

Florida Cormorants Visit the Bear Lakes



WEATHER BRINGS CORMORANTS TO ALL THE BEAR LAKES.

If you were home on March 4, 2013, no doubt you watched the visiting Cormorants fly in. They seemed to just keep coming until we lost count. They were followed by a few visiting sea gulls.

Although you may see one or two smaller resident species on your lake, these visitors were the larger version.

They prefer freshwater lagoons and rivers near the sea. We had these visitors before and during extreme temperature drops and high winds along the coast.

The Florida Cormorant is a great hunter of fish which is their food source. The bird can dive down far into the water, and is successful in catching a fish on every dive. Boy were they ever diving in our lakes on the 4th! Flocks of these birds by the hundreds were pictured on bear lakes. Approximately 200+ Cormorants reported on Big Bear, 250 reported on Little Bear, and 300+ were reported on Cub Lake. Cormorants will

swallow the fish whole down into their throats, so it is hard for the fish to get away.

Little Bear reported these fish catching bass so large, they couldn't swallow them and dove down to try and find a smaller catch. Some of the surrounding neighbors on Little Bear decided to spook them away because they had so many floating bass which were too big for them to swallow. The neighbors collected 46 fish and decided to have a neighborhood "fish fry," so not to waste the fresh fish kill.

The Cormorants visited again on March 24th but only half as many visitors from earlier in the month. See picture at left taken on March 24, 2013, on Cub Lake.

When the bird is through fishing, they will perch themselves somewhere under the hot Florida sun drying their wings. This is necessary since their wings are not waterproof, which gives them more speed when under the water.



FISH TOO BIG FOR BIRDS TO SWALLOW.

16" Reclaimed Water Transmission Pipe Runs Through the Bear Lake Watershed... Why Was the Pipe Directed Through Our Neighborhood so Close to the Lake?



Pipe Boring Rig & 16" installation
or highly treated sewer water polluting our rivers.

When the Sanlando/Wekiva Wastewater Treatment Plant Operating Permit was renewed, the amount of discharge to Sweetwater Creek was limited by 2/3rds and they mandated lower total nitrogen limits. This should tell you something about reclaimed (reuse) water,

reuse water to decrease their groundwater withdrawal (irrigation and recharge). As a result, both utilities worked with Saint Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) to construct a 16" reuse water main to Apopka.

Unfortunately, the least congested route for this project was to change their plans from SR436 and Piedmont Wekiva, into our neighborhood down Balmy Beach Drive. Bear Lake Preservation Association (BLPA) is closely monitoring the construction. Sanlando Utilities, Utilities Incorporated, and Trisure Corporation, were soon made aware of BLPA's presence, after the sidewalk was removed which exposed dirt too close

At the same time, the City of Apopka had a need for

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Snapshots of Bear Lake History — As We Remember It

By Irving and Betty Reedy



In 1922, the Reedy family moved from Virginia and arrived in Jacksonville, Florida by freight train. Irving Reedy was only three months old at the time. His family eventually settled in Lake County. Irving remembers the beautiful sand bottom lakes as he was growing up. His wife, Betty Lottich's family, moved from Southern Illinois to Altoona, Florida, in 1936.

In July 1945, Irving Reedy and Betty Lottich were married and lived in Orlando. He was an electrical engineer for OUC and Betty was a school teacher.

In 1952, they moved from Orlando to Big Bear Lake and raised their three sons: Jim, Bob, and Tom Reedy.

Irving and Betty Reedy looked for a year for good lakefront property. The Reedy's wanted to live on the east side of a large lake for the sunset, a lake that had drainage flow and a beautiful sandy bottom. So they found Bear Lake! In 1952, they bought their present property on Holliday Avenue. At the time, it had a small one-story frame house with an attached dirt-floored garage.

In 1951-52, Big Bear only had weekend cabins on the north and east sides of the lake. Irving and Betty do not remember any houses on the west or south side of the lake. Their house used the water pumped from the lake for everything except drinking. At the time, there was no air conditioning, as homes were built with breezeways.



Their telephone number began with CY, as in cypress.

Three children and eight years later, the Reedy family needed a bigger house with two bathrooms. Since they loved their current property on Bear Lake, they moved the little house to a lot about a mile east on Quail Avenue. They lived in the small house until 1960, when their larger home was completed and where they still enjoy to this day.

