

LNWC Mission Statement

The Mission of the Lake Norman Wildlife Conservationists is to protect and enhance the natural resources and wildlife habitats of the Greater Lake Norman area for all to enjoy.

Inside this issue:

Reed's Creek Report 2

Heron Habitats 3

Blues & Burrito Flyer 4

Conservation Funding 5

Conservation News 6



Inland Sea Chronicle



Volume 7, Issue 2

www.lakenormanwildlife.org

Kids Meet Amazing Critter Friends!

By Billy Wilson, President

The Lake Norman Wildlife Conservationists logged another Amazing Critter Cruise this spring. Over 100 passengers were aboard the ship when the three-hour cruise set sail at noon on Saturday, June 15th, from Queen's Landing. The annual event is made possible by **Jack Williams**, owner of Queen's Landing, who donates the use of the Lady of the Lake, a 90-foot luxury yacht, for the afternoon.



Kacie Pierce, 4, finds a new corn snake friend at LNWC's annual Amazing Critter Cruise.

The excitement began immediately after embarking, when the Captain brought the group's attention to a nesting platform off the portside of the ship, which was occupied by an adult osprey with its young. Then, North Carolina Wildlife Federation board member **Steve Turley** took the microphone and continued to inform the crowd of the many unique aspects of the wildlife found on Lake Norman.

Shortly after the Captain gave the order to get underway, passengers mingled and gazed out of the ship's windows hoping to catch a glimpse of Lake Norman's wildlife.

After a kid-friendly lunch consisting of hamburgers and hotdogs was served, passengers anxiously awaited their turn to get

(Continued on page 2)



A Great Blue Heron nesting platform is placed on Lake Norman. The platforms were built during the winter by LNWC volunteers,

Hérons Have New Homes!

This summer, the North Carolina Wildlife Federation and LNWC established two heron rookeries on Lake Norman to provide much-needed nesting opportunities for protected colonial water birds. The rookeries are located in close proximity to where the Catawba River meets the northern part of the lake. Our volunteers, with help from certified biologists,

(Continued on page 3)

**Working Together
for
Wildlife
Conservation
on
Lake Norman**



**Wild Lives
Wild Places**

DID YOU KNOW?

As a chapter of the North Carolina Wildlife Federation, LNWC is a non-profit organization that depends on donations. Our Tax ID is 20-8576936. Please send donations to:
P.O. Box 4296
Mooresville, NC
28117

(Critter Cruise continued from page 1)

up close and personal with the “critters.” Handlers from Zootastic Park of Lake Norman made their way through the upper and lower decks of the ship with live animals in hand, which included native species such as a red fox and a corn snake. Also accompanying the handlers was a Lemur, an exotic primate brought along for the fun of it.

Passengers who attended this year’s event travelled from beyond the immediate Lake Norman area to board the ship; several families who bought tickets were from out of state. Furthermore, **Mary Bures**, manager of the Great Outdoors University of Greater Charlotte, a program of the NCWF, worked

with LNWC to recruit children who don’t regularly frequent Lake Norman to be a part of the event. As a result of the collaboration, about 30 students from the Hispanic Learning Center of Cabarrus County were able to enjoy the waters and wildlife of the lake.

LNWC is already planning to make next year’s cruise even more amazing. Former Duke Energy scientist **Gene Vaughn** is slated as the “2014 Amazing Critter Cruise” tour guide. This wildlife expert is sure to provide passengers with a wealth of information as the ship makes its way across the lake. Also, expect to see even more native species of animals on board next year! Tickets will go on sale in the early spring.

Water Water Everywhere But Not A Drop to Drink!

By Eric Peterson, Conservation

Back in January 2007, officials with North Carolina’s Ecosystem Enhancement Program announced that work was underway to restore a Lake Norman wetland area just off Highway 21 in Mooresville, situated on the south side of Cypress Landing townhome community. The 15-acre property was reconfigured to allow water from Reed’s Creek to flood the adjacent meadowland and wooded area to create a wetland wildlife habitat for animals displaced by the tremendous building growth in the Mooresville area.

Wow! The spring and summer of 2013 have certainly made that vision a reality. As a result of the amazing amount of rain we have had since early spring, the wetlands acreage is now about 85-90 percent underwater, with the two major exceptions being islands No. 35 and 36.

