
The Lake Mitchell H.O.B.O.

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FROM THE PRESIDENT

Anita Lawson, anitalawson@bellsouth.net

Almost three months have passed since I became President of our Lake Mitchell H.O.B.O. Association. It has been a busy, hectic time for H.O.B.O. The number one priority has been to get our Marine 9 Fire and Rescue boat back in operation. The engines are old and having mechanical problems. Mechanics were consulted and it was determined the engines should be replaced. The East Chilton Volunteer Fire Department, under the guidance of Fire Chief Matt Griffin, is having all the work done and Marine 9 should be back in the water by the time you receive this newsletter.

We owe a big thank you to all of our volunteer fire departments that serve our lake. Most of the time we are unaware of all they are doing for us.

Coosa County Volunteer Fire Departments are selling signs as required for each residence with your new E911 address. The E911 service is new to Coosa County residents and a lot of work and planning has gone into this effort to make us all safer. You can contact Wayne Ward, Fire Chief at the Richville Volunteer Fire Department to get answers to any questions about the signs.

Our new website is becoming a reality. Keep our address www.lakemitchellonline.com for future reference to find out the happenings on Lake Mitchell.

Judy Murchison is working on getting our new phone books for 2009/2010 printed. Please contact her if you know of any changes that need to be made. Please furnish your email address in this information.

Our Spring Clean-up is scheduled for March 21 and will be history by the time you get this newsletter. I hope all of you had it on your calendar, especially if you have never participated. It is an enjoyable and worthwhile effort.

Be safe and have fun.



AREA REPRESENTATIVE REPORTS

Area 9 Dale & Patty Vann rdvann@bellsouth.net

It is time to come out of hibernation and head to the lake. For the first time that I can remember, Patty and I did not use the lake house on the weekends this winter as much as we normally do. I probably still have a stack of wood to burn. Anyway, it is time to get back to our routine of spending the weekends at the lake. Now is the time to clean the house, fertilize the grass, pick up sticks and limbs, make sure the water works, check the air conditioner, have the boats serviced and whatever else needs to be done. Does this sound familiar? In any case, we are looking forward to spring and summer and seeing our lake neighbors. Let me know if there is anything you would like to report. Also, please contribute your 2009 H.O.B.O. dues if you have not already...\$25.00. Thanks.

Area 14 Rose & Eric Green
Rosegreenlake14@yahoo.com

We hope everyone is doing well. I'm sure most of you are suffering from spring fever! I can tell you that being here at the lake every day watching and listening to the boats go by, feeling the warm air when we go outside, and seeing the sun shine on the water really gives Eric and me spring fever. Summer will be here before we know it and we look forward to seeing everyone soon.

Area 15 Anita & Jerry Lawson anitalawson@bellsouth.net

The water work keeps going. Bill Spratlin is doing everything he can to get us water. Pennamotley is the only area remaining to have the pipes installed. Perhaps this summer we will celebrate getting community water.

Also, I sent emails to as many people as I could to advise Wayne Ward, Richville Volunteer Fire Chief, is in charge of selling the signs with your new E911 addresses. These are to be installed at the drive closest to your house so the fire department can see it in case of emergency. They are blue reflective signs. Place your order with him today.

COMMITTEE REPORTS:

Water Quality Report Sam Piccolo, Chairman
sampiccolo@centurytel.net

PARAMETER	ACCEPTABLE RANGE	SIX SITE AVERAGE
Dissolved O ₂	5-9	9.23
pH	6.5 - 8.2	7.17
Alkalinity	20+	41.67
Hardness	10 - 120	48

Quarterly Report Average Water Quality

A low **dissolved oxygen** level indicates a demand on the oxygen in the system. Pollutants such as inadequately treated sewage as well as decaying natural organic matter can cause low oxygen levels. The **ph** scale ranges from very acidic such as battery acid to very basic such as household lye. The midsection of the scale between 6.5 to 8.2 is optimal for most organisms. If a body of water has an abundance of buffering materials causing high **total alkalinity**, it is more stable and resistant to ph changes. When alkalinity is above 20mg/l there is a marked increase in nutrient utilization. **Hardness** refers primarily to the amount of calcium and magnesium, which enters the water mainly by leaching of rocks. Both minerals are essential to the development and growth of aquatic plants and animals.

