

Bear Lake Preservation Association Celebrates More Than 20 Years of Service



The pristine Bear Lakes (Big Bear, Little Bear, Cub, and Asher) have been placed in our care by virtue of our moving to its shores. Those of us who live within its watershed have accepted responsibility for its preservation in its current condition.

The Bear Lakes are some of the cleanest lakes in our county/state. As a member of BLPA, you are sharing in that stewardship.

BLPA is a group of concerned residents who have been working for more than 20 years to preserve the Bear Lakes. Although we started out with a limited budget, with the help of our neighbors and your membership, we have grown to a strong non-profit organization respected by the county and community. We all purchased property here because of the clean lakes we can swim, fish, boat, and enjoy. Our 20+ years of lake data shows a slow deterioration trend with the lakes chemistry remaining very much the same. With knowledge, education, and stewardship, we have significantly slowed this trend over the years through the assistance of the BLPA.

Over the many years, BLPA has:

- Been actively involved in keeping the county informed of the need for street sweeping and storm drains cleared for all surrounding Bear Lakes;
- Provided education and information regarding the benefits and construction of rear berms and swales along all developed shoreline areas;
- Education to establish a natural shoreline of vegetation to prevent shoreline erosion;
- Education and implementation of alum treatment to control internal recycling and remove phosphorous from seepage inflows;
- Education on yard waste, fertilizers, and stormwater runoff;
- Education and information of boating activities, safety regulations, etiquette, and law enforcement contacts;
- Information on Lakewatch and water quality;
- Education and information on Neighborhood Watch, area

crimes, and law enforcement contacts;

- Education and information on the construction and benefits of a seawall;
- Information on local real estate and property values.

BLPA is proud the Bear Lakes are all part of the Florida Lakewatch Program. Lakewatch data is more than rain fall and water clarity. Because of the dedicated Lakewatch volunteers (Nancy Dunn: Big Bear, Jan Brown: Little Bear, Margaret Bundy: Cub), this program continues to conduct cutting-edge applied research on many aquatic resources that directly aids Florida's water resource agencies to insure "the protection and propagation of fish, shellfish, wildlife, and recreation in and on the water, for the people of Florida." It's a proven 30-plus year volunteer monitoring program established by the Florida Legislature (F.S. 1004.49), which has achieved statewide, national, and international recognition as a model program. Lakewatch water quality data is of research quality and has been used by scientists around the world in peer-viewed scientific publications. The data is routinely used (local, county, and state agencies, as well as, private firms) to address trends in water quality. It is the most cost-effective water quality data collection platform in Florida.

Much of the degradation to the Bear Lakes can be attributed to algae blooms which is caused by fertilizer in stormwater runoff. When fertilizer is used anywhere within our watershed community (approximately 1,000 acres), a portion of it typically runs off into the Bear lakes through stormwater.

Although it turns your lawn green, it also will turn the lake green. This is because lakes are very sensitive to fertilizer and it only takes a small amount to grow the algae, which quickly turns water green. The fertilizer also provides food for aquatic plants and contributed to the 2007 - 2012 eelgrass explosion in the Bear Lakes. Fertilizer comes from the entire watershed. It's not just a 'lake front resident' issue.

BLPA would like to remind the entire watershed not use fertilizer, especially granular type which continuously dissolves in a heavy rain. It is then carried with the stormwater runoff (with other pollutants) into the street which eventually flows directly into the Bear Lakes. If you must use fertilizer in trouble spots, use zero phosphorous fertilizer. Phosphorous is the middle number like 10-0-8. As a property owner, you can help keep our lakes clean and clear by doing your part!

Thank You Volunteers! Unless Someone Like You Cares, Nothing is Going to Get Better...It's Just Not

The Directors of the Bear Lake Preservation Association (BLPA) would like to extend their appreciation to leaving board members Corrie Hungerford, past Treasurer, and Debra Davenport, past Membership Chairman, who have donated their valuable time to this organization. Your many years of service and support will never be forgotten!

The board would also like to take this opportunity to welcome back Jim Maki who is returning as Treasurer and Jon Albert, who has joined the Membership Committee.

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.

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!

Bear Lake Attracts the Josey Family in 1963

By Raymond Josey



News that the "big road" was coming through our College Park neighborhood had everybody talking. By early 1963 we had received notice from the State of Florida that the new I-4 would take our house and we would need to relocate. On Sunday afternoon drives with Nancy and our daughters we always seemed to come back to the Bear Lake area in our quest for property to build our new home. The roads were two-lane sand trails, dense woods with tall pine trees filled parts of the neighborhood, Balmy Beach Drive didn't go to Highway 436 and houses were few and far between around Jasmine Lane.



