

June 2005

# The Istokpoga Newswire

Friends of Istokpoga Lake Association, Inc.



## Friends of Istokpoga Annual Meeting Held

The annual meeting of the Friends of Istokpoga Lake Association, Inc. was held at the Lorida Community Center in Lorida, Florida, on February 24, 2005.

Dr. Paul Gray, Florida Audubon Society, presented "The Birds of Istokpoga". It was an awesome presentation and we sincerely thank Dr. Gray for this illuminating look at our birds.

Karen Whall, a biologist with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, presented an update to the bass tracking she gave us last year. If you weren't there you really missed another good presentation.

We also held our annual election of Directors. Bill Dwinell announced he was no longer going to be president and that he was willing to remain on the Board of Directors for another year if someone else was willing to be President.

Nominations were made and by unanimous vote Gary Albin, Bill Dwinell, Bert Galloway, Don Linton, Jeannette Porter, Jack Richie, and Jim Wilburn were elected to the Board of Directors (BOD).

In a subsequent meeting the BOD elected Bert Galloway President, Don

Linton Vice-president, and Jeannie Porter as Secretary / Treasurer.

Please give these new officers your full support.

## Hydrilla Treatment

The Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) started the lake treatment for hydrilla in February. This treatment was planned to have several applications of liquid form of Sonar.

After the initial application, the concentration of the herbicide several reports of damage to plants other than hydrilla

*So far we have not heard any new plan from DEP*

were received. One report stated that crop damage south of the S-68 structure was expected to occur because of the anticipated high levels of Sonar in the canal. DEP applied powdered charcoal in the canal to absorb the sonar and stop any potential damage.

The treatments have stopped for this year and are not expected to resume.

So far we have not heard any new plan from DEP to address the continuing problem of hydrilla in our lake.

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## Special points of interest:

- *Mark you calendar for the Lake Istokpoga Management Committee meeting on June 16th*
- *Be sure to check out our Web site*

## Dr. Paul Gray, PhD Honored

For those of you that have been with the Friends of Istokpoga Lake Association, Inc. since it began in March of 1998, I am sure I do not need to tell you much about all the help Dr. Gray has given us over these last seven years.

Paul has been there for us when we needed articles written for this newsletter. He has been a speaker at our meetings on a number of occasions. These things I am sure you are aware of, but behind the scenes he has been an even greater help to this organization.

Paul is heavily involved in protecting the ecology of Lake Okeechobee. Since Lake Okeechobee and Lake Istokpoga are closely tied together,

He is truly a Friend of  
Lake Istokpoga!!

he also gets involved in discussions about our lake. Paul is always there to help us by speaking up, providing information and “making noise” so the people in the various govern-

ment agencies take notice of our plight too.

So, at our meeting in February, we recognized Paul with a plaque, thanking him for his outstanding support of the Friends of Istokpoga Lake Association, Inc. He is truly a Friend of Lake Istokpoga!!

Next time you see him be sure to thank him yourself for all the help he has given us.

## Jack Richie Recognized

Jack Ritchie of Lake Placid has been a Director on the Friends of Lake Istokpoga Board for several years. During that time he served as Treasurer; maintaining budget reports and accounting records. Many will recognize Jack for the time he volunteered to represent The Friends of Istokpoga at a variety of the water management and water quality meetings held around the county. The Friends of Istokpoga Lake Association presented

Jack with a Certificate of Appreciation for his tenure as Treasurer and his participation as a Director on the Board at the February 2005 General Membership Meeting. Jack volunteered for a new term as a Director for Friends of Istokpoga also at the February of 2005 meeting.

He remains active in many community based groups and currently is a member of the High-

lands County Water Advisory Committee, Highlands County Affordable Housing Advisory Committee, Board of Directors Highlands County Lakes Association, Board of Directors Ridge Trails Association, Director Friends of Istokpoga Lake Assn., President of Sun-N-Lakes of Lake Placid Fire District and Chairman of Highlands County Home Owners Association.

## Have You visited the website lately?

While we believe our newsletter is a valuable communication tool for us and our members, we also believe our website is equally valuable, and unlike the newsletter, it can give you information in a much more timely manner.

So when you are wondering what is going on with the lake, or if there are any meetings going on to help protect the lake, check out our website. Another big advantage to our website is that it doesn't cost us to put up-to-date information out there

and if you already have email and Internet Service, it doesn't cost you anything either.

Our web address is on page 4 just under our address. Be sure and check it out.

# Lake Istokpoga Needs Your Help

By Bert Galloway

Concerned members of Friends of Istokpoga take heed about the following predictions in regard to Lake Okeechobee's declining health.

Lake Okeechobee was in trouble before last years hurricanes churned up a thick layer of pollution that had settled on its bottom and turned the water the color of day old coffee.

