

LAKE WATCHER

The Newsletter of Lake Watch of Lake Martin

No. 51, January 2016

2015 Achievements:

- 22 sites monitored for water chemistry and bacteria in the Lake Martin Watershed
- 102 data records submitted to the AWW water quality database
- First set of bacteria monitoring data sent from Lake Watch to the Swim Guide, www.theswimguide.org
- Hundreds of children and adults educated on lake and watershed stewardship

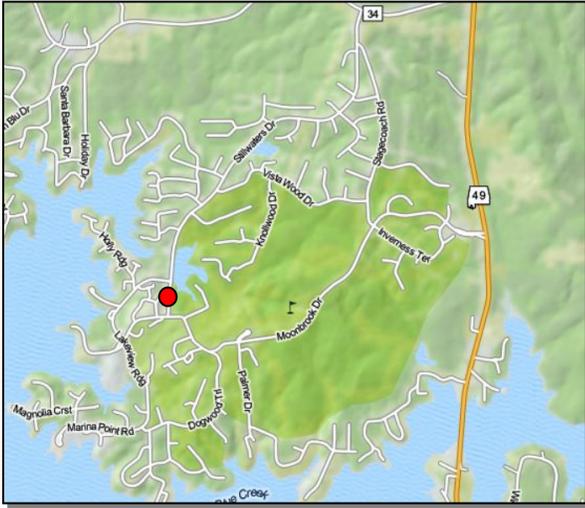
Lake Watch Annual Meeting Set for February 21, 2016

The Lake Watch Annual Meeting will be **Sunday, February 21, 2016, noon to 2:30 pm at the StillWaters Residential Association Centre** inside StillWaters Resort (1816 StillWaters Drive, Dadeville, AL; 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 donate a nominal fee of \$7.50 per person to cover the cost of our catfish dinner so that our dues and donations are used for water quality and watershed stewardship purposes. To pre-register, go to www.lakewatch.org. Click the **Events** menu on the left side of the homepage, then click the **Register** button. You may send your luncheon payment with your dues or pay at the meeting but please do take the time to preregister for the meeting. Or, if you prefer, send an e-mail to us at membership@lakewatch.org to let us know that you plan to attend.

Lance LeFleur, the Director of the Alabama Department of Environmental Management, is this year's guest speaker. Mr. LeFleur was the owner of a Mobile recycling business when he was appointed as Director, ADEM in April 2010...just in time to be selected by Governor Riley as point-man for Alabama in response to the BP oil spill in the Gulf. It was a hectic time in his career, and a time he likely would have preferred to miss. It was several weeks before he could get to the agency in Montgomery and meet his staff. Since that time, he has been a breath of fresh air compared to several past directors. It was largely through his willingness to hear pleas from Lake Watch that we were successful in attaining Treasured Alabama Lake (TAL) designation for Lake Martin. Director LeFleur has been asked to speak briefly on specific TAL rules that help protect our lake. He also will likely address the adverse impact on recent funding cuts made by the Alabama Legislature and his response to those cuts.

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):

Our board will see some changes in the coming year. President Kathryn Braund is completing her three-year term and Eric Reutebuch has been nominated as her replacement. Secretary Zelma DePasquale is also retiring from the board and Diana Porter has accepted a nomination for that position. The Nominating Committee has presented three nominations for board vacancies: Zelma DePasquale, Dick Bronson, and Judy Palfrey.

Our Year in Review

Kathryn Braund, Lake Watch President

Lake Watch members have been busy over the past year. Under the direction of our Volunteer Monitor Coordinator, Judy Palfrey, our certified water quality monitors test sites from Horseshoe Bend down to above the Martin dam and report results to Alabama Water Watch's database (see map on page 5).

We have lost some of our most dedicated and experienced monitors this year to retirement but fortunately, we have new volunteers to help fill the gaps. But, as always, we are eager for new volunteers to continue the work that is the very core of our mission. In addition to monthly testing, our volunteers have worked on educational projects for local children, including the Living Streams program. Lake Watch is a member of the Middle Tallapoosa River Basin Clean Water Partnership and we have worked with the Lake Martin Home and Boat Owners Association on a variety of local issues. In addition, Lake Watch members prepare items relating to lake quality for *Lake Magazine*.

One important issue of concern over the past year was the discovery of "brown frothy material" in Sandy Creek near the Hwy 49 bridge and in StillWaters. Bacteriological testing did not reveal the presence of *E. coli*, but our volunteers continue to be vigilant and respond to bacteriological threats to our lake and associated streams.

