

November 2009

The Istokpoga Newswire

Friends of Istokpoga Lake Association, Inc.



Lake Istokpoga Historical Tidbits #2

By Gary Lamperelli, Director

I'm composing this next installment of "Tidbits" from a comfortable recliner chair on my screened patio that over-looks our wonderful lake, awash with self-pride and euphoria, reaffirming that I had made one of my best decisions when I purchased my little "chunk of paradise." It was a bit more than 4-1/2 years ago when my cousin, Pier, joined me for a day of searching for a place where I hoped to spend the rest of my life, following eventual retirement. After what was turning into a depressing day of viewing eight "not-for-me" properties there was one final place to check. As we drove up, I remember sitting a bit more upright in the car, but not willing to allow myself to get too enthusiastic based on the prior let-downs of the day. As soon as we got out of the car and walked around to the "back" of the house I experienced that overused, but applicable "love at first sight" feeling. I stood mesmerized while taking in all of the natural beauty of the sparkling water, smelling the clean air, listening to the gentle rustling leaves of the many Oak, Cypress, Fruit and Palm trees that sat between me and the water's edge. As I detected the gentle lake breeze cooling things off "just right" I turned to

Pier and simply stated, "...*this is the one; I don't even care what the inside of the place looks like... This is me!*" I have always prided myself on acting relatively rationally, very conscious of not allowing emotions to cloud a decision. I was fully aware of just how out of character my comments were and immediately cringed internally at the thought that I might have to later admit that I just "got carried away." My mind was quickly put to rest once we actually got inside and realized that the modest cottage also suited me well.

No doubt every one of you have your own recollection of "that special moment" when you just knew that Lake Istokpoga was where you wanted to either retire, live part-time or simply vacation. The place is just awesome. It's only been since I've been on the Board that I thought it wise to explore all the various pockets and different communities that surround this historic and beautiful paradise. I hope to learn more of your specific stories over the coming months and years, knowing that people's motivations can differ dramatically, while still arriving at a similar conclusion. That leads me to one such captivating conversation. However, first please indulge me with an "historical perspective" in transitioning to this engaging meeting.

The "Summer of '42" had nothing on the

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Special Point of Interest:

November 12th is our next scheduled FOI meeting in Lorida. Hydrilla Update is the primary message. Be sure to join us and bring a neighbor for this important issue. See pg 6 for more information.

“Summer of ‘54”

I’ve quickly learned that “historical facts” can be informative, interesting and useful let alone just plain fun. Just look at the *Trivia* games for proof, which have literally collected mega-millions of sales dollars over the years with this concept. On the other hand, I have also learned to appreciate that history doesn’t happen in a vacuum. All kinds of other “stuff” occur at the same exact time, in different places, all over the world. Additional perspective will wrap around those individual “facts” to provide context, thereby painting a much richer, more realistic framework when pondering the specific topic. So without further delay, “the facts... nothing but the facts,” having nothing to do with Istokpoga but occurring during the same time period of our “real” story (the summer of 1954)... brought to you in the ever popular, yet not-so-literally-accepted “running chain-of-fact” format. Stop your smiling, this is serious business:

Selective historical events during the summer of 1954:

Joseph Welch asks Senator Joseph McCarthy “Have you no sense of decency, sir?” during the televised Senate-Army hearings / Bill Haley’s “Rock Around the Clock” is originally released / President Eisenhower signs executive order adding “under God” to the Pledge of Allegiance / Rocky Marciano beats Ezzard Charles in 15 rounds for the heavy-weight boxing title / John Landry runs worth record mile (3:58.0) / 1st atomic power station opens near Moscow in

