



WHO CARES?

By: Sallie Forman, Founder/President

““Unless someone like you cares a whole awful lot,
Nothing is going to get better.
It's not.” -Dr. Seuss, *The Lorax*

There is little doubt that our community cares about our Rehoboth Lakes “community” defined as state and local officials, residents, organizations, supporters of SOLA3, even visitors, and, of course, SOLA3. We care because of their historic significance. The lakes help define the unique environment of our community, and they are integral to the ambiance of the area. Delaware’s General Assembly has honored them with a resolution declaring they are “natural treasures.”

But the problem is that while we “care about” the lakes, we are not doing enough to **care for** them. Yes, we have demonstrated our care by the progress made, with the help and support of many, since SOLA3 organized in 2004. This includes restoration of Lake Gerar, a conservation easement around Lake Comegys, erosion control and filtering out pollutants through the installations of riparian buffers, scaled back development at Lake Comegys and Silver Lake, Stormceptors® installed at Stockley and Laurel Streets, a Rehoboth ordinance that creates a 10’ set back requirement (SOLA urged 15’) for lakefront properties, dredging the west end of Silver Lake, and most important, our success in having the State of Delaware confirm its ownership of Silver Lake and Lake Comegys.

To really **care for** the lakes means protecting them from future degradation and improving their environment. That’s why a priority for SOLA3 is to work with the Rehoboth Beach Board of Commissioners (BOC) to put in place ordinances that will require protections from runoff emanating from individual lots and to phase in a comprehensive storm water management system to improve the City’s many storm drains with new technologies to limit harmful substances entering the lakes.

Seven years have passed since the Rehoboth Planning Commission initially included these provisions in its Comprehensive Development Plan (CDP). The plan (updated in 2015) has been approved by the State of Delaware, but Rehoboth’s BOC has taken no action on these provisions.

As reported herein, the BOC has begun a process to address degradation of Lake Gerar, caused by runoff and old storm drains that have polluted the water since its costly restoration in 2005. This is an example of what happens at Lake Gerar and Silver Lake, absent a holistic policy that will protect the lakes from future harm, thus eliminating the need for costly, remedial actions. Now is the time for the BOC to demonstrate that it **cares for** these iconic, natural treasures by beginning the process to adopt the provisions included in the City’s CDP. We will also continue our efforts with the Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Control (DNREC) to complete and implement its management plan for Silver Lake and Lake Comegys.

SOLA3 is grateful to former DNREC Secretary David Small for beginning the process and finding the resources for dredging Silver Lake. We look forward to working with the new DNREC Secretary, Shawn Garvin. As he has stated, we too greatly value and recognize the importance of our partnership with DNREC. And, we continue to be most grateful to our community, that demonstrates their shared vision for improving our lakes, through their generous support.

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NEW DNREC SECRETARY TAKES OFFICE

Shawn M. Garvin was appointed by Governor John Carney as Secretary of DNREC and confirmed by the Delaware State Senate on March 15, 2017, taking office immediately afterward as a member of the Governor's cabinet.

Secretary Garvin is a Delaware native and graduate of the University of Delaware. In November 2009, he was appointed by President Barack Obama to serve as Administrator of Region III for the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), overseeing the agency's work in the Mid-Atlantic, which includes Delaware. His 20 year EPA career included serving as the senior state and congressional liaison for EPA Region III, providing counsel to agency leadership on complex public health and environmental matters. Prior to his service with the EPA, he served as an aide to then - U.S. Senator Joe Biden, and also was Executive Assistant to former New Castle County Executive Dennis Greenhouse.

We thank the Secretary for his comments that follow:

"As DNREC Secretary, I look forward to furthering the Department's investment and interest in the Rehoboth Lakes system. Delaware's waterways, lakes, and ponds are an important and critical component in each of our lives. All of us should have the goals of working for open space preservation, improving



New DNREC Secretary
Shawn M. Garvin

water quality, coordinating resources to address impacts of sea level rise, and helping to provide outdoor recreational opportunities. I am pleased to lead a DNREC team that implements those priorities. Throughout my career, I have placed enormous value on the fact that public-private partnerships are integral to environmental stewardship. Delaware is fortunate to have Save Our Lakes Alliance 3 with its experienced leaders and volunteers as a conservation stalwart, and as Secretary, I will continue promoting strong relationships between DNREC and our conservation partners, including SOLA3."

IMPROVEMENTS TO LAKE GERAR MAY BE COMING

By: Sallie Forman

One of the first projects SOLA3 took on shortly after we organized in 2004, was improvements to Lake Gerar. The surrounding neighbors wanted solutions to eliminate the ever-growing Canada geese population, stagnant/putrid water and shoreline erosion. The City of Rehoboth was able to secure a State grant and hired Envirotech Consulting for a major restoration, that included installing a natural riparian buffer, diffusers, and barriers to eliminate the geese. Since that time, the southwest prong of the lake has filled in with 52" of sediment and silt from large storm drains, construction runoff and adjoining homeowners dumping their yard waste, resulting in very shallow water in that area.

