



CALL TO ACTION...IF NOT NOW, WHEN?

The Newsletter of the Bear Lake Preservation Association, Inc. • August 2006

Are You a Casual Polluter?

By Bob Heideman

JULY 1997



THIS MONTH'S WATER CLARITY FOR BEAR LAKE IS:

20'

DO NOT FERTILIZE

Did you know the lake water clarity has declined this much?



JULY 2006



THIS MONTH'S WATER CLARITY FOR BEAR LAKE IS:

7'

DO NOT FERTILIZE

Grass clippings and phosphorous fertilizers are degrading the quality of our lakes.

Just as we are addicted to oil, we are also addicted to every day living habits that damage our environment, specifically our water supplies. It has always been that way. "People equal pollution" has been a common phrase in the environmental science world for a long time. Thirty-three years ago, while on a kayak trip near the Arctic Circle, I was advised, "You can drink the river water everywhere, except in the areas where people live."

We all live downstream. That is a fact. We don't realize it when we are buying it or hiring a landscape firm, but much of the fertilizer and pesticide used to keep landscapes beautiful washes into our lakes during thunder storms. We are "the casual polluters" because we don't know, or we don't care about the damage that is taking place. We think that as long as we are just doing what everyone else is doing, and there is no law against it, there is no compelling reason for us to stop doing it.

We are living a contradiction. As we beautify our private landscape

we are damaging our communal landscape. A beautiful yard gratifies us personally while improving the look of the neighborhood, but when we use fertilizers, pesticides, etc. to make our private property beautiful we are, in fact, polluting the public water supply and turning our beautiful clear lakes an ugly green. The cause and effect relationship is difficult to see because of the delayed reaction and the immeasurable affect each bag of fertilizer has on the whole. **While each person with an over-fertilized yard is thinking that their bit is insignificant, to a lake it is like death from a thousand cuts because it all adds up.** Because our private landscape can be seen and attributed to us individually and the corresponding degradation to our communal water can not, the "out of sight, out of mind" phenomena is in full force. It will be difficult to get people to change their ways because of our innate desire for personal beauty. Like Galbraith said in 1908, "private

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The mission of the Bear Lake Preservation Association is to provide environmental and civic stewardship for the Bear Lakes watershed. This is achieved through water quality monitoring, scientific understanding, public education, governmental intervention, and watershed improvements for the enhancement and preservation of the water quality and biological integrity of clean lakes.

www.blpa.net

Are You a Casual Polluter?

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affluence is consistent with public squalor.”

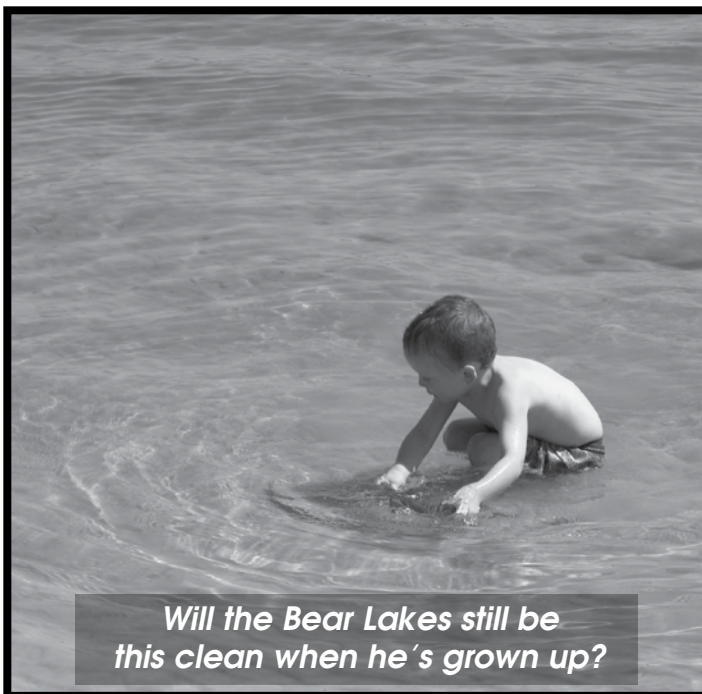
We in the Bear Lake watershed have to come to grips with this contradiction of private affluence (green landscaping) at the expense of degrading our public water supply (lakes, rivers and ground water). I am referring specifically to **excess fertilization, excess erosion, soaps, pesticides, insecticides, etc. washing into the ground, the streets, ditches and our lakes.** Things that you know would kill your fish in your home aquarium are allowed to wash into our communal environment. To get everyone in the watershed to change their behavior, will require a complete change of their values.