Obninsk Russia / History’s largest check (Internal US Treasury check issued at \$4,176,969,623.57 - comparison: cost of 1st class stamp is \$0.03) / US Unemployment at 2.9% / Food rationing ends in Britain / Elvis Presley records his 1st hit, “That’s All Right” and within 3 weeks joins the Memphis Federation of Musicians Local 71 / Major League Baseball Players Association founded / President Eisenhower puts forth a plan for an interstate highway system / construction begins on Disneyland / Sports Illustrated magazine begins publishing / Census Bureau forms... and finally to highlight the summer, President and dictator Getulio D Vargas of Brazil (1930-45 & 1951-54) “temporarily” resigns and then promptly commits suicide the next day, at age 71 (sorry... that dictator issue rubs me the wrong way)

You got the picture? Can you feel yourself drifting back to those semi-wonderful and simpler days when we seemed to have more time to enjoy family, friends, neighbors and just about everything else in our lives? Reality check: Residents living around Lake Istokpoga today are still able to connect on this level more so than the vast majority of America. Lucky us... now what’s the tie-in to Lake Istokpoga in the summer of 1954 you ask:

Enter Longtime Istokpoga Resident and Pioneer - Ms Carole Shumard

I was fortunate enough to have Bill Dwinell introduce and accompany me to Carole’s home, spending roughly 45 minutes in conversation and learning about her and family. Although I had prepared a sheet of questions that I hoped would stimulate some informative conversation, I gained some considerable insights observing the

exchanges between Carole and Bill. Her eyes sparkle and open-wide with genuine excitement as she relays that a Black Bear had been rummaging at a nearby neighbors, something that has turned into a rarity these days although apparently commonplace in the past. Fortunately a picture was snapped of it as it explored around the porch and she promised to share it with Bill. To see the contentment when Carole talks about the neighborhood Sandhill Cranes, Herons, seasonal birds or squirrels, raccoons, wild pigs or turkeys underlines the unmistakable impression of a person who enjoys life and her comfortable surroundings. A Great Blue Heron had built a nest in the neighborhood for the 3rd time and nurses her 2 chicks... “I’m so excited to watch them.” There was talk of owls and “*that big old tree*” which has always been there and fortunately still is. She knows everyone in the neighborhood and with good reason. Carole and her family had been coming to the same spot since she was a little girl. As a matter of fact, her current home sets where her Dad had built their first cabin. For years there was no running water or electricity and it was about 7 years before a road was added to be able to reach the spot other than by boat, the only way available during those early years.

Through her kitchen window I could see a picturesque view of one of the winding canals that J. Clifton Childs had navigated and eventually dredged after buying 35 acres of lakeside wilderness in 1951. “*It looks quite different now because of all the trees and vegetation growing... none of that was here originally.*” Over the years

Clifton dredged most if not all of the “parallel” canals that today offer many homeowners consistent access to Lake Istokpoga, via Henderson’s Fish Camp. *“I was always by my father’s side and we used to wade out into the Lake to fish around the island. The bottom was sandy and firm and I loved to fish.”* I asked what kind of fishing did she like the most, and without hesitation Carole matter-of-factly replied, *“... Bass, of course.”* That was quite a distance to traverse, so I inquired if she or her family had been concerned by the gators and water snakes. *“No, they never bothered us much!”* How has the lake changed over the years from your earlier memories and experiences? *“Besides the new trees, other plant growth along the canals, and weed problems from altering the natural water level cycles, the water is not anywhere as clear as it used to be and there’s just a fraction of the wildlife that used to visit, especially the flocks of birds.”*

After building a number of fishing cabins on the property, Mr. Childs sold a section of the land to Florence Eaves. Carole chuckles as she remembers that *“the guys coming to the fish camp loved it because of the natural outdoors, great fishing and abundance of wildlife. But the women basically couldn’t wait to leave! Many of them were fairly well-to-do and would have preferred to vacation where they could go shopping, go to restaurants, and take in some culture. Instead they remained isolated here for days, as the guys would be having the time of their lives, with*

only one ruddy, dirt / sand single-lane road out in the middle of what they considered the swamp! Growing up as a tomboy, I thought it was fantastic, but still laugh when I think about some of those times.” In 1975 Florence and Boyd Clark sold the property to Morgan and Mabel Henderson, with Henderson’s Fish Camp remaining the only Istokpoga fish camp still under its original owner.