In December, we received the welcome news that FERC issued Alabama Power a new 30-year license to operate Martin Dam, approving the company's proposal to raise the winter water level by three feet and, if there is sufficient water available, to extend the summer water level into the fall. Alabama Power also plans several recreational enhancements around the lake as part of the new license. Implementation of the new license takes effect on January 20, 2016, after a 30-day review period.

As we continue to monitor the local watershed and speak out on issues that would impact water quality, we continue to seek your support through your dues and your help with our organization. We are always eager for active volunteers. If you are interested in helping with meetings, the newsletter, our website or our Face Book page, or other activities or wish to become a volunteer water monitor, please contact us at info@lakewatch.org.

Be sure to check out our website at www.lakewatch.org. Our site allows members to renew their dues, make donations, update their contact information, as well as access information about our organization,

including a list of our Lake Watch water test sites, research reports (focused on Lake Martin), information on how to volunteer, news and events relating to our mission, and handy links and maps. You can also keep up with us 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 of interest on our page.

So, Who’s Watching the Water?

Eric Reutebuch and Ann Campbell

Water chemistry monitors test and report important variables that indicate the health of the lake and its incoming tributary streams and Tallapoosa River, including pH, dissolved oxygen, alkalinity, hardness and turbidity. Bacteriological monitors test for *E.coli* which indicates fecal contamination in water, and at certain levels, waters that are unsafe for swimming. Alabama Water Watch at Auburn University receives Lake Watch data from individual volunteers and maintains permanent computer records for each site.

Here’s an overview of the nuts and bolts of expenses to keep our monitoring program operating:

Water Chemistry Monitoring:

Primary supplier is LaMotte. Current method is to order chemicals on a quarterly basis as needed to save on shipping costs, but monitors often request special orders.

- Full kit including case, glassware, thermometer and reagents ~ \$290.00
- Secchi disk & line with weight from Ben Meadows: \$50
- Full set of water chemistry reagents ~ \$97
- Remote sampler made by a local manufacturer for AWW: \$75

Bacteriological Monitoring:

Primary supplier is Micrology Labs.

Estimated cost to equip an active bacterial monitor for the season (May – Sept), five months, for one site is approximately \$50 plus tax and shipping. In accordance with the guidelines set out by ADEM, Lake Watch of Lake Martin, along with other water monitoring groups in the state, takes a sabbatical on bacterial monitoring beginning in October and returning to our regular monthly monitoring routine in May. The Coliscan Easygel growth medium must be kept frozen until sampling time. The bacterial testing requires that the monitor use an incubator to grow bacteria in sample petri dishes and report bacteria count results to AWW. An incubator can be easily made by the monitor with an inexpensive ice chest/cooler, night light and thermometer.

*Note: all these costs are at current year prices which tend to go up a bit each year.

