Happy New Year LLA members! As we enter 2015, you can be proud of the association’s performance in 2014. Last year was one of firsts:

1) Our membership grew 6% over 2013 which was the best growth in 5 years;

2) The first full year of the installation of Solar lights on hazard markers was marked with over 100 lights placed at the south end of the Lake. This safety program has been widely accepted by our members and the general public;

3) Shore Sweep collected more trash than any prior year, with over 50 tons removed from the lake;

4) We have experienced improved relationships with the counties surrounding Lanier. In addition to financial investments in your association, several counties around the Lake have significantly participated in our cleanup programs. LLA received a major award from Gwinnett County for the varied cleanup activities that we sponsor; we were named Community Organization of the Decade by Gwinnett Clean and Beautiful!

5) For the first time we embarked on a major project protecting islands on Lanier from erosion. With major funding from Tommy Bagwell of American Proteins, and significant materials and installation discounts from Bluegrass Materials and Tom Child at Marine Specialties, we are beginning to rip rap some islands that are eroding from water washing away at the shore line. The first island was completed in December 2014, and we expect to complete several more in 2015.

6) A new program with the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) and the Corps of Engineers (COE) for removing abandoned vessels and docks from the Lake was initiated by the LLA.

Many other programs were continued in 2014 with outstanding success. You will read about them inside this newsletter.

As we look forward to 2015 and beyond, our major projects are continuing for the association. Programs such as Adopt-A-Lake, Shore Sweep, Solar Lights, County and Community relationships, Island Rip Rap will be foremost in our plans. We will also participate with the State of Georgia as they defend Lanier and the Georgia waters against the Florida law suit filed with the US Supreme Court. Attendant with the legal action, we will support the ACF Stakeholders Group as they present the results of their modeling work over the past several years. Part of our focus will be improved storage quantity in Lanier and the potential for an additional 26+ billion gallons of available storage by taking Lanier full pool up 2 feet to 1073 feet above sea level. This would be beneficial to all stakeholders during drought situations.

We will also have a strong campaign for growing membership in 2015. Our objective will be to increase membership by 40 – 50% in the next 10 months. This is an ambitious goal, but with help from our members, we can accomplish that growth.
Water Wars II
Lake Lanier’s Own Version of “WW II”

By Clyde Morris,
Attorney for the
Lake Lanier Association

About a year ago, Florida asked for permission to file suit against Georgia in the Supreme Court of the United States, asking the high court to equitably apportion the waters of the ACF in a way that would send more water to Florida. Recently, the Court granted Florida leave to file its Complaint against Georgia and gave Georgia thirty days to file its Answer.

This case is about “equitable apportionment,” which at its most fundamental level is about how much of the ACF’s water each state is entitled to use by law. To quote one excerpt from Florida’s Complaint:

50. The existing storage, evaporation, and consumption of water by Georgia’s municipal, industrial, recreational, and agricultural users have diminished the amount of water entering Florida in spring and summer of drought years by as much as 3,000-4,000 cubic feet per second (“cfs”). This has altered the flow regime of the Apalachicola River during the most vulnerable times for riverine and estuarine species. In recent drought years, Apalachicola River flows averaged less than 5,500 cfs throughout the entire late-spring-summer-fall period from May through December. Such long durations of extremely low flows were unprecedented before 2000.

So, the challenge is all about the amount of ACF flow to which Florida is entitled, which in turn is fundamental to the LLA’s mission of “Full Lake” (and spurred the LLA to dive into the Water Wars previously). To quote a portion of Florida’s Prayer for Relief:

Florida further prays that the Court enter an order enjoining Georgia, its privies, assigns, lessees, and other persons claiming under it, from interfering with Florida’s rights, and capping Georgia’s overall depletive water uses at the level then existing on January 3, 1992.

In determining whether to cap “Georgia’s overall depletive water uses at the level then existing on January 3, 1992,” the Supreme Court will consider the uses to which the State of Georgia and the Corps of Engineers now put the waters of the ACF, as well as the uses for which Florida seeks to obtain more of that water.

