “light that is on all night long, or motion-activated light that offers a startle factor?” Motion-activated, he says, but also light that is “properly shielded.” After all, you don’t want to annoy your neighbor every time a deer, coyote, wolf, mountain lion, or Bigfoot walks by. (My examples, not Burlet’s.)

Light is a tool, Burlet points out, and tools should be used to serve a purpose. “I like sledgehammers,” he says, “but I don’t use them to hang pictures on my wall.” Put the light where you need it, “not in your neighbor’s windows.” And as with any tool, he says, “Put it away when you’re done with it.”

According to Burlet, there are four types of light pollution:

- **Glare** pollution shines directly into your eye and makes it hard for you to see.
- **Light trespass** shines from your building onto your neighbor’s house or property.
- **Skyglow** brightens the sky over towns and cities.
- **Clutter** is just what it sounds like, a bunch of “bright, confusing, and excessive groupings of light sources.”



Todd Burlet’s photo “Battle Lines” depicts light pollution doing battle with the Milky Way. Unshielded cabin yard light (left) is 1.5 miles away; orange skyglow is from a town 45 miles away.

Of particular concern for cabin, woodland, and lake homeowners are the first two, **glare** and **light trespass**, though if you cast your eyes south on a gorgeous moonless dark night, you *will* see the metropolitan **skyglow** of Hayward. And what about those pretty holiday lights we use to brighten our spirits during our long winters? Do they need to be on all night? Think of the money you could save by putting them on timers. And how about those nifty solar lights that are appearing on more and more of our docks and illuminating more and more of our steps and pathways leading to our shores? Are they really needed? Are they motion-activated?

Whatever your thoughts about these questions, I hope you feel blessed by the gloriously dark sky above you. Wouldn't it be wonderful if fifty or a hundred years from now we could see the same star-studded sky that outdoor writer Gordon MacQuarrie and his father saw in 1916 when they built their cabin on the Middle Eau Claire Lake? Wouldn't it be wonderful if far into the future we could feel that awe-inspiring, other-worldly connection to all creation? What a precious gift.

Treasure it. Embrace it. Protect it.

For more on Dark Nights & Starry Skies, search **online** for International Dark-Sky Association; Sixth Dark Sky Festival (December 7-9, 2023); Starry Skies North IDA; St Croix 360 dark skies; "The World's Largest Designated Dark Skies Sanctuary," PBS North documentary (Nov. 25, 2022). **In print**, read Paul Bogard, *The End of Night: Searching for Natural Darkness in an Age of Artificial Light* (2013); Lisa Abend, "A Manifesto for Loving the Darkness, and Not Metaphorically," *The New York Times* (Feb. 15, 2023); Johan Eklöf, *The Darkness Manifesto: On Light Pollution, Night Ecology, and the Ancient Rhythms that Sustain Life* (2022)

A BRIEF LOOK BACK: 50 YEARS of FOECLA!

Friends of the Eau Claire Lakes Area was incorporated on **October 23, 1973**, as the **Friends of the Eau Claire Lakes, Inc.**

We look back with appreciation for the vision of the original four directors: E. Grant Snyder, Irene Pease, Glen Hall and Leslie Hall.

The original purpose of the organization was: "*the preservation of the water quality, environment and land uses for the lakes commonly referred to as the Eau Claire Lakes area of Bayfield and Douglas County.*" Membership was open to all persons interested in the preservation and protection of these beautiful lakes.

Years later, the lake association changed its name to the "Eau Claire Lakes Area Property Owners Association" to leverage property ownership to assist in getting conservation grants. In 2013, the name was again changed to "Friends of the Eau Claire Lakes Area." By including the word "Area" in the name, the board aimed to emphasize that the organization's mission extended to all 11 or so lakes that make up the Eau Claire Lakes chain of lakes, plus area lakes outside the Eau Claire Lakes watershed.

The activities of this pioneering organization led to a deeper understanding of what was necessary to keep our lakes clear and beautiful.

Members became involved in monitoring lake health through testing and by observing lake usage. They focused on educating lake users about good lake stewardship and recognized the importance of involvement in policy making and civic responsibilities to protect and preserve the quality of the lakes.

Today, the water quality in the Eau Claire Chain of Lakes is listed in the top 10% of all Wisconsin waters.

We owe many thanks to the dedicated citizen scientists, many of them FOECLA members, who have monitored water quality on area lakes for decades.

We continue our efforts to educate residents and visitors alike on how to maintain this remarkable asset. We continue to work with local governments, local businesses, and environmental organizations to advance our mission.