Irving and Betty remember two artesian springs in the lake, one at 27' deep and the other at 32' deep. Holliday Avenue was a clay road, and Jamison Street was just part of the woods. A neighbor, Mr. Jamison, lived on seven or eight acres between Holliday Avenue and Bear Lake Road. Another neighbor, George Bunnell, lived in the present house east of Bear Lake Road and on the north side of Bunnell Road. Mr. Bunnell owned a 40-acre orange grove surrounding the house and extending to the north beyond what is now McNeil Road, which did not exist at the time. Mr. L.E. Beggs had a small grocery store built as an extension to his house. It was on the lake side of Bear Lake Road and in the vicinity of the Presbyterian Church. The traffic was so sparse, Irving and Betty felt that it was safe to send their five- and seven-year-old boys to the store for a loaf of bread or a bottle of milk.

Mr. Mashburn was an elderly man who lived with his wife in the yellow house located on Holliday, close to Bear Lake Road. One day Mr. Mashburn

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Real Estate Watch

By Susan Burton, Realtor®

The following is the current information regarding real estate listings. Please don't hesitate to call me with any questions (407-222-3917).

Active Listings

1604 Bear Lake Rd	\$349,900
6007 Linneal Beach Dr	\$449,500
3304 Holliday Ave.....	\$495,000
3050 Holliday Ave.....	\$549,900
3218 Holliday Ave.....	\$649,000
3524 Holliday Ave.....	\$950,000
6135 Linneal Beach Dr	\$974,800

Pending Sales

6103 Linneal Beach Dr	\$695,000
1411 Balmy Beach Dr	\$1,200,000

Snapshots of Bear Lake History — As We Remember It

Continued from page 2

spotted an unusual item hidden in the bushes across Holliday Avenue. Because his vision was poor at the time, he asked Irving to go with him to see what it was about. It turned out to be a Notice of a Public Hearing before the County Commission to change the zoning of the corner property between Bear Lake Road and Holliday Avenue and as far as the present Jamison Street, from residential to commercial. They believed at the time the notice was intended to be hidden. Mr. Mashburn and Irving alerted the community and about 20 residents crowded the County Commission's meeting room. The purpose of this zoning change was to allow a full service gas station and a convenience store to be built on the site. The developer told the County Commission and residents how useful that would be to the community, but he was voted down and the request for a zoning change was denied.

A number of years ago a developer who owned property across from the north side of the lake wanted to provide lake access to the houses he was building there (Paradise Point). He owned a small piece of lakefront and brought in a dredge to remove the muck and make a beach which would provide lake access to people who

owned those lots. The mixture of muck and water was pumped out but unfortunately, the dirty water was allowed to run back into the lake and Bear Lake was contaminated by suspended matter for many months. Apparently, he hit the clay hardpan and kept going, which caused the entire lake to turn red for months. Some neighbors say the discoloration lasted as long as three years. The residents were furious.

In the late 1960s there was a city bus that came from Orlando and traveled down Bear Lake Road to State Road 436 and then to Apopka. The bus ran in the morning, noon, and another in the evening.

When Holliday Avenue was being paved, the original alignment of the junction of Holliday Avenue and Bear Lake Road began approximately 100 feet south of the present intersection. This allowed northbound traffic to make the small left turn without changing speed. When Holliday Avenue was being repaved, a meeting with the county engineer resulted in the present left and right turns which forced traffic to complete these turns at a much slower pace.

When the Reedy children were small, they made frequent trips to Clermont to visit their grandparents. There

was a small lake nearby and it was full of mussels. The Reedy family harvested a tub full and brought them to Bear Lake, where they thrived. It is believed that the mussels filtered the suspended matter and trash and kept the water more clear.

Since 1952, the Reedy family has continued to enjoy the sunsets on Bear Lake, along with their beautiful lakefront home and property. They continue to be involved in the lake and are frequently seen at the Bear Lake Preservation Association meetings.

THE BEAR LAKE PRESERVATION ASSOCIATION (BLPA) IS A TAX-EXEMPT, NON-PROFIT 501(C)3 ORGANIZATION

BLPA would like to remind you that all contributions are tax deductible. Should you wish to make a contribution, please request a receipt from Jim Maki, Treasurer. Your tax deductible contributions can be made to any of the following categories: General Operating, Dues, Carp, Alum.