Can we all agree on this statement? **An unpolluted natural environment with clean clear lakes and clean drinking water — but without lush green lawns — is**

a more desirable environment than an environment with unswimmable lakes and un-drinkable ground water, even if it has lush green lawns. If we agree on that, we can act right away as intelligent, proactive people who understand science and the laws of cause and effect. OR we can do it some years later, after the water is irrevocably polluted, when we are forced to do it by the EPA or some other regulating body, when they eventually outlaw fertilizers and other aquatic pollutants.

There are many places in the United States and Europe that already have very restrictive laws on the use of fertilizer for the above reasons. Should we do the same? Asking people to conserve energy, water, or anything else of a personal nature does not work with

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Will the Bear Lakes still be this clean when he's grown up?



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- Treasurer..... Pam Ison
407-682-5485
- Correspondence Secretary ... Sue Parker
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- Lakewatch Nancy Dunn
407-295-6335
Jan Brown
407-295-6739
Margaret Bundy
407-523-1064
- Membership Holly Gosney
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- Newsletter Vicki Jameson
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- Dick Dominica 407-522-4402
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Are You a Casual Polluter?

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most people. You have to force them (like with rolling blackouts) or make it a law (like watering only on certain days). The Florida Department of Health is now making new laws concerning septic tanks and the Department of Agriculture is looking at restricting fertilizers. I hope that we don't have to wait for the laws because I'm afraid that at the rate we are going our **Bear Lakes will be un-swimable** by that time. How can we get everyone in the watershed to see that the reduction or the elimination of fertilizer on their property as a good thing?

Here are some things that we should be doing to protect the jewels of our communal landscape, those things that we came to this location for, those things that make our property values go up and up...our beautiful Bear Lakes.

- We can have it both ways (lush beautiful green landscape and clean water) **ONLY** if we are super diligent with the use of fertilizer, pesticide, etc. That means using only **no phosphate liquid fertilizer, non-toxic biodegradable pesticides, and preventing the first flush of rain water from leaving your property.** Car wash water should go into the ground and not into the street or storm drain. Do not use a garbage disposal. Pump your septic tank every three years. Pick up pet waste.
- Our watershed was originally sugar sand for the most part, with scrub oak, pines and pal-

mettos. When it was like that the lakes were exceptionally clear. We can never get back to that but we can undo some of our polluting behaviors. Some properties do not need a lawn. If you have lots of pines you can let your lawn revert back

to pine needles. No watering, no fertilizers, no pesticides, no cost. This is common in places like Arizona, Lake Tahoe watershed, and it is mandated on Captiva Island (a very wealthy island) and many other environmentally astute areas.

Do your part...stop polluting!



The Lakes May Not Be Clean Tomorrow!

Remember to report any water quality changes immediately to your LAKEWATCH captains such as improper use of liquids, garbage or yard waste in the water or in ditches or storm drains. You can report this information to the following LAKEWATCH captains: Bear Lake, Nancy Dunn, 407-295-6335; Little Bear Lake, Janet Brown, 407-295-6739; Cub Lake, Margaret Bundy, 407-523-1064.

We Need LAKEWATCH Volunteers on Lake Asher

Volunteers are needed to continue monthly sampling of this lake. All you need is a couple of hours each month, lake access and a boat or canoe. Please call David Watson, University of Florida, 1-800-LAKEWATCH or contact Nancy Dunn, 407-295-6335.



Mobile Marine Service
407 474-4225

Jeff Belford

Phone 407-474-4225
mobilemarinesvc@hotmail.com

1630 N. Singleton Avenue
Titusville, FL 32796

What's Being Put on Your Lawn?