FOECLA developed an award-winning lake ecology education program (LEEP) that brings Drummond middle school students into the outdoors for "hands-on" learning, encouraging them to become life-long lake stewards. The LEEP curriculum is now available at no cost to interested schools and lake associations.

We have sponsored informational programs and seminars for the community about everything from cooking and successful fishing to maintaining septic systems and preventing oak wilt.

We initiated a program with the Town of Barnes to develop and fund an effective boat landing monitoring program to protect area lakes from aquatic invasive species. Our members volunteer to inspect shorelines for signs of aquatic invasive species, and work with the Wisconsin DNR in control efforts. More recently, FOECLA has set up 12 water level gauges on 10 of the area lakes that are monitored by volunteers.

We partner with Wisconsin DNR's Healthy Lakes and Rivers Program to help local property owners with shoreline practices that improve habitat and water quality. We provide guidance on installing fish sticks, native plantings, water diversions, rock infiltration, and rain gardens, and we apply for and administer grant funds on behalf of the property owners.

Our mission – "to protect, preserve and improve the environmental and esthetic quality of the Eau Claire Lakes Area watershed, including the lakes, rivers, shore lands, wetlands, forests and attendant wildlife resources" – has been embraced all over the Eau Claire Lakes area, and membership in our local, volunteer-powered, nonprofit organization has grown to more than 250 families. Join us as we begin the next 50 years!

Did you know?

This is the **ONLY** printed newsletter we send each year!

In doing so, we try to reach as many friends, neighbors, and businesses in the Eau Claire Lakes Area as we can to communicate our mission:

“To protect, preserve and improve the environmental and aesthetic qualities of the Eau Claire Lakes Area watershed, including the lakes, rivers, shorelands, wetlands, forests and attendant wildlife resources.”

To receive occasional emails, including thoughtful and thought-provoking essays, topics on forest and lake ecology, and upcoming educational opportunities, sign up on our website: friendsofeauclairelakesarea.com.

PS - If you've signed up but aren't receiving emails from us, check your spam or promotions folder, or get in touch and we'll help. Send an email to: eauclairefriends@gmail.com.



Save the Date NORTHWEST WISCONSIN LAKES CONFERENCE

FRIDAY, JUNE 23, 2023
SPOONER HIGH SCHOOL

ONLINE: WWW.WISLAKESCONFERENCE.ORG

Mark your calendars now!

25th Annual Northwest Wisconsin Lakes Conference

Spooner High School

Friday, June 23, 9 am – 3:45 pm

Register at: nwwislakesconference.org.

Volunteer Opportunities!

Volunteering is fun and you meet great people! Here are some opportunities and contacts:

- BAISS Pontoon Boat Drivers (Barnes Aquatic Invasive Species Sucker) – **Julia Lyons**, (715) 590-4218, julia.vanloo@gmail.com
- Boat Landing Monitors for Clean Boats Clean Waters – **Barb Clements**, (715) 495-7134, barbc.ais@gmail.com
- LEEP Volunteers (Lake Ecology Education Program) – **Cris Neff**, (715) 795-3227, cneff86@gmail.com
- FOECLA *Musings* and *Did You Know* Contributors – **Anne Torrey**, (612) 306-6504, annectorrey@outlook.com
- Shoreline AIS Monitors (Aquatic Invasive Species) – **Ingemar Ekstrom**, (715) 795-2183, ije@cheqnet.net
- Wisconsin DNR Water Quality Monitors – **Danielle Matuszak, DNR**, (715) 661-8175, danielle.matuszak@wisconsin.gov

Stuff to do!

Take time this summer to get out and discover some of the unique things going on in the Eau Claire Lakes area!

Barnes Area Historical Association Museum – May to September (FRI and SAT; 11 am – 4pm) This treasure trove features a variety of exhibits that track the history of the Barnes area. You'll find items of interest for adults and children. Located at 4545 Co. Hwy. N. Admission is FREE but consider supporting the organization with a membership. www.bahamuseum.org

Taste of Barnes – SAT June 17 Craft and food fair, basketball and pickleball tournaments, 5K run, music and entertainment! FOECLA board members will be on hand to talk about our programs – stop by our display and enjoy a sweet treat to celebrate our 50th anniversary! Barnes Town Park. See Facebook page at *Taste of Barnes*.