Environmental Dan Murchison danmurchison@gmail.com
PROTECTING OUR WILDLIFE ON LAKE MITCHELL

Monofilament line thrown into our lake can cause undue pain & death to our wildlife. Around a bird's neck it becomes a hangman's knot. Fish have little chance of survival if they become tangled in their gills. It lasts a very long time when submerged in water! For these reasons and many others one of the manufacturers of fishing line (Berkley Manufacturing) has joined with fishermen and other environmental groups to promote the recycling of monofilament line.

The Lower Coosa Clean Water Partnership and Lake Mitchell H.O.B.O. have joined in this effort to protect our wildlife by installing monofilament line recycle devices at all of our marinas and at Higgins Ferry Park. The line will be returned to Berkley Manufacturing to be recycled into environmentally friendly fish attractors. Please do your part to help with this effort by using the bins and encouraging others in this effort. Wouldn't this be a great thing to teach our children?

BALD CYPRESS TREES

Bald Cypress trees are a gift from nature which will help stabilize creek and river banks against erosion. They also attract small fish to hide in their root system to protect them against large predators. In addition, they live in or close to the water edge and provide a beautiful wildlife setting for us to view. I have promoted the planting of these trees in wet areas in the back of sloughs and the heads of creeks on Lake Mitchell. I have asked for help and support from Alabama Power Company, Forestry Division, and others. I think this is a great way for us to take positive "in the ground" steps to live up to our mission statement of improving Lake Mitchell. I would appreciate your thoughts and assistance with this project.

Fireworks Jim McCormick jmac51@bellsouth.net

It is not difficult to hear a story, or have a story of our own concerning the difficult times we as individuals as well as our country are currently going through. Even with all that is going on around us we can still find celebration in the fact that we still are free to decide and speak our voice in the greatest Nation in the World. It is in that spirit that we will again celebrate our independence as a nation as our lake family comes together for the annual Fireworks Show.

By the time you read this, permits on the State and Federal level will have been applied for and contact made with our supplier. We try to improve our show each year, whether in size, timing, or even the angle we shoot as well as the sequence in which the shells go up.

One of our challenges is the positioning of the staging area. Due to the width of Cargile Creek most of the viewers are sitting "stage right or stage left". While you can still see the show fine some shells will appear to be on top of each other. This year we are going to try to "spread" the show laterally so that those viewing from the sides will see a show covering 180 degrees of the sky.

Also this year we are going to scrap some of our mortars for the smaller shells and purchase 20 more of the larger ones. In essence we are dropping a percentage of our smallest shells and replacing them with the same number of our largest, highest, and brightest ones. (No, our show was not included in the Stimulus Package!)

Your contributions have been steady. I know of some lakes and communities that have cut out or cut back their show this year. But come "heck or no water" we will have our celebration Saturday July 4, 9pm in Cargile Creek.

Scholarship Steve Miles smiles2@bellsouth.net

Lake Mitchell H.O.B.O. is in the process of accepting applications for the first *Lake Mitchell H.O.B.O. Environmental Awareness College Scholarship*. The scholarship fund was made possible by donations from H.O.B.O. members and money raised from the sale of the 2009 Lake Mitchell H.O.B.O. calendar. The Scholarship Committee would like to thank everyone who has contributed funds and/or spent time on this project as it will benefit a local student. The scholarship amount will be \$2500.00 and will be awarded this spring for the fall semester. Applications are being accepted from the six Chilton County high schools and one Coosa County high school.

To be eligible for the scholarship an applicant must be a high school senior with a B average and must participate in a Lake Mitchell H.O.B.O. clean-up or other acceptable environmental activity. For more information contact Steve Miles, Scholarship Committee Chairman or one of the following committee members: Nancy Piccolo, Rebecca Beaty, Roxanne Martin, Fred Rogers, Jim Woodrow or H.O.B.O. President, Anita Lawson.

