

April / May 2008



Bulletin

YOUR PRIMARY VOICE ON LAKE ISSUES

With a mission to identify issues affecting our members and pursue resolution with the responsible organizations

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

BRUNSWICK COUNTY, VA

John Cataldo, *President*
Johnna Fross
Joe Hoxter, *Secretary*
Lenny Turner

HALIFAX COUNTY, NC

Fred Kneisel
Quinton Qualls

MECKLENBURG COUNTY, VA

Bill Bryant
Barbara Burgdoerfer
Patrick Dempsey
Bill Lindenmuth, *Treasurer*
Vernon Wilson
Lake Environment

NORTHAMPTON COUNTY, NC

Ralph Domach
Doug Hughes, *Vice President*
Larry Jolly, *Past President, Government Relations*
Jack Saunders, *Safety, Planning & Development*
John Slaton

WARREN COUNTY, NC

John Boyle
Pete Deschenes,
Calvin DeShields
David Duxbury, *Membership*
Laura Kolb, *Nominating*

April "Meet the Candidate Forums" for Halifax and Warren Counties

While the Government Relations Committee continues to be engaged in many activities around the lake, we are now focused on the upcoming political forums for Halifax and Warren Counties. The schedule of events follows and we hope you can attend:

The Lake Gaston Association will be hosting "Meet the Candidate Forums" on April 5 and April 12 at 10 a.m. Both events will be held at the Littleton Community Center, 225 Oak Street, Littleton. The following candidates have been invited.

April 5, 10 a.m. for Halifax county candidates: NC State House District 49 - Lucy Allen (incumbent) and Keith Shearin; NC State House District 7 - Angela Bryant (incumbent) and Jean Reaves; and NC State Senate District 4 - Ed Jones (incumbent) unopposed. Halifax County Commissioners – District 1, Carolyn Johnson (incumbent) and Ronnie Locke; District 2, Marcelle Smith (incumbent) and Sammy Webb; and District 3, Rachel Hux (incumbent) unopposed.

April 12, 10 a.m. for Warren county candidates: NC State House District 27 – Michael Wray (incumbent) unopposed; NC State Senate District 7 - Doug Berger (incumbent) and Chuck Stires. Warren County Commissioners – District 1, Clinton G. Alston (incumbent) and Jennifer Jordan; and District 5, Barry Richardson (incumbent) unopposed.

Forum format will be: first, candidates will be given a few moments to introduce themselves and their platform. Second, moderator will ask questions that will have been submitted in writing by audience members before and during the meeting. All questions will be screened and candidates will have two minutes to respond. Time permitting, each candidate will have two minutes for summation.

Register of Deeds candidates for Halifax and Warren counties are being included and will have the opportunity to introduce themselves at the beginning of the forum.

Directions to the Littleton Community Center are:

From Warrenton: Follow Rt. 158 east to Divine Street which is near the town line and before you reach either the Towne Center (formerly McPherson Complex) or the stop light. Turn left onto Divine Street. At the end of Divine Street, turn left onto Oak Street. The Center is about two blocks down on the left side.

From Roanoke Rapids: Follow Rt. 158 west to Divine Street which is past the stop light and about 1 block west of the Towne Center (formerly McPherson Complex). Turn right onto Divine Street. At the end of Divine Street, turn left onto Oak Street. The Center is about two blocks down on the left side.

President's Corner ...

Is this a great country, or what? Our nation, state and local governments provide us with many opportunities to participate in this democracy, if we are willing to take advantage of the many venues that are available to us.

Lots of good "stuff" going on in government and politics right now. All five county governments are in the middle of their budget process. Budget work sessions are discussing whether to build new schools, classrooms or buy new books. Can we afford additional deputies or extend the water lines to a new subdivision? The money that will be spent will come from taxes. Do I have your attention yet? Brunswick has a committee formed to look at changing the real estate assessment cycle from the current six years to something less, while Northampton is considering taking on additional debt. Do you have thoughts on any of these issues? Our government can only be a government of the people, by the people and for the people if the people participate.

The LGA (and the LG Chamber of Commerce) have been exploring the pros and cons of incorporating a town around Lake Gaston. Guest speaker at our monthly meeting on April 2, will be UNC Professor of Public Law and Government David Lawrence, who will give us some much needed information on this issue. Should there be a town of Lake Gaston?

