

# Lake Watch celebrates stewardship of the lake

The Lake Watch of Lake Martin faithful met on March 4 at the StillWaters Homeowners Association Building to celebrate another year of Lake Martin stewardship. It was an afternoon of acknowledging selfless volunteer dedication to monitoring water quality throughout the Lake Martin watershed, as well as promoting watershed stewardship through the environmental education of hundreds of youth and adults.

The Lake Watch outstanding volunteer of the year award, known as the Woodfin Martin Award was presented to a long-time Lake Watch member, Judy Palfrey, in appreciation for her service as Lake Watch of Lake Martin Water Monitoring Coordinator, along with her longtime commitment to environmental education of youth and adults, service as an Alabama Water Watch water monitor trainer and her water monitoring efforts at several sites in the watershed.

Palfrey has monitored at seven different sites on the lake and in several tributary streams (Buck Creek, Chattasofka Creek, Sandy Creek) that drain the Dadeville area and flow into the lake near Smith Mountain. She monitors both water chemistry and bacteria (E. coli monitoring) using the Alabama Water Watch water monitoring protocols. Palfrey also teaches Dadeville grade school and middle school students about water monitoring, watershed stewardship and about how monitoring living streams and the macroinvertebrates – larvae and nymphs of stoneflies, mayflies, caddisflies, dragonflies and other critters – that live in them help to determine the health of the streams.

And if that weren't enough, Palfrey has also educated the public at environmental education booths at several events using the Enviroscope to teach children and adults about non-point source pollution and its negative impacts on streams, rivers and lakes.

The group was then treated to a sneak-peek of the new



**LAKE WATCH**  
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book, *Alabama Rivers – A Celebration and Challenge* by Dr. Bill Deutsch, retired Auburn University professor and founder of the AWW Program. The book is due out later this year. Deutsch has been a long-time friend of LWLM, as he trained the very first group of Lake Watch monitors back in 1993. He has been teaching a course on Alabama rivers at the AU Osher Lifelong Learning Institute. The enthusiastic response to his course, which is routinely packed with 50-60 participants, was inspirational in his tackling the daunting task of compiling his seven-week curriculum into a book.

Deutsch noted that his book is complementary to those of Scott Duncan, *Southern Wonder – Alabama's Surprising Biodiversity*, and Jim Lacefield's *Lost Worlds in Alabama Rocks*, which unites the state's diverse geology and rich plant and animal biodiversity in an easy-to-read text for the general public. He touched on some of the reasons why our state is number one among all states in aquatic biodiversity, with more species of fish, crayfish, turtles, mussels and snails than any other state.

He then presented a peek at the vibrant images that he composed for Alabama's major rivers and their basins, including the Tallapoosa River Basin. Into the imagery of the river system, he wove watershed features, special plants and animals (some found nowhere else in the entire world) and a discussion of life along the river, featuring key historic figures and developments as the lands were settled by Europeans.

Deutsch closed, as he does in his book, with a challenge calling for us to contemplate how each of us would act to preserve our rich, riverine heritage for generations to come.

One thing immediately comes to mind – go to [www.lakewatch.org](http://www.lakewatch.org) and join Lake Watch of Lake Martin in protecting our lake and the Tallapoosa River watershed.

*Eric Reutebuch is president of Lake Watch of Lake Martin. For more information, visit [lakewatch.org](http://lakewatch.org).*



Judy Palfrey is the Lake Watch 2018 Woodfin Martin Award winner