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This newsletter includes info on our upcoming Lake Watch Annual Meeting, an update on FERC relicensing, updates on water quality testing in the lake, info on new and exciting ways to keep up with Lake Watch activities, and an update on major changes for Alabama Water Watch.  
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****Please renew your Annual Lake Watch Membership at the Annual Meeting! ****
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**NOTE from the President**

The past year has been a good one for Lake Watch. Our volunteers worked with Alabama Water Watch, ADEM, the Middle Tallapoosa River Basin Clean Water Partnership, and the Camp ASCCA Living Streams program to promote water quality and environmental awareness. We have certified water quality monitors testing fifteen sites around Lake Martin and plan to expand chemical testing as well as establish more wide-spread bacteriological (*E. coli*) testing at various sites.

Administratively, the board has moved toward committee governance. We are looking for volunteers to help in various ways. If you are interested in helping with meetings, the newsletter, or other activities or wish to become a volunteer water monitor, please contact us at [info@lakewatch.org](mailto:info@lakewatch.org).

We have established a new website through Wild Apricot (access at <http://lakewatch.org>). The new site offers membership management, and allows members to renew their dues, make donations, update their contact information, as well as access information about our organization, including news about various events of interest to members. We have also established a presence on Facebook. Be sure and “like” our page and keep up with news of members and articles of interest. Feel free to post your lake photos and items on interest on the page.

Thanks to many generous donors, the Dick and Mary Ann Bronson Environmental Education Award is up and running and our first recipients—local science teachers—will be notified in early 2014. Our organization was called upon to do preliminary bacteriological testing at an area of concern on the lake (with good results) and we continue to work to improve water quality issues on Lake Martin and in our watershed.

We supported the effort to have the winter water pool levels raised and are hopeful that the voice of so many concerned citizens on that issue will also lead to wider recognition of the need to protect our “Treasured Alabama Lake.”

*Kathryn Braund, President*

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Lake Watch Annual Meeting

The Lake Watch Annual Meeting is set for **Sunday, February 16th, 2013, noon to 2:30 pm** at **the StillWaters Residential Association Centre** inside StillWaters Resort (1816 StillWaters Drive, Dadeville, AL; see map and directions below). The meal will be catered and we ask that you pre-register so that we have a good count in order to accurately order food. Also, the Board has asked that everyone pay a nominal fee of \$5.00 per person to cover the food costs. This will make sure our dues and donations are used for water quality and watershed stewardship purposes, and keep our treasury in good shape.

Harold Banks, a well-known canoeist, writer and Lake Watch member, will be our featured speaker this year. Harold, who has spent more than 50 years on the water, has paddled the entire length of the Tallapoosa River, from headwaters to the Gulf of Mexico. He will discuss the river’s natural beauty and local recreational opportunities. Following Harold’s presentation, Jim Felder of the Alabama Scenic River Trail Association will explain the Alabama Scenic River Trail and what a National trail designation would mean for the Tallapoosa River. Shane Harris, from the Alabama Cooperative Extension Service, will explain what is happening locally within Tallapoosa County, including Lake Martin, regarding a canoe trail.

