

SOLA3

SAVE OUR LAKES
ALLIANCE 3

Founded in 2004 to Preserve, Protect and Maintain Silver Lake, Lake Gerar and Lake Comegys in Rehoboth Beach, Delaware

A Lakes Management Plan

Sallie Forman, Founder/President

A lake is the landscape's most beautiful and expressive feature. It is earth's eye; looking into which the beholder measures the depth of his own nature.

~Henry David Thoreau

While Lake Gerar, Silver Lake and Lake Comegys may appear beautiful, they share the same distinction as 85% of the rivers, streams, bays and lakes in the State of Delaware – they are too toxic for swimming and 94% of them contain fish that are not healthy enough for human consumption. What the “beholder” should reflect on is the human behavior that has brought about the deterioration of these abundant, natural resources and ask “is this the legacy we wish to leave for future generations?”



Upward Bound students using GPS technology to map Silver Lake storm drains in a project sponsored by SOLA3 and the University of Delaware.

In 2012 the state declared its ownership of Silver Lake and Lake Comegys, based on research provided by SOLA3. The Delaware General Assembly requires that the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC), the agency responsible for the lakes, “to protect and conserve” these natural resources through a comprehensive, consistent management program.

Since 2013 SOLA3 has been in regular contact with DNREC officials to inquire about the status of its management plan. Just as we were running out of patience and I was preparing this column, I received an email from Frank Piorko, (Division Director, DNREC Division of Watershed Stewardship) to say that the plan has been finalized and that it will soon be shared with The City of Rehoboth and SOLA3. Frank has provided a comprehensive outline of the management plan and related strategies. He also addresses the status of the dredging project at the west end of Silver Lake (we started this project in 2010 with then Secretary O'Mara), the ocean outfall, and the requirement for permits/leases for lakefront structures. Please read Frank's article on page 5 carefully, as at some point DNREC will seek public comment on the plan. If you have specific comments or questions, please send to us at SaveOurLakes3@aol.com. (Continued on page 7)

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Celebrating in Style: SOLA'S 10 Years!

The Honorable Jack Markell and Mrs. Markell served as honorary chairs for the gathering of our community and supporters to celebrate SOLA3's 10th Anniversary on August 16. John and Bryn Burke graciously lent their beautiful home - in an ideal location between the ocean and Silver Lake - and were great hosts greeting the many guests and VIPs. Top area restaurants provided an array of outstanding food that would have wowed James Beard. Local businesses and individuals gave creative items for the silent and live auctions. We were blessed with cool ocean breezes and a beautiful sunset over Silver Lake.

SOLA3 was surprised and honored to receive tributes and congratulations from the Delaware House of Representatives, sponsored by Speaker Schwartzkopf, and from the Delaware Senate, sponsored by Senator Lopez. They are truly our "BFF."

SOLA3 surprised the crowd (who applauded vigorously) with the announcement that it is partnering with DNREC and the Sussex Birders to create an interpretive bird identification sign for the bird refuge at Silver Lake. DNREC will provide its guidelines for the sign. SOLA3 will pay for the sign and work with the Sussex Birders on selection and pictures of the birds. This will be a great resource for the many birders and bird lovers who visit the site year-round.

This was SOLA3's only fundraiser in its ten years. It was an outstanding success, because of the support of so many in our community who provided the resources to continue our work. We thank you for your generosity and commitment to SOLA3's mission. (See sponsor list below)

Heartfelt Thanks to Friends and Sponsors who made our ten-year celebration a success:

SOLA3 Best Friends

Bramble and Brine, Martha L. Cochran, Sallie Forman and Jonah Gitlitz

SOLA3 Special Friends

Bad Hair Day, Phil and Deb Barbara, Binn 66, Boardwalk Builders, Michael Boyd, Tom Childers and John Hall, Rod C. Cook, Nancy and David Cullen, Patricia M. Day, Valarie and Dick Elliott, Envirotech Consultants, Mary Ellen and Tom Gaspard, Patrick Gossett and Howard Menaker, Denis and Joan O'Toole, Richard Scott, Marsha Simon and Trudie E. Thompson

