



The Lakes Communicator

April 2023 Edition

President's Message – Charlene Carson

First Quarter 2023 – In Review

As our Lakes community continues to grow and my efforts continue to move the association to a business focused operation, I want to share some information on what it takes to keep things running.

While the exact number is subject to change, we are currently a community of 710+ homes – more than double the bedroom community from the early 2000 years. New residents look for information to help them navigate their surroundings. In the first 3 months of 2023 (ending March 23, 2023), LITUS has received and directed more than 300 inquiries via email, phone calls, direct messages, and voice mails. As would probably be expected, January call volume had the highest number of inquiries about how to pay annual dues. In no particular order, other inquiries fell into groupings like “I need a form...”, “where can I get/see...”, “my neighbor is ...”, “tell the Board...”. Addressing these topics accounts for untold hours on the part of the many volunteer committee members, Board members and our LITUS Property Manager.

Why did I think this was important to share with you? Being responsible for a community this size is no longer a part time activity – it's a full-time job! While it may seem like decision making is a clear and simple process, it is far more complicated. Practicality and common sense are quite often the factors that come into play when addressing issues, planning for future needs, making improvements in processes, and bringing about change. Keeping our community running involves far more than the physically apparent activities. The behind-the-scenes work is what keeps the “heart” of the Lakes community beating.

A goal of the current Board is to closely monitor and manage all expenses related to the operations of the association. As such, all service contracts will be reviewed and put out for bid where necessary. This year started with the landscaping services being put out for bid. The work and improvements done by the prior service provider (Premium Landscaping) added considerable WOW factors to our community. Their work will have the community enjoy these features for many years to come. Sadly, the economics of the situation are that we cannot sustain the costs associated with that level of creativity.

We continue to move forward with developing and formalizing charters for our volunteer committees. To date nine (9) charters have been

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written, of those five (5) have been reviewed and accepted by the Board (Communications, Drainage, General Maintenance, Security Cameras, and Social committees). These charters have been posted on the website. The remaining four (4) charters (Beautification, Finance, Ponds, and Road committees) will be reviewed by the Board for adoption in the near future.

One last thought for the membership – my neighbors - we are on a journey of change – one that cannot be measured in days or weeks, but rather months, if not years. We are making progress, but there is still much to be done. As can be expected when an association reaches this size, there will be nay sayers and those with different agendas. I intend to stay focused on continuing to improve the overall operation of the association and position it for better operation in the years to come. I hope that you will join me on this journey, demonstrating the integrity and respect I believe this community holds.

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## **Treasurer's Report, SPECIAL ANNOUNCEMENT for the QUARTERLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING on Monday, April 17th, 2023**

Monday, April 17th will be our QUARTERLY MEMBERSHIP meeting at the Inlet Square Mall in Murrell's Inlet from 6:00 -7:45 PM.

We are personally asking that EVERY homeowner be there. The bulk of this meeting will be a Financial Presentation about where we are, how we got here, and what we need to do going forward.

We believe the presentation will help clear up many of the questions and misconceptions about our overall finances.

Since we can't undo any past projects that have been done, we are focusing our energies on the finances that have been handed over. We will not revisit anything about the park, the road extension, or the sidewalks that happened previously. We can only start from here and plan forward. We have a clear awareness of the complaints, concerns, and issues expressed over the past two years and are working on resolving them.

In the meantime, we have arranged to provide you with more current information on our finances. On the 15th of each month, you will be able to view our previous month's Income and Expense Reports. You will find them in your FrontSteps account. (Click: "Financial Reports for Owners", then "2023 Owner Reports," then the current months report) No more waiting for quarterly reports!

In addition, Board members have been given access to: Income and Expenses reports, the Check Register, General Ledger Report, and AR Collection Reports. Seven (7) sets of eyes will be aware of and able to review all expenses.

Also remember to check the calendar. I am usually in the office 2 days a week if you have questions, need clarification, or help accessing the reports.