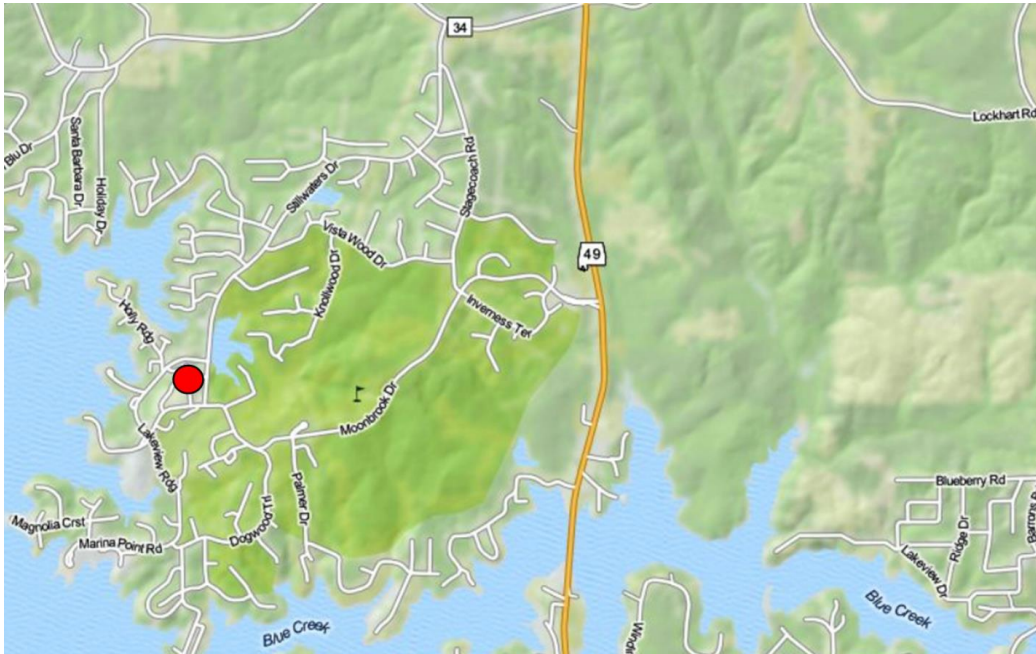
We have two board positions up for election this year. The Nominating Committee has presented two nominations for these vacancies: Myrna Lehman and Jesse Cunningham. Remaining board members with continuing terms are: Jim Anckersen, Matt Campbell, Eric Reutebuch, Dick Bronson, and Diana French. Officers are Kathryn Braund (President), Tom Collier (Vice President), Laurel Goldsmith (Treasurer), and Zelma de Pasquale (Secretary). Ann Campbell is the Quality Assurance/Quality Control Officer and Monitor Coordinator.

We’ll send out reminder postcards in January about the meeting but ask that you make firm reservations as early as possible. Don’t forget to invite friends and neighbors and potential new members.

To pre-register, go to the Lake Watch webpage, at www.lakewatch.org – click the **Events** menu on the left side of the homepage, then click the Register button to register.

Directions to the StillWaters Residential Association Building: From Hwy 49, south of the Hwy 49- CR 34 intersection, turn into StillWaters onto Moonbrook Drive,

- Take Moonbrook Drive to StillWaters Drive,
- Turn right on StillWaters Drive, the StillWaters Residential Association Building will be on your left (see red dot on map below):



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### **Martin Dam Re-licensing**

*Dick Bronson, Lake Watch Board of Directors member, LW founder and former long-time President*

We're still waiting word from the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) on the re-licensing package sent to them by Alabama Power Company (APC), and it may be several more months of waiting if past history has anything to do with it. In some cases, particularly with re-licensing of other systems, it has taken several years for decisions.

In June 2013 APC provided additional information requested by FERC following the Public Hearing held earlier at Central Alabama Community College. Most stakeholders involved in the long re-licensing process were satisfied with the input and hopeful that recommendations in the packet would be approved. Major points in the packet of most interest to local stakeholders are:

- a 3-ft increase in the winter pool level, and
- an extended summer pool level into the fall, provided sufficient water is available.

We believe these are reasonable changes to the lake pool level requirements and, if approved by FERC, can improve the economic impact of the lake by allowing more use

in the fall months. We hope that FERC sees it this way too. Regardless of the decision, we will still have the privilege of living on the cleanest and most beautiful lake in the state...the one and only "Treasured Alabama Lake".

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**Update on Lake Watch water quality monitoring**

*Ann Campbell, Lake Watch Water Monitoring Trainer and Coordinator*

The Lake Watch of Lake Martin volunteers have been monitoring water quality on Lake Martin and its tributaries for over 20 years. We currently have 20 volunteers on our water monitoring team. Our goal, along with all the other members of Lake Watch of Lake Martin, is to protect the cleanest lake in Alabama. LWLM celebrates the dedication of our volunteer monitors. They are: Laurie Barrett, Kathryn Braund, Dick Bronson, Mary Ann Bronson, Ann Campbell, Lulu Campbell, Matt Campbell, Chuck Coleman, Rosa Ann Coleman, Raymond De Pasquale, Zelma De Pasquale, Tom Ford, Tommie Ford, David French, Diana French, Chuck Lehman, Myrna Lehman, Larry Locke (recently retired), Pat Lynch, Tom Lynch, and George Zorn.

