

June / July 2008



Bulletin

YOUR PRIMARY VOICE ON LAKE ISSUES

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

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911 Emergency Data Cards, Distribution Underway

LGA Public Safety Committee reports that the 911 Emergency Data Cards have been printed and they will be distributed by a number of local organizations and churches. One person figured out that they are cards to remind someone of the critical data while in the state of excitement that frequently corresponds to an emergency situation.

So the card has places for the caller's name and type of emergency. The caller may vary depending on whether a resident or visitor dials 911. The emergency will vary between something medical like a heart attack, cut or bad burn, or house fire, or robbery. But the constant items for a particular residence will be the address, nearby major crossroads and subdivision. Visitors to your home will not be familiar with local address information and even the resident during a moment of duress, may have trouble with some known information. We hope this card can be helpful to you if kept by the phone or on the fridge.

Cards will be available at the LGA annual meeting on June 14, or contact your local community group or church and ask for them.

This project was the result of several months of work identifying all the fire districts and rescue/emergency services that service lake area properties in the five counties around the Lake.

The 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 has introduced a study bill for investigating boater safety training requirements in adjoining states and looking at what is being done on the National level.

LGWCC Announces 2008 Tentative Noxious Weed Treatment Sites

The Lake Gaston Weed Control Council (LGWCC) voted to accept the proposed tentative 2008 noxious weed treatment plan submitted by 'Skips Aquatic Solutions, LLC during their May 8, 2008 meeting. The proposed plan may be viewed on the LGWCC web site, <http://www.lgwcc.org/>, under the Treatment Areas / survey heading. As was stated at the meeting, this is a tentative plan based on the LGWCC's current budget and the presence of noxious weed growth in 2008.

President's corner ...

The Town of Lake Gaston. Has a nice sound, or does it? Well, we (the LGA) like many of you are trying to figure out if incorporating as a town is in our best interest. The Chamber of Commerce started a committee to look into the incorporation of the town of Lake Gaston. They invited the LGA to participate. Why would we even consider forming a town? Well, the honest truth is when we try to convince the County governments to support the issues you have told us that you consider important (through your participation in our surveys), they pretty much ignore us. You have told us you want the lake to maintain a rural atmosphere, aggressively attack the Hydrilla problem, and increase law enforcement at the lake. While the lake area pays an increasingly larger percentage of each county's collected taxes, the number of voters (many of you vote in your primary home district) is very small. (Taxation without representation?) Many of our county representatives act as if we don't exist. IF all of the politicians representing us were elected by us, they couldn't ignore us. But, how much would that cost? Would it be worth it? I don't know.

We are working to get more information. At the annual meeting we will have the Virginia side of the equation. The Government Relations Committee is working to quantify the actual cost of various options in services offered and taxes required. When we have a good feel for the facts and some projected costs, we will give you the opportunity to vote on what we should do. As always we represent you the Lake Gaston property owner. We are the only organization that can say that. We work to pursue those issues that you have told us are important to you. Our Directors spend the time to convince (or try to) the authorities to support your point of view.

We work for you. We need to know what you want us to do and we need more people like you in our ranks. Please urge you friends to join. Thanks.

John

Why Look into Incorporation?

Some of our members and other lake property owners have questioned the LGA's motives with regard to incorporation. Many feel we are pushing incorporation, which is far from the truth.

As John Cataldo alluded to in his President's Corner, we are merely investigating incorporation as a possible vehicle to preserve the quality of life we enjoy here at Lake Gaston, whether full time or part time. We certainly have not made a decision one way or the other as to whether incorporation is the proper vehicle, let alone whether we should pursue it or not. We simply do not have enough facts.

So far, we have only gathered information about the process and requirements for incorporation in North Carolina. We will complete that portion of the fact gathering process during our annual meeting on June 14 with Susan Williams' presentation on the Virginia rules and process. We will also review what we have learned about the North Carolina rules and process for those who were unable to attend our previous meeting on the subject.

Certainly the largest part of the fact gathering process is putting pencil to paper to determine where the town might be located, what services the residents in the town would want, what those services would cost, who would provide them, how much revenue is required and where it would come from. Once we have sufficient answers to those questions, and probably several others that we don't know about yet, we will bring the facts to the property and business owners for their questions, concerns, opinions and recommendations.