Restaurants Providing Food for the Event

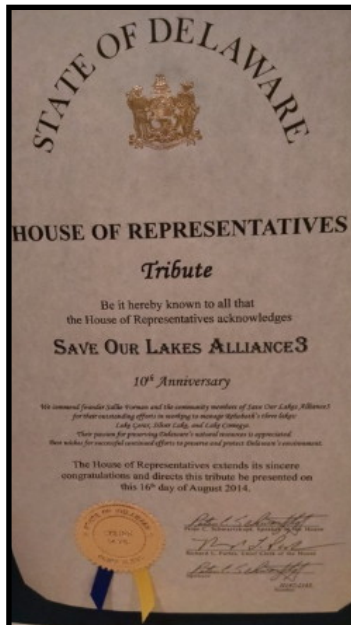
a(Muse.), Back Porch Cafe, Baywood, Bethany Blues, Blue Moon, Cafe Azafran, Dos Locos, Eden, Hobos, Mariachi, Nage and Saketumi



Above front row, l-r: Nancy Cullen, Sallie Forman, DNREC Secretary David Small, Bryn Burke, Toni Sharp, Dan Payne. Back row, l-r: John Burke, Mike Boyd, Tom Childers, Senator Ernie Lopez.



A good time was had by all.



Senator Lopez: Good Friend to the Lakes

Following is an excerpt from Senator Ernie Lopez's editorial in the *Cape Gazette*. We know we are in good company with the Center for the Inland Bays. We congratulate and wish them much success for their next 20 years.

Sen. Lopez thanks CIB and SOLA3

"... the work done in the General Assembly is not done in a vacuum, and as a state senator representing a large portion of eastern Sussex County and a lover of the environment, I put a great deal of trust and faith in the efforts of local nonprofits whose missions include protecting and enhancing our rich natural resources. Two of those nonprofits, Save Our Lakes Alliance3 and the Center for the Inland Bays, are celebrating milestone anniversaries this month. For the last decade, SOLA3 has created awareness and coordinated action toward protecting the lakes in and around Rehoboth Beach: Lake Gerar, Lake Comegys and Silver Lake. These historic and environmentally sensitive areas, in the midst of Delaware's greatest resort destination, have been cared for and defended by dedicated SOLA3 volunteers, whose advocacy, knowledge and commitment deserve all of our thanks..."

Rehoboth Elementary Students Study Silver Lake

For the past six years, SOLA has sponsored a hands-on, inquiry based water quality workshop for the two fifth grade classes at Rehoboth Beach Elementary School. The school is located on the banks of Silver Lake, where the workshop takes place each fall.

Under the watchful eye of Todd Fritchman, president of Envirotech Environmental Consulting, Inc., students count and examine organisms from an unidentified healthy lake and compare them with those in water from Silver Lake, assess their data and determine which water is the healthiest and why. Each year they have found that Silver Lake is lacking in good water macroinvertebrates and appears less healthy when compared with the control sample. Students return to the classroom for follow up discussions on their data and on what they and their parents can do to help improve the quality of the lakes. Science teacher Jacquie Kisiel provides a myriad of study projects related to the water quality workshop. SOLA3 provided her classes with state of the art water sampling kits, which the students have used for several year to monitor the lake, taking their study of environmental practices very seriously. See photos below.



At left, SOLA President Sallie Forman (far left) and Envirotech President Todd Fritchman (far right) pose with the fifth graders holding their SOLA orange bags. Above right, some of the kids examining their water samples.

Rehoboth Beach Area's First Historical Marker Dedicated to Lakes

A record-breaking crowd that included State and local officials was on hand August 25, 2014, to witness the dedication of a Delaware State marker that recognizes the historical importance of Lake Comegys and Silver Lake. During the War of 1812, American Colonel Samuel Boyer Davis blocked access to the lakes to strategically keep vital resources out of British hands. The Nanticoke Tribe was sustained by easy access to shellfish from the Atlantic during their summer encampments at the lakes, and ship captains relied on Silver Lake for fresh water during the Colonial era. The lakes have the geological distinction of being formed tens of thousands of years ago by receding glaciers, a fact confirmed by Scott Andres, P. G., senior scientist with the Delaware Geological Survey. They are the only freshwater lakes in Delaware and iconic environmental features of the Rehoboth area. In 2004, the Delaware Assembly passed a joint resolution, sponsored by then Senator George Bunting and Rep. Pete Schwartzkopf, citing the lakes as natural treasures to Delaware and the United States.