You could see the shores of Bear Lake from the sandy lot with a for sale sign posted in front. That seemed to be a perfect place for our new home. After purchasing two lots for \$2,000 we busied ourselves with building a new house and moved to Paradise Point in August of 1963.

Bear Lake provided a wonderful place for our family to enjoy picnics, swimming, and fishing. The white sandy beach at the swim lot was a favorite place for our daughters, Angie and Pam, to swim, play and enjoy the water. Bass and speckled perch were plentiful for anglers enjoying the beautiful Bear Lake. Water skiing was popular on the lake, as well.

There have been many happy times and lots of changes since we moved to the Bear Lake neighborhood nearly 50 years ago. Where has the time gone?

Raymond and Nancy Josey are dedicated members and have volunteered on the Board of the Paradise Point Community Club for the past 47 years.



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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

10032 Bear Lake Rd	\$370,000
6011 Linnal Beach Dr	\$500,000
3050 Holliday Ave.....	\$595,000
3218 Holliday Ave.....	\$775,000
3524 Holliday Ave.....	\$1,000,000

Pending Sales

6007 Linnal Beach Dr	\$449,500
6103 Linnal Beach Dr	\$695,000

Sold Properties

6003 Linnal Beach Dr	\$1,000,000
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Neighborhood Watch

Ernie Glass, FCPP with the Seminole county crime prevention unit has asked BLPA if we would get the word out that he would help our community to start a neighborhood watch.

How Does It Work? It starts with a coordinator, block captains and the residents. When a crime occurs, residents are asked to contact the Sheriff's Office FIRST. After contact with a deputy is made, the resident should contact their Block Captain who, in turn, makes the Coordinator aware of the situation. The Coordinator then contacts the other Block Captains who in turn will contact the residents

in their "block" via the community email notification list.

How Much Of My Time Will It Require? Participation in Neighborhood Watch will not infringe upon your valuable time. We simply ask you to be observant while conducting your normal everyday activities. At the very most, one hour a month would be the amount of time required to fulfill the duties of Coordinator or Block Captain.

For additional information please contact Judy Ihrig at 407-292-4632 or the Crime Prevention Unit at 407-665-6631.



Protecting Our Waterways...



Seminole County Range & Water, Special Operations Division.

Shown are two of the three officers covering all of Seminole County including the St. John's River.

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.

Natural Pest Control Around the Bear Lakes

By Margaret Sullivan Bundy

Surely at sometime you have been in your backyard at dusk and noticed a few bats flying around. This is because bats are active at night and the time they will leave their daytime roosts. If you watch carefully, you will notice one of the first things the bats will do at dusk is dip their lower jaw into the water to take a drink, while still in flight. Next, they will each begin to forage up to 3,000 insects a night.

Bats are the only mammals capable of true flight. On average, bats fly at a speed of 20 wing beats per second. They have well-furred bodies with naked, transparent wings, which are a membrane spread across elon-

of August.

Bats are harmless creatures and important to our environment. It is a myth that bats are major carriers of rabies. The fact is, less than 1/2 of 1% of bats carries the rabies virus. Those that do, become paralyzed and die within three or four days.

Florida is home to approximately thirteen bat species. Unfortunately, many of them are disappearing at alarming rates. Public education and preservation of roost sites are the keys to maintaining Florida's native bat populations. Bat houses are a perfect way to get involved in conservation and it will provide the bats in our area

with a much needed safer place to live. Consider putting a bat house in your back yard. In return, the bats will provide you with significantly fewer insects! Because bats have a lifespan of 20+ years, you and your entire family will enjoy many years of free natural pest control and entertainment.

Bat houses should be located at least ten to fif-

teen feet above the ground and should be exposed to sunlight most of the day. Yes, bats like it hot. The best way to know where to place your bat house is to observe their normal flight patterns at dusk. Locate your bat house where the bats will most likely see it with their eyes, or discover the crevices with their sonar. You do not, however, want to locate your bat house directly over the water. Bat guano is very high in nitrogen. It is a natural fertilizer that will be broken down by the natural elements such as rain, sun and wind. Therefore, you also do not want to place it too close to the water unless you have natural berms and vegetated swales in your yard to avoid direct runoff into the lake. Guano is not known to be toxic

or harmful to humans, dogs, cats or other animals.

The most successful bat houses are located at the University of Florida in Gainesville. One of their bat houses can hold up to 250,000 bats and the neighboring bat barn house can hold up to 400,000 bats. Currently, it is estimated that these bat houses are home to up to 150,000 bats. It's worth a trip to Gainesville just to watch these bats as they leave their roost! If you take the family on a road trip to Gainesville to see this spectacular sight, you won't be disappointed – it's not just the home of the Gator.