If the business and property owners were in agreement that the benefits of incorporation are worth the cost, the LGA and/or the Chamber of Commerce would need to decide if either or both of these organizations has the capacity and expertise to pursue incorporation. The work, as I'm sure you can imagine, would be extensive.

I hope you will attend our Annual Meeting and learn more, along with your Board of Directors, about the incorporation process. We plan to allow sufficient time for questions, but don't guarantee we will have all the answers yet. We do promise to share what we are learning throughout the investigation, and encourage you to provide feedback along the way.

P&D Working Toward a Deliverable Product

The LGA Planning & Development Committee continues 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. They continue to identify key requirements existing in at least one of the five county existing documents for exploitation in our activity. There has been significant progress in the mapping activity for the Planning and Development Zone for which we have an interest, all thanks to Patrick Dempsey.

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 are seeking assistance from the UNC Center for Sustainable Community Design and will know shortly if they or the Institute for the Environment may be able to help us. We continue to examine the facts regarding the potential for forming a township or city in either or both Virginia and North Carolina. This discussion will be the featured agenda item at the upcoming LGA Annual Meeting on June 14.

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 jackdsaunders@embarqmail.com. 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.

Lake Environment Monitors Attend Training Refresher

The Annual Lake Environmental Monitor (LEM) Training Refresher was held on April 26 2008. Fifteen LEMs were present. Jason Nawrocki from North Carolina State University gave a presentation regarding the identification of noxious aquatic weeds and native vegetation. Jason brought samples of several aquatic plants so that the LEMs could get a front seat refresher as to the looks, feel and smell of the samples to improve identification accuracy. He also provided copies of pretty detailed info sheets for people to retain. These info sheets (available at: <http://www.weedscience.ncsu.edu/aquaticweeds/factsheets.asp>) have been produced by NC State University, under the guidance of Dr. Rob Richardson who has been a good supporter of our activities at Lake Gaston and is the continuing Chair of the Technical Advisory Group which advises the Lake Gaston Weed Control Council on recommended approaches to improve control of noxious weeds and restoration of native vegetation.

Kirk Rundle with North Carolina Wildlife Resources has responsibilities on Lake Gaston for the fisheries and stocking programs. He described what has been done over the last years regarding the introduction of the Triploid (Sterile) Grass Carp and the efforts to track them and get a more informed idea of their mortality rates. Kirk also answered a number of questions about the known feeding habits and preferred diet of the grass carp, growth rates and amounts eaten a day, and any signs of feeding. Bruce Johnson also shared some observations on the grass carp.

Bruce Johnson, one of our members and a participant and leader in last year's plant survey, discussed the aquatic plant sampling program performed last year under the sponsorship of NC State and the expanded effort that we hope to accomplish this year. It is anticipated that Dr. Richardson will be here to hold a new training session for the sampling program in late June or early July. There will be more computers available this year and attempts are being made to ensure all have operator friendly program installed for taking the data prior to the sample program kickoff.

LEM County Captains were identified: John Cataldo in Brunswick, Tom Winebrenner in Halifax, Bill Lindenmuth in Mecklenburg, Bruce Johnson in Northampton and George Kimble in Warren County. If you are interested in additional information or participating as a LEM please contact jackdsaunders@embarqmail.com

From the desk of the Executive Director

Summer is here on Lake Gaston, and July 4 is on the horizon – so soon?

We are glad you liked the full-page calendar that we started in our April/May Bulletin – we appreciate your feedback. As we find out about events for next year, we will start adding those too.

As you know we try to keep you informed of what is going on in your particular county by sending those of you with emails copies of the upcoming Commissioner/Supervisor agendas, as well as their Planning agendas, and Notices of Public Hearings. Sometimes these agendas come to us just the day before, or the morning of. We know many of you do not live on Lake Gaston fulltime and cannot make the county meetings. However, if you do live here year round, we do encourage you to attend these meetings, it's your chance to see and influence how your tax dollars are being spent.

The LGA directors who live in your county take turns to be at those county meetings and summarize what went on. We send those summaries out to our members with email. The subject starts with LGA: (to let you know it is a communication from us) followed by Attendee summary of ... (with the date and type of county meeting), and it concludes with the LGA director who attended that meeting. We have been receiving positive feedback from you that you find these summaries valuable.