One of the Top Recommendations from the Bear Chain of Lakes Hydrologic/Nutrient Budget and Water Quality Management Plan: Construct Swales and Berms Along All Developed Shoreline Areas

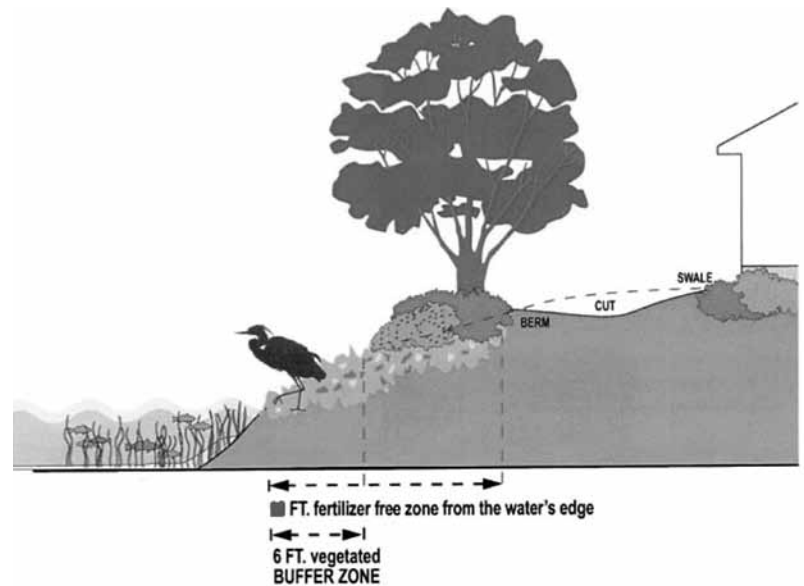
How we use and maintain our lake front property is very important. We can minimize the impact on our lakes by building a swale and berm system to intercept runoff and pollutants from your yard. Unfortunately, untreated storm water runoff is considered Florida's leading source of water pollution. As indicated in the year-long nutrient study results, most of the surrounding storm water runoff ends up directly into our bear lakes (Bear, Little Bear, Cub, and Asher). One of the top recommendations for all the bear lakes is to construct swales and berms along all developed shoreline areas.

Because swales are wider than they are deep (usually a 6:1 ratio), the rainwater is spread over a broader area. This slows the water and allows the runoff to temporarily pond. By reducing the water's speed, it allows the vegetation to filter the rainwater and remove sediments, heavy metals, and hydrocarbons such as oil and grease. The first 1" of rainfall contains the most harmful pollutants. Allowing the storm water runoff to pond in the swale allows the water to soak into the soil, helping to reduce the volume and amount of pollut-

ants in our lakes. The picture depicts a gradual swale and berm. The Bear Lake Preservation Association recommends a 50-foot fertilizer free zone OR NO FERTILIZER to keep our bear lakes clean.

Nancy and Jim Dunn used leaves and algae they cleaned up from their shoreline to build a berm many years ago in order to keep the lake clean. The grass grew back quickly over the organic matter which created the berm. They reported how easy it was to do-it-themselves. For many years the Dunn's have filtered pollutants from their yard by creating a swale and berm. Whether you use a landscaper or do-it-yourself, you can slow down or prevent fur-

ther damage to our beautiful bear lakes by building your own swale and berm along your shoreline. A well thought-out and constructed swale and berm will bring interest to your lakefront property and help keep our bear lakes clean and clear. Do your part today!



Composting Floating Lake Vegetation

As lakefront homeowners, most of us have spent a lot of time raking up floating vegetation. Usually, the raked up vegetation are thrown up on the shoreline to dry out and eventually bagged up to place by the curb on trash day. However, did you know that aquatic plants are the perfect addition to the compost pile?* Because the plants have a high moisture content, it speeds the compost process. In addition, their mineral-rich tissues provide excellent nutrition for the garden or other plants in your yard. The next time you spend all that time raking up your lake front property, consider composting those floating aquatic plants to use as a natural fertilizer. The process is easy and relatively quick by following these seven simple steps:

Step 1: Spread a tarp on the ground near the preferred compost area of

your yard. Collect floating aquatic plants from the surface and pile them on top of the tarp;

