

D R A F T

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www.lakewatch.org

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By the time you read this you've seen Christmas decorations up for at least a month. It almost makes me want to leave the lights up all year. Almost, but not quite. But in the spirit of the season, Mary Ann and I wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year!

This newsletter will serve two purposes:

- 1) announce the new dues structure, and
- 2) announce who will take the reins of Lake Watch.

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New Dues Structure. The Lake Watch Board of Directors met on 7 November 2012 and approved the following changes to annual Lake Watch membership dues.

REGULAR DUES

Student	\$ 10
Single	15
Family	25

LAKE MARTIN STEWARD

Silver	\$ 50
Gold	100
Platinum	250

MEMORIAL DONATION

I wish to make a memorial donation of \$_____ in honor of _____

Dues are payable on 1 January 2013 and every following year on the first day of January. Dues are delinquent if not paid by 31 January of each year.

As many of you know, this is the first increase in dues since Lake Watch was formed more than 20 years ago. While the changes are modest, the funds will help defray the cost of replacement chemicals for test kits used monthly by volunteer monitors. This is necessary because federal & state funding cuts to Alabama Water Watch last year gutted their ability to do such funding. From my perspective, it's reasonable for us to absorb the costs considering the scientific backstop that AWW has provided us for so many years.

The change to an end-of-year due date will simplify sending out notices and will make it easier for members to know when their check is due. I can't count the number of times that members stopped me to ask when their membership was due. Now we'll know.

The board also discussed how to deal with new members who join near the end of the year. A policy will be stated in a new Lake Watch brochure that's being worked on to replace the old blue tri-fold that has been used for nearly 20 years.

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**Leadership change.** For several years I've hinted at stepping down and turning the organizational leadership over to younger and smarter people. That time has come and a new Lake Watch president will be elected during the February annual meeting (more on that later). The realization that I've entered my 80<sup>th</sup> year...and my aches & pains when I get out of bed...make it clear this is a good decision.

With unanimous consent, the Board of Directors nominated Dr. Kathryn Braund to stand for election as President. She agreed and I couldn't be happier! Kathryn brings a new set of ideas on how to continue the work of Lake Watch and has stated in the past that we must maintain the "watchdog" of Lake Martin.

Kathryn lives on the lake in Still Waters, she's married to Kyle Braund (a retired veterinarian from Australia), she has been a member of Lake Watch and a volunteer monitor for many years, and she has served on the board for at least 6 years. She is a Professor of Southern History at Auburn University, having received her Masters Degree there and her Doctorate from Florida State University. She has written several books about the Creek Indians and is working on another.

The slate for consideration at the annual meeting:

- Kathryn Braund as President
- Tom Collier as Vice President
- Eric Reutebuch as Board Member (Technical Advisor)
- Dick Bronson as Board Member (Environmental Education)
- Nominations from the floor

Remaining board members are: Jim Anckersen, Matt Campbell, Dick Duncan, John Durr, Dave Heinzen, Pat Lynch (Secretary) and Tom Lynch (Treasurer). Ann Campbell remains as the Quality Control/Quality Officer (testing coordinator)

As for me, I fully intend to hang around for many years representing Lake Watch in environmental education programs and continuing to work with the Radney Elementary School in Alexander City. I guess our philosophy is, if we can't educate enough adults to understand and appreciate our state's natural resources, maybe we can grow a new batch of good stewards.

**Annual meeting.** The Lake Watch annual meeting is scheduled for **Sunday 17 February 2013, noon to 2:30pm** in the Banquet Room at **Uncle Nick's Smokehouse Restaurant** (formerly the Cove Restaurant) 6 miles south of Dadeville on Highway 49.

We're still working on the program but as always, the meal will be free. Just make sure we get your reservations after we send out reminder postcards in January. See you there.

**Thanks!** I'll have a few more things to say at the February meeting but for now I want to extend my profound thanks for having had the privilege of serving as Lake Watch President for 20+ years. It's been a ride...and nothing that was accomplished by the organization would have been possible without the loyal backing of you members. Certainly our close association with Alabama Water Watch at Auburn University gave us the necessary scientific credibility, and our early connection with David Ludder and the Legal Environmental Assistance Foundation gave us the legal tools to fight for what we knew was right...but it was your willingness to support us through your membership that gave us perseverance. Actually it was more than that...it was your friendship that kept things moving forward. Thanks again.

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I'm confident that you will give Kathryn the same great support you gave me. I hope you continue your membership and encourage others to join us.

To paraphrase someone, come see me...I'll leave the porch light on.

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