



Florida

LAKEWATCH

Volume 1

July, 1991

LAKEWATCH Picnic

Dr. Daniel Canfield, the Director of Florida LAKEWATCH, wants to meet the LAKEWATCHers and wants you to have the opportunity to meet each other. He has volunteered to open his home for a party. Would you like to come? Dr. Canfield will supply the BBQ pork (with his special sauce), paper products and utensils, and ice.

We can share experiences of battles won and lost, lake problems and solutions, uses of LAKEWATCH data -- learning from each other.

Join the LAKEWATCH worker bees on Saturday, July 27th, anytime after noon at Dr. Canfield's home in Gainesville. He has a pool, so bring swim suits, towels, lawn chairs, friends, and the kids. Bring whatever you want to drink and a covered dish to share.

Please call Lorraine Duncan at 904/462-2554 to let us know how many folks you will be bringing. There is a map in this Newsletter showing you the way to Dr. Canfield's house from SR 441. If you need more detailed directions, just ask Lorraine.

Hope to see you!

A Poem for the Legislature

You've always shown yourselves
to be
Ones favoring ecoiogy
That's being done and needs to be
For air and water quality.

A need requiring constant care
And everyone to be aware.
One program working toward this
end
Is LAKEWATCH, waters'
caring friend.

Professionals direct and start,
But citizens are taking part.
A cost-effective, joint affair,
Where training makes us all
aware.

Support is mostly volunteer,
With work and funds from year
to year.
Results this special group achieve
No one would here-to-fore
believe!

To gather samples for a test
Takes special training at its best.
LAKEWATCH trainers found the
way;
Now plain folks do it every day.

The volunteers have learned an art,
And each will always do his part.
We need some help to stay alive.
LAKEWATCH needs funding to
survive!

Richard Baird, whose wife Robbie is a dedicated LAKEWATCHer on Deerbuck Lake in Marion County, wrote this poem and sent it to his legislators in support of the Program.

Legislative Update

The Florida LAKEWATCH Bill was sponsored by Representative Bob Sindler and Senator George Kirkpatrick in the Florida Legislature this year with the strong support of Representative Bert Harris of the House Agriculture Committee. Recently signed into law by Governor Lawton Chiles, the Bill reads in part as follows:

240.5329 Florida LAKEWATCH Program. -- The Florida LAKEWATCH Program is hereby created within the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture of the Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences at the University of Florida. The purpose of the program is to provide public education and training with respect to the water quality of Florida's lakes.

While this Bill creates Florida LAKEWATCH, *it does not fund the Program.* Monies must be allocated by the Appropriations Committee. Many thanks to those of you who supported the Bill and who contacted your legislators to register support. Now would be a good time to express your appreciation to your local District's senator and representative and request their help in getting funds.

Videos Available

The following educational videotape programs are available in the Aquatic Plant Management Series:

Florida's Aquatic Plant Story -- describes the benefits of native aquatic plants, recounts problems caused by some exotic "aquatic weeds," and introduces the major methods of aquatic plant management. (24 minutes; IFAS Catalog No. VT-315)

Istokpoga -- tells the story of one of Florida's largest lakes, and the hydrilla infestation that made its waters all but unusable; recounts the citizen activism and agency cooperation that resulted in the largest aquatic herbicide application in Florida history, and describes the results of that treatment. (39 minutes; IFAS Catalog No. VT-285)

Aquatic Plant Identification of Floating and Floating-leaved Plants -- features descriptions and pictures of 14 of the most common floating and floating-leaved plants in Florida. (26 minutes; IFAS Catalog No. VT-360)

All programs cost \$10.60, payable to the "University of Florida." They are available on VHS, S-VHS, and PAL video formats. Please specify format and IFAS Catalog number.

Messages from Sandy

Check the knot on your Secchi disc -- it can come untied. Can't it, Joyce? and David?

Our chemist, Ms. Mary Rutter, has changed her name to Mary Stonecipher. You may already have noticed the new name on the feedback letters she sends you.

Congratulations to the Kingsley Lake group in Clay County! Because of their hard work, they were successful in getting Kingsley Lake designated an Outstanding Florida Water (OFW) which will entitle them to additional legal protection for their lake. The homeowner association prepared a petition which delineated the lake's history, geology, water quality, recreation, wildlife resources, plant

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/// /// LAKEWATCHer's Questions \ \ \ \ \

Summer is often the time that lakes experience fish kills. What should you do if this happens on your lake?