We are going to sponsor candidate forums for Halifax and Warren counties in on April 5 and 12. These forums give you a chance to meet and question the candidates for local and state offices.

As a member you are kept up to date on happenings in your county and lake wide by the Bulletin and periodic e-mails. We also alert you when there is breaking news of meetings or public hearings of which you should be aware.

We need to continue to build this organization. You can help by getting your neighbors to join the LGA. An application is in this Bulletin. It only costs 25 bucks. That is a good deal considering we are the only organization on the lake that is dedicated to representing you the property owner.

John

Public Safety committee continues to pursue boating safety training

The LGA Public Safety Committee continues to pursue North Carolina Legislative action for Boating Safety Training parallel to that passed in the last session of the Commonwealth of Virginia's House of Delegates and Senate. Rep. Wray arranged a meeting with Acting North Carolina Wildlife Commission Chair Fred Harris and State Senator Ed Jones. Rep. Wray unfortunately had a late conflict and was unable to attend. Pete Deschenes and Jack Saunders attended representing the Lake Gaston Association and the Lake Gaston Water Safety Council. Both Mr. Harris and Sen. Jones shared their views as to what should be part of an effective Safe Boater Training Law. Mr. Harris advised us that Captain Chris Huebner would be our point man for working such legislation. We still await notification from Rep. Wray and his office as to the time when we may have a meeting of potentially interested supporters of boater safety training legislation in Raleigh.

We have completed work to identify all the fire districts and rescue/emergency service that service lake area properties in the five counties around the Lake. Butch Garnett (Chief of the Roanoke-Wildwood VFD) has provided quite a lot of information and assistance in compiling the definitions accurately. Our next steps are to have individual 911 call cards printed to distribute around the lake for residents and guests to have a set of location parameters and emergency numbers readily available. We intend to use local organizations, churches, voluntary fire departments and churches to disseminate the data. The completion time we are shooting for is before the end of April.

From the desk of the Executive Director ...

I don't know about you, but I can't believe that we have reached April so quickly this year, and that this issue of the Bulletin will include Memorial Day events! As at the time of writing, we have had a relatively uneventful winter, weatherwise – oops! I hope I don't live to regret that statement, we did have snow in early April several years back. The tree tops have started bursting forth with the hint of foliage and the daffodils are in bloom. Spring is indeed here on beautiful Lake Gaston.

The Calendar of Events around Lake Gaston will now be a regular feature. We will feature the 'main events' for the year as they become available, and include as many of the local events as space permits for the period of the next Bulletin. I know, for some of our members, our Bulletins are the only source for what's going on at the lake.

As David Duxbury, our Membership Chair, will tell you in this issue, his team has been calling members who have yet to renew for this year. They started this last year, and in many cases our members had just forgotten to renew and were pleased for the telephone reminder. As a result of our request in the February/March Bulletin for members to let us know if they no longer had property on the lake, we had several telephone calls and emails letting us know they had moved and thanking us for keeping them informed and for all the work our directors did on their behalf.

If you receive your Bulletin by US mail, you will now see that your address label shows the specific expiration date of your membership, rather than paid thru a particular year. Or, for our Lifetime members it will state Lifetime.

Another if ... if you have email and use a SPAM blocker, please check to see that you allow emails to be received from the Lake Gaston Association. Please permit execdir@lakegastonassoc.com. You may be missing important emails from us such as the non-emergency low water level advisory we sent out on February 29th.

Moir

P&D reports on progress

The Planning & Development Committee continued discussions regarding the recommended positions that we would support for adoption by the five county governments surrounding Lake Gaston including commercial on water and off water development, green areas, walking and biking paths, and open spaces. The Committee continues to identify key requirements existing in at least one of the five county existing documents for exploitation in our activity. We recognize the need for some level of completion of the mapping activity for the Planning and Development Zone for which we have an interest. Our discussions have been completed regarding recommendation for single family dwellings and new sub-divisions.

The Committee has put its attention on the need for getting to a deliverable product to the LGA membership for comment and improvement and then the need to introduce the positions to the local county governments. We will seek advice from experienced, recognized groups and work to formulate plans, maps and recommendations over the next several months.