After seeing *Cape Gazette* publisher Dennis Forney's editorial promoting the lakes for historic status, SOLA3 contacted Speaker Schwartzkopf and Senator Ernie Lopez, who gladly agreed to sponsor the marker. We wish to thank them for their enthusiasm and support. We also thank Kate Fair of the Historical Commission, with whom we worked on many drafts to develop the text. The marker is installed at the State bird refuge at the south end of the Silver Lake Bridge. Be sure to watch for it as you walk or drive by it on Silver Lake Drive. We hope you share in our pride in having our treasured lakes honored in this special way.



Standing at the dedication of the marker are (l-r) Sen. Ernie Lopez, Dan Payne (SOLA3), Rep. Pete Schwartzkopf, Nancy Cullen (SOLA3), Sallie Forman (SOLA3), State Archivist Stephen Marz and DNREC Secretary David Small.



Dewey Mayor Diane Hanson and Rehoboth Beach Mayor Sam Cooper.



Rehoboth Beach Commissioners Patrick Gossett, Kathy McGuinness and Stan Mills at marker dedication.



Silver Lake Management Plan 2015 Update by DNREC:

Frank M. Piorko, Division Director
DNREC Division of Watershed Stewardship,
provided the following update:

Since 2013, when DNREC held a public informational meeting regarding the status of Silver Lake as a DNREC owned resource, the Department has started a path toward the development of a management strategy and the continued efforts related to specific projects on the lake.

In the early spring of this year, DNREC asked a private planning consultant for a scope of work after meeting with them and several of the sections of the Department that have responsibilities for part of the lake management efforts. The timeline for development of a scope of work has been delayed, and the Department hopes to have a priced proposal as a reference by the end of May. There have been no contractual arrangements as of yet, and the next steps will be a meeting with the City of Rehoboth and SOLA3. We anticipate that meeting in early summer.

Lake Management Plan - Update

The draft proposal for a management strategy will have steps that include:

- Public Participation Development and Data Collection
- Planning and Draft Plan Development
- Management Plan Segments Development
- Public Meetings and Deliverables

It is envisioned that the draft management plan segments would include areas for consideration that comprise:

- Physical Condition of the Lake
- Water Quality
- Aquatic Vegetation
- Lake Hydrology
- Fisheries and Wildlife Management
- Stormwater Management
- Land Use and Setback Distances
- Permitting for Structures
- Public Access and Recreational Opportunities



As the plan for the lake and surrounding land area is developed, there will be a public process envisioned that will involve the stakeholders and lake owners as well as community representatives.

Lake Dredging and Water Management in the Upper Lake Area - Update

The Department continues to evaluate another option for managing an open water condition at the upper end of the lake. While traditional dredging options have proven very costly, another proposal has been developed to utilize “coir” or coconut fiber logs as a way to stage dredged material behind them creating a shelf along sections of the open water shoreline. We are evaluating this proposal carefully as it may not afford an area necessary to store the complete 8,000 cubic yards of material estimated to be dredged.

A decision to move forward with this latest proposal will be determined in the next month.

Lake Structure for Managing Water Level

The Department has asked Davis, Bowen and Freidel (DBF), a local engineering company to assist with the evaluation of the outlet structure and the piping system that comprises the outlet for the lake. DelDOT has determined the need for repair and replacement of part of the piping system and since it connects to the beach outfall pipe, it makes sense to look at this as one continuous system.

DBF is already under an “on-call” contract and can begin to evaluate this problem in a few weeks.

DNREC Permits and Leases for Lake Structures

While a larger effort takes place to develop a regional approach for management of Silver Lake, the Department will evaluate any request for new or replacement bulkheads, docks and other shoreline improvements individually as the need arises. A permit or lease may be required from DNREC and DNREC will coordinate with the City of Rehoboth to ensure that building permit conditions and any City requirements are adhered to.