Step 2: Allow the excess water to drain off, and then spread the plants out on the tarp so that they make a layer about 4 to 6 inches deep;

Step 3: Coarsely chop the aquatic plants into pieces about 2 inches long;

Step 4: Place a 6-inch-deep layer of lawn clippings or other fine green waste at the bottom of a compost ring. Add a 4-inch-deep layer of the chopped aquatic plants while they are still moist. Place a 6-inch layer of shredded newspaper over the plants. Cover this with a 2-inch-deep layer of fresh manure.** Add more layers, repeating this pattern, until you have used all the aquatic plants;

Step 5: Cover the compost ring with an old tarp to retain heat and moisture.

Check the temperature and moisture level of the composting materials periodically. The pile should feel warm and moist;

Step 6: Remove the tarp after one to two months. The pile should be significantly smaller, drier and cool. Replace the tarp and wait another few weeks if the pile is still warm;

Step 7: Work the finished compost through a 1/2" wire screen before adding it to the garden or plants so that the nutrients can be easily taken up by plants.

* For more information on composting, go to: http://gardeningolutions.ifas.ufl.edu/giam/maintenance_and_care/soil_fertilizer_and_nutrients/composting.html

** See the above-referenced website for the types of manure or other recommended contents for a compost.

Top Ten Causes of Boating Accidents

Florida continues to lead the country in boating accidents. Most accidents are caused by a combination of the following top ten factors:

10. **OVERLOADING:** Check the manufacturer's coast guard approved capacity plate for the maximum weight or number of individuals your vessel can safely carry on board;

9. **EXCESSIVE SPEED AND ALCOHOL USE (BOTH TIED FOR 9TH):** Speed and operation of any vessel should be applicable to lake conditions; Florida has a very strict law on operating a vessel while under the influence of alcohol and drugs;

8. **CONGESTED WATERS AND HAZARDOUS WATERS (BOTH TIED FOR 8TH):** It should not be a surprise that most accidents occur on a Saturday and Sunday. Always be courteous when boating;

7. **FAILURE TO YIELD:** Understand all navigational rules. Taking a boating educational class and being alert while on the

water can lower your chances of run-ins with other boats;

6. **RECKLESS OPERATION:** Take a moment to observe how boaters around you are operating their vessels;

5. **EQUIPMENT FAILURE:** If there is a chance you may be on the water after the sun goes down, check your navigational lights on your vessel before leaving the dock;

4. **WEATHER:** Before you leave your dock, check your safety equipment and listen to the forecast;

3. **PASSENGER AND SKIER BEHAVIOR:** There must always be at least two people in or on your vessel or it must be equipped with a wide-angle rearview mirror when towing a skier, knee-boarder, etc.; Maintain a safe distance from skiers, knee-boarders, etc., and other watercraft; All skiers and vessel operators are required by law to wear U.S. Coast Guard approved personal flotation devices; Never go a long distance with tow rope out. Always pull in tow rope as soon as skier, knee-boarder,

etc. drops off; Raise your hand when your skier, knee-boarder, etc. is down or if you see that another is down; Boats must stay 150 feet from the shore or structures;

2. **OPERATOR INATTENTION:** A lot of things on the water competes for ones attention – pay attention to what matters;

1. **OPERATOR INEXPERIENCE:** Operator inexperience **IS THE LEADING CAUSE OF BOAT ACCIDENTS.** It is the responsibility of each lake lot owner and their families to operate their vessels safely and courteously, as well as abiding by all boating regulations.

The Florida Boater's Guide, a handbook of boating, laws and responsibilities, can be viewed online at www.boat-ed.com/fl/handbook. To report any illegal boating activity on the Bear lakes, please contact the South Region of the Seminole County Sheriff's Office at 407-665-1700. The Bear Lake Preservation Association hopes you enjoy a safe, accident-free water craft season!



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Exit Real Estate Results

16" Reclaimed Water Transmission Pipe Runs Through the Bear Lake Watershed... Why Was the Pipe Directed Through Our Neighborhood so Close to the Lake?

Continued from page 1



Dirt exposed and ready to fall in ditch to Bear Lake.

to the first ditch leading directly to Bear Lake. See picture left showing dirt exposed and ready to fall in ditch to Bear Lake.