Respectfully, Debbie Wolcott, Treasurer and Jackie DiVincent, Finance Committee Co-Chair

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Community News & Updates

Plant-A- Flower Event

Join your friends and neighbors for a fun morning planting flowers along Swan Lake Drive on **Saturday, April 15th from 10am-12pm!** Anyone who would like to donate a flower or help plant the donated flowers should meet Bill Vesely near the Power Lines at the head of Swan Lake Drive. Perennial flower contributions would be preferred since they will come back every year but any flower donation would be wonderful!

If you are not able to come out and plant a flower but still want to contribute a flower, please drop off flower donations at 10am at the event or drop flower donations at Bill's house (1428 Winyah Bay Road) one or two days before the event.

If heavy rain is predicted or likely to occur an e-bulletin will be sent to the community. Light rain will not stop the event. The rain date will be Sunday, April 16th from 10am-12pm.

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### Board Meeting Agenda

The Lakes POA Board is pleased to share that the Board Meeting Agenda will be published, via eBulletin, the Friday before the open Board Meeting. Remember open Board meetings are held in **January, March, April, June, July, September, October, December** and will start at **7pm** for observers. Board meetings in those months (**February, May, August, November**) immediately after quarterly meetings will be **working sessions** for the Board and committees. These meetings **WILL NOT** be open to observers.

Have you ever wondered about how to send a question, concern, feedback, or comment to the Lakes Board? There are several ways to communicate with the Board.

- Homeowners can send requests to Karen at LITUS via email at [ktucker@litustolet.com](mailto:ktucker@litustolet.com) .
  - Homeowners can also attend the POA Quarterly Homeowner Meeting.
  - Homeowners can request to present a topic to the Board at Public Board Meetings. Please send a request to Karen at least one week prior to the Board Meeting.
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### The Lakes Website

The Lakes POAs official Lakes Website is <https://thelakes.us/>. The Lakes POA website is where Property Owners can find the ACC forms, budget, governing documents and much more. The POA is aware of other social media websites. These other websites are not sponsored, monitored, managed or updated by The Lakes POA. The other websites may not have the most current or accurate information about our community. Please visit The Lakes website when looking to obtain official POA documentation or information.

# Committee Updates

## Architectural Control Committee (ACC), by Robert White

Last year was a busy one for the ACC. The most requested projects were: Fences: 15, Patios: 14, Driveway extensions: 13, Pool, Enclosure, fence: 11, Bulkheads: 7, Generator Installations: 7, Hot Tubs: 6, Solar: 5

Not all projects require approval by the committee, currently. No approval is needed for paint, roof replacement, hurricane shutters, minor landscaping, flag poles, windows, etc.

Some of the issues on submitted requests to the ACC which led to delays were:

- Legibility – please print clearly.
- No email address - Your email address is the best way for someone from the committee to get in touch with you.
- No compliance deposit check included with the request.
- Not notifying the ACC when the work is completed.

Just a reminder that prior to making a change to the original footprint of your property, you must submit the proper forms for approval to the Architectural Control Committee. Project approval request forms can be found on the Lakes website (<https://thelakes.us/>) under the folder-Documents, sub-folder External Documents.

There are many ways to submit your forms for approval. US (snail) Mail to 400 Waccamaw River Road, email to [thelakesacc@gmail.com](mailto:thelakesacc@gmail.com) or the drop box located at 400 Waccamaw River Road. Residents are reminded that contractor working hours are 7AM to 7PM, Monday thru Saturday. No contractor work is allowed on Sunday or National Holidays. It is the residents' duty to inform the contractor of these rules.

Most projects are addressed by one of the following forms:

|           |                                              |
|-----------|----------------------------------------------|
| ACC-2-MJP | Major Project Approval Request Form          |
| ACC-2-SP  | Swimming Pool/Spa Approval Request Form      |
| ACC-2-BHD | Bulkhead/Dock                                |
| ACC-2-MIS | Miscellaneous Projects Approval Request Form |

**We are currently looking for someone to become the chairperson of the ACC, feel free to contact us at the phone number below or at [thelakesacc@gmail.com](mailto:thelakesacc@gmail.com).**

Robert White 843-251-7625 ACC Chairperson

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Beautification Committee, by Bill Vesely

To keep our community looking beautiful, we kindly request that if you see rubbish or garbage, please stop, and pick it up. It takes all of us to keep our neighborhood looking wonderful.