SO WHAT’S THE TIE-IN TO THE SUMMER OF 1954 YOU ASK...

Long awaited answer: It was during the summer of 1954 that Carole and her husband, Clifton, got married and traveled by boat to this slice of paradise, spending their honeymoon right here on Lake Istokpoga. *“I don’t remember the exact date anymore”* but she did remember that they had a wonderful week... just the two of them. You want real romance, listen to Carole tell her story while picturing the spectacular sunrises and sunsets that we are privileged to witness over Lake Istokpoga still today, but toss in a few more flocks of migrating birds, diverse as ever as they cut through the sun’s rays and their images faintly reflecting in the “clear” water. Now that’s priceless! Unfortunately I forgot to ask if Gertulio Vargus’ suicide put any kind of damper on her otherwise spectacular honeymoon, but something tells me, nah...the Bass were biting pretty good! On behalf of the Friends of Istokpoga, thank you Carole Shumard, for sharing a slice of your precious time while putting up with my shenanigans. **“Ze Plane, Boss.... Ze Plane”**

If you’re wondering what the title of this next section has to do with Lake Istokpoga log into Google Earth and plug in the following coordinates: 27° 27’35.22”N

and 81°19’30.20W... Zoom in... keep zooming... a little more... alright, much more...and there you will find your answer!

A Sebring resident emailed FOI wanting to know why the plane was never removed from the lake. The answer to that question, outside of speculation, still remains somewhat of a mystery, but since their name doesn’t appear on our current member listing, I don’t feel so bad (kidding of course, but I couldn’t resist). Anyway, the topic is certainly a part of Istokpoga history and a good one at that, so here’s what I can tell you about this unique “artificial reef” that has been a fixture in the Lake for the past 28+ years: The date was May 1st 1981, coincidentally being the same day that Radio Shack released its Model III TRSDOS 1.3, but I digress. I found the original report first appearing in the May 6th 1981 *The Sebring News* – page 3a, complete with a photo of the wreckage (a “related” article appears on page 2a of the same addition). Granted, during my research I’d been nursing a “pitcher” of nicely aged, smooth 12 year single malt Whisky, but what popped into this distorted mind was an instant flash of Tattoo (Herve Villechaize) excitedly delivering one of the most famous lines in television history. Come on... be honest... tell me you can’t see the connection... I just won’t buy it!

Due to the ground-level angle it looks like it is sitting in a field with no evidence of water and consequently details “...was reportedly on a test flight when it developed engine trouble and crashed in a field off U.S. 98... at about 9 a.m.” This preliminary report doesn’t even mention

Istokpoga, but at least now I better understand the term “field reporting!”

But before the exciting conclusion to our story: Some related “tidbits” because *somebody* needs to appreciate that my eyes felt like they were bleeding after days of “looking” for all the gory details connected to aircraft registration N630H:

*NTSB - Breakdown of airplane or helicopter accidents in Sebring, Lake Placid & Lorida:

Earliest recorded (see below): Jan 5th 1964 in Sebring; Most recent: Feb 7th 2009 in Lake Placid

Incidents by town between 1/5/1964 & 2/7/2009: Sebring/44; Lake Placid/30; Lorida/11

Total # of crashes: 85 (ave. 2.43/yr); Nonfatal (69); Fatal (16) or 18.82% of all crashes took 26 individuals / Istokpoga “landings” (3) / Confirmed drug related: 4