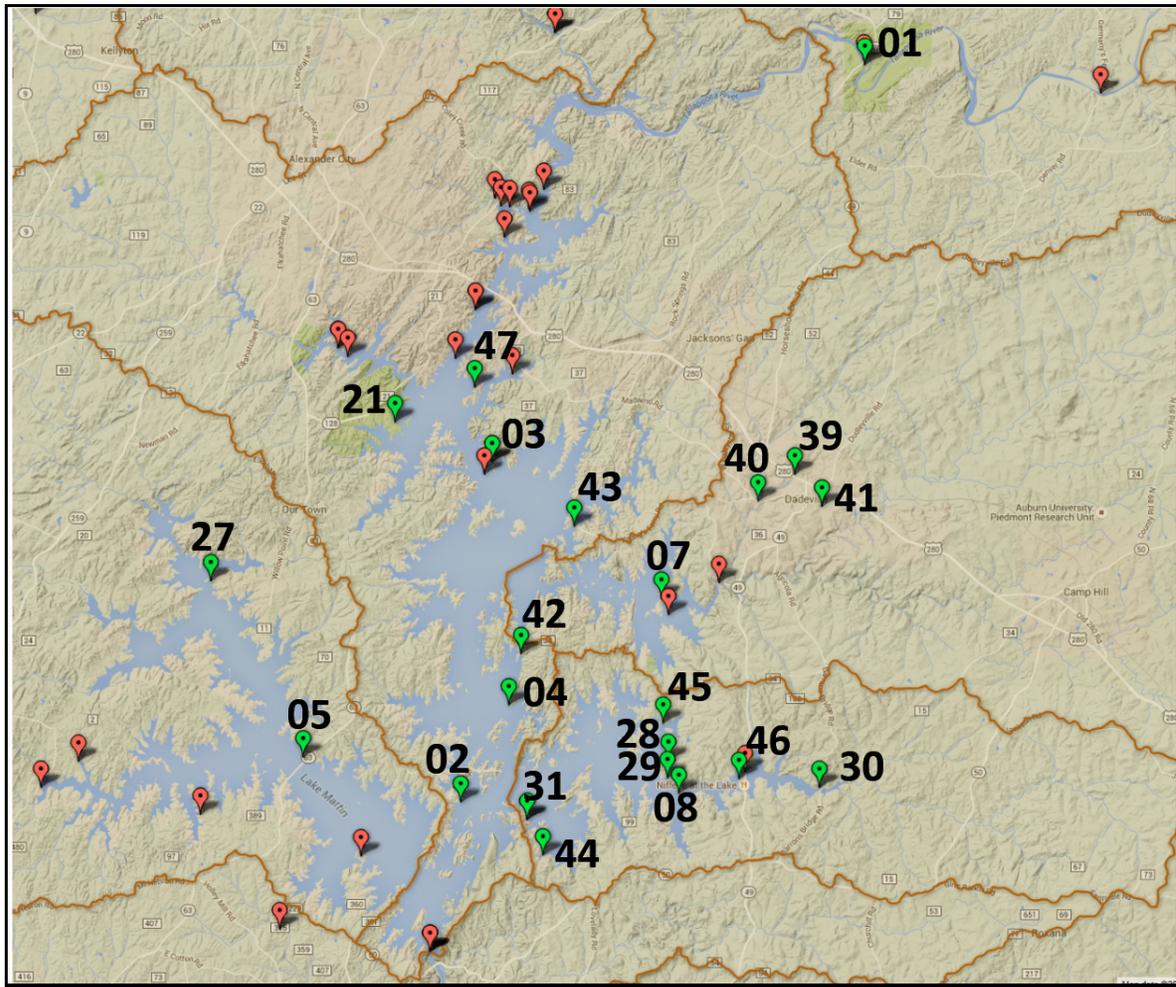
Bottom Line:

Although current monitors are adding water quality data from the Lake Martin Watershed to the AWW database, as our veterans retire their kits, **WE NEED NEW MONITORS** to join our Lake Watch team. If you want to get in on the fun of monitoring our Treasured Lake and its tributaries, go to the Alabama Water Watch website www.alabamawaterwatch.org and sign up for a workshop for water chemistry monitoring or bacteriological monitoring or steam biomonitoring, or better yet, all three! Once you’re certified, go to the Lake Watch website at www.lakewatch.org and contact our volunteer monitor coordinator to make arrangements to select a site (or sites) of your preference and Lake Watch will order supplies for you. Then once your site information is submitted to AWW, you’ll be set up for data input

into the AWW website, and you'll be ready to go! I guarantee that you'll get that warm, fuzzy feeling inside – knowing that you are doing your part in protecting our Treasured Lake for all to enjoy!

Lake Watch sites monitored in 2015 – WOW, great job monitors!:

AWW site code	Monitor(s)	Waterbody	Site Location
TALLAPOOSA RIVER			
07001001	Palfrey/Williams	Tallapoosa River	Horseshoe Bend National Military Park
LAKE MAINSTEM			
07001047	Reutebuchs	Lake Martin	1732 River Oaks Drive
07001021	Reutebuchs	Lake Martin	Wind Creek State Park swimming beach
07001003	Bronsons	Lake Martin	Bay Pine Island
07001043	Palfrey/Williams	Lake Martin	Dare Park swimming beach
07001042	Palfrey/Williams	Lake Martin	Paces Point Trail
07001004	Fords	Lake Martin	Camp Alamisco
07019002	Mike Guillot	Lake Martin	The Ridge Marina
SANDY CREEK WATERSHED			
07001041	Palfrey/Williams	Chattasofka Creek Trib	Near Dadeville High School - East South St
07001039	Palfrey/Williams	Buck Creek	Near Freeman Drive Bridge
07001040	Palfrey/Williams	Buck Creek	Past Waterworks holding station-W Lafayette St
07001007	Palfrey/Williams	Sandy Creek Embayment	Smith Landing
BLUE CREEK WATERSHED			
07001030	Coleman/Lehman	Blue Creek Embayment	Barrons Bridge
07001046	Dave Hagan	Blue Creek Embayment	Marina Point Condo Dock
07001045	David and JoAnn Hawk	Blue Creek Embayment	Dock at 890 Holiday Drive
07001028	Raymond and Zelma DePasquale	Blue Creek Embayment	Sunset Cove
07001029	Coleman/Lehman	Blue Creek Embayment	Pier at Harbor Pointe Marina
07001008	Kathryn Braund	Blue Creek Embayment	Stillwaters
07001044	Jim & Shellie Bearrentine	Cooper Creek Embayment	Pier at 144 Crooked Arrow Drive
07001031	Lulu Campbell	Cooper Creek Embayment	Bankers Cove
KOWALIGA CREEK WATERSHED			
07001027	George Zorn	Kowaliga Creek Embayment	Zorn Dock Lakeview Road
07001005	Diana & David French	Kowaliga Creek Embayment	Boat ramp at Kowaliga Bridge