Some of our neighbors have been observed bringing dog waste from their homes and dropping it into the Dog Waste Stations. Please remember the Dog Waste stations should be used only in the event a dog owner doesn't want to carry the waste a long distance to their home. All the stations are now being cleaned and cleared by your fellow property owners. Please do not add more waste and increase their responsibilities.

The Beautification Committee is looking for Volunteers in the following areas: *Dog waste stations, Trash or Storm Debris Pickup*, as needed and/or after a weather event. If you are interested in volunteering for any of these positions, please send an email to lakesbeautification@gmail.com .

We are very excited for our upcoming plant or donate your own flower event! Let's have lots of flowers and plants for all to enjoy! The event will be held April 15th from 10am-12pm.

The Committee is looking forward to several events next year including planting flowers by The Lakes signs in April, a "Plant or Donate Your Own Flower" Event in May, the formation of a Storm Debris Team and Trash Removal Team. If you are interested in being added to the list of Community Members who would be willing to be contacted to help during a cleanup event, please send an email to lakesbeautification@gmail.com .

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## **By-Laws Committee**

The By-Laws Committee has completed the final reviews of the community feedback from the information sessions and surveys. We are preparing the final version for legal review and plan to share a version with the community in the coming months.

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Communication Committee

The Communication Committee continues to review options for a general communications survey. We have tested several options, including using current functionality on the Lakes Website, but the option presented its own challenges with accessing and returning the survey. The Committee continues to explore other options, but has been challenged with several obstacles including cost, delivery methods and ways to return the survey if not submitted electronically.

Please remember you can always submit ideas for review by the Communication Committee by sending an email to Karen @ ktucker@litustolet.com .

Co-Chairs: Barbara Cardinal and Jeri Mathur

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## **Horton & Seneca Lake Committee Update**, by Doug Owens

Horton has just given us the completed house plan paperwork & fees for the completion of The Lakes Phase 20. That means, hopefully, within a reasonable period, The Lakes will be completely built out and we will no longer be under construction! We suspect that construction will be complete, or most of it will be, by the end of this year. We will keep you informed as to progress.

We are pleased to announce the completion of the Seneca Lake project with the lowering and reconstruction of the spillover and removal of silt in the area of the pipe under Saluda River Road. Additionally, we have had the creek walls between the spillover and this pipe rebuilt to eliminate future silt build up. This area will be scheduled for future review and maintenance.

This work would not have been possible without the imagination and expertise of our Drainage Chair Mike Healy and the hard work and tenacity of Committee members Tom Fontanazza, Frank Murawski and Denny Brown!

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Pond Committee – By Debbie Wolcott, Pond Committee/ Facilitator Chairman

It has been an exceptionally long cold spell. As a result of that, things have been quiet overall. I anticipate that warmer weather will initiate much more activity. The new signs for Long Bay and Monticello Lake have been installed. And so far, on my initial “walkabout”, I have found no sign of live snails, or their dreaded pink egg masses.

In March, TLC (our pond treatment team) is back on property every two weeks, trying to get the current growth under control.

Three (3) issues were the primary source of complaints this year:

The Lake Seneca Spillway was clearly the main topic. It’s been an ongoing concern for over a year. Advanced expertise was needed. A special committee was formed to handle the complex interactions. Thanks to the weather, a willing contractor, a dedicated committee of homeowners, Board & Drainage folks, as well as patient homeowners we literally “weathered through” all of that. We expect that the situation on lake levels and road drainage has been remedied.

Although the initial repair attempt was done by the developer for FREE, it was not working properly. Meanwhile it was vandalized. As a result, the final cost to us was \$3,400. Many homeowners on several ponds and streets were impacted for a long time. So, a small price to pay for that major sigh of relief!

