



Committed to a Clean and Full *Lake Lanier*

# Lanier Outlook

Newsletter for the Lake Lanier Association  
February 2013

## Upcoming Dates to Remember

### 11th Annual Lake Lanier Association Golf Tournament

Monday, May 6th, 2013  
10:00AM Registration;  
11:30AM Shotgun Start  
Legacy on Lanier at Lake Lanier Islands

### Annual Member Meeting

Wednesday, June 5th, 2013  
6:00PM  
Forsyth Conference Center at Lanier Tech

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## Message from the Board

As we enter 2013, a short review of 2012 will show that your association had an excellent year. Our major programs of Adopt-A-Lake, Shore Sweep, lake advocacy with our legal team, and community participation, were very successful:

a) Adopt-A-Lake made major strides working with state agencies and local colleges providing data input for their activities.

b) Shore Sweep again collected over 35 ton of trash from the lake. In addition, the LLA was involved in two major clean-up projects in 2012. One involved multiple sunken houseboats at a single private dock in Hall County. The other was an abandoned houseboat that had been sitting on Forsyth County shoreline for over five years. Leadership by the LLA was instrumental in resolving both of these water quality and safety issues.

c) On the legal front, the Tri-States law suits have been settled in favor of Georgia and the LLA. Significant for LLA was the acknowledgement that one of the authorized purposes for Lake Lanier was recreation - a major accomplishment for the economic progress of North Georgia.

d) The LLA has established a significant presence in the community through membership and leadership in various major programs and projects such as Rotary, ACF Stakeholders, and the Metro Water Planning district.

Other initiatives were prevalent as well in 2012:

a) After the tragic accidents last summer, LLA took leadership in establishing the Lake Lanier Water Safety Alliance (LLWSA). This group of Lanier agencies and public participants will focus on water safety, boating education, awareness of the rules and procedures for safe boating and recreating on Lanier.

b) Our drive for raising the lake level 2 feet (to 1073 feet above sea level), which would provide Georgia with a 26+ billion gallon available water storage reservoir continued. Support for this initiative has been achieved through the legislature and most Lanier stakeholders.

c) The LLA annual meeting was a first for our new method of having political candidates "meet and greet" their constituents, rather than each make a one minute speech. This concept was well received by the candidates as well as our members.

d) Our fund-raising was successful with our golf tournament and a major investment by Forsyth County in LLA plans and programs.

e) Our financial performance was on plan, and we expect to continue that prudent management.

f) As the US Army Corps of Engineers develops the first new Water Control Plan in 50 years, the LLA is extremely active in providing input and support for recreation and holding reasonable lake levels.

g) Continuation of member social events around the lake - a low cost way for the organization to allow its members to more fully enjoy the benefits of membership by meeting other individuals that are interested in promoting lake advocacy.

Moving to 2013, our initiatives will continue to be towards of mission of Clean Lake, Full Lake, Safe Lake:

a) Our ongoing successful programs, such as Adopt A Lake and Shore Sweep, will continue into this year.

b) We will monitor developments and public responses in the developing Water Control Plan. We will continue to advocate for Lake Lanier in that process.

c) The new LLWSA program will be driven for awareness and education.

d) A new initiative of solar powered navigation marker lighting on Lanier will begin. We anticipate eleven solar marker lights will be installed in 2013. This will be a major project that the LLA will drive with assistance from the CORPS and US Coast Guard Auxiliary.

e) LLA will continue to pursue increased membership in 2013. Focus will be on family memberships with a goal of 20% net improvement from 1500 memberships to 1800. We also want to work with the businesses in North Georgia and particularly around the lake. The more members we have, the stronger our voice becomes when dealing with other agencies on lake issues. Existing members can help with this challenge by encouraging friends, neighbors, and local businesses to join the LLA if they haven't already.

f) We will continue to encourage more members to participate in committee work - Shore Sweep, Adopt-A-Lake, fundraising, socials, membership, newsletter, etc.

In summary, 2012 was a very good year for the LLA, and we anticipate an even better year in 2013.

## LLA Submits Water Control Manual Comments to the Corps

In light of the 11th Circuit's rulings in the Tri-State Water Wars, the Corps is writing a new Water Control Manual (WCM) for the ACF. The Association recently submitted formal comments to the Corps as input for the new WCM. The full text of the comments is available on our website, but here is an outline of the main points we made to the Corps.

### 1. The Corps' minimum flow into Florida should be lowered.

The Corps has set a minimum flow of 5,000 cfs on the premise that ACF basin inflow did not drop below that in the pre-Lanier records from 1929 through 1955. However, a 26-year base period is insufficient to serve as the baseline. The last 20 years have had substantially lower flows, and a Columbia University study of paleohydroclimate records shows that the lowest historical flows in the ACF were likely well below 5,000 cfs.