The fact that there is an original jurisdiction, equitable apportionment case in the Supreme Court of the United States that could determine forever how much of the water in the ACF we may be able to keep and use is of august importance to everyone in Georgia, and especially to those who are concerned about Lake Lanier. And while it is perhaps hard to imagine this beautiful lake, which supports millions of people, being drained to prop up a desirable but tenuous oyster farming operation in the Gulf of Mexico that has recently been the victim of Florida’s overharvesting as much as nature’s droughts, that is the proposition that has been laid before this nation’s highest court.

We will periodically update membership on the case via the LLA website and newsletter. But for now, it is most important to recognize the critical importance of Florida’s legal action and the extensive repercussions that could result on Lake Lanier.
Abandoned and Derelict Docks and Vessels

The LLA is working with the Corps of Engineers and the DNR to get a more effective process in place for identifying and dealing with abandoned and derelict docks and vessels around Lake Lanier. There are several projects that have already moved forward in terms of getting resolved through this initiative whether it be through the property owner or one of the agencies. This is a complicated issue that involves many different parties and processes. As part of our service to the community, through this initiative, the LLA hopes to gain a better understanding of all the issues and to influence change where appropriate through either legislation, agency funding, or process improvement.

The photos above are of a recent success. This sailboat had been laying on a shoreline area of Bald Ridge Creek for the past several years. The LLA contacted the owner and expressed concern about the vessel. By working with the owner and communicating with local boating groups, we were able to find a salvage option for this sailboat and the boat has since been towed away and removed from the lake and the owner took care of removing the dock.

Atlanta Boat Show 2015 a success

What a success the Atlanta Boat Show 2015 was! Over 25,000 people attended the show and the LLA booth at the show was busy for the entire four days! Lots of fun for both LLA staff and volunteers that worked the booth talking with lake stakeholders about LLA programs and services.

One of the fun items we had at the LLA booth this year was a full lake map mounted on foam board on an easel display. As people came by the booth, we asked them to put a push pin for where they live, where they store their boat, or their favorite place to recreate on Lake Lanier. There were a lot of pins in the map by the end of the show and it was interesting seeing what a great representation we had of visitors from all around the lake. Thanks to everyone that stopped by and we hope to see you again at another event soon!
Island Rip Rap

The Lake Lanier Association has launched a major new initiative to help reduce the amount shoreline erosion occurring in the lake. In this new effort, we are focusing on protecting the shoreline of the many islands in our lake. As the water levels of the lake fluctuate, shoreline is exposed to erosion due to wave action from wind and boat wakes. When the shoreline erodes and collapses, trees and other debris fall into the water causing safety hazards for boaters and swimmers.

When dirt and other material that is normally above the water line falls into the water it causes silt which reduces the water storage capacity of the lake. Lanier serves as the fresh water supply for over 4 million people in the North Georgia area. If the water capacity of the lake continues to decline due to siltation, it could potentially impact the drinking water supply.

Lake Lanier contains many islands throughout the way. These islands add to the unique character and beauty of the lake and create small coves and beaches which provide many areas for quiet recreation. As more and more of the shoreline erode, these waterways become shallower and less useable for safe recreation. There are some areas on the lake where the entire island has disappeared as a result of constant erosion.

Our first project to install rip rap on island shoreline was completed in early January of 2015. Almost 600 feet of rip rap was installed on island shoreline located at the south end of Three Sister Island chain on the main channel of the lake.

100% of the cost of this initial island project was funded through contribution from corporate partners. Tommy Bagwell, President of American Protein Corporation in Cumming provided the bulk of the funding. Tom Child and Marine Specialties Inc. completed the installation work. Blue Grass Materials in Cumming provided the stone and Grizzle Trucking provided hauling services. Each of these partners provided a significant discount for their services performed on this project.

We are planning to complete additional projects during 2015. We will be conducting a fund raising campaign beginning in the spring. We intend to reach out to key organizations and individuals in the lake community to seek their support. Tommy Bagwell has committed to provide matching funds to support the next project.