Committee members and other LGA Directors are observing ongoing county Planning, Development and Zoning activities and bringing the results back for building our experience level with the issues that continue to face the area residents and businesses. This is important background to achieving our key vision of maintaining and protecting the sensitive ecological and mostly rural atmosphere of Lake Gaston.

If there are members or acquaintances that have experience in community/county development and planning who would be willing to work on this activity please contact us through jackdsanders@embarqmail.com. P&D monthly meetings are held the third Friday of the month at 0830 at the Eaton's Ferry Grocery and Grill on Hwy 903 south of the lake.

Calendar notes ...

- April 2** – LGA monthly meeting at 9:30 a.m., Lake Gaston Baptist Church. Guest speaker will be UNC Professor of Public Law and Government David Lawrence, on why to incorporate and what is involved in incorporating a town. (252)586-6577 or 1-888-586-6577
- April 12** – Littleton Lions Club Pancake Brunch, 7:30 – 11 a.m., Lions Den, Littleton (252) 586-5959
- April 18** – American Legion Spaghetti Dinner, 5 – 7 p.m. Mitchell St., Hwy 903, Littleton (252) 586-3970
- April 18-20** – Haliwa-Saponi Pow-Wow, Tribal grounds, Hollister (252) 586-4017 ext 222
- April 19** – US Coast Guard Auxiliary America's Boating Course, 8:30 – 5 p.m., Henrico (252) 586-2700
- April 19** – 5th Annual Brunswick Spring Festival & 5 miler, 8:30 a.m. Lawrenceville, VA (434) 848-3154
- April 19** – Chicken Supper, Ebony VFD, 5-7 p.m. (434) 636-2005
- April 26** – LGA Lake Environment Monitor training, 8:30 a.m. Eaton Ferry Grocery & Grill, Hwy 903 south of bridge, (252) 586-3624
- April 26** – Clarksville Lake Country Wine Festival, noon – 5 p.m. (434) 374-2436
- May 2-4** – Spring Fling Sailing Regatta, Outdoor World Campground (252) 586-5417
- May 3** – Crab Fest Lakeland Arts Center, Mosby Ave., Littleton (252) 586-5577 or 1-877-330-0574
- May 7** – LGA monthly meeting at 9:30 a.m., Lake Gaston Baptist Church. Guest speaker will be Allan Garrett, Operations Mgr. WZRU 90.1 and 90.5 FM.
- May 10** – Littleton Lions Club Pancake Brunch, Lions Den, Littleton (252) 586-5959
- May 17** – US Coast Guard Auxiliary America's Boating Course, 8:30 – 5 p.m., Henrico (252) 586-2700
- May 23** – American Legion Post 308 Spaghetti Dinner, Mitchell St., Hwy 903, Littleton (252) 586-3970
- May 24** – Lake Gaston Chamber of Commerce Battle of the Barbeque – corner Elams & River Road
- May 24** – Lake Gaston Lions Club Fish Fry, (252) 537-8746
- June 4** – LGA monthly meeting at 9:30 a.m., Lake Gaston Baptist Church. (252)586-6577
- June 14** – LGA Annual Meeting, Lake Gaston Baptist Church. (252)586-6577
- June 21** – US Coast Guard Auxiliary America's Boating Course, 8:30 – 5 p.m., Henrico (252) 586-2700
- July 2** - LGA monthly meeting at 9:30 a.m., Lake Gaston Baptist Church
- July 5** – Annual Independence Day Boat Parade, 10:30 a.m. mile marker 17, (252) 257-1807
- July 5** – Lake Gaston Lions Club Fish Fry, (252) 537-8746
- July 5** – Lake Gaston Annual Fireworks Display, Eaton Ferry Bridge, at dark (252) 586-4322
- July 17-19** – 31st Annual Virginia Lake Festival, Kerr Lake, (434) 374-2436
- July 19** – US Coast Guard Auxiliary America's Boating Course, 9 – 5 p.m., Henrico (252) 586-2700
- August 6** – LGA monthly meeting at 9:30 a.m., Lake Gaston Baptist Church.
- August 9** – 4th Annual O'Sail Crossing, Lake Gaston (252) 586-5711
- August 16** – US Coast Guard Auxiliary America's Boating Course, 8:30 – 5 p.m., Henrico (252) 586-2700
- August 29 & 30** – 24th Littleton/Lake Gaston Festival, downtown Littleton (252) 586-5959
- September 3** – LGA monthly meeting at 9:30 a.m., Lake Gaston Baptist Church
- Sept 20** – US Coast Guard Auxiliary America's Boating Course, 8:30 – 5 p.m., Henrico (252) 586-2700
- October 1** – LGA monthly meeting at 9:30 a.m., Lake Gaston Baptist Church
- October 4** – Lake Gaston Lions Club Seafood Festival, (252) 586-3453
- November 5** – LGA monthly meeting at 9:30 a.m., Lake Gaston Baptist Church
- November 22** – Lake Gaston Boat Parade, (252) 586-2700
- December 3** – LGA monthly meeting at 9:30 a.m., Lake Gaston Baptist Church