The near-record rainfall has encouraged even more growth in the 4,000-5,000 trees that were started during the mitigation process. It’s a jungle out there! We recommend exploring the wetland with your kayak or canoe. Many species of wildlife call it home, thanks in part to LNWC’s efforts to place nesting boxes and clean the area of debris.

Proper Tire Disposal

LNWC litter cleanup efforts are still culminating in the retrieval of about a dozen vehicle tires each year in the Reed’s Creek Wetland and adjacent lake waterway, about half of them with rusting rims.

Please be aware that each family in Mooresville is entitled to discard a maximum of five tires per year, free of charge, at the Iredell County Solid Waste Facility Transfer Station on Hwy. 150. Call 704-663-5314 for information.

(Continued from page 1)

designed and constructed the platforms, and Lancaster Custom Dock & Lift Systems, Inc. erected the 30-foot poles and attached the 18 nesting platforms.

Volunteers began building the platforms in December. Upon completion of the project this summer, **Tim Gestwicki**, NCWF CEO, stated that, "it was another good day for those who appreciate and value the wildlife of Lake Norman. Working with dedicated volunteers and professional wildlife biologists, these projects benefit everyone from anglers to birders, osprey to great blue herons, and boaters and wildlife enthusiasts."

The project was funded by a grant from the Habitat Enhancement Program of the Catawba-Wataeree. In addition to the heron rookery initiative, the program supports and provides funding for osprey nesting platform sites, wood duck nesting boxes, turtle basking platforms and efforts to enhance fish habitat and restore eroded shorelines.



Great blue herons (*Ardea herodias*) are listed by the NC Natural Heritage Program as a vulnerable species in the Piedmont due to loss and fragmentation of habitats along rivers, reservoirs and adjacent floodplain forests. These protected birds nest in colonies known as "rookeries" or

"heronries," which can contain many nests, thus they are classified as colonial nesting water birds.



LNWC volunteers (from left) Billy Wilson, Kristen Meng and Mark Lancaster join Tim Gestwicki, NCWF Executive Director, out on the lake to create Great Blue Heron nesting sites. The herons will have time to get familiar with their new platforms before next year's nesting season begins.

Colonial water birds, in general and on Lake Norman, have been identified as a priority conservation resource in the North Carolina Wildlife Action Plan. The specific rookeries (i.e., islands) are protected under the Colonial Waterbird Nesting Area Program. The boundaries of these habitat areas are posted, and no entry is allowed during the water bird nesting season from April through August.

In colonies with many nests and potential nesting sites, males select and defend the highest nest sites. In defending selected sites, male birds put on grand displays accompanied by shrieking in order to attract females. Males gather material and females build the nest. They build large, bulky nests of sticks, lining the interior with twigs, moss, and pine needles. Both adults then care for the hatchlings (generally 3-5) within the rookery until they are ready to fledge. The North Carolina Wildlife Action Plan calls for priority research, survey and monitoring efforts for heron rookeries.

Please consider supporting this conservation initiative as a volunteer with the LNWC Island Habitat Program. For more information, please email billy.wilson@lakenormanwildlife.org

**“Support
Conservation by
Attending
Mooreville’s
13th Annual
Blues
&
Burritos”**

Homesley & Wingo
LAW GROUP PLLC
Presents

13th Annual

BLUES & BURRITOS

All donations to benefit:

**Rusty Barkley and
The Part Time Blues Band**

Pat “Mother Blues” Cohen
Max Drake

**SEPTEMBER
20th | 2013
6pm - 10pm**

on the front lawn of
Homesley & Wingo Law Group
330 S. Main St., Mooreville | 704-664-2162

Beer by
 New Belgium

Burritos from
 Requitos

**MUSIC
DATE**

www.lakenormanlaw.com

Wildlife Fun-Raisers!

Wildlife Fun-Raisers!

LNWC Wildlife Oyster & Shrimp Fest

By Don West, VP

Plans are well underway for this year's **Wildlife Oyster & Shrimp Fest**, set for Sept. 21st. Our committee works hard each year to make the event even better. One thing that needs no improvement is the **Big Daddy's** menu – steamed oysters, steamed shrimp and delicious barbeque. Come join us for an evening of fun, food, and entertainment. We will feature live music, as well as various auction items, both large and small, including several exciting vacation destinations.