Vatten Paddlar Canoe, Kayak & SUP Races – SAT July 8 Enjoy the beautiful Eau Claire Lakes as you paddle through a 5- or 10-mile course! Recreational paddlers and families may prefer the 5-mile distance and racers and folks out for more of a challenge steer for the 10-mile distance. Choose to paddle in your canoe, kayak or stand up paddle board. Prizes offered in a variety of classes. Advance registration required at www.vattenpaddlar.com

MacQuarrie Pilgrimage and Canoe Tour – FRI and SAT August 25 – 26 An annual weekend program featuring a weekend of presentations and site tours focusing on local legend Gordon MacQuarrie, a writer and journalist. He is known for his short stories involving hunting and fishing (many of which took place in the Eau Claire lakes region) and the semi-fictional *Old Duck Hunters Association, Inc.* Register at www.bahamuseum.org.

FOECLA 2023 MEMBERSHIP FORM

Name _____

Mailing Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Email _____
Your email is safe with us! It's never shared and you can unsubscribe at any time.

Lake/Lake Address _____

I am interested in learning more about volunteer opportunities:

<input type="checkbox"/>	BAISS Boat Driver	<input type="checkbox"/>	AIS Shoreline Monitor
<input type="checkbox"/>	DNR Water Quality Monitor	<input type="checkbox"/>	Vatten Paddlar Volunteer
<input type="checkbox"/>	LEEP – Classroom or Field Trip Volunteer	<input type="checkbox"/>	FOECLA – Website and Constant Contact
<input type="checkbox"/>	CBCW Boat Landing Monitor	<input type="checkbox"/>	FOECLA – Event Planning
<input type="checkbox"/>	Town of Barnes AIS Committee	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lake Level Gauge Reading and Recording

We welcome your comments and suggestions!

Make check payable to: Friends of the Eau Claire Lakes Area
 Mail to: PO Box 1308, Hayward, WI 54843

1. MEMBERSHIP LEVELS

_____ Basic (\$20) _____ Contributing (\$50)
 _____ Sponsor (\$100) _____ Sustaining (\$200)
 _____ Patron (\$400)

PLUS Additional Donations Below:

2. CLEAN BOATS/CLEAN WATERS

Designated Fund to support boat landing inspections.

_____ **Any amount**

3. INVASIVE SPECIES REMEDIATION

Designated Fund to support shoreline monitoring, BAISS Boat operations, divers and AIS treatment in cooperation with Town of Barnes Aquatic Invasive Species Committee.

_____ **Any amount**

4. EDUCATION

Designated Fund to support LEEP (7th grade classes/field trips) and public programs.

_____ **Any amount**

5. STUDENT SCHOLARSHIP

Designated Fund to support annual \$1,000 post-secondary education scholarship.

_____ **Any amount**

TOTAL – Thank You!

(1 + 2 + 3 + 4 + 5, above)

To become a member or renew your membership, complete and return the above form with your payment – or join online at <https://friendsofeauclairelakesarea.com>.

FOECLA is a 501(c)(3) charitable organization, so your contributions are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law.

Our members keep us strong. We welcome your suggestions on how we can improve our organization – and if you would like to learn more about how you can become involved, we can help! Email us at eauclairefriends@gmail.com.



Like us on Facebook! Search for "Friends of the Eau Claire Lakes Area"

FOECLA BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Monthly meetings April through October

Jim Bakken	President
Roger Martin	Vice President
Katherine Stewart	Treasurer
Stephen Wilbers	Secretary
Wayne Kolberg	Director
Mike Milliken	Director
Cris Neff	Director
Martin Olson	Director
Marianne Paker	Director
Anne Torrey	Director
Lee Wiesner	Director
Vacant	Director



FRIENDS OF THE
EAU CLAIRE LAKES AREA

PO Box 1308 | Hayward, WI 54838



Become a member today!
We're celebrating 50 years of
Environmental Stewardship!
1973 - 2023

Wildlife sightings!!

Do you have photos to share? Contact us at eauclairefriends@gmail.com to share your photos and stories!

You probably haven't seen it, but there's an elusive cat that makes our area its home. A healthy and growing bobcat population in Wisconsin has resulted in more sightings. Residing in swampy, forested areas and typically weighing 11-30 pounds, bobcats are twice the size of a large, domesticated cat and sport a 5 to 9 inch tail that looks "bobbed" (hence their name). They feast on rodents, rabbits and squirrels. The stealthy bobcat offers only an occasional fleeting glimpse because they are on the move during twilight hours.



Above: This very large bobcat was captured on a trail cam near Middle Eau Claire Lake

Left: These three bobcat kittens were photographed near Gordon by Andy Stanley while deer hunting. They scrambled up a small oak tree only 10 yards away from his tree stand!