1. Take water samples even though it may not be the usual time of the month for your sampling. Additionally, using one of your water sample bottles, take an extra sample by filling it underwater and capping it underwater when it is absolutely completely full (make sure there is no air in the bottle). Do not freeze it. Call LAKEWATCH. We can measure the dissolved oxygen in this sample.
2. Look at the water. Does it look different than usual? Does it smell different than usual (perhaps like sulfur or "chemicals")?
3. Write down what species of fish are dead (all one species?).
4. Write down what sizes of fish are dead. Be as specific as you can; for example, it is more helpful to say, "four bass smaller than 1 inch and one bass about 5 inches," than to say, "a few small ones and a big one."
5. Find what appears to be a "representative" area that is about a yard square. By looking at them, count and record how many fish are dead in this area. Do not handle dead fish unless you are wearing gloves.
6. Get information from your neighbors. Has anyone noticed anything unusual? Perhaps they have seen fish that seem to be gasping for air at the lake surface. Maybe they have noticed drums or containers of hazardous materials on the shore. Have they seen "slicks" on the water? Sometimes trucks dump toxic chemicals into nearby storm drains which run into the lake. Have plants in the water been sprayed (the spray itself may not be harmful, but the dead plants can use up the oxygen from the water as they decay)?
7. Record the date of the fish kill.
8. Write down the recent weather conditions (hot or cool? rainy or dry? overcast or clear? windy or calm?).
9. If you can catch a sick, but living, fish and get it to LAKEWATCH, we may be able to determine whether a disease or parasite is at fault. Dead fish deteriorate too rapidly to be analyzed.

Once you have this information, call either LAKEWATCH or your nearest Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission Office to get help in determining the possible cause of the fish kill. Your measurements and observations will provide important clues. You'll learn to appreciate buzzards!

Messages (continued)

communities, fishery resources, and support letters. They were able to use their LAKEWATCH data to document their unusually oligotrophic status. It was an outstanding job, and they produced a model document. Good work, folks!

The North American Lake Management Society (NALMS) has produced a booklet explaining how to form an effective homeowner's association. Dr. Canfield, Director of Florida LAKEWATCH and recently-elected President of NALMS, is in the process of modifying the booklet for Floridians. He hopes to have a first draft available at the picnic.

Most of the calls I have to make are to find out how much water people filtered -- this information is sometimes not written on your filter paper wrappers. Please tape a reminder to your flask if you need it. The lab must know how many "mls" you use.

There is a new data sheet hot off the presses. If you are xeroxing your own, be sure to get a new copy to use as an "original." You can identify the new one because it has Mary Stonecipher's name in the bottom paragraph.

Hope to see you at the picnic. Keep on dippin' and pumpin'!

Jet Skis

Jet skis are referred to as Personal Watercraft (PWCs). When they are being driven irresponsibly, however, lake residents have other names for them!

According to Florida law, a PWC is subject to the same regulations that apply to boats. For example, an operator of a PWC must wear a Personal Flotation Device and have a fire extinguisher on board. Operation at night is prohibited. Minimum age to operate a rental personal watercraft is 16; a nonrental personal watercraft, 14.

The law also requires that PWCs be "reasonably muffled while being operated anywhere within the state." Additionally, many counties have more specific noise level restrictions.

Besides often being intrusively noisy, jet skis are sometimes operated irresponsibly. Many counties have individual regulations governing them. For example, Orange County requires a maximum speed of five mph within 100 feet of the shoreline, docks, piers, boathouse, or structures, and jet skis must operate at idle speed in canals. Check with your County Sheriff's Office Marine Patrol Unit for your local regulations.

Other states have passed laws to regulate PWC operation. For example, in 1989, Massachusetts banned PWCs on lakes under 75 acres. A New York law requires the maintenance of a 500 foot distance from designated bathing areas. In Oregon, regulations are in effect which require no wake speed within 200 feet of swimmers, launch ramps, marinas, moorage, or directly behind waterskiers and prohibit the harassment of wildlife.

At their worst, PWCs are irritatingly noisy and can endanger life, limb, and property. When behaving responsibly, however, PWC users have as much right to enjoy Florida's waterways as anyone else.

