CRESCENT Things: Keowee Going Green — Protecting its Greatest Asset

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The Reserve at Lake Keowee has been recognized over the years with a myriad of awards, honors, and accolades praising the residential community for its design and amenities. Spanning 3,900 acres in the foothills of the Blue Ridge Mountains, on more than on pristine Lake Keowee, the beauty of The Reserve has attracted families from across the nation. Protecting the beauty of its 30 miles of shoreline and 3900 acres is one of the highest priorities of the community's employees, residents, and members.

Among The Reserve at Lake Keowee Foundation's functions is being an active steward of the environment, and each year The Reserve's foundation organizes events and volunteer efforts that include small acts of care, kindness and protection of the land, water and wildlife.

In 2010, The Reserve adopted five islands in Lake Keowee through the "Adopt-an-Island" program created by Friends of Lake Keowee Society (FOLKS) and Duke Energy Island Keeper. Islands 17, 17A, 17B, 17C, and 17D have been adopted by The Reserve and its members. The property owners and staff from The Reserve cleaning the lake and islands in conjunction with the bi-annual "Lake Sweep", a lake-wide clean-up effort organized by FOLKS.

One of the purest lakes in North America, Lake Keowee is more than 26 miles long, dotted with islands, and with some waterways spanning two to three miles wide. Lake levels remain near full pond throughout the year to depths well over 125 feet. A drinking water source for Greenville County, S.C., Lake Keowee enjoys 18,500 acres of mountain-fed waters and three hundred miles of shoreline and is the second cleanest lake in South Carolina behind Lake Jocassee, which is 90% protected from development, according to Sandra McGee, Community Relations Manager for Duke Energy. Lake Keowee is a haven for outdoor recreation and home to many freshwater fish including largemouth bass, smallmouth bass, bluegill and white bass.

Reserve residents adopted and maintain a four-mile stretch of Highway 133, just off the Cherokee Foothills Scenic Highway (Highway 11) in Sunset, S.C. Four "Adopt-A-Highway" clean-up weekends are conducted each year in February, May, July and October. Clean-up efforts in the past have resulted in collecting nearly 100 bags of litter from the roadside.

Additional environmental stewardship acts have included special events and partnerships with FRIENDS of the Blue Ridge Parkway, in honor of the Parkway's 75th Anniversary last year, as well as well as being a pilot member of The Audubon Lifestyles Sustainable Golf Facility Program, the most comprehensive program to measure sustainability in golf course management.

"One of the reasons we formed The Reserve Community Foundation was specifically geared toward environmental stewardship, so we are excited do more 'little things' that add up to big, positive impacts," stated Kathryn Coleman-Gravely, executive director of The Reserve at Lake Keowee's Community Foundation. "Lake Keowee is a tremendous asset to our area, and we want to do our part in helping it stay clean and beautiful so that it can be enjoyed responsibly for generations to come."

Stay Tuned for Part 4. For Part 1, click HERE. For Part 2, click HERE.

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