Lake Lanier Association Annual Golf Tournament helps to raise funds for programs

The Lake Lanier Association annual fundraiser golf tournament was held on October 20th 2014 and was another big success helping to raise funds for programs and services to help keep our lake clean, full and safe. Thank you to all the players in the tournament and the sponsors that helped make the event successful.

Thank you to the 2014 Lake Lanier Association Golf Tournament Sponsors:

12Stone Church • Barefoot Wine • Barkley Geib • Hatfield Development Company • Hill Tire Company • Metro Waterproofing • Milton Martin Honda • Moreland Altabelli Associates • Norman’s Landing • North Point Volvo • Pittman Construction • Resource Alliance • Waste Pro • Willard Wrecker
Solar Lights 2015

We are preparing for our 2015 solar light install program which we hope will begin in April. We have started off this year with strong support from the communities of Hall and Forsyth. We are also receiving financial support from many individuals who are purchasing solar lights to be placed on hazard markers. We thank all who are helping our program progress. We installed over 100 lights in 2014 and our goal is 100 for 2015.

We appreciate all individuals who are helping us monitor existing lights and welcome any group who will subscribe to monthly monitoring areas of our lake and report findings to our web site. We need strong support for monitoring lights in order to assure the Corps of Engineers we can maintain the lights and to keep all of our lights in working order.

The Atlanta Boat show was well attended this year and it was a pleasure to meet so many attendees. We received many positive comments concerning our solar light program as well as comments on our other safety projects. We welcome anyone who would like to volunteer assistance in any of our programs. Please contact our office and join us in maintaining a clean, full and safe lake.

November 2014 Lake Lanier Index

Our November temperature average of 61.3 was four degrees cooler than 2013 and 12 degrees cooler than October. The Secchi readings were very similar to last month and even to last year with the exception of higher readings near the dam. Section “A” averaged 5 feet with a low of 3.6 feet north of the rowing venue on the Chattahoochee Branch, “B” averaged 8.4 feet, “C” 10.1 average with the highest reading off Garrett Rd near the dam of 14.6 feet. Our chlorophyll a averaged 6.9 micrograms per liter over the entire lake. There were three readings over 10 in the Upper Chattahoochee Branch and two over 6 near Hide Away Bay and Bald Ridge Marina. With the increased Secchi readings in the South Lake we will raise our Lake Lanier Index to 6.

Our Index has been updated using a newer method for chlorophyll a testing. The new method is more sensitive, thus higher readings. We started testing in 2000 and AMPRO labs purchased equipment for the analysis of our samples using the best method available. In fourteen years there have been improvements in chlorophyll a testing and the cost of equipment is expensive. We are very fortunate in that Gwinnett County Water Labs has offered to do our testing using the new method, the same one used by Georgia’s EPD and the water lab at UGA.

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, Gwinnett Water Lab for our chlorophyll a analysis, and the support of all Lake Lanier Association members. We are forever indebted to AMPRO Labs for testing our samples for over fourteen years and being professional and delightful to work with.
We always want more members to help us achieve our goals of keeping Lake Lanier clean, full, and safe. Below is a membership application to give to your friends and neighbors who may not already be members and ask them to join us!

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Please enter your name and address information below / New Address? Please write below

Name:
Address:
City, State, Zip:
Phone Number:
Email Address*:

• Please be sure your email address is correct. We are moving toward email based communications for several of our membership services.

PERSONAL MEMBERSHIPS:

Family Levels:  □ Bronze $50  □ Silver $100  □ Gold $150

□ Captain’s Club, $200-$499
□ Admiral’s Club, $500-$999
□ President’s Club, $1000 and up

□ Please send me my free Lake Lanier Association hat for my gift of $200 or more. For online payments, email lakeinfo@lakelanier.org to request a hat be mailed to you.

BUSINESS MEMBERSHIPS:

□ Business Membership, $250 Name listing on LLA website
□ Business Membership, $500 Name listing plus logo on LLA website
□ Business Membership, $1,000 Name listing, logo, plus brief company description on LLA website

□ My check is enclosed.