For additional information on the identification of Florida bats and how to build your own bat house, please access: Bats of Florida: <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdffiles/UW/UW20300.pdf>, Effective Bat Houses of Florida: <http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/pdffiles/UW/UW29000.pdf>



gated arm bones and fingers. Literally, Bats fly with their hands!

Contrary to popular belief, bats are not blind. In addition to sight, bats make an ultrasonic sound that echos off solid objects to navigate and locate their food sources in total darkness. They also have sensitive ears and are uniquely equipped to catch flying insects using their wings, skin around their tails, and mouths. A bat's diet consists of root worms, cutworms, corn borer moths, potato beetles, mosquitoes, and grasshoppers. This makes them an important part of natural pest control.

Bats mate in the fall and produce one to two babies in the Spring. Because baby bats are flightless, they will remain in the roost until the end

MI Homes Plans to Build on Bowles' Property

On September 18, 2012, a meeting was held at St. Andrews Presbyterian Church concerning the rezoning of the Bowles' property location behind the little store on Bear Lake Road. MI Homes made a presentation to about 25 Bear Lake Woods homeowners and BLPA representatives. The Bowles' property has not been sold to MI Homes until the zoning is revised to residential which should be brought to the County on or about the middle of December. The Bowles' pond will be enlarged with a new retention pond added. There will be a 40-home development which will be a "maintenance free property." The entry to this property on Bear Lake Road will be approximately 100' south of the little store. A 50' buffer will be added between the Bowles' property and the existing Bear Lake Woods property. The price range for these 3- and 4-bedroom homes will be between \$218,000 - \$241,000.

Neighborhood Watch Dos & Don'ts

DOs

Do call 911 for all suspicious incidents

Do be nosy neighbors; be aware of what is happening in your neighborhood. Know when your neighbors are away and what type of vehicle they drive.

Do report suspicious activity; call 911 when you see strangers, strange vehicles or anything that makes you look or think twice.

Do make a written report; tell the responding deputy you want a written report made of your incident. Remember, your information may be just what we are looking for to solve another crime.

DON'Ts

Don't pursue anyone; do not put yourself or anyone else in harm's way.

Don't put yourself at risk, call and report the problem. Don't try to confront or apprehend a suspect; let a trained deputy do that.

Don't ignore the problem, unreported problems grow into bigger problems making them difficult to solve.

Don't call your regional office to report crimes or suspicious activity. The regional office is for information only; it's not manned 24 hours and cannot dispatch a deputy.

Don't let crime "Knock Your Block Off." Become involved with the safety and security of your neighborhood. It's your home, your community...be safe.



Contact the Sheriff's Office Crime Prevention Unit for additional information on this and other important safeguards.



**Pam Oropeza
Realtor**
407-446-5861
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**Frank "Happy" Oropeza
Realtor**
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Buying or Selling in or around Bear Lake or Lake Brantley area? Contact Happy or Pam Oropeza for Results you can count on! Bear Lake area resident for over 25 years



Exit Real Estate Results

Information on Lakewatch...Rainfall Data



Rain kept lake water temperatures cool during the summer months. Algae attached to eelgrass decreased from last year due to cooler water temperatures. Algae is still thick on eelgrass in areas directly in the path of storm drain inlets. Water clarity drops in months with large amounts of rain (and typically in the fall following July, August & September rains)

WINTER/SPRING 2012: The water clarity in Bear Lake from January through April was very clear with readings of 12.5' to 14'. The good clarity was mostly due to small amounts of rain and cooler water temperatures which stayed below 70 degrees. In May, as water temperatures warmed up, algae increased giving the lake a green hue. As boating increases with the nice weather, bottom sediments, muck and algae are stirred up in the shallow areas and pushed onto shorelines along with chopped & floating eelgrass. Residents were raking out eelgrass along with the black muck off of their beachfronts. Eelgrass also breaks off & floats to shorelines with strong winds. By the end of May, lake water levels dropped to a low 102.2' (measured by feet above sea level). Bear Lake had not overflowed to Cub Lake through the outfall manhole and pipe since December 2011 when the water level was up to 103.6'. (A difference of 1.4") Water Clarity, which is measured in deep undisturbed areas, varied from 12' to 13'.

SUMMER/FALL 2012: In June and July, water clarity lowered from 11' to 9'. Tropical Storm Debby dropped only 6.5" of rain; however, making the total rain for this period 15.9", flushing in fertilizers, feeding algae, lowering the water clarity. Rains kept water temperatures unusually cool during the 90 degree summer days and the water elevation rose to 103.5. Surface water temperatures remained a low 74-75 degrees through July. Residents were still raking out chopped eelgrass along with algae and muck washing up, mostly after heavy boating weekends or high winds. Surface water temperatures, which typically average 90 degrees, never got above 76 degrees going into August. August rains totaled 7.6" and Bear & Little Bear lakes began to flow to Cub Lake with 103.6 levels, which is the controlling elevation of Big Bear. As of October, the elevation is 104.25 & pouring out to Cub Lake to the Wekiwa.