This fall we began our long talked about plan to reintroduce regular bacteriological testing and add additional sites specific to bacteriological monitoring to our repertoire. Where chemistry monitoring utilizes a kit of various chemicals to determine water quality citing air and water temperature, pH, alkalinity, hardness, dissolved oxygen, clarity and turbidity, bacteriological monitoring at a single site involves using a series of 3 one milliliter water samples deposited via sterile pipette into 3 media vials in the field. Those vials are transported to be plated within 30 minutes if not on ice and within 3 hours if on ice. Once at home the vials are emptied onto 3 corresponding treated petri dishes which are subsequently deposited in a pre-heated incubator. The incubation period is 30-48 hours at 29-37 degrees centigrade. None of this is fancy stuff, nor does it require extensive scientific experience or expertise. We make our incubator using a small lidded ice chest with a vent hole bored into its top, and a smaller hole to receive a thermometer. The system uses a 4 watt bulb night light as a heat source, an extension cord, a cardboard divider to shield the sample plates and the thermometer from direct heat and light. Once the incubation period is complete the bacterial colonies are counted and EPA standards applied to the count to determine whether designated water quality criteria for that water body are exceeded. All of our data is reported to Alabama Water Watch which maintains monitoring records from across the state. We are guided by AWW recommendations for reporting problems, for further documenting problem findings and for advising the proper authorities.

Lake Watch of Lake Martin needs more monitors. A one day training workshop is all that is needed to become certified as a monitor. Come learn something new, enjoy the outdoors and do a good service for our Lake. Monitoring is fun stuff that gets you outside to enjoy our beautiful Lake and creeks more often than life might otherwise allow. Have a look at the Alabama Water Watch website [www.alabamawaterwatch.org](http://www.alabamawaterwatch.org) to see lots of volunteer training workshops available in Auburn and across the state. The AWW website also offers a wide range of water quality information from across the state.

One of the most important aspects of our monitoring program is to keep the data credible through an effective Quality Assurance Plan. Lake Watch monitors operate under an AWW quality assurance/control plan for statewide Citizen Volunteer Water Chemistry and Citizen Volunteer Bacteriological Monitoring approved by the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). We follow specific protocols to develop long-term data sets that are useful for determining water quality conditions and trends. Proper interpretation and understanding of these trends, conditions and causes of water quality impairment require consistent and careful monitoring. Because there are natural changes occurring over time, we can only identify and document degradation or recovery if we collect data for several months or years at the same place, at approximately the same time of day, and in the same way. After several years of monitoring a particular site, a valuable record of water quality trends is established.

Lake Martin became the first Treasured Alabama Lake in April 2011. This protective status was achieved as a result of the untiring efforts of LWLM president emeritus Dick Bronson and with the extensive support of the data collected by our volunteer monitors. Dick has said, “The lake and the river will continue to be vital for the development of Alexander City, Dadeville and the other communities within the watershed, providing drinking water, wastewater treatment, irrigation, recreational opportunities... Decisions made today will affect the condition of the watershed in the future.”

LWLM’s goal of protecting our lake is realized in substantive ways through the dedication of our volunteers. Our data has been used in recent years to document pollution problems. Through the monitoring efforts of LWLM, damaged sewer lines have been located and repaired. In conjunction with Alabama Department of Environmental Quality support, our data has been the impetus for extensive renovations to treatment facilities on tributaries feeding Lake Martin.

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Dick and Mary Ann Bronson Environmental Educational Award
Kathryn Braund, Lake Watch President

At the meeting last year, incoming president Kathryn Braund announced that the Board of Directors had created an award to honor Dick and Mary Ann Bronson. After careful discussion on the best way to utilize the funds donated, the Bronson Award Committee offered scholarships to local science teachers for the 2014 Legacy teacher workshops and the 2014 Annual Conference of the Environmental Education Association of Alabama. The scholarships will cover registration, lodging, meals and travel costs for the recipients. The workshops and conference are designed to further environmental science education in the Lake Martin area, and teachers are provided professional hours for participation. The awards are designed to aid those who have the greatest impact on the next generation about environmental stewardship: our local teachers. Lake Watch is taking applications from area teachers through January 1, 2014 and will announce the award winners after the first of the year.

A donation to the Bronson Award fund in memory or honor of a loved one makes a great gift. We'll send a card to the honoree. So make your gift giving easy and donate to Lake Watch.

Keeping Connected with Lake Watch

Laurel Goldsmith, Lake Watch Treasurer and Webmaster

You can keep up with Lake Watch by “liking” us on Facebook @ Lake Watch of Lake Martin. Post items you think lake watchers would be interested in hearing about or comment on postings that have been made by others.

Also take a moment and check out our new website at:

<http://lakewatchoflakemartin.wildapricot.org>.