With leadership from Commissioner Stan Mills, the Rehoboth Board of Commissioners (BOC) has again hired Envirotech to make recommendations to restore the southwest prong of the lake. Todd Fritchman, President of Envirotech, stated that any remedial solution would involve dredging the area that has filled in, and he also recommended that the City create a comprehensive storm water management system to protect the Rehoboth lakes.

Envirotech will present its full recommendations with costs to the BOC in the fall.



Shore of Lake Gerar



SILVER LAKE DREDGING A REALITY

By; Sallie Forman

Dredging the west end of Silver Lake began in September 2016 and continues to progress. The project is designed to improve the shoreline, deepen the lake at its narrowest point by 2 feet, and the area closest to the footbridge by 6 to 18 inches. It creates an expanded shoreline as a wetland from the removal of years of accumulated sand, silt and clay coming from runoff and Rehoboth Beach storm drains. The new wetland will result in beneficial habitat for the flora and fauna of the lake. Once the fill area has dried, it will be planted with wetland vegetation, such as Soft Rush, Tussock Sedge, and Silky Dogwood.

Chuck Williams, in DNREC's Division of Watershed Stewardship, who has managed the project, stated, "We designed the project at a certain water level, 4.8 NAVD. Recently the levels have been about a foot less. We will continue to monitor this to determine if we need to do any additional work in the lake."

SOLA is most grateful to Chuck for his perseverance in finding the best solution at the best cost; and for his expertise in managing the project.

SOLA3 initiated the project with DNREC officials in 2010, who approved it, but it took several years to find a practical, environmentally sound, and affordable process.

DNREC budgeted a former plan at \$300,000, but one bid came in at \$700,000; so Chuck and his team looked for other ways to do the project. At that time, the City of Rehoboth was asked to share in the cost.

Because the State of Delaware acknowledged ownership of the lake in 2013, the final cost (under \$125,000) will come totally from State funds - sparing Rehoboth any contribution to the project's cost. Last year Rehoboth's Board of Commissioners approved the project's plan with no alterations.

These pictures show the excavator in action last October and the new wetland/fill area, as of early May, to be planted with wetland vegetation.



ENVIRONMENTAL CONCERNS FOR NEW DEVELOPMENT

By: Sallie Forman

The owner of the Bay Mart Shopping Center, on Route 1, across from the Spring Lake Subdivision, submitted a site plan to the City of Rehoboth Beach for review in 2015. It was determined that the Planning Commission would review the plan since the property is within the City's boundaries, and, at 7.78 acres, one of the largest lots remaining to be developed. The development, named Beach Walk, includes 58 individual home sites, as well as 5 town homes and recreational structures.

The proposed development would require removal of the entire asphalt and concrete surfaces, and the demolition of two huge building structures. This activity could release hazardous chemicals, whether released into the ground or airborne, and could potentially adversely affect the health of the large populations closest to the property which includes three communities, a senior center, and the elementary school. Furthermore, the plan provides minimum protections for polluted storm water, sediment and erosion control, and surface and groundwater runoff that would enter Silver Lake from a storm drain located on Scarborough Avenue Ext.

On October 19, 2016, SOLA3 and the Rehoboth Beach Homeowners Association submitted a joint letter to the Planning Commission expressing these concerns. We asked that the Planning Commission require an Environmental Impact Assessment to determine the environmental impact of Beach Walk pre-construction and during construction on public health and Silver Lake.

The entirety of our letter was published by the Cape Gazette as a Commentary titled "Serious concerns raised over Beach Walk" on its editorial page and can be found at:

<http://www.capegazette.com/article/serious-concerns-raised-over-beach-walk/118931>. That resulted in a number of residents "letters to the editor" supporting our position.

The plan was submitted by the developer as a condominium. After several public hearings, and deliberations, the Planning Commission asked the developer to submit the plan as a subdivision, not as a condominium, as originally submitted. Rather than complying with the Planning Commission's request, the developer chose to ask the City's Board of Commissioners (BOC) to review the plan, as a condominium. Subsequently, the Planning Commission's attorney prepared and submitted a motion to dismiss the developer's appeal to the BOC.

SOLA3 TO AWARD GRANTS FOR SHORELINE IMPROVEMENTS

By Mike Boyd, SOLA3 Vice President

In the interest of promoting lake and shoreline improvement projects on Silver Lake, Lake Comegys, and Lake Gerar, SOLA3 is establishing Grants to award one or more cost-sharing lake-side Improvements to homeowners bordering these lakes. Grants in 2018 will total \$3,000.