May 17-23 is National Safe Boating Week

It is a good time to inventory the required Safety Equipment on your vessels and check the condition of the life preservers and fire extinguishers.

US Coast Guard Auxiliary 2008 Training Dates

April 19, May 17, June 21, July 19, August 16 and September 20

America's Boating Course is an eight hour course covering the basics of boating and is appropriate for youth as well as the adult boater. Successful completion of this course satisfies the education requirement for youth to operate a PWC in both Virginia and North Carolina. Courses are taught at the USCG Auxiliary Flotilla 93 Building, located at 252 River Road, (Route 1214), Henrico, 1/4 mile south of Route 46. All classes are on Saturday from 8:30 a.m. to 5 p.m., with the exam given at the end of class. Please bring your lunch - none will be provided. The fee for the course is \$30.

Pre-registration and prepayment are required and may be accomplished by calling the Lake Gaston Gazette, (252) 586-2700, or stopping by their office at 378 Lizard Creek Road, Monday through Friday, 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. Registration and payment must be completed no later than one week prior to the course date. Checks, made out to the US Coast Guard Auxiliary, may be dropped off at the Gazette, or mailed to the Lake Gaston Gazette, P.O. Box 1166, Littleton, NC 27850, Attn: Boating Safety Course.

US Coast Guard Auxiliary Vessel Safety Checks

As a courtesy to the boating public, US Coast Guard Auxiliary performs **Vessel Safety Checks (VSC)** to help you keep your boat safe. This consists of a review of safety equipment on your boat or PWC. Their equipment list is usually above and beyond what is required by most state boating laws. The results of the VSC are told *only to you* - there is no penalty for failing - it is a learning experience so you can enjoy your boating in a safer manner. If your boat passes the VSC, you get a decal to display on your boat. Many insurance companies offer discounts on boat insurance to individuals whose boats pass this check.

The 2008 schedule will be published in April (too late for this Bulletin) that will identify the dates and the marinas where these VSCs will be conducted. In the meantime if you need your boat examined before the dates are available, Tom Van Petten invites you to call him at (252) 586-5853.

Land lines preferable for 911 emergency calls

Land line phones are preferable to use when making 911 emergency calls. If using a cellular the caller needs to make sure the 911 operator is from the county you are in as sometimes the 911 calls route back to the individual's normal local area. Also ensure with both land line and cellular calls that a clear, complete, and accurate description be given of the location, including street/road address, county, and subdivision and nearby crossroads.

Boating season – avoid theft

Recreational boating will be in full swing again on the lake. Secure your property in docked vessels and on docks to keep them from blowing away and to avoid petty theft.

How's our lake level recently??