Lake Watch water quality monitoring sites from Horseshoe Bend down to Martin Dam. Green dots = active sites (site number = last two digits of AWW site code), red dots = inactive sites.

The Frenches

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

I first “met” the French’s when they sent me a membership check nearly 20 years ago. The funny part was, they sent it from their home in Missouri, and it took me a few years to actually meet them when they retired and came to the lake. They built their house in the Windover area of the lake, continued their membership, and began attending every Lake Watch meeting and training session possible. They took the Alabama Water Watch training in chemical testing in May 1999 and adopted a test site near the old Kowaliga Bridge in an area of the lake that needed data on water quality.

They’ve been loyal water quality monitors since that time, having submitted more than 270 monthly test reports (= **22 ½ years of monitoring!**) to the AWW website. In addition to their dedication to keeping track of water quality in the southern part of the lake, they were always available to help with environmental education projects with local school children, including Living Streams programs at Camp ASCCA. It was there that Diana’s school teacher experience came to the fore, and David’s former law

enforcement experience didn't hurt either when trying to keep kids focused on their tasks. But mostly it was their infectious love of life that was evident to anyone who saw them at work with young people.

As with all of us, Father Time began catching up with Diana and David...the aches & pains increased, and they decided to hang up their "monitor spurs" and let someone else continue their good works. They will still be around...just not quite as active. And their legacy is already written...THEY DID GOOD!

Environmental Education in the Lake Martin Watershed, and Beyond

Judy Palfrey, Lake Watch Water Monitoring Coordinator and Dick Bronson, Lake Watch Board member, Lake Watch founder and former long-time President

Water quality and learning about macroinvertebrates (aquatic insects, snails, crayfish and clams) were taught to Dadeville Elementary after-school science club children by Judy Palfrey and her daughter, Heather Williams. Using Judy's bug box, the children were taught about the bugs and given clay to make their own. At the end of the term, the diorama was finished and placed in the entrance of the school. Alexander City Outlook came out and wrote an article about the event.



Dadeville Elementary School students get hands-on science lesson from Lake Watcher, Judy Palfrey (Cliff Williams /The Record, 5/14/2015).

As well as learning about the bugs, an Enviroscape (provided by Tallapoosa County Extension Service) was used to teach about pollution. Also, Judy worked with the Montgomery Clean City Commission at the Montgomery Zoo. Using the Enviroscape, pollution from point & nonpoint sources was discussed. Students from all over Alabama came to the booth.

Judy and one of City of Montgomery's employees taught at Genetta Park (a reconstructed wetland) to Carver High School students using the Enviroscape. Cynthia discussed trash issues while Judy taught about watershed and point/nonpoint source pollution. Judy and Heather also taught water chemistry using AWW kits to a Dadeville 8th grade Physical Science class. Pollution from different sources was discussed as well as watersheds and macroinvertebrates.

Lake Watch volunteers continue to help with a variety of other Environmental Education projects with schools in the local area, including:

- Water quality testing using the LaMotte chemical test kit
- Field trips to Wind Creek State Park where instruction was given on chemical, bacterial and biological water testing
- Field trips to wastewater and drinking water treatment plants (Alexander City)
- Field trip to Martin Dam
- Nature hikes on the trails behind Radney Elementary School (Alexander City)



Dick Bronson explaining to the Radney gifted class how a healthy, diverse population of aquatic macroinvertebrates translates to a healthy stream, river and lake that we all benefit from (Cliff Williams /The Outlook, 11/1/2015).