Occasionally, we will receive a request from a member asking us not to send the county meeting agendas, but that they do want to receive the other emails we send that are not county specific. Unfortunately, it's all or nothing. Maybe in the future we can offer our members a choice, but currently the way the database record is designed from which we electronically pull the email address, it isn't possible. With approximately 800+ emails to work with, I would find a manual intervention of the email lists hard to manage – they are updated each month. I do send all our email communications to you with the Subject commencing with LGA: if you see an unwanted county meeting, perhaps you could delete on receipt.

This is a message for those of you who received your June/July Bulletin via US mail who would usually get notified by email that the Bulletin has been posted on our website. Your email address we have for you is being rejected. Please send your new email address to memrec@lakegastonassoc.com.

We look forward to seeing you at our Annual meeting on Saturday, June 14, at 9:30 a.m. for sign-in and refreshments, with meeting starting at 10 a.m. and out at noon (or sooner) at Lake Gaston Baptist Church, one mile north of Eaton Ferry Bridge.

Moira

US Coast Guard Auxiliary 2008 Training Dates

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.

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, Halifax and Northampton counties. Contact Nomination chair Laura Kolb at (252) 586-4705, or email, laurakolb@embarqmail.com

Calendar notes ...

- June 4 – LGA monthly meeting at 9:30 a.m., Lake Gaston Baptist Church. No speaker. Committee Reports and opportunity to ask questions. (252)586-6577 or 1-888-586-6577
- June 4 – Lake Gaston VFD Golf Tournament, 8 a.m. (434) 636-2254 or (434) 636-3351
- June 6,7,8,14,15 – “South Pacific,” Lakeland Theater Company, Littleton (877) 330-0574
- June 14 – LGA Annual Meeting, 9:30 – noon, Lake Gaston Baptist Church. (252)586-6577
- June 20 – American Legion Post 308 Spaghetti Dinner, Mitchell St., Hwy 903 Littleton (252) 586-3970
- June 21 – US Coast Guard Auxiliary America’s Boating Course, 8:30 – 5 p.m., Henrico (252) 586-2700
- June 21 – Roanoke/Wildwood VFD Auxiliary Card or Game night, 7-10 p.m. (252) 535-2609 or 586-1385
- June 21 – Chicken Dinner, 3 – 6 p.m. Ebony VFD (434) 636-2297
- June 28 – Lakeland Singers Spring Concert, Lakeland Theater Company, Littleton (877) 330-0574
- July 2 - LGA monthly meeting at 9:30 a.m., Lake Gaston Baptist Church
- July 3 – Annual Picnic in the Park, 6:30 – 10 P.M., Parker Park, South Hill (434) 447-4547
- 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 – Boston Butts, 11 a.m. until , Ebony VFD, (434) 636-2005
- 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
- July 24,25,26,27 – “Beauty & the Beast,” Lakeland Theater Company, Littleton (877) 330-0574
- 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
- September 4 – Affair on the Square, downtown South Hill (34) 447-4547
- Sept 20 – US Coast Guard Auxiliary America’s Boating Course, 8:30 – 5 p.m., Henrico (252) 586-2700
- September 27 – Farmers Day, 10 a.m. – 3 p.m., Centennial Park South Hill, (434) 447-4547
- 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



LGA APPLICATION

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 LGA BULLETIN: E-Mail US Mail

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

THANK YOU!

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

General (\$25): 941; Bronze (\$50): 71; Silver (\$100): 16; Gold (\$250): 1; Lifetime (\$250): 57

THANK YOU TO OUR SUPPORTING LEVEL BUSINESSES

American H₂O Technologies; LLC, Daughtridge Gas; Dominion Power North Carolina; E. Carroll Mann Custom Builders; Outdoor World Lake Gaston Campground; Ed Roughton, Realtor, Story Properties; Superior Walls of North Carolina; Chris Thompson, Realtor, Waterfront Properties at Lake Gaston; and Virtually Yours At The Lake

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

**Don't Miss the...
Lake Gaston Annual
Fireworks Display
Saturday, July 5 at dark**



Help the LGA grow

We are always looking for new members to increase "Your primary VOICE on lake issues." May we ask you to share your Bulletin with a neighbor? Perhaps let them know why you like our organization and encourage them to join? Your help would be appreciated. Thank you.

- David Duxbury, Membership Chair

LGA Q & A:

(252) 586-6577 or 1-888-586-6577 * Info@LakeGastonAssoc.com * www.LakeGastonAssoc.com

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