Watershed residents, please fill in the blanks then give this agreement to your lawncare company/gardener/landscaper/husband/wife.

When using a lawn care service, whether existing or a new company, please add the following directions to the agreement and insist on mandatory compliance from the company.

Lawn Service Contractual Agreement

You are custodian of a property within the watershed of a uniquely clean, clear, swimmable lake. Fertilizer is the number one enemy of the lakes and is causing damage. The priority must be clear, clean water rather than greener grass.

1. Fertilize minimally. Use only no phosphorous fertilizer.
2. Never apply fertilizer within 15 feet of the lake high water level. Note: This could be 30 feet or more from the lake edge during low water conditions.
3. Never fertilize in ditches, swales, between houses, on steep grades, or in areas that flow during rain events.
4. If soil test indicates a need for phosphorous then use a liquid application.
5. Insist that granular fertilizer is not permitted.

I/we agree to abide by the above requirements.

Homeowner Signature: _____ Date: _____

Lawn Care Service Signature: _____ Date: _____

Anti-Wake Law

In 1998, the Seminole County Board of Commissioners approved a law that prohibits wakes within 50 yards of the shoreline. A wake is defined as moving waves — a track or path that a boat leaves behind it when moving across the water. The ordinance reads as follows:

"It is unlawful to navigate or operate on any waters of Seminole County, any vessel, aquaplane, or similar device in any bathing, swimming or launching area at a speed creating a wake.

"The term bathing, swimming or launching area shall include any area within (50) yards of the shoreline, docks, piers, bridges or boathouses,

or any other object arising from the water (excluding ski jumps or slalom courses) except when picking up or dropping off a water-skier in a manner otherwise consistent with this Code and State law.

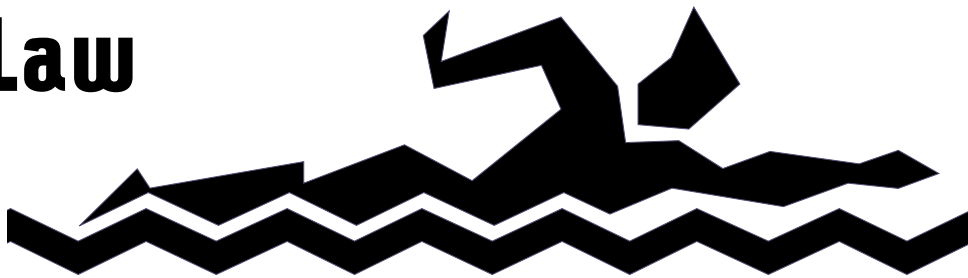
"The fifty yard distance shall be measured from the vessel, aquaplane or similar device or from any extension thereto including, but not limited to: a skier, or other device being towed."

Violators are subject to fines of up

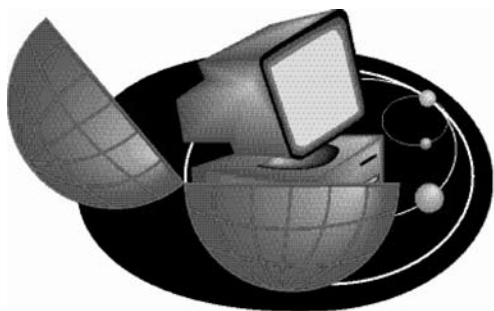
to \$500 and/or 60 days in jail. Seminole County Sheriff Don Eslinger and his staff and the Florida Game and Freshwater Fish Commission Marine Patrol will vigorously enforce this law and other existing boating laws.

The Anti-Wake Law is designed for safety and water quality for swimming conditions.

DO NOT STIR UP THE LAKE BOTTOM OR ERODE THE SHORELINE.



Have you seen the BLPA website?



For news you can use regarding...

- Bear Lake water quality
- News and events
- The history of Bear Lake
- Helpful links
- Relevant articles pertaining to the health and quality of Florida's waterways
- And so much more!

Visit www.blpa.net today!

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Information on Lakewatch...Rainfall Data

Rainfall Versus Water Clarity

The following Lakewatch data covers the last 10 months (collected in the third week of each month). Clarity level is the average of four locations on Big Bear Lake and Little Bear Lake. Lake levels determined by surveyed elevation markers set on the lakes by Seminole County.