- Preparatory work on a stream restoration project for Barrett Creek (Radney School)
- Visit and presentation to Radney School Gifted Classes by ADEM Director Lance LeFleur, followed by a hike on the school's nature trail.

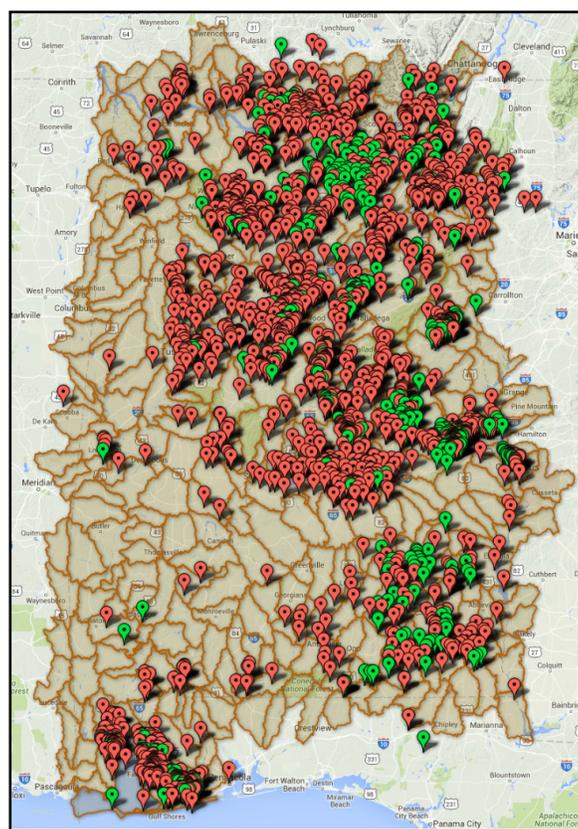
Exciting changes for Alabama Water Watch

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

Hundreds of citizen monitors volunteer hundreds of hours each year in stewardship of streams, rivers, lakes, bays and bayous statewide. Volunteers trained and certified in water quality monitoring (water chemistry, bacteriological, and/or stream biomonitoring) have tested over 2,300 sites on 800+ waterbodies over the past 23 years, submitting over 82,000 water data records to the AWW database, as well working to resolve countless water pollution problems, and education of thousands of youth and adults in aquatic ecology, water quality and watershed stewardship.

2015 turned out to be another year of significant transition for AWW. Our beloved AU Water Resources Center Director, Dr. Sam Fowler, retired after 39 years of service and leadership in the Alabama Cooperative Extension System and then at the AU Water Resources Center. We were very fortunate that Dr. Puneet Srivastava was chosen to replace Dr. Fowler as the Center's Director. Dr. Srivastava has a long list of impressive credentials and achievements over the past decade in water resources research. We look forward to working with him for many years to come!

Another **MAJOR** transition was a total rebuild of the AWW water quality database and online data tools (graphs and maps, see map below). Sergio Ruiz-Córdova, our resident database guru, working with AWW programmer-extraordinaire, Jim Johnson, put in many long hours to build the new faster, better AWW database! For the first time, we can now visualize and query AWW data by watershed, making it easier to interpret and utilize AWW water data.



110 workshops were conducted in 2015, thanks in large part to our dedicated citizen trainers, and our super-workshop-coordinator, Rita Grub. With over 400 new water watchers on the ground, we will get even closer to realizing our vision of having a monitor on every stream, river, lake, bay and bayou in the state.

AWW sites, 2,327 and counting!, from the Tennessee Valley to the Gulf of Mexico.

Though we are greatly appreciative of ongoing support from the Alabama Cooperative Extension System and the Alabama Agriculture Experiment Station at Auburn University, the long-term viability of AWW still depends on the support of Alabamians...through monitoring, joining the AWW Association, donating, and voicing support of AWW. 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).

I want to thank all of you for all that you do in support of the AWW Program, and preserving our treasured Alabama waters for all to enjoy!

Dues Reminder

Take the plunge, if you haven't already!

Support Lake Watch! And ask a neighbor to do the same!



For the many faithful Lake Watch members who already sent in their dues for 2016, thank you! And for those who haven't yet, don't forget to send a check to: P. O. Box 72 Alexander City, AL 35010 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**

We also welcome donations. Don't forget—a donation in someone's honor/memory is a lovely gift/tribute.

Lake Watch

Lake Martin

P. O. Box 72

Alexander City, AL 35010

