

Newsletter No. 48
10 March 2013

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As Lake Watch transitions to new leadership, this will likely be the last newsletter in the “old” format but I’ll still provide a short comment or two as the opportunity permits.

Annual meeting. The meeting was held on Sunday 17 February 2013 at Uncle Nick’s Smokehouse Restaurant south of Dadeville. More than 60 people attended and enjoyed a great meal and warm fellowship.

Announcements

1. Announcement was made of a public service presentation by Dr. Steven Sammons (Auburn University Department of Fisheries) on **Monday 8 April 2013** at the Still Waters meeting room from **6:00-7:30pm**. The free program, entitled “*Lake Martin Stripers-Where Are They?*” is sponsored by Lake Watch.
2. Announcement was made of legal action taken against the town of Camp Hill, Alabama for repeated water quality violations dating back to 1986 that adversely affect the Sandy Creek area of Lake Martin. In November 2012 Lake Watch joined two other organizations in a “*Notice of Intent to Sue*” but that action was quickly pre-empted when the Alabama Attorney General and the Alabama Department of Environmental Management filed suit against the town. This is the same action we took several years ago against the towns of Wadley and Dadeville for similar violations and in both cases the AG and ADEM stepped in.
3. Dick Duncan was presented with the “*Woodfin Martin*” award for his service on the board and helping with many environmental education projects. Thanks Dick!

Elections

The following elections took place with the unanimous vote of all members present: Dr. Kathryn Braund as President; Tom Collier as Vice President; Zelma dePasquale as Secretary; Laurel Goldsmith as Treasurer; and Eric Reutebuch, Diana French & Dick Bronson to the Board of Directors.

Program

1. Dr. Sam Fowler, Director of AU’s Water Resources Center gave an informative presentation about ongoing projects. Dr. Bill Deutsch gave brief comments about his close association with Lake Watch through the years. And Eric Reutebuch gave a slide show of humorous anecdotes involving the Bronsons and invited attendees to “roast” the outgoing president. Several did. And well!
2. Appreciation gifts of matching jackets were presented to the Bronsons but the most meaningful was the establishment of the Dick & Mary Bronson Scholarship that will be given periodically to teachers, students and others who are interested in environmental matters. Wow! What a nice gift

Comments from the past president

It has been a privilege and an honor to have served as president of Lake Watch for more than 20 years, and it couldn't have been done without the support of many friends. But most of all the support from my wife Mary Ann. She has been my guiding light, my mentor, and my critic when it was needed...which was pretty often. In fact, the cutting room floor is littered with words and phrases that were deleted by her censor pen after reading what I had written. But every once in awhile I managed to sneak one past her.

For the past several months I've reflected on my tenure with Lake Watch and tried to put things into perspective. Certainly neither Mary Ann nor I thought of getting into the environmental field when I retired from the Army 29 years ago...it just happened. My reflections were helped by reading the 47 newsletters I had written since 1992. And as I thought about the many contentious goings-on within Lake Watch, I realized what a pain in the neck I'd been, particularly regarding the point-source pollution caused in part by textile discharges that simply overwhelmed the municipal wastewater treatment system. It's no wonder some folks in Alex City and Dadeville wished I'd moved back north.

But I wouldn't have changed a thing. And it's ironic that, several years later, many of those same people who were upset have told me how they wished they had listened to me. Ok, 'nuf said about the past.

There are two things I'm most proud of.

First is attaining the *Treasured Alabama Lake* recognition for Lake Martin. The designation ensures that the lake will be protected for future generations.

Second is the direction our environmental education program is taking. And that's where I see the most benefit...teaching young people about the connection between clean water and quality of life. And it's here that Mary Ann and I intend to spend our time representing Lake Watch. Remember our new motto, "*No Child Left Inside.*"

One last thought. Kathryn Braund will be a great president of Lake Watch and she has excellent officers and board members to help. I see nothing but clear skies ahead for Lake Watch. Many thanks to Kathryn for stepping up to serve.

Dick Bronson

Comments from the new president

My goal as the new president is to keep the ship sailing in the right direction now that our Captain has left the helm. We pray for smooth sailing. But whatever happens, we can be sure that we will be sailing on clean water due to the continuing efforts of Lake Watch volunteers. The heart of the Lake Watch mission is to act as the "keepers"; to watch and check and ensure clean and plentiful water now and in the future. It is an honor to serve this organization and I look forward to working with other Lake Watch volunteers to build on the great work accomplished over the past twenty years.

Kathryn Braund

Dues reminder

For the many faithful members who already sent in their dues for 2013, thank you! And for those who may have forgotten, we would appreciate your sending us a check in order to keep you current. Shown below are the new dues as explained in the last newsletter.

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

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

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

Dues are due on January 1 of each year and delinquent on January 31.

Mail to: Lake Watch of Lake Martin, P.O. Box 72, Alexander City, AL 35011

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