We had a spate of relatively low lake levels for 11 days between February 22 and March 3, that is, averaging 199.1 ft above mean sea level (msl). We are used to experiencing levels closer to 199.7 ft/msl. The lower levels are normal albeit rare. In all of 2007, the lake was below 199.0 for 40.8 hours in which 22.2 hours was the maximum time within a rolling seven-day period.** Dominion Power is in control of the flows from the three dams that affect the Lake Gaston elevation. They do a commendable job. We are blessed to enjoy a lake with very stable levels, recalling that the primary purpose of the dams is flood control and renewable power generation. – Bill Lindenmuth

**Source: Roanoke Rapids and Gaston, FERC Project No. 2009 Article 412 Project Operation and Flow Monitoring Plan 2007 Annual Report. (Available on our web site attached to the Environment Committee Reports)

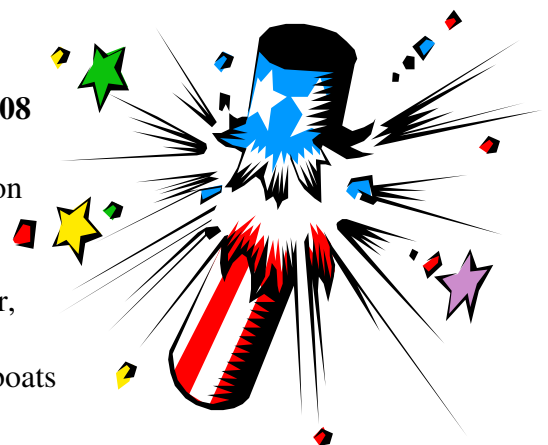
Lake Environment Monitor training date set

April 26 from 9:30 a.m. until 11:30 a.m. is this year's date and time for LEM training, at Eaton's Ferry Grocery and Grill on Hwy 903 south of the bridge. We intend to have refreshers on identification of noxious aquatic weeds, some examples of native vegetation, information on the triploid (sterile) grass carp, and updated call lists. We will also review the vegetation sampling accomplished last year with NC State University and the results.

If you are not a Lake Environment Monitor and would like to see what is involved, you are very welcome to attend. We really are interested in maximum participation and hope you can all attend. If you plan on attending or need additional information please contact jackdsaunders@embarqmail.com.

Lake Gaston Annual Firework Display **Saturday, July 5, 2008**

For those of you who are waiting to know when The Lake Gaston Annual Firework display will be it is Saturday, July 5, at dark, at Eaton Ferry Bridge. It's an event that draws boats from east and west of the bridge by the hundreds. And depending on your preference for the best spot, you may leave home early enough to be up by the bridge, or, if you are like me, I like to watch from further back. It's definitely an experience – watching the fireworks from a boat, and the amount of boats that turn out for the event.



You may not realize that Longbridge Volunteer Fire Department organizes this event and that they rely on donations to fund the firework display. Donations can be made any time of the year. They also have an ad booklet which is not just for businesses – non-profits, property owner associations, and individuals advertise too, like surprising a loved one with a “Happy Anniversary,” spot. And, there is a special page dedicated to non-ads listing others that have made donations of \$10 or more. Deadline to be included in the ad booklet is mid April. Checks should be mailed to Longbridge VFD, c/o Kendra Pierce, P.O. Box 133, Vaughn, NC 27586, memo: Fireworks. For more information you can contact Roy or Kendra Pierce at (252) 586-4332.

Thanks for letting us continue to be your voice – please tell a friend

Thanks to all who renewed or added their voices to the LGA for 2008. Membership Team Member, Sherman Merchant, eloquently stated the reason to join: “Adding Your Voice to the LGA Membership, will benefit You and Everyone Concerned with the Preservation of Our Lake Gaston Community.”

If you have not yet renewed for 2008, we will call to ask you why, so that we will better understand your unmet expectations if you have them, and be better prepared to serve our members in the future. Of course we will ask you to reconsider rejoining as we need your voice.

We hope you’ve enjoyed the benefits, which include: Bi-monthly Bulletins, the Web Site and its valuable Links to Government and Business; the LGAAlerts; real-time E-mails with important news; monthly Speakers on current issues; and Candidate and Weed Status Forums, among others. We feel our greatest benefit, however, is the hundreds of hours our volunteer directors spend each month studying the issues that affect you, and presenting your views and your voice to local governments on those issues that could or would adversely affect the quality of life at Lake Gaston. Many of those current issues are presented in this Bulletin.

We enjoyed talking to several Home Owners Associations last year, and look forward to meeting many more of you as we expand our efforts to learn your concerns this year.