OK, back to the rest of the story: According to the *National Transportation Safety Board website, where you can literally read official reports on every aviation accident since 1962, this British-built De Havilland DH-104 5A “Dove” departed Sebring Airport and experienced “power plant failure for undetermined reasons” (engine failure) after takeoff resulting in a “forced landing off airport on water,” adding that the pilot departed the scene after the craft landed in a “swampy area near edge of lake.” Apparently when it comes to planes, the salvage of wreckage is the responsibility

of the owner as opposed to a municipality, county or the lake management. To “muddy the waters” so to speak, a variety of State, local or Federal government agencies (FWC, DEP, ATF, and FBI) might have to conduct their own investigations as jurisdiction is determined. This makes sense when you consider all the potential connections or ramifications: possible fuel leakage, habitat destruction or other environmental concerns connected to water and wildlife, the aviation industries detailed inquiries, pilot licensing, etc. After viewing newspapers, websites and speaking with a number of individuals, the consensus seems to be that the situation was very complicated and once fuel or any other potentially dangerous concerns had been negated, and the wreckage never presented a navigational hazard, it still sits as it has for the past 28 years. The bright side to this curious yet unfulfilling conclusion was that I got to “hear” Tattoo do his “thing” again and was transported to the *Fantasy Island* days. My concern is that now the

debonair, but regrettably recently departed Ricardo Montalban is not just standing there smiling and waving, but I can hear him touting the “*the elegant, soft Corinthian leather*” track from those Chrysler Cordoba ads!!! Is nothing sacred? Bartender... another pitcher, please!

Friends of Istokpoga on Facebook

The Friends of Istokpoga Lake Association, Inc. now has its own

Facebook page. If you are a Facebook user, we hope you will join our Facebook Group. We have information about important meetings and events on our Facebook page. You can find us by searching Groups for “Friends of Lake Istokpoga”.

And, don’t forget to drop by our website www.istokpoga.org for up-to-date information on what is happening around the lake.

Membership in Friends of Istokpoga Lake Association

Membership in the Friends of Istokpoga Lake Association, Inc. (FOI) is very important to you and to our great lake. Managing Lake Istokpoga is a very complex task, and there are many individuals and organizations that think they know what is best for our lake. Many of these are government agencies and each of them have a different perspective on just what is important from their narrow viewpoint, and this is their job. On the other hand,

FOI’s only interest is Lake Istokpoga and what is good for the WHOLE lake and the people that live on it, fish it, and enjoy it.

this may not be the best thing for the

lake when everything is considered.

FOI’s only interest is Lake Istokpoga and what is good for the WHOLE lake and the people that live on it, fish it, and enjoy it. Our goal is to keep everything in balance.

When we meet with the various agencies who are all pushing their own agendas, we need the power of our membership behind us.

We know that times are putting a strain on all of our wallets, so keep in mind that you can’t find a better value for your money than the ability to help preserve our great lake than the \$7.00 membership fee to be an individual member, or the \$12.00 fee

for a family membership. It is time to start thinking about renewing your membership for 2010.

What's Happening on Istokpoga- Oct. 2009?

We received a little rain in September and October, but the ground has been so dry, it soaked it all up pretty quickly. The water level was at 39.12 ft. on October 29th. As we try to give you some insight, about events, that we are aware of, since our last newsletter. If you wish to ask any questions, please send them to friends@istokpoga.org. The following are items we feel you need to know about:

A: Hydrilla Spraying on Istokpoga

The hydrilla seems to be getting ahead of the spraying, but we've been told the spraying will be the week November 16th - 20th." They will be using Aquathol K, as they have in the past. As stated in the last newsletter, they will be spraying about 2,000 acres.

If you currently have trouble getting out of your canal because of hydrilla, call 863-402-6813 for help.

B: Arbuckle Creek Monitoring of Water Quality

SFWMD are still Monitoring the sites on Arbuckle Creek for phosphorus on Arbuckle Creek which ultimately flows into Lake Istokpoga. While there is no formal reporting process for the results, SFWMD will continue to monitor the phosphorus coming down Arbuckle Creek.