The mess not only threatens the lake's diverse fish and plant populations but also jeopardizes the water supplies and economies of nearby communities and an environmental project of greater concern. (The \$8.4 billion Everglades Restoration).

Paul Gray, the science coordinator for Audubon's Lake Okeechobee program describes recent visits to the lake as more and more demoralizing.

We don't know how bad it's going to get before it starts getting better," he said.

At the Pahokee marina, a pier normally full of fishermen has been deserted for months. The few dozen boats that one would normally see have all but disappeared

"What you're going to find this summer is this lake is going to turn just as green and just as slimy as anything you've seen in a science fiction movie," said the Pahokee's Mayor. "When that starts, no one will get on that water".

The unsavory green color comes from toxic algae, which blooms from the pollutions spreading through the lake and smothers plants and fish. The coming

algae bloom is drawing alarming comparisons to an ecological disaster at central Florida's Lake Apopka which succumbed to similar problems in the 1940s.

As you can see from the proceeding account, Lake Okeechobee has a big problem and the answers to fix are costly.

Our reason for including this in our newsletter is to alert you to the fact that Istokpoga could end up in the same condition as Okeechobee or Apopka.

We need action taken in the near future to stop the large levels of phosphorus, the prime pollutant, that are entering Lake Istokpoga from numerous sources. Istokpoga's phosphorus is already high and if we do nothing it will become another Okeechobee or Lake Apopka in the very near future.

We need you as concerned citizens to contact our elected officials in regard to this problem by letter, phone or visitation to let them know about our concerns. The health of Lake Istokpoga is dependent on us solving this problem.

## Please contact:

**State Senator J.D. Alexander**, 403 S. Commerce Ave. , Sebring FL 33870, (863) 386-6016

**State Representative Denise Grimsley**, 205 S. Commerce Ave. , Sebring, FL 33870, (863) 385-5251

**County Commissioners, Bob Bullard, Andrew B. Jackson, Guy Maxey, Barbara Stewart, and Edgar Stokes**, 600 S. Commerce Ave. , Sebring, FL 33872, (863) 402-6500

*A portion of the article was reprinted from The Highlands Today, Friday, April 22, 2005*

## Support Our Associate Members

Our Associate Members are a valuable part of the success of this organization. Without their continued support we would have to raise our membership dues just to stay afloat.

I want to encourage each of you to read the list of Associate Members on our back page and learn who they are. Then I want you to think of them whenever you are looking for their specific type of service or product.

If we will support them with our business, I am sure they will continue to

***"It is important that you tell them that you are a member of Friends of Istokpoga and appreciate their support."***

support the Friends of Istokpoga Lake Association, Inc. .

It is important that you tell them that you are a member of Friends of Istokpoga and appreciate their support. when you purchase anything from them.

## Highlands Airboat Association

Do you know how much help the Highlands Airboat Association is to Highlands County? Do you know that they voluntarily clean up many of our lakes every year? Do you know that they donate any excess monies to charities every year? Do you know that they make their boats available to Law Enforcement Officers of the County, State Game Commission and Civil defense, if requested? Do you know that you don't

even have to own an airboat to join their association?

We want to thank each and every member of the Highlands Airboat Association for there untiring efforts in our county and especially in Lake Istokpoga, which they do twice a

year! The next clean-up for Lake Istokpoga is scheduled for some time in July.

For more information on the Highlands Airboat Association or the July Lake Istokpoga clean-up contact Willa Keene at (863)

***We want to thank each and every member of the Highlands Airboat Association***

465-3727

**Friends of Istokpoga Lake  
Association, Inc.**

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Help us protect Lake Istokpoga

Were on the Web —  
[www.istokpoga.org](http://www.istokpoga.org)



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**Friends of Istokpoga Associate Members**

Anne Jackson, Realtor, Sebring  
Annie's Club 98, Sebring  
Audubon of Florida, Lorida  
Boat Corral Rentals, Inc., Lake Placid  
Capt. John's Guide Service, Okeechobee  
Cerexagri, Inc., Clermont  
Graig D. Graybill, Security Service, Sebring  
Glades Electric Cooperative, Moore Haven  
Graphic Impressions, Lake Placid  
High Hopes Guide Service, Sebring  
Highlands Airboat Association, Inc., Lake Placid  
Home & Office Essentials, Lake Placid  
J & H Supply, Lake Worth

Jet A Service, Lake Placid  
Lake Istokpoga Marina, Lake Placid  
Lake Placid Marine Inc., Lake Placid  
Lake Shore Resort Motel, Lake Placid  
Mossy Cove Fish Camp, Lorida  
Neibert's Fishing Resort, Sebring  
Outback U.S.A., Lake Placid  
Performance Sales and Service, Lake Placid  
Precise Installation, Lake Placid  
South Florida Water Management District  
Sue Clark, Realtor, Lake Placid  
Trails End Fishing Resort, Lorida