Save our website address in your favorite’s folder and keep us posted of any address changes, personal information, events, etc...

You can also pay your dues using PayPal on our website. We will also accept checks received by mail at our PO address Box 72 Alexander City, AL 35010.

Dues reminder:

For the many faithful Lake Watch members who already sent in their dues for 2014, thank you! And for those who haven’t yet, we would appreciate your sending us a check in order to keep you current. Membership levels are listed below:

Regular dues (annual): Student \$10 Individual \$15 Family \$25

Lake Martin Steward: Silver \$50 Gold \$100 Platinum \$250

I wish to make a donation of _____ in honor of _____.

Update on exciting changes for Alabama Water Watch

Eric Reutebuch, Lake Watch Board of Directors member and AWW Associate Director

As a member of Lake Watch, you probably already know that hundreds of citizen monitors volunteer hundreds of hours each year in stewardship of streams, rivers, lakes, bays and bayous statewide. Volunteers that have been trained and certified in water quality monitoring (water chemistry, bacteriological, stream biomonitoring) have tested over 2,200 sites on 800+ waterbodies over the past two decades, and achieved waterbody upgrades (one being on our beloved Lake Martin – Treasured Alabama Lake!), resolution of countless water pollution problems, and education of thousands of youth and adults in aquatic ecology, water quality and watershed stewardship. What would happen if AWW were to cease?

Well, thankfully, AWW is alive and well, and continuing its evolution as the AWW Program navigates the treacherous waters of diminishing dollars from all sources. Before his retirement this past June, AWW founder Bill Deutsch worked closely with Sam Fowler, Director of the AU Water Resources Center, Gary Lemme, Director of the Alabama Cooperative Extension System, William Batchelor, Dean of the AU College of Agriculture and Director of the Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station, and David Rouse, Director of the recently-formed School of Fisheries, Aquaculture, and Aquatic Sciences (formerly the Department of Fisheries and Allied Aquacultures), to secure a bright future for AWW! As of July 2013, AWW merged with the AU Water Resources Center, under the leadership of Sam Fowler.

Dr. Fowler has been supportive of the AWW Program for many years, and has now provided the program with a secure home as a part of the Water Resources Center. Eric Reutebuch, long-time AWW staffer, will oversee day-to-day operations of the AWW Program as Associate Director of the Program. Dr. Lemme and Dr. Batchelor have agreed to provide temporary financial support for the next three years through Extension and the Alabama Agricultural Experiment Station. So, if you value AWW and what the Program and our volunteer monitors have done, and continue to do throughout Alabama, shout out a hearty ‘THANK YOU’ to these men of foresight and vision.

AWW’s new home within the AU Water Resources Center is at the new Center for Advanced Science, Innovation and Commerce, known as the CASIC Building. The building is located in the Auburn Research Park on the south side of campus on Devall Drive.

The bottom line with all of this change – we feel that AWW is stronger than ever! The staff is committed to continue working toward the fulfillment of AWW’s mission ‘to improve both water quality and water policy through citizen monitoring and action’ and the vision of ‘having a citizen water monitor on every stream, river, lake and coast in Alabama.’

Though we are greatly appreciative of how several administrative units at Auburn University have stepped up to stabilize the AWW program, the long-term future of AWW still depends on the support of all Alabamians...through monitoring, joining the AWW Association, donating, and voicing their support of AWW to legislators. If you haven’t already – come join us on our journey! For details on the different ways that you can get involved, visit the AWW website (www.alabamawaterwatch.org).

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**Bill Deutsch, Founder of AWW, Retires after 26 Years of Service**

Lake Watch showed its appreciation to Alabama Water Watch at AWW's Annual Meeting earlier this year by presenting AWW's founder and director, Dr. Bill Deutsch, with a \$250 check (see photo at right).



Bill started the AWW Program back in 1992 with the goal of training 'citizen scientists' throughout the state to take an active role in managing and protecting their local waterbodies. Through the development of EPA-approved monitoring protocols wed with appropriate testing technologies, Bill established methods by which individuals could gather science-based credible data, acquire knowledge, and actively engage in local watershed management. Twenty-two years later, AWW is among the premiere citizen volunteer monitoring programs in the country, Lake Martin is Alabama's first and only 'Treasured Lake,' and Lake Watch continues its role as steward of our beloved lake! Thanks a million, Dr. Deutsch, and have fun with those grandkids!

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SEE YOU AT THE MEETING ON SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 16th!