SFWMD is working on a rule change that will put Arbuckle Creek into their regularity program. This will give them more enforcement capability. A rule change will take a year or more to be completed. SFWMD says:

The South Florida Water Management District is amending the Lake Okeechobee source control rule. This rule, also known as the Lake Okeechobee Works of the District Rule, regulates the control of non-point phosphorus discharges from

land in the Lake Okeechobee Watershed. The rule is being amended to incorporate the statutory requirements of the Northern Everglades and Estuaries Protection Program (Chapter 373.4595 of the Florida Statutes).

The Northern Everglades statute specified source control responsibilities for each of the coordinating agencies, the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD), the Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS), and that agency efforts be coordinated. The statute directed FDACS to develop a Best Management Practice (BMP) Program for agricultural land uses. Best Management Practices (BMPs) are practices that landowners can employ to reduce phosphorus in their offsite discharges. The FDEP was directed to develop BMPs for non-agricultural land uses and the SFWMD was directed to require BMPs under the existing regulatory programs.

The South Florida Water Management District's proposed source control rule amendment will expand the jurisdictional area of the existing rule to include the Arbuckle Creek and Lake Arbuckle basins. Consistent with the statutory requirements, the proposed rule amendment will require agricultural land uses to implement BMPs or to conduct monitoring to show that the BMPs are not necessary. Landowners that are participating in the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services Best Management Practices Program will be excluded from the requirement to obtain a source control permit under the South Florida Water Management District Rule. The proposed rule will also require BMPs for non-agricultural land uses. Public rule workshops are anticipated in late spring 2010.

C: Hydrilla Resistance to Herbicides

No new news...No new chemicals at this time. This section will be discontinued after this issue until such

time that a suitable substitute for Sonar is found.

D: Canal Maintenance and Dredging

We all want to know when the work is going to start on the dredging of the canals. Clell Ford, Highlands County Lakes Manager, and Erin McCarta informed us they were still getting permits and locations to put the spoils to be removed from the canals. Their best guess is sometime in February, 2010 for the work to actually begin. Quite a few landowners have been contacted regarding the disposal of the spoil materials, so the county will have a place to put it. They are now dependent upon DEP to give approval (permits) for the sites they have identified.

E: Istokpoga Canal Project US Army Corps of Engineers

This project is just about finished. G-85 has been removed and replaced by S67, meaning the structure portion of the project is complete. The Boat ramp and park are still waiting for SFWMD to assume the responsibility of the facility. According to our contact at SFWMD, they are waiting for the Corps of Engineers to finish up the work and then the turnover process can be completed. The estimate is some time in December for the turnover.

F: Spring Lake Water Control Plan

Spring Lake seems to be as concerned as we are about the quality of water that goes into Arbuckle Creek. Spring Lake permit process is in the works with SFWMD, for the updated water control projects. The permit process is moving along well and with good cooperation regarding Spring Lake. The overall project is a phased process and will take several years to complete.

G: S-68 Modification, Project US Corps of Engineers

This project is finished, except for some minor touch-ups. No further updates on this project will be covered in this column.

H: Lygodium Treatment on Big Island

Mike Bodle, SFWMD, is the project manager that does the Lygodium treatments. He was positive about the results of this recent treatment were they attacked the dense areas of Lygodium, but warned that this plant is very difficult to kill, and there are still areas that require treatment. The treatments are funded by FWC and he is confident that he will have additional funding for the 2009 – 2010 fiscal year. He has not completed the plan but believes he will apply another treatment this fall or the spring of 2010 for Big Island.

I: FWC Weed Control

Weed control spraying by helicopter and airboat by a contractor was done on October 19-20 with two helicopters being used. Approximately 800 acres were treated. The herbicides used were glyphosate (120 ounces/acre) and 2,4-D Amine (32 ounces/acre).