Turtle and Clam Alert

Several lakes are experiencing die-offs of turtles and of a clam called "corbicula." For example, Long Pond in Putnam County had 94 cooters, seven softshells, and one mud turtle die, apparently at about the same time. Lake Chipco in Putnam County experienced the die-off of 23 cooters, one softshell, and one turtle of unidentified species. Six of these turtles had severely deformed shells. Opal Lake in Putnam County reported the death of 15 cooters, one mud turtle, and one Florida redbelly. Lake Ashby in Volusia County had about a dozen large cooters die. Rose Lake in Orange County, Daugherty in Volusia, Rosa in Putnam, and Floyd in Pasco have reported smaller (fewer than ten) die-offs.

In response to these reports by Florida LAKEWATCHers, Dr. Ken Dodd of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service [904/372-2571] is conducting an investigation of the dead turtles. If you have a die-off, please contact him.

Similarly, die-offs of a clam called *corbicula* have been reported. *Corbicula* are beige clams about the size of a quarter. They can be identified by the concentric circles on their shells. There can be up to about 8000 of them in a cubic yard of lake bottom. *Corbicula* are filter feeders and purify water, filtering about 1/2 quart of water per clam per hour! When they die, however, their sharp-edged shells open and become a hazard.

Mr. Robert Brock at the University of Florida's Environmental Engineering Department [904/392-0838] is interested in gathering information on this exotic clam.

The following are excerpts from Florida court cases:

ALBERT A. HILL, et al. v. MARION LAKE PROPERTIES, INC.

In this case, the defendant wanted to use one lakefront lot as an access lot for property owners in a large development which was located away from the lakeshore of Deerback Lake in Marion County. For the previous 19 years this lot had been subject to deed restrictions which would allow the construction of a single-family residence.

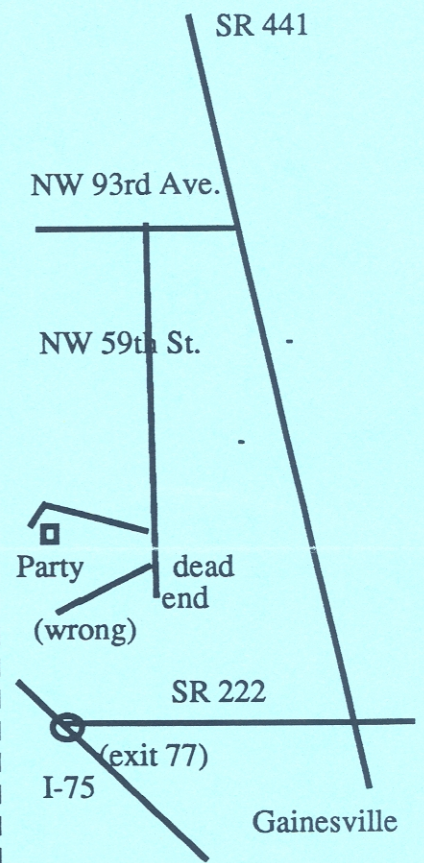
The judge ruled, "Defendants are enjoined from using lot 1, block 5, Lake View Manor, for either public or community access to Deer Back Lake or any other lakefront lot in said community for lake access purposes as such use is violative of the current deed restrictions. Defendants are further enjoined from

constructing any community facility, dock, boatramp, or bathhouse on any lakefront lot in Lake View Manor as such construction is violative of the current deed restrictions."

TAYLOR v. TAMPA COAL CO.

The Supreme Court held that the court properly enjoined defendant from diverting water from a lake for irrigation during a dry season. It was ruled that each riparian owner has the right to use the water in the lake for all lawful purposes, so long as his use of the water is not detrimental to the rights of other riparian owners. The owner of land on the margin of a natural lake or pond has a right to have the natural level of the water maintained, so as to permit him to enjoy the advantages attendant upon riparian ownership, and to protect him from the disadvantage of having a strip of uncovered lake bottom left in front of his property.

Map to Dr. Canfield's



If you have any questions, comments or concerns, please contact:

Sandy Fisher or Dr. Dan Canfield, Jr.
Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture
7922 NW 71st Street
Gainesville, FL 32606
(904) 392-9613/392-9617

We are always interested in knowing of any upcoming meetings that other LAKEWATCH volunteers may want to attend. If you know of these meetings, let us know in advance and we will include them in our newsletter.

If you have any poems, like the one printed in this issue, we would be glad to include them as well.

If you have questions that are of interest to a number of volunteers, we will answer them in the newsletter so everyone can learn.

We here at LAKEWATCH are always looking for new and innovative ways of helping our volunteers. Any suggestions would be most appreciated. Keep up the good work!!