### 2. A 5,000 cfs minimum flow is unsustainable.

The required minimum flow was also based on the presumption that dams would be built on the Flint River – but they never were. In addition, precipitation has been lower from January through April since Buford Dam was built, which diminishes Lanier's ability to refill. The decline in precipitation coincides with the increased demand for augmentation flows imposed by the Corps and results in lower levels in Lake Lanier.

### 3. Augmentation flows are not required by the Endangered Species Act.

Generally, discharges from Lanier that raise Apalachicola River flows above run-of-river are not required by the ESA and should not be required in the new WCM.

### 4. Year-round full pool should be raised to 1071 immediately and to 1073 after all necessary preparations have been completed.

Raising full pool to 1073 would make available an additional 26 billion gallons of stored water for all legally authorized purposes; it would also raise Lanier's levels across the board by two feet and increase safety during droughts. Many of Lanier's drownings result from inexperienced swimmers venturing outside of the designated swimming areas, where sudden drop-offs and deep siltation are unseen hazards. When the lake drops, the designated swimming areas are out of the water, leaving users no choice but to venture into these relatively more dangerous areas. The most cost-effective solution for safety and water storage needs is to raise Lanier's level.



### 5. Existing storage and ramp rate provisions should be changed

The endangered mussels thrived in the Apalachicola for millennia under conditions in which river levels varied widely and quickly. This causes us to question whether the Fish and Wildlife Service's requirements are based on sound science. FWS's requirements deplete the water available to preserve minimum flows in the Apalachicola during severe droughts, and absent an established need for them, we believe they should be eliminated.



# ACF Educational Series

Feedback from our members has let us know that more information about the Corps' operations would be a valuable service. So, beginning with our next newsletter, we will publish a series of educational pieces discussing how the ACF system is operated, what the issues are for

Lake Lanier, and the positions LLA has taken as its members' advocate in protecting the lake.



# January 2013 Lake Lanier Index

The Lake cooled slightly to 48 from an average 51 in December, and one degree warmer than our January 2012 reading. Our Secchi average of 6.5 feet was a full foot above 2012. Our lowest reading of 3.3 feet was near Nix Bridge Rec Center and a dock in Little River. The highest readings were off Chestnut Hill Rd and in Cinnamon Cove 9.8 feet. Our "A" sector averaged 5.2 feet, 0.7 feet above last year. "B" averaged 6.8 feet 0.3 feet above 2012 and "C" 8.8 feet 0.3 feet above 2012. The chlorophyll a readings were very low with only one reading at 2 PPB in the Upper Chestatee Branch the rest at 1 PPB. We will increase our Lake Lanier Index to 6.6 with the better Secchi results.

Adopt-A-Lake divides Lake Lanier into three sections "A" north of Brown's Bridge, "B" the center region south of the Bridge to a line from Six Mile Creek east to Aqualand Marina, and "C" south of this line to Buford Dam. We have 30 stations that volunteers test the first weekend every month. Secchi readings are taken by lowering a weighted disk into the water and measuring the distance it can be seen thus giving a gauge of clarity. Chlorophyll a is used to determine nutrients in the Lake. The Lake Lanier Index is only a measure of nutrients and clarity and not of water safety. Thanks to our wonderful Adopt-A-Lake volunteers, AMPRO Labs for our chlorophyll a analysis, and the support of all Lake Lanier Association members.

## Happenings at Lake Lanier

Even though we are in the "off" season, there are still plenty of activities going on around Lake Lanier. In case you are looking for something fun to do below is a list of a few of the upcoming events around the lake:

### FEBRUARY

- Valentine's Dinner served at BullFrogs Bar & Grill at Legacy Lodge  
Thursday, February 14 – Saturday, February 16th



- Valentine's Dinner & Party Package at Legacy Lodge  
Saturday, February 16th

### MARCH:



- ShamRock Music Festival, Peachtree Point at Lake Lanier Islands Resort  
Saturday, March 16th



- Sunset Cove  
Open Daily, Friday, March 29th



- Easter Egg Hunt at Lake Lanier Islands  
Saturday, March 30th

### APRIL:



- Boat Show at Lake Lanier Islands,  
Saturday, April 13: 10 am - 6 pm and  
Sunday, April 14: 12 pm - 5 pm



- Full Moon Party at Sunset Cove  
Friday, April 26th
- Music & Beer Fest at Sunset Cove  
Saturday, April 27th





**Lake Lanier Association**

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*Committed to a clean and full  
Lake Lanier to enhance its  
economic value in Georgia.*

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## **LLA at the Atlanta Boat Show**

*Thanks to all the members that stopped by and said hello at the recent Atlanta Boat Show. The show was bigger and better this year and was a successful event for everyone involved. It is great seeing so many Lake Lanier people at that show supporting our local merchants! Special congratulations to member Brendan Smith for winning the \$200 value his/hers jackets with the LLA stitched logo.*