BULLETIN BOARD

2009 Calendar of Events

H.O.B.O. is your organization! Members are welcome at all meetings and social functions. Annual membership dues in H.O.B.O. are \$25.00 per family, payable each January. See the back page of this newsletter for the applicable form.

May 15	6:30 p.m.	Board of Directors meeting	FUMC
June 6	4 p.m.	Annual Picnic	Higgins Ferry
June 7	2 p.m.	Area Rep meeting	location TBA
June 15		newsletter deadline	
July 4	10 a.m.	Pontoon boat parade	Higgins Ferry
	2 p.m.	Speed boat parade	Blue Creek
	9 p.m.	Fireworks	Cargile Creek
Aug 7	6:30 p.m.	Board of Directors meeting	FUMC
Aug 9	2 p.m.	Area Rep meeting	TBA
Aug 15		newsletter deadline	
Oct 23	6:30 p.m.	Board of Directors meeting	FUMC
Oct 24	8 a.m.	Fall lake clean-up	Higgins Ferry
Nov 20	6:30 p.m.	Annual General Membership meeting	TBA
Dec 15		newsletter deadline	

Memorial Gifts

From Bill & Beth Winston in memory of Martha Elizabeth McBride Zuelzke

The Lake Mitchell Memorial Fund is available for gifts in honor or in memory of a friend or loved one. Please send your contributions to our post office box and note your check accordingly. The intent is to set aside these funds until there is a sufficient amount to fund special projects.

“Good Neighbor” postings

You now have an opportunity to give and take, or sell and buy with your lake neighbors. We are offering this opportunity to any current (annual dues paid) member of our organization. If you have an item to sell or give away, or are looking for an item, you may submit a written request to Becki McCallum at beckmau@earthlink.net. She will verify that you are a current member and reserve the right to edit the content. Any requests for publication need to be made by the newsletter deadline posted on the above calendar.

Help me find my lost boat please!

From Annella Trobaugh Smith: our little john boat lost its grip on our dock during one of the winter rains. It has not found its way home, and I have been out of town and unaware that it was lost. I am sure he has lost his bearings and cannot find the way back to his dock... if you discovered a small old green john boat floating downriver this winter, please guide him back home. If you need directions, please call my neighbor for information: Becki McCallum 755-5334. Thank you!

ANNOUNCEMENTS

Email any submissions to beckmau@earthlink.net and judymurchison@gmail.com for editing and inclusion.

New phone books will be mailed soon

The 2009-2010 phone books should be ready by the time you read this newsletter. With a paid membership in H.O.B.O. you will have one sent to your mailing address as we have it in our phone book.

A BIG, HUGE, THANK YOU to Kristi Austin in Area 15 for her help and expertise in putting the book together; and to Jim Woodrow in Area 2 for his continued hard work keeping the database current, enabling us to have a phone book. We are one of only a few lakes that have phone books listing all of the people on the lake.

Are you taking pictures?

Dust off your camera and take some photos! Submission for this year's photo contest will begin in April. We like to get photos from each season on the lake (they are ALL beautiful). Proceeds from calendar sales fund our new *Lake Mitchell H.O.B.O. Environmental Awareness College Scholarship*. The first scholarship is to be awarded in the spring to a qualified resident from either Chilton or Coosa County.

A little human interest story...

Do you know “Billy Branch”?

What the local folks in Area 5 call “Billy Branch” or “Billy Slough” may not be familiar to everyone on the lake. A man named Billy Jones lived at the turn off of County Road 716 in the 1930's. That is where “Billy Slough” got its name. Lonza Bates had a small camp at the end of the slough. There was no access to the water at that time, so Lonza and his brothers Archie and Lawrence Bates cleared the road with a pick and shovel and a team of oxen belonging to Lonza. It took about two years to clear to the water. On Monday after Easter the family of Archie Bates would go to Billy Slough for the day. The ladies would sit and talk while the men went out fishing. The day's catch would be cleaned and they would have a big fish fry. To this day, every year on the Monday after Easter the big fish fry tradition continues by a big camp fire up in Billy Slough.