CARP: By the end of this summer, we can see where the Carp have removed large areas of eelgrass growing on the bottom of Bear Lake. They are only eating the roots, leaving the rest for homeowners to rake out. The cleared areas are easy to see in the shallow areas. Use a depth finder to locate eelgrass growing to 14' deep. Rake out the dying eelgrass, as it is loaded with nutrients like lawn clippings. Both are bad for the lakes.

The most important message on the water clarity signs posted around Bear Lake is: DO NOT FERTILIZE. The greatest impact toward the decline of the Bear Lakes is from lawn fertilizers in our watershed. The BLPA began educating residents that fertilizers are the number one enemy to a clean lake. Fertilizer washes into the lakes, feed plants and algae, turning the lakes green. A green lawn is a green lake. If you have a service, insist they stay 100' from the lake with Phosphorous Free fertilizer.

Bear Lake	Date	Rainfall	Clarity Level	Water Level (Above Sea Level)
	4/12	1.45"	12-1/2'	102.6
	5/12	2.5"	12-1/2'	102.35
	6/12	1.3"	11-1/2'	102.65
	7/12	14.6"	9'	103.5
	8/12	7.6"	10'	103.64
	9/12	8.9"	9-1/2'	103.82

Little Bear Lake	Date	Rainfall	Clarity Level	Water Level (Above Sea Level)
	4/12	1.45"	6'	102.6
	5/12	2.5"	7'	102.42
	6/12	1.3"	6'	102.73
	7/12	14.6"	7'	103.8
	8/12	7.6"	5'	103.83
	9/12	8.9"	5-1/2'	103.8

Cub Lake	Date	Rainfall	Clarity Level	Water Level (Above Sea Level)
	4/12	1.45"	7'	99.3
	5/12	2.5"	9'	99
	6/12	1.3"	5'	99.9
	7/12	14.6"	8'	99.9
	8/12	7.6"	8'	100.7
	9/12	8.9"	7'	100.3

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

Robert (Bob) Shields
Owner



321-354-4449
robshields@aol.com

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Thank you for your continuing support to help keep our lakes clean!

Name: _____

Address: _____

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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.*

Calendar of Events

NOVEMBER 13General Membership Meeting
St. Andrews Presbyterian Church, 7:30 pm
*Speaker: Mark Flomerfelt, Stormwater
Capital Projects, Public Works Department*

DECEMBER 8 Boat Parade

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



PO Box 162605
Altamonte Springs, FL 32716

BLPA HOLIDAY BOAT PARADE

The BLPA Holiday Boat Parade will be held on Saturday, December 8th. If you wish to participate, registration will be held at the Cramner's dock at 5:30 p.m. The boat parade will begin at dark and the winner of the Holiday Boat Parade will be announced at the next general meeting. For more information, call Catherine Heideman at 407-538-1097.

Cub Lake Corner



On September 6, 2012, 100 Carp were released into Cub Lake which averaged 11 to 13 inches. The photograph to the left shows Dan McKenzie assisting in the release. They are all off to a good start. The University of Florida Scientists at Lakewatch, together with Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation

Commission, recommended the total number of Carp permitted for Cub Lake (200), be released in stages. This recommendation was made, so that all the fish are not the same age when they are released, and the Carp will maintain the unwanted weeds for a longer period of time. It was time to release the second half of the group, as eelgrass and other plants still remain a nuisance to residents.

The first 100 Carp permitted and stocked in July 2010, were not making a difference as many of them were believed to have been lost to predators, such as otters and bass.



Dan McKenzie has done an excellent job on the barrier to keep the Carp in Cub Lake (photograph on the right). The eelgrass on the grate has been cleared off and the barrier is as solid as it can be.

The Bear Lakes are flowing out strong to the Little Wekiwa through Cub Lake with the high waters of Big Bear (104.5), from all the recent rainfall (see Lakewatch chart of rainfall totals provided in this newsletter).

The Carp will gather where the water flows so keeping the 12-18" Plecostomus fish (photograph below), from digging along the banks around the outfall grate will be a constant challenge. These sucker-mouth aquarium catfish create large burrows into canal and lake beds, which compromise the integrity of shorelines. They (Plecostomus) were illegally/ignorantly dumped into the Bear Lakes from aquariums.



The Plecostomus fish are a constant nuisance for our lakes and have no natural enemies. The Bear Lake Preservation Association (BLPA), would like to remind you to never release your aquarium plants and fish into our Bear Lakes (Big Bear, Little Bear, Cub, and Asher).