Credit Card Payment

□ Please charge my □ VISA □ MasterCard □ American Express □ Amount ______

Name as it appears on card ______________________________________________________
Account Number ________________________________________________________________
Expiration Date ____________________ Security Code ______________________________
Signature ________________________________________________________________

YOU MAY ALSO RENEW YOUR MEMBERSHIP BY PAYPAL VIA OUR WEBSITE, WWW.LAKELANIER.ORG. IF YOU HAVE A PAYPAL ACCOUNT, YOU MAY SET UP YOUR PAYPAL ACCOUNT TO AUTOMATICALLY ANNUALLY BILL

All dues and donations are tax-deductible under IRS 501(c)3 Not for Profit tax code, as permitted by law

1/15
December 22, 2014

Mayor Ford Gravitt  
City of Cumming  
100 Main Street  
Cumming, GA 30041

Mashburn Family Trust  
3200 Still Road  
Cumming, GA 30041

Judson H. Turner  
Director, Environmental Protection Division  
Georgia Department of Natural Resources  
2 Martin Luther King Jr. Drive  
Suite 1456, East Tower  
Atlanta, GA 30334

Dear Mayor Gravitt, Mashburn Family Trust, and Mr. Turner:

The breach of the Lake Alice Dam 18 months ago in May 2013, has caused serious damage to Lake Lanier. It was encouraging that the City of Cumming and the Mashburn Family Trust agreed in November 2013 to a plan of action that would remediate the damage caused by the breach and prevent future damage. The plan called for dredging Lake Lanier to remove the massive amount of sediment that had infiltrated the lake as well as building a weir structure to prevent additional sediment from entering the lake.

Since November 2013, engineering studies and designs have been developed. However, work has yet to begin and additional sediment continues to flow into Lake Lanier, further exacerbating the damage caused by the original breach. Lake Lanier is a source of drinking water and recreation for Forsyth County and millions of citizens downstream of Lake Lanier. The failure of the parties to initiate, much less complete, the remediation work on the ground continues to damage the lake. Shovels on the ground are the only solution; plans on paper are not enough.

The Lake Lanier Association urges all of the involved parties, including government agencies, to implement a plan of action immediately, prior to the onset of the rainy season in which conditions can be expected to deteriorate even further. The remediation of the silt running into Lake Lanier should be implemented regardless of other issues involved in this project as the lake continues to deteriorate. The Lake Lanier Association stands ready to facilitate resolution in any way that may be useful. But the immediate implementation of an action plan is long overdue.

Respectfully submitted,

Val Perry  
President

“Committed to a Clean, Full, and Safe Lake Lanier”
Lake Lanier Association
615 F Oak Street, Suite 100
Gainesville, GA 30501

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

Kroger Community Rewards

Don’t forget to update your Kroger Community Rewards designation for the Lake Lanier Association nonprofit organization as your beneficiary. Kroger requires individuals to update their beneficiary organization annually. So far in 2014, the Lake Lanier Association has received over $230 in income from Kroger to support lake programs and services though our members shopping at Kroger and designating us as the beneficiary!

If you haven’t already signed up, you need a Kroger Plus Card to participate. You can get a Plus Card at the customer service desk at any Kroger store. Once you have a Kroger Plus Card, go to the Kroger website https://www.kroger.com/communityrewards and register your Plus Card. As part of that registration process, you will be asked to designate a beneficiary organization. Please choose the Lake Lanier Association, organization #37224.

Shore Sweep Update

Wow and a big thanks to last year’s 1,000+ Shore Sweep volunteers who collected and removed a record 50 tons of trash. The mood that resonated from last year Shore Sweep volunteers was that it was fun, exciting and extremely gratifying to be part of this huge effort to help preserve the natural beauty of Lake Lanier and make it a safer lake for all to use.

Shore Sweep 2015 is scheduled for Saturday September 26th. The Shore Sweep 2015 planning committee is preparing plans for an increased number of volunteers and to exceed the amount of trash collected last year. Please plan on participating in this year Shore Sweep. We need volunteers for all phases of Shore Sweep.

For additional information please call or email Joanna Cloud.