Has anyone seen this fish? *Reprinted with permission*

Southern walleye becoming hard to find

David Rainer, Alabama Dept of Conservation and Natural Resources

The Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources' Fisheries Section is looking for a few good southern walleye.

Yes, believe it or not, there are walleye in Alabama—just not many of them these days. Indeed, the popular and abundant northern walleye has a southern cousin. Unfortunately, the southern strain endemic to Alabama and Mississippi has been on the decline for the past few decades because of changes in water flow and the resulting siltation of the spawning grounds.

The population in Alabama has now reached a point that the Fisheries Section is attempting to capture fish to establish a brood stock at the Marion Fish Hatchery.

Despite significant effort, fisheries biologists have had only limited success in collecting southern walleye for the project. Only eight males were caught in the latest sampling effort at Hatchet Creek, a Coosa River tributary that runs into Lake Mitchell.

Unlike its northern cousin, the southern walleye is more at home in Alabama's cooler rivers and creeks, according to Rider. On the other hand, the northern walleye has adapted very well to the lakes and reservoirs from Tennessee to Canada.

"Our fish are more riverine, so when the impoundments went in the siltation basically suffocated the spawning gravel," Rider said. "These fish need a clean, cool, gravel bottom to spawn successfully."

When he was at Auburn in the early 90s, Rider was involved in a study for the Conservation Department that sampled southern walleye across the state. He remembers in 1993 that it didn't take much effort to catch about 20 fish in Hatchet Creek.

"Fast forward about 15 years when we started making plans to develop a brood stock," he said. "We went back to Hatchet Creek and saw how bad it had filled in and we didn't get a lot of walleye."

With the fish collected in 2006, the hatchery was able to produce 6,500 fingerlings that were released into Lake Mitchell. About 500 fingerlings were saved for brood stock.

"The thing about the brood stock is it's tough to keep those fish alive in the hot summer months at Marion," Rider said. "Our hatchery has been running cool water from the wells through the ponds, but we have had some mortality. Once we get a brood stock going, we're going to explore more ways to keep them alive. We're looking at National Forest lakes that are deep and cool."

The Fisheries Section is also looking for any information they can get from Alabama's anglers about southern walleye, which is darker and more mottled than its northern cousin.

"We're asking anglers to let us know if they catch a walleye," Rider said. "We would like to know exactly where they caught it. If they could take a fin clip about the size of a thumbnail, we can take the tissue and determine if it is the southern walleye strain. We are looking for any information that would help us concentrate our collection efforts."

"If they catch a walleye and want to keep it alive to donate to the hatchery, that would be the best-case scenario."

The Lake Mitchell H.O.B.O.

Anglers who wish to donate a live fish or a fin clipping should contact the Fisheries Section at 334-242-3471.

A memory relayed by Bill Attaway *reprinted with permission*

Dixie Wilson was one of river's unique characters/Cruisin' the Coosa *Memoirs*
Special to the Advertiser

I don't mean did you hear about him or did you go to New Dixie Camp, I mean did you know my friend Dixie Wilson? Very statuesque and charming, a voice that you would never forget, a very successful businessman in the days when it wasn't easy for a black man.

I remember when I was a young boy; my dad's friend would sometimes invite us to his place on the river. Of course, it was in a different location and was the old Dixie Camp, I suppose. The biggest treat was that Dixie would cook or have it done for the folks that had cottages there. Hey, I'm talking white jackets and all—he had class.

When I went to work on the lake, one of the first people I went to see was Dixie. Seeing all the old ragged boats scattered about, I reminded him if he was going to rent them, they would all have to be registered, numbered and declared sea-worthy or safe. He gave me that ol' humble look that he had and said, "Well, you know Po' O' Dixie can't read and write..."

I told him I had a couple of off days coming up, and I would come down and help him. When I got there, Po O Dixie had the 'gout' with his foot up, resting. I intended to 'help' him, but I ended up dragging those old boats out of the water, cleaning them, buying the paint, painting the numbers—everything.

Then came the time that I was dreading: how was I going to handle telling him how much he needed to mail in for registration—I mean, can't read or write? I stood there with my hat in hand, will he have cash? Finally, I said, "Now Dixie, we are going to have to have...a couple hundred dollars."