Cleaning up the Lakes Lake Gerar's Condition

May 9, 2015, marked the continuation of cleaning the debris from the shorelines of Silver Lake and Lake Comegys, with two teams assembled at each location. Teams included homeowners around the lakes, as well as Rehoboth Beach Commissioners Kathy McGuinness and Bill Sargent. It was a foggy, overcast morning that provided comfortable conditions to walk or kayak around the lakes. The outstanding "treasure" was a pair of men's Polo underpants found in the underbrush. Undoubtedly there is a good story connected with that!

It was a pleasant surprise that since SOLA3's last clean up three years ago, there was less debris accumulated than expected - an encouraging sign that people have become more responsible in disposing their trash. We and the wildlife thank you. SOLA3 does not include Lake Gerar in its clean up, because the City of Rehoboth contracts for its maintenance. You may have noticed that the water at the west end of the lake is very murky. This is caused by deposits of unwanted waste material and the accumulation of silt sediment coming from a storm drain. SOLA3 will continue discussions with the City and its contractor on ways to restore this area of Lake Gerar.



Top, Dan Payne displays Polo undershorts found by Nancy Cullen. Below, Tom Childers and John Hall use kayaks on Silver Lake on a foggy lakes cleanup day.



A Tribute to Three Very Special SOLA3 Friends

Sallie Forman, Founder/President

SOLA3 is saddened by the loss of three individuals with whom we had a special connection. Ernie Sando was our first treasurer in 2004 and continued to be a great supporter until his passing in November, 2014. For our first community rally in 2004, he created the large SOLA3 banner that we continue to use. Ernie was a very gifted and giving person. As co-owner of Bayberry flowers, he gave beautiful, creative arrangements for our special events. As a neighbor, I will certainly miss running into him on Pine Lane to catch up on the latest Rehoboth happenings.

Shortly after I founded SOLA3, I met Mary Campbell. I was immediately impressed by her feisty and "can do" personality. Because of her experience and knowledge from serving on the Rehoboth Beach Planning Committee, and as its chair, I asked her to be a SOLA3 advisor, which she was until she passed away in April of this year. I have fond memories of talking with her on many occasions on her porch or in her parlor at her Lake Gerar home about how things get done in the City.



That eventually led to a meeting with City and DNREC officials, resulting in Lake Gerar's environmental improvements. Every time I'll pass her home, I know I'll remember, with great fondness, our times together.

Nancy Cullen, a SOLA3 Director, interviewed Evelyn Thoroughgood for our 2012 newsletter. We chose Evelyn because of her deep Rehoboth roots and the fact that her long-time home is on Silver Lake. Evelyn shared many stories with Nancy of her growing up in Rehoboth and next to Silver Lake. We learned even more about her many accomplishments and dedication to her community upon her passing in May. She

really was a woman ahead of her time, who will be missed by many.

President's letter continued from page one:

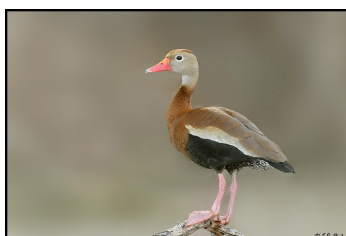
Highlights of SOLA3's activities and programs over the last ten years demonstrate that we have been a catalyst for significant improvements to the three lakes, as well as sponsoring workshops and educational opportunities for the public on how to be good stewards of the lakes. But we have been limited in what we can do without some government entity being responsible for these natural treasures.

We are glad that the management plan is in final form and includes the important issues that need to be addressed to improve the lakes. We look forward to seeing the final document, continuing our dialogue with DNREC, the City of Rehoboth, and the community. With DNREC as the management agency, we enter a new era of optimism for improving the lakes for future generations.

On a much lighter and certainly happy note, SOLA3 had a great time celebrating its tenth anniversary. If there is any doubt, take a look at our "show and tell" recap of these events, attended by many in our community, as well as local and state officials. On behalf of our Board, I thank you all for your participation and support.