Above all, we need more members to present an ever stronger voice, to ensure that your concerns are heard by our local governments. Bring a friend or neighbor to our next monthly meeting, or have them call us with questions, at (252) 586-6577, or toll free, 1-888-586-6577.

This will serve as a reminder that those who have not renewed by April 10th will lose their voice in the one organization that works tirelessly to support all the property owners on Lake Gaston, as well as the other member benefits mentioned above.

We hope to see you at the upcoming LGA monthly meetings, on April 2nd, and May 7th, 2008 when the speakers will be UNC Professor of Public Law and Government David Lawrence who will be speaking on why to incorporate and what is involved in incorporating a town. And, Allan Garrett, Operations Mgr. WZRU 90.1 and 90.5 FM, the local public radio station serving the Lake Gaston area, Rocky Mount and Roanoke Valley.

LGA NEEDS YOU!

Your Lake Gaston Association is in need of directors. To insure that the LGA’s work continues to preserve the quality of life that brought us to beautiful Lake Gaston, we need your expertise. Directors are currently needed in Brunswick and Halifax counties. Contact Nomination chair Laura Kolb at (252) 586-4705, or email, laurakolb@embarqmail.com

LGA APPLICATION FORM

Dues are for Calendar Year (January-December)

PLEASE INDICATE: New Member Renewal

Address Change E-Mail Change

PAYMENT IS FOR:

\$ 25 General Membership \$ 250 Lifetime

Supporting Levels:

\$ 50 **Bronze** \$250 **Gold**

\$100 **Silver** \$500 **Platinum**

Name(s) or Business: _____

Lake Resident Full-time or Part-time

Lake Property House Lot Multiple

Subdivision _____

Lot # _____

County _____

LAKE ADDRESS: (#/Street/City/State/Zip) _____

MAILING ADDRESS: (If different) _____

PHONE @ Lake: _____

Home: _____

E-Mail: _____

SEND BULLETINS: E-Mail US Mail

Please tell us how you first heard of the LGA (i.e., which newspaper, LGA newsletter, neighbor, brochure, website, radio, etc.)

THANK YOU!

Citizens urged to participate in county budget process

Take part in local government budget activities. For improvements in the presence of law enforcement and to reduce emergency response times all citizens need to participate in the county government budget processes. Go to the Commissioners and Supervisors meetings and support increased law enforcement and emergency services budgets for the entire county. Talk to your elected officials one on one and encourage them to support increased budgets for law enforcement and emergency response. Remember that you can make a difference.

A Special Thanks to our **SUPPORTING Members** who will be contributing a higher level of Financial support in 2008 so the LGA can approach its mission and goals with greater scope and influence

**Members who have renewed their Supporting Levels for 2008
and new members who have joined at a supporting level since our last Bulletin:**

Gold: Dominion North Carolina Power

Silver: Louis & Joyce Chetty, Frederick & Susanna Finger, George & Carol Anne Jennison, Towney & Gayle Kennard

Bronze: Atty. Theaoseus and Eva Clayton, Joseph H. Doyle, Lee B. & Lee W. Smith, Raymond W. Stiles, Chris & Nora Williford, Bob & Bev Woodard, W. Stephen & E. Dianne Wood

Thank you to all our members who have renewed for 2008 and our new members too!

Members in good standing:

General (\$25): 912; Bronze (\$50):71; Silver (\$100): 16; Gold (\$250): 1; Lifetime (\$250): 55.

THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTING LEVEL BUSINESSES

American H₂O Technologies, LLC; Daughtridge Gas; Dominion North Carolina Power; E. Carroll Mann Custom Builders, Inc; Outdoor World Lake Gaston Campground; Ed Roughton, Realtor, Story Properties; Professional Lake Management; Sea\Tow Lake Gaston; Superior Walls of North Carolina; Synthetic Turf & Maintenance; and Virtually Yours At The Lake

Visit them on our website: www.LakeGastonAssoc.com/Support.htm

CHECK: If the information on the label below is incorrect, please advise. By Web: www.LakeGastonAssoc.com, By Email: MemRec@LakeGastonAssoc.com or By Mail: LGA Member Records at the address below. Thanks!



Non Profit Org. BULK RATE Permit No. 2 Henrico, NC

P.O. Box 656 ~ Littleton, NC 27850