I believe he said fine. I followed him into his little 'office,' he rolled back the top of the old desk, opened several drawers and pulled out several of the old ledger-type checkbooks. Some banks I didn't even know. He settled on one of a stack!

Then I asked, "Do you want me to make it out for you," handed it back to him, and he whipped the prettiest signature on there you had ever seen. I expected an 'X'. I said, "Dixie, I thought you said you couldn't read or write." He grinned and said, "But I figures real good!"

As I started to leave, he handed the check to me, asked if I would carry it to Montgomery and held out his hands as if to say, "No stamps!"

Did you know Dixie? You should have.

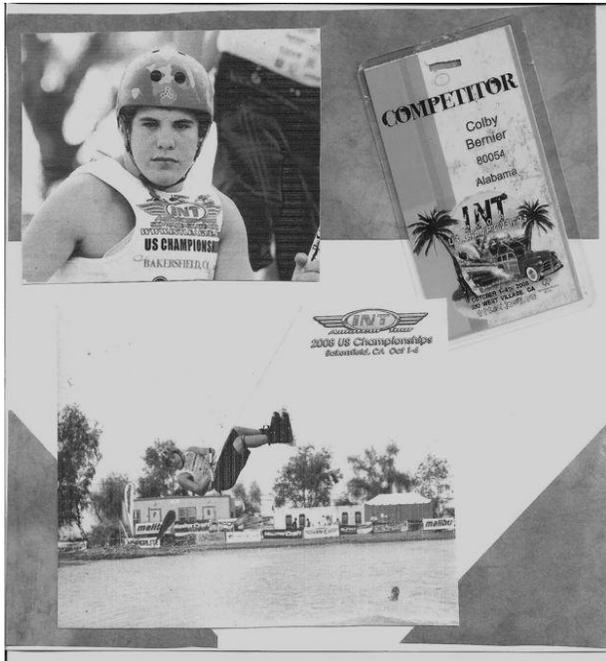
– Bill Attaway's original Cruisin' the Coosa column was published in The Clanton Advertiser in the 1980s and '90s.

H.O.B.O. needs a new(er) work boat!

Our current utility boat is almost beyond repair. If anyone has an older pontoon boat they are willing to donate (tax deductible), or if you know of anyone willing to donate an older boat, please contact Anita Lawson at 205 663-7035, 256 377-4584, or anitalawson@bellsouth.net.

***Come see your friends and neighbors
At the annual picnic!
June 6/4 p.m./Higgins Ferry***

H.O.B.O. SPOTLIGHT



COLBY BERNIER

#1 RANKED WAKEBOARDER IN THE STATE OF ALABAMA

#3 RANKED WAKEBOARDER IN THE UNITED STATES

Sunny California was the site of the U.S. National Wakeboard Competition held Oct. 1-4, 2008. This elite event represented the best 450 athletes, ages 6 to 72, from across the United States.

To be invited to this prestigious tournament an athlete had to place either first or second in his or her state's qualifying tournaments. Colby Bernier had placed first in the state of Alabama in the advanced wakeboard division. Bernier started his wakeboard season February 2008 practicing on Lake Mitchell behind a Mastercraft X-Star. The biggest hurdle Bernier had to overcome in wakeboarding was making his body go upside down and spin 360 degrees, 10 feet in the air, behind a boat going 23 miles per hour. Once over that initial hurdle it was practice, practice and more practice.

After 11 tournaments and more than 200 hours behind the boat, Bernier received recognition as No. 1 in the state and was invited to the Nationals.

The trip to California did not start well for Colby as he became ill the day before competition was to start. However it ended quite well for him, scoring his personal best run and accumulating 11,053 points. Out of the 450 athletes, Colby was ranked the #3 wakeboarder in the country.

Colby lives in Cargile Creek along with his brother Adam and his parents, Julie and Pete Bernier. Colby plans to spend time this year teaching wakeboarding on Lake Mitchell. See his ad in the H.O.B.O. 2009-2010 Phone book.