All areas planned for treatment were treated, including a <1-acre patch of Lygodium found within the planned treatment site on the southwest side of Big Island. Another 200 acres on the northern and eastern marshes of Lake Istokpoga are planned for treatment on November 9.

Fishing Report on Lake Istokpoga—October 25th

By Gary Albin, Trails End Fishing Resort

According to the Fish and Wildlife Commission (FWC) the fish populations are still good on Istokpoga. As the old joke goes

“that’s why they call it fishing and not catching”.

The bass catches have been medium at best. I have witnessed some bass tournaments where there were several 5 to 6 pounders caught and a few 8 to 9 pounders. At the same time some anglers almost struck out after fishing all day throwing all types of artificial bait. The results for anglers using shiners have also been less than the normal good results. On one of the cool mornings last week, a couple of our better local fisherman had over 20 bass of all sizes landed on artificial bait. So the bass results vary all over the place but are generally slower than normal.

The crappie results have been as varied as the bass results. Day-time fishing with minnows, trolling with jigs, and working the grass has not given very good results. A few night fishermen have had better luck but the catches have varied from just a few to some limits. Bluegill catches have been low.

As a summary, most fisherman are looking forward to the water temperature dropping from the current high 80’s to about 80 degrees before the fish start to hit.

Friends of Istokpoga November 12th Membership Meeting

The Friends of Istokpoga Lake Association, Inc. will hold the fall general membership meeting at the Lorida Community Center in Lorida, Florida, on Thursday, November 12th at 7:00 PM. It is the start of a new season on Lake Istokpoga. We would like to see you and all your neighbors and friends at this kick

off meeting for the 2009 & 2010 season.

The speakers for the evening will be Erica VanHorn from FWC Aquatic Plant Management Group and also Carl Smith from Highlands County Weed Control Section. They will give us an update on the hydrilla treatment that is planned for November 16-20th. They will also provide an update on other vegetation that they are treating.

Clell Ford, Highlands County Lakes Manager, will also speak at the meeting and update us up-to-date on the status of canal dredging project. He will answer any questions you have about this project and hopefully give us a firm date for the start of it.

This should be a very informative meeting. So please attend the meeting and support the Friends of Istokpoga Lakes Association, Inc. Bring your friends neighbors and anyone you know who are interested in keeping Lake Istokpoga pristine for now and generations to come. Be there with your questions.

There will be refreshments served starting at 6:45. There will also be a membership table where you can pay your 2010 dues. So come out and meet with your board of directors, neighbors and others for the good of our Lake Istokpoga.

Please share this newsletter with your friends or neighbors when you are done with it, and encourage them to join FOI.

Mail completed Application to address at bottom of form with your membership fee or bring it to our meeting.
Remember that numbers count, so please consider all members of your household when joining.

Membership Application Friends of Istokpoga Lake Association, Inc.

Annual membership fee \$7.00 per person
Annual Family Membership fee \$12.00 per family*
Annual Associate membership fee \$25.00

Annual dues are valid Jan. 1 to Dec. 31

*Family Membership is for a couple and their children under 18 years old living at home

Name(s) or Business name _____

1st Street Address _____

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Send all mail to address: 1 ___ 2 ___ other _____

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Circle Correct Answer: Yes/No I am willing to work on a committee below?

Committees: Finance, Legislative, Newsletter, Membership, Publicity, Weed Control (Circle one)

Associate Members:

Is business name EXACTLY as you would have it appear in the newsletter/Website? _____

Primary Contact _____

Description of Business for website _____

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Fax Number (____) _____

Signature: _____

Additionally, I would like to donate \$10 ___ \$15 ___ \$25 ___ Other _____ *

**All Donations are tax deductible*

Make Checks Payable to: **Friends of Istokpoga**

Mail to: P.O. Box 205, Lorida, FL 33857

For additional information call: 863-219-0082 - Voice Mail

Or email us at: friends@istokpoga.org

Please visit our web site: www.istokpoga.org

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

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