Maybe you have been considering replacing the reedy phragmites that are spreading along the edge of the lake, or perhaps you would like to add an environmentally engineered riparian buffer. These and related projects may be eligible for our support. SOLA3 will fund one or more projects that meet the objectives listed in our Lake Improvement Grant Criteria document. The criteria and an application form will be available for download on our Website in late summer.

The grants competition will be open to individual homeowners, homeowner associations, or groups of two or more homeowners (e.g., lakefront neighbors) who wish to undertake a lake improvement project. If your project is selected for a SOLA3 grant, then, upon its successful completion, we will reimburse you 50% of your documented out of pocket costs up to \$3000. Smaller scale projects are also welcome – for example, a simple project costing \$500 could be eligible for a \$250 SOLA3 grant. All improvements covered by the award must be completed in 2018.

We will be reminding lakefront homeowners about the grants by mail or email later this year and will be posting more detailed information on our Website - www.sola3.org. Take advantage of this opportunity to improve your shoreline, prevent erosion, and harmful runoff into the lake, and possibly add value to your property.



SILVER LAKE OUTFALL UPDATE

By: Brooks Cahall
Drainage Program Manager
DNREC Division of Watershed Stewardship

The first concern this project will address is the deteriorating outfall pipe between Silver Lake and the Dune. The design for this project has been completed by our engineering consultants (Davis, Bowen, and Friedel, Inc.). After meeting with a couple of the homeowners, concerns arose about the constructability of the original plan to replace the pipe with traditional open cut construction methods. Therefore, we are working with our partners at the Sussex Conservation District to issue a request for proposals to use an approach called cured-in-place pipe. This approach is trenchless rehabilitation to repair existing pipes. This approach will allow us to repair the leaky outfall pipe from the inside with minimal excavation.

The second concern this project addresses is the extension of the outfall farther into the Atlantic Ocean. The plans for this work are complete. We have turned this part of the project over to our Shoreline and Waterway Management Section, and they are determining where this work fits into their capital plan. The Division of Watershed Stewardship's Shoreline and Waterway Management Section works to protect and enhance eroded beaches to enable continued recreational use of this precious resource. Additionally, they work to improve the state's ability to endure severe coastal storms with minimal damage to public and private property and infrastructure.

Rehabilitation of the outfall pipe is a top priority for the Drainage Program. We are starting the process of bringing in a contractor to do this work. I anticipate this happening between Labor Day and the end of the year.

The proposed outfall is another flashboard riser-type structure so that there would be some flexibility to adjust, especially ahead of storms. We have made the decision to line instead of replace the outfall pipe. Meaning that we can replace the outfall structure at a later date. We understand the need to balance the flooding concerns of the eastern residents with desires of the western residents that prefer more water in the lake at their properties.

A request has been made of the Department to put together a management plan for Silver Lake that would address this issue. We will be putting together a scope of work and getting that out to one of our consultants for a proposal over the next few months. Once we know the price we will pursue funding partners and decide how to move it forward.

Please note, that this project is not related to the dredging project at the west end of Silver Lake.



Silver Lake

FORMER DEWEY BEACH MAYOR DIANE HANSON JOINS SOLA3 BOARD

Diane Hanson, currently a Dewey Beach Commissioner, was elected January 8, 2017, to serve on SOLA3's Board as Secretary, for a three-year term. Diane, a full-time resident of Dewey Beach, was first elected in 2007, serving as mayor of Dewey Beach from 2010 until fall of 2016, when she chose to turn over the reins to Dale Cooke who was a Dewey Beach commissioner at that time.

Diane earned her undergraduate degree at Cornell University and a Master's degree at the University of Pennsylvania. She is a seasoned professional with expertise in organizational development, training, and instructional design. She has had great successes improving employee performance as an independent consultant and as manager at a major pharmaceutical company. She is a well-known, published author of books and articles in the fields of performance improvement and organizational development.

Diane has served on a variety of boards, including the Center for Inland Bays, the American Society for Training and Development (Sussex Chapter), and was President of the Board of the Chester County SPCA in West Chester, PA, President of SCAT (Sussex County Association of Towns), and President and co-founder of the Women's Referral Network of Chester County, PA.

Diane commented: "I am pleased to serve on the SOLA3 Board as the lakes bordering on Dewey Beach add a great deal to the beauty and ambiance of our area. I am a strong advocate for clean water and air for everyone and especially in our back yard. And my experience and contacts as commissioner and former mayor should be very helpful to SOLA3."

Sallie Forman said "We heartily welcome Diane Hansen to our board. As former Mayor and now Commissioner of Dewey Beach, she brings a wealth of professional experience and expertise to our work. "

"And, I wish to express my gratitude to all who serve on our board, as they are the foundation of our past and future accomplishments."