Bear Lake	Date	Rainfall	Clarity Level	Water Level (Above Sea Level)
	10/05	6"	7'	104.6-1/2
	11/05	7-3/4"	7-1/2'	104.6
	12/05	3"	8-1/2'	104.5
	1/06	7/8"	10-1/2'	104.5
	2/06	3-1/4"	11'	104.5-1/2
	3/06	1"	10'	104.4
	4/06	1-7/8"	9'	104
	5/06	3"	10'	103.7
	6/06	4-3/4"	9-1/2'	103.6
7/06	5"	8'	103.9	

Little Bear Lake	Date	Rainfall	Clarity Level	Water Level (Above Sea Level)
	10/05	6"	7'	104
	11/05	7-3/4"	8-1/2'	103.9
	12/05	3"	10'	103.85
	1/06	7/8"	no data	no data
	2/06	3-1/4"	12'	103.8
	3/06	1"	12'	103.33
	4/06	1-7/8"	8'	N/A
	5/06	3"	6'	102.63
	6/06	4-3/4"	6'	102.94
7/06	5"	6'	N/A	

Cub Lake	Date	Rainfall	Clarity Level	Water Level (Above Sea Level)
	4/06	1-7/8"	9'	—
	5/06	3"	12'	—
	6/06	4-3/4"	10'	—
	7/06	5"	14'	101.1

CUB LAKE MUST BE DOING SOMETHING RIGHT!



Real Estate Watch

By Susan Burton, Realtor®

Call me if you have any questions (407-682-1214). The following is the most current information regarding the activity on our lakes:

Active Listings

9730 Bear Lake Road.....	\$2,500,000
3039 Cecelia Drive	\$1,000,000
6245 Linneal Beach Drive	\$799,000
6007 Linneal Beach Drive	\$1,275,000

Pending Sales

3124 Holliday Avenue	\$1,950,000
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There have been no closed sales since last newsletter.

The BLPA Wants YOU!

The BLPA is committed to preserving the lakes and community to protect our lifestyle and property values. The BLPA invites you to join our organization. Be Aware! Get Involved!

Look at the membership advantages the organization provides:

- Free BLPA license tag.
- Lake preserving activities and ideas for residents.
- “Watchdog” challenges to encroachment by developers and government.
- Neighborhood social activities (picnics, block parties, boat parade, etc.)
- Monthly Lakewatch testing and analysis.
- Expert speakers on environmental topics such as lake management and water quality.
- Coordination of Neighborhood Watch communities.
- Town Hall forums for homeowners to express pros and cons of neighborhood projects.
- Liaison with the county on issues such as traffic, lake patrols, and water run-off problems.
- Other activity suggestions welcomed by members.
- Annual community picnic.

Please add your voice and financial support by joining this community enhancement group.

NOTE: BLPA annual dues have been increased for the first time in 15 years, covering printing and postage costs.

New/Renewal Member • Bear Lake Preservation Association, Inc.
c/o Pam Ison, 3010 Holliday Ave, Apopka, FL 32703

Name(s) of Home Owner(s): _____

Street Address: _____

City/St/Zip: _____

Telephone: _____

Email: _____

Please mail this form to the above address with your check for \$75.00; senior citizens, \$35.00. Please make your checks payable to Bear Lake Preservation Association, Inc.

GET INVOLVED AND DO YOUR PART! WE CAN'T DO IT WITHOUT YOU!

St. Andrews Presbyterian Church

9913 Bear Lake Road • Apopka, FL

407-293-6802 • Worship: 10:00 am



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Calendar of Events

October 10 Board of Directors Meeting

November 14..... General Meeting

December 9 Boat Parade

December 10 Boat Parade Rain Date

For committee meeting dates, please contact one of the Board members. The Ecology Committee meets the 2nd Thursday of each month.

www.blpa.net

CALL TO ACTION...IF NOT NOW, WHEN?

BEAR LAKE
Preservation Association
c/o Pam Ison
3010 Holliday Avenue
Apopka, FL 32703