The second issue was Property Trespassing (esp. for Fishing). We have consulted with the Horry County Police. They do not advise that homeowners or Board members confront trespassers. Homeowners need to post “No Trespassing” signs on their property, then call the non-emergency police line to report trespassers, establish a police file and ultimately the reports they need to proceed further.

There are two ponds for The Lakes residents (ONLY) to fish on if they don’t have lakefront property; Lake Oaktree (by Meadowoods) and Lake Murray (by Swan Lake Drive).

The third issue is Construction Debris / Noise Pollution. We have had ongoing concerns with the amount of construction related trash and debris throughout the ponds, homes, and grounds. In addition, excessively loud music from construction workers has been a problem. Both of these issues have been directed and forwarded to the Horton Supervisor responsible who usually responds quickly. There is little to report, at this time in regard to the ponds, as I have just returned from my trips. There have been a few contacts during my absence, and I should have spoken with those folks by the time you read this.

My personal gratitude to all of you that are helping to keep our ponds in pristine conditions.

Please keep your correspondences coming through Karen Tucker at LITUS.

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## **Road Committee, by Jack Price**

The Lakes Road Committee had its first formal meeting on March 21, 2023. I would like to welcome Bob White, our newest member, who is currently The Lakes ACC Chairman. I would also like to thank Anthony DeVincent for volunteering on the committee. Anthony brings years of expertise in road maintenance and will be a knowledgeable asset. Ken Atkinson has also agreed to be an advisor to the committee. He has spent most

of his working life in the paving industry, in addition to being a long-time Lakes resident who has been an advisor on the condition of our roads and knows them well.

Beginning Tuesday, March 28, 2023, the Roads Committee will begin inspecting every road in The Lakes, in a timely manner. Anthony and I have inspected some roads however the plan is to start from scratch, prioritize needs, and report to the Board. If you see three handsome guys walking the streets with notepads....you will know what we are up to.

Some concerns have been made known of damage to lawns by cars driving up on the lawn. We are looking into this to see what options are available and will report back in the next newsletter.

If there are any road concerns, please contact Karen Tucker at Litus To Let. She will record your concern and contact me. Once a concern is received, someone will be out to inspect, formulate a report and keep the homeowner informed of all actions that will be taken. Karen Tucker's phone number is 843-448-9000 x129. Her email address is ktucker@litustolet.com.

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Social Committee, by Michele Ferrante

Social Committee – The Social Committee is excited to share the tentative dates for The Lakes Community Event schedule for 2023.

- Community Barbeque – June 10th
- Halloween & Chili Cookoff – October 29th
- Lakes Holiday Event & Tree Lighting - December 9th

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### **Safety Corner – Purple Paint**

Did you know that purple paint on a tree or fence meant “No Trespassing” in South Carolina and several other states?

#### **Call to Action:**

**Drivers...****Please slow down**, obey traffic signs (like stop signs) and remain vigilant for pedestrians.

**Pedestrians...****Please wear bright or reflective clothing** when walking and be mindful of traffic.

In April 2018, the South Carolina General Assembly passed a bill that allowed property owners to paint on trees, fences or other objects around someone's property indicating “no trespassing”. It acts the same as if you post “no trespassing” signs. It is a legal way for homeowners to notify hikers, hunters, and anyone who feels like wandering onto someone else's property not to do it; you should not go onto anyone's private property with or without a sign.

## Neighborly Reminders

- Please remember dogs must be on a leash at all times when not on their homeowner's property.
  - As the season turns from cold to warm we are seeing an increase in mold and mildew on the exterior of our homes. Property owners are reminded that they need to remove the mold and mildew.
  - One of our Property Owners recently shared some Facebook sites to help new residents get connected. They are: Surfsidians, Surfside Beach, Murrells Inlet, SC and the Myrtle Beach Patch
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## Welcome New Neighbors

We inadvertently missed 2 new Homeowners on Reedy River Road, Nehemia & Monica Meeks during the last update. Welcome to your new community!