Did you know that SOLA3 has received two Governor's Outstanding Awards and was listed among Delaware's top 50 eco-activists in *Delaware Today*.



Diane Hanson

SOLA3 BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Sallie Forman, Founder/President (2013-16)
 Mike Boyd, Vice President (2014-17)
 Diane Hanson, Secretary (2017-20)
 Dan Payne, Treasurer (2015-18)
 Tom Childers, Director (2013-16)
 Charlie Browne, Director (2016-18)
 Susan Gay, Director (2016-19)

SOLA3 is grateful for its partnership with the following organizations:

Rehoboth Beach HOA
 Draper Subdivision
 Lake Comegys HOA
 The Village Improvement Association

2017 SOLA3 Newsletter
 Edited and Produced by
 Diane Hanson and Charlie Browne



REHOBOTH ELEMENTARY SCHOOL 5TH GRADERS CONCLUDE SILVER LAKE UNHEALTHY

By: Tom Childers, SOLA3 Director

It was cold for a mid-October day, and most of us were scrambling for gloves. For the 8th year, award winning science teacher Jacquie Kisiel brought her 5th-grade science students to the laboratory-by-the-lake. Over 100 eager students gathered on the shore of Silver Lake, adjoining the Rehoboth Elementary School property. Their assignment was to measure the health of the Lake's water by applying the principles of scientific observation.

Under the sponsorship of Save Our Lakes Alliance 3 and the apt tutelage of Todd Fritchman, president of Envirotech Environmental Consulting, Inc., and a licensed, certified State of Delaware teacher of biological sciences, they examined water samples from two lakes. The first was a healthy lake from a Delaware state park; the second was Silver Lake. The students were looking for signs of good or bad health, based on the richness of macroinvertebrate life that each lake sustains. The greater the number and variety of macroinvertebrates, the more biodiverse and healthier is the lake. In the water sample from the healthy lake, everyone could easily find a large number and variety of macroinvertebrate specimens. By contrast, in the Silver Lake sample, macroinvertebrate life was poor—difficult to find, and, when found, proving to be organisms that can thrive in low-quality water, such as leeches, worms, and black fly larvae.

It was easy for the students to conclude that the water of Silver Lake was unhealthy. In the discussion, they raised thoughtful questions about how the lake had gotten to its present poor state and what could be done to improve it; and they went on to speculate about the implications of these local findings for the environmental well-being of the region, nation, and globe.



SAVING OUR NATURAL TREASURES

Only because of vital support from our generous community can SOLA3 be successful in accomplishing its mission. Please consider your tax deductible contribution as an investment that pays dividends through environmental improvements to our treasured lakes that will be enjoyed by current and future generations.

You may give with a check or a gift of stock.



REHOBOTH BEACH AS A SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY

How to Preserve Its Uniqueness and Address Issues That Come From Its Success
By: Susan Gay, SOLA3 Director

On Saturday, November 5, 2016, Ed McMahon, noted urban planner and known for his many writings on the important subjects related to building and preserving unique communities, addressed a packed house at the Rehoboth Beach Fire Hall. He spoke about a "sense of place": those elements that make a city or town different from any other. Whether coming here to live, work or vacation, people want to spend time in a special place like Rehoboth Beach, not one that looks like every other city.

Sussex County provides a clear example of the difference uniqueness makes. Driving down Route One, you could be in any city in America. But once you cross the canal into our city, you know you are in a place unlike any other, with the special character we all love.

SOLA3 was one of the 10 sponsoring organizations for this November special event. Sallie Forman represented SOLA3 in a follow up meeting which was a facilitated focus group comprised of these 10 sponsoring organizations. The focus group met in late April to address the concepts Ed discussed and ideas about what defines the character of Rehoboth Beach. The group discussed the wide-ranging assets of our community, and what is worth saving or preserving. The lakes are widely viewed as unique and scenic features of the City that no other coastal community can match.

Following the recommendations of Mr. McMahon, on-going efforts of the group will combine education, participation and suggestions for city officials as they begin the revisions of the Comprehensive Development Plan next year.

In the meantime, please take time to watch the videos that were created from it. Due to the length of the entire presentation, separate videos were made for community development and tourism. They can be accessed here:
<http://www.sola3.org/>

We hope you will enjoy these videos and join us in the ongoing conversation about how to keep Rehoboth Beach special.



At Chamber of Commerce Luncheon

(Left to Right)

Sallie Forman, SOLA3 President

Senator Ernie Lopez

Dan Payne, SOLA3 Treasurer

Governor John Carney

Speaker of the House Pete Schwartzkopf

Susan Gay, SOLA3 Board Member

Photo Provided by RCDGCC

SOLA3 would like to thank

Peggy Douglas

and

TJ Redefier

For allowing us to use their

Amazing Photographs

In our 2017 Newsletter