The area marinas support us generously every year, and for that reason, we alternate the site of the Fest among them. This year, the host marina is **Long Island Marina**, at the tip of Lake Norman. For those residents of Huntersville, Cornelius and Davidson, we have rented the **Party Wheels** bus out of Huntersville to chauffeur the first 45 guests who reserve a spot to and from the Fest. There is no additional cost for this service. If you are interested in taking advantage of the bus, please make your reservation at the time of ticket purchase.

One new twist this year is the opportunity for sponsorship. We have numerous sponsorship levels, and each comes with complimentary tickets, special seating, oyster-shuckers at your table, beverages and more! We are also looking for volunteers to help us make this the greatest Oyster Fest yet. If you are interested in tickets, sponsorship or volunteering, please go to info@lakenormanwildlife.org.

*“See you in
September for
food, music, fun
and
conservation
networking!”*

Blues and Burritos for Wildlife and Mission Work

By Billy Wilson, President

The conservation initiatives implemented by the Lake Norman Wildlife Conservationists (LNWC) rely heavily upon our fundraising efforts, and I am excited to inform you that LNWC was recently chosen to be a benefit organization of the **13th Annual Blues and Burritos** event, a Lake Norman tradition hosted by the **Homesley and Wingo Law Group**.

This exciting event, set for September 20th, will be held from 6-10 p.m. on the front lawn of Homesley and Wingo, 330 S. Main Street in Mooresville. Deli-

cious food will be provided by **Tequilila's Mexican Grill**, and three great bands will perform throughout the evening, including: Rusty Barkley and the Part Time Blues Band; Pat “Mother Blues” Cohen; and, Max Drake. All proceeds raised during the event will be contributed to the two benefit organizations - LNWC and The Mooresville Christian Mission.

LNWC will have an informational booth set up at the event. Please stop by and see us to learn more about our organization and volunteer opportunities!

LAKE NORMAN
WILDLIFE
CONSERVATIONISTS

PO Box 4096
Mooresville, NC 28117

E-mail:
info@lakenormanwildlife.org

We're on the web!
lakenormanwildlife.org



Conservationists Updates

LNWC Library Programs

LNWC holds free nature programs the second Thursday of each month, eight months out of the year, starting at 7 p.m. at Mooresville Public Library. No reservations are required.

Jan Blodgett of Davidson College will give the first program of the 2012-13 program year. She will discuss "What Lies Under Lake Norman" on Sept. 12 in the Youth Services Room. Don't miss this fascinating look at the pre-Lake Norman landscape!

Conservation Projects

We get numerous requests from potential volunteers interested in helping local wildlife and wild places. Education Program Director **Sid Smith** has been in contact with park service officials to set up volunteer opportunities. "At Robbins Park in Cornelius," Sid said, "we have met with the city and now have a blue print of the park to be marked with potential projects. Our first project will be general cleanup work - cutting brush and piling it for removal by the city. We will need volunteers for that work and plan to start it when we can rely on some cooler weather." We will send out information when that time comes.

LNWC BOD Meetings are Open!

Members are welcome to attend all meetings, which take place at 5:30 p.m., at the Lake Norman Keller-Williams Office in Mooresville, off Bluefield Road. The dates this year are Sept. 9, Oct. 7, Nov. 4, Jan. 6, Feb. 3, March 3, April 7 and May 5. Join us in formulating our wildlife protection goals!

LNWC

Officers

Billy Wilson, President
Don West, VP
Don Higgin, Treasurer
Julie Higgin, Secretary

Directors At-Large
Eric Peterson, **Sid Smith**,
Jim Ray & **Ken Teeter**

Standing Committees

Conservation
Eric Peterson
Education Programs
Sid Smith
Projects
Ken Teeter
Membership
Ken Conrad
Island Adoptions
Billy Wilson & Kristen Meng
Grant Writer
Theresa Fink
Community Relations
Don West
Website Manager
Jim Ray
Newsletter & Publicity
Julie Higgin

The *Inland Sea Chronicle* is published by the Lake Norman Wildlife Conservationists, a chapter of the NC Wildlife Federation. Direct comments and inquiries to **jchiggin@yahoo.com**