**WELCOME** to our new Lakes Homeowners, as of March 25, 2023

**Pamlico Ct.**

William & Janice Duty

**Waccamaw River Rd.**

Natalie Temple

**Saluda River Rd.**

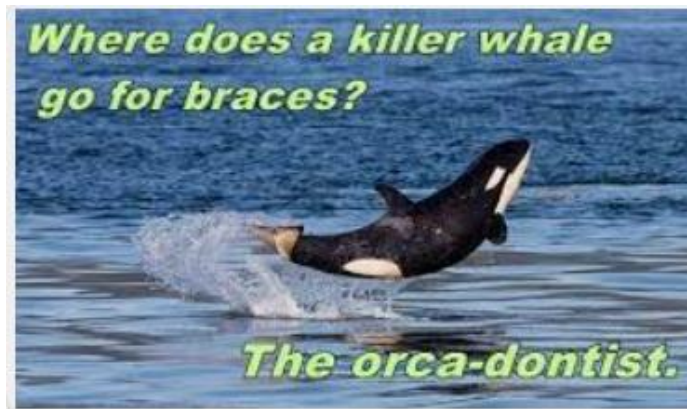
Gerard & Deborah Crawford  
Hannibal & Kathleen Trapuzzano  
Michael & Jamie Ribble  
Shaughn & Breanna Davis  
Robert & Maria Pellicane  
Gary Carrieri  
Edmun & Marueen Ellington  
Thomas & Julia Stafford

Steven & Linda Rowinski  
Charles & Shannon Kelly  
Edwin & Juliana Stoetzner  
Vincent & Amalia Gianfredi  
Jerry & Alice Baldwin  
Joanne Kotulski  
Brian & Maria LaBrunda  
Lynne Macey



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On the Funny Side of the Lake



APRIL 2023

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
						01
02	03 Lakes Office Hours 12pm – 3pm	04	05	06	07 Lakes Office Hours 12pm – 3pm	08
09 Easter	10 Lakes Office Hours 12pm – 3pm Lakes Board Meeting 7pm- 8pm	11	12 Lakes Office Hours 12pm - 3pm	13 Lakes Office Hours 9am - 12pm	14 Lakes Office Hours 12pm – 3pm	15 Plant a Flower Day 10am-12pm
16	17 Lakes Office Hours 12pm – 3pm Lakes Quarterly POA Meeting – Inlet Square Mall 6pm – 7:45pm	18	19 Lakes Office Hours 12pm - 3pm	20 Lakes Office Hours 9am - 12pm	21 Lakes Office Hours 12pm – 3pm	22 Earth Day
23	24	25	26 Lakes Office Hours 12pm - 3pm	27 Lakes Office Hours 9am - 12pm	28	29
30						

Next Public Board of Directors Meeting: Monday, April 10th, 7pm at the Lakes Office

Next Quarterly POA Meeting: Monday, April 17th, 6pm -7:45pm, Inlet Square Mall

Lakes POA Board Members

President – Charlene Carson

Vice President – Tom Fontanazza

Secretary – Michele Ferrante

Treasurer – Deborah Wolcott

Director at Large – Jack Price

Director at Large – Bill Vesely

Director at Large – Carla Wessels

Committee Heads:

Architectural Committee	Bob White
Beautification	Bill Vesely
Bylaws/Covenants Review	Charlene Carson
Camera Security	Ken Ferrante
Communications	Jeri Mathur and Barbara Cardinal Co-Chairs
Developer/Construction Liaison	Doug Owens
Drainage	Mike Healy
Maintenance	Ken Ferrante
Pond Maintenance	Deborah Wolcott
Road Committee	Jack Price
Social Committee	Michele Ferrante
Welcome Committee	Jodi Vecchio

All Board members/committee heads are homeowners and Lakes neighbors volunteering endless hours of their time. There is always a need for more volunteers. Consider volunteering a few hours of your time, knowledge, and special skills to your community.