

Hello Lake Now Members,

As your new Lake NOW President, I'm writing to you all on behalf of our new Lake NOW Board. Your new Board Members are unanimously pleased to be serving on the Lake NOW board and we will be working diligently to move Lake NOW forward into the coming year. I will be routinely dropping you email updates, so will start with this "President's Email News #1", as I wanted to share some initial thoughts with you:

- First, as your incoming Board, we would like to express our deep gratitude and congratulations to the previous Board Members who established Lake NOW! They are a very dedicated group who gave much of their time and resources to getting Lake NOW up and running and built the membership to 99 members!! The accomplishments are numerous. We all thank them! If you were not able to be at the Feb 19<sup>th</sup> meeting, Judi had wonderful presentation about the previous board, and then we recognized Judi herself with the presentation of an artwork plaque. Then, we all enjoyed cake and champagne.



- Your new Board is a dynamic, motivated group of women with very impressive backgrounds, all united in our desire to see women's rights and causes advanced and protected. We are all coordinating with our predecessors to ensure a smooth 'turnover' of responsibilities.
- The Board is already planning a Special Board Meeting this coming week to begin our work together, ensuring proper completion of turnover with 2012 Board members, strategizing on immediate issues (such as the wonderful program in March with Nan Rich), Public Relations, Committees, and more.

- I wanted to share some of the things we, as a group, will be addressing within the next few months:
  - Strategic Planning – a structured approach to seeing where we are, where we ultimately want to be, and how we get there. The Board will initiate the process, and all members will be invited to participate in the planning sessions.
  - Use of Technology – your entire board has excellent computer skills, including at least 2 computer professionals. We agree that the available technology can and should be used to facilitate communication, coordination, and information sharing in a much more efficient way. To that end, Sandee Paradise, your 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President, has already developed a WEBSITE for Lake NOW. The website address is: [www.lakenow.weebly.com](http://www.lakenow.weebly.com) Be SURE and check it out. Your Board will plan to utilize that website as a primary communications medium, along with EMAIL and possibly Facebook. Paper-based mailing will be held to a minimum (as needed to accommodate those who do not have access to the internet and/or email.)
  - Immediate planning for the MAR 19<sup>th</sup> Membership Meeting at which a very special guest, **Nan Rich**, will be our speaker! She will be a candidate for Governor of Florida and we are VERY excited about her visiting us. I hope you will put it on your calendar. We are planning a social and light appetizers beginning at 6:00pm, then her presentation will begin at 7:00pm. We will need some volunteers to help organize the dinner, so please, contact Carol King if you might be interested.
  - Public Relations – we want to ensure the word gets out on all the great things that Lake NOW is doing. We will be addressing this during Strategic Planning and will be soliciting your involvement, ideas, etc.
  - Committees – we already have established within Lake NOW a number of very important committees. We'll be looking at those committees, tweaking where appropriate (based on strategic planning results) and we'll be soliciting YOUR involvement in these committees. This is where the real 'work' of Lake NOW gets done, and every Lake NOW should be on a committee. Again, using technology, much of the planning and coordinating will be considerably easier and more efficient, saving everyone's valuable time when meetings do have to occur.
  - Some Reminders for your Calendar:
    - March 1 – Women's History Month Luncheon, Lake Sumter State College
    - March 19 – Lake NOW Meeting – Special Guest – Nan Rich, Mt. Dora Library
    - March 22-24 - 2013 FL State NOW Conference – March 22-24, Gainesville, FL
    - July 5-7 – 2013 National NOW Conference – Chicago, IL

The above items are just a rough draft starting point for our new Board. We are VERY excited about the coming year and all the great things that Lake NOW will be involved in. There will be many opportunities for your involvement, input, and more. We are also going to focus on some enjoyable 'social' events throughout the year. It provides a great opportunity to just talk together, learn from others, and share our life experiences with each other.

As your President, I'm looking forward to meeting those of you I haven't met yet! I hope you'll make plans for the meetings. I'll be excited about inputs you have toward making Lake NOW a continuously improving organization and one that provides you with the opportunities you seek to advance women's causes in Lake County and beyond.

NOW and FOREVER,

*Sherrie*

Sherrie S. Aly, CDR, USN (Ret)  
President, Lake NOW