The Birds of Silver Lake



Clockwise from top left:
Canvasback,
Great Black-backed Gull,
Black-bellied Whistling Duck,
Common Yellowthroat

SOLA3 Really, Really Needs You

As often as you may read or hear about SOLA3's activities and programs, it may surprise you to learn that most of our accomplishments are the result of our 6-member Board of Directors. As we begin our next five years, we realize that our future success will depend on expanding the SOLA3 organization to include an **active** committee-based structure. SOLA3 is the only organization dedicated to improving our Rehoboth Lakes. Simply put, we need more volunteers to maximize our effectiveness. In all cases, your commitment would not exceed ten hours a year. And you would enjoy your time with our dedicated board, who make working and playing together fun.

Specifically, here is where our greatest needs are:

An Education Committee to organize workshops and other educational programs to help the public understand how their behavior impacts the health of the lakes.

A Lakes Monitoring Committee, trained by DNREC, to take periodic water quality samples and be on the lookout for other signs of impending harm (e.g., absence of a silt fence at a lakeside construction site, signs of a fish kill, unusually low or high water levels).

A Lakes Clean Up Committee to organize our bi-annual lakes' clean up.

An Outreach Committee to help with press releases, our newsletter and Web site, and contacts with other organizations.

We also seek candidates to serve on our board. Currently we want to fill a vacant Director position and add another member to the board, as allowed by our bylaws.

To get on board (yes, pun intended), please choose how you would like to be involved. You may indicate your preference on the enclosed "Friends" form and return in the self-addressed envelope; or send an email to SaveOurLakes3@aol.com Also indicate if you would like a call to discuss any of these positions.

Don't miss this opportunity to be part of an important environmental cause that means so much to our community.

Thank You Board of Directors and Advisors!!

SOLA3 Board of Directors

Sallie Forman, Founder/President (2013-16)

Mike Boyd, Vice President ((2014-17)

Toni Sharp, Secretary (2014-17)

Tom Childers, Director ((2013-16)

Nancy Cullen, Director (2013-16)

Director, vacant ((2015-18)

Dan Payne, Treasurer (2015-18)

Appointed Advisor:

Mable Granke

SOLA3 is grateful for its partnerships with the following organizations:

Rehoboth Beach HOA

Draper Subdivision

Lake Comegys HOA

The Village Improvement Association



SOLA Board of Directors receiving the 2012 Governor's Outstanding Volunteer Award. Left to right: Toni Sharp, Secretary, Tom Childers, Director and Webmaster, Sallie H. Forman, Founder and President, Nancy Cullen, Director and Newsletter Editor, Mike Boyd, Vice President and Dan Payne, Treasurer.

Planning Our Future

Tom Childers, Director

With our 10th Anniversary behind us, the SOLA3 Board began planning its five-year future. After interviewing a list of key stakeholders that included Rehoboth Beach Mayor Sam Cooper and community leaders, the Board met in April to consider the environmental, social and political contexts of the lakes, possible SOLA3 roles and priorities for action.

Please send your ideas on how SOLA3 can be most effective in accomplishing its mission to saveourlakes3@aol.com.

We expect to wrap up the plan by the end of the summer.

Don't touch that dial!



L-r SOLA Directors Dan Payne and Tom Childers work with the board to develop a strategic 5-year plan.

Excerpts from October 2014 Delaware Beach Life's organization spotlight, "SOLA3, Fighting for Great Lakes."

"Now celebrating its 10th year, Save Our Lakes Alliance3, or SOLA3, has carried out its mission through education, dialogue and research. Formed entirely of volunteers, the group has met with individuals, organizations, businesses and government officials, eventually achieving a monumental goal: In 2012 the state claimed ownership of the lakes, making a single agency responsible for their health. 'I would say this has been our great accomplishment so far,' says Sallie Forman, founder and president of SOLA3... 'The Rehoboth lakes are iconic; distinct jewels in the crown of our wonderful environment. But we have to work on improving the lakes' environment so we can continue to enjoy them and leave a better legacy for future generations.' "