Following BLPA's field visits and telephone calls on March 4th, they immediately installed lake protection structures. See right picture showing hay and silt barriers placed in ditch for filtering. As the construction and large road borings took place, the construction crews and utility companies were also made aware of the lake and the storm water system, by multiple visits and telephone calls from concerned residents who wanted to make sure the bear lakes were protected throughout this project. See picture on page 1 of the Pipe

Boring Rig & 16" installation.

Due to a conflict with the storm water pipe, it was necessary for the construction crew to change the route from Pine

to Holliday to the eastside of Balmy Beach Drive. The road right-of-way is very narrow and many change orders occurred due to conflicts. Residents are not happy to have this large pressure pipe go so close to their "pristine" Bear Lake, especially after the 10" water line broke on Bear Lake Road in 2011, and we experienced the damages left from 135,000 gallons of muddy water flushed into the lake.

BLPA has learned Utilities Incorporated will own and maintain the pipe after the construction is completed. The emergency number for pipe leaks, pipe breaks, etc. for this 16" pipe on Balmy Beach Drive is: 1-800-272-1919. SAVE THE WEKIWA – SAVE THE BEAR LAKES!



Hay and silt barriers placed in ditch for filtering.

Information on Lakewatch...Rainfall Data

Bear Lake	Date	Rainfall	Clarity Level	Water Level (Above Sea Level)
	9/12	8.9"	9-1/2'	103.82
	10/12	6.6"	9-1/2'	104.2
	11/12	1.3"	15-1/2'	103.65
	12/12	0.6"	15'	103.6
	1/13	2.2"	15'	103.5
	2/13	1.5"	13-1/2'	103.2
	3/13	3.0"	13'	103.1

Little Bear Lake	Date	Rainfall	Clarity Level	Water Level (Above Sea Level)
	9/12	8.9"	7'	100.3
	10/12	6.6"	8'	100.3
	11/12	1.3"	9'	100.9
	12/12	0.6"	8'	100.5
	1/13	2.2"	9'	99.9
	2/13	1.5"	6'	99.8
	3/13	3.0"	9.5'	95.0

Cub Lake	Date	Rainfall	Clarity Level	Water Level (Above Sea Level)
	9/12	8.9"	5-1/2'	103.8
	10/12	6.6"	6'	103.83
	11/12	1.3"	5'	103.6
	12/12	0.6"	7'	103.6
	1/13	2.2"	N/A	N/A
	2/13	1.5"	10'	103.3
	3/13	3.0"	8'	103.2

Painting by Bob
int/ext painting, pressure washing,
drywall repair, tile, texture

Robert (Bob) Shields
Owner



321-354-4449
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***Effective June 13, 2009, BLPA is now a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization. All financial contributions to BLPA are now tax deductible. BLPA will provide a receipt upon request for your donation.*

Educate Yourself and Your Lawn Maintenance Crew



PO Box 162605
Altamonte Springs, FL 32716



Do not blow grass clippings, leaves, or other yard debris into streets, ditches or storm drains. When mowing near the water's edge, use a grass catcher. Do not blow grass clippings into the lake from your mower. Stop this harm to the Bear Lakes now and help keep the Bear Lakes clean!

2012 Boat Parade Winners

1st placeAngie & Randy Kramner \$50.00
2nd place Susan Parker \$25.00
Decorated yard Brenda & Gary Vallancourt \$50.00

THANK YOU VOLUNTEERS!

Unless Someone Like You Cares

Nothing is Going to Get Better — It's Just Not!

Volunteers are critical to the success of any organization. Without their time and energy it would not be possible to accomplish all of the goals of this organization. It's only with the assistance of local volunteers such as yourself that we can rise to meet the challenge of our mission statement.

Thank you to all the BLPA board supporters and volunteers! If you are interested in becoming a volunteer, please contact a BLPA Board member today.

Upcoming Event

APRIL 23General Membership Meeting
St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, 7:30 pm

Guest Speaker:
**THE BEAR LAKE PRESERVATION
ASSOCIATION WELCOMES
Commissioner Lee Constantine**



For committee meeting dates, please contact one of the Board members. The Ecology Committee meets the 3rd Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. For information, contact Bill Houston at 407-721-0219.

www.blpa.net