
Friends Of Istokpoga

Newsire

Friends Of Istokpoga Lake Association, Inc.
36 Bald Cypress Street, Lake Placid, Fl 33852

In This Issue: Tussock Removal Plans

From the President

It has been a busy two months as you will see as you read through this newsletter. We added a new director, and then lost one. Jack Newkirk had to resign for personal reasons.

Don Linton saw our request for volunteers in our last Newsire and volunteered. He was appointed as director by unanimous vote of the board of directors.

We also had another volunteer, Debbie Tetor, who volunteered to be Secretary/treasurer. You can read more about Don and Debbie in our "Meet Your Directors" column.

Several of us were on vacation during this period so it made things a little more hectic than usual.

The dry period saw the lake drop pretty low, and then with all the rain in July, we saw it come back up some.

Hopefully, everyone can get out through their canals now.

By the way, for those of you with computers and Internet access, you can see a graph of the Istokpoga water level by

going to

<http://www.saj.usace.army.mil/h2o/plots/isthp.gif>

Lorida Meeting - Aug. 27

The second Quarterly meeting was held at the Lorida Community Center on August 27th. Speakers were Ken Denson, GFC, who discussed why the draw down and what would be done if funds became available; Lt. Dale Knapp, GFC Law Enforcement, explained his plan for a Lake Istokpoga Cleanup Day on November 7th, and Clell Ford, Highlands County Lake Manager, gave us more information about the Istokpoga Management Committee.

46 people were in attendance and we signed up 13 new members.

Incorporation of Friends Of Istokpoga

On August 11, 1998 we applied to the state of Florida to become a corporation. This normally takes about three to four weeks.

On August 13, 1998 the State Of Florida recognized us as Friends

Of Istokpoga Lake Association, Inc.

We needed to incorporate to officially make ourselves a nonprofit organization and to be able to get a bulk mail permit from the U.S. Mail Service. Getting a bulk mail permit is necessary for us to be able to send out our meeting notices and newsletter as often as we would like.

As you can imagine we don't have a big budget with only a \$5.00 membership fee.

We still have a few steps to go with the government before we can get our bulk mailing permit, but we are well on our way.

Tussock Removal from the lake

In our last issue we told you about the tussock removal being done around Big island. Now we will tell you about additional plans.

Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission (GFC) Biologist, Ken Denson, has been working on a plan to rid Lake Istokpoga of some of the 2000+ acres of tussock that is thriving

on our lake (tussock is the floating masses of plants that abound around the islands and shore line).

Ken believes the best way to deal with this tussock is to remove it from the lake. The ideal way to do this is to lower the lake level to a point where tussock removal equipment can be brought in to remove it. Several land owners around the lake have offered to let GFC pile the removed tussock on their land, reducing the cost of removing the tussock since it won't have to be hauled away. The county has agreed to spread this tussock once it is there.

Ken has estimated the cost of this "Draw down" to be \$10 million and this would allow them to remove all of the tussock around the shore line and the islands. GFC has \$1 million and is looking elsewhere for additional funding. South Florida Water Management District was the group GFC expected to fund a partial draw down, but they have declined. GFC is now asking the US Corp. Of Engineers to fund the project.

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If GFC does obtain the funding, the work wouldn't be started until June, 2001. The draw down would lower the lake about a foot and a half below the normal summer pool level or to about 36.5 feet. This would limit access to the lake from most, if not all canals. GFC plans to insure access from some of the public boat ramps, but as yet have not define what this would be.

The risky part of this plan is that it depends on us getting enough rain in the spring of 2002 to refill the lake. Unlike other lakes, like Lake Kissimmee, Lake Istokpoga does not have other major water flows feed into it that would restore it regardless of rain fall.

GFC has contacted many of the fish camps around the lake and is polling them for their opinion on the draw down. As of this printing, we are not aware of any other businesses the GFC plans to contact. According to Beacham Furst, the majority of the

fish camp owners are in favor of the draw down, but we know of at least two that are not.

We will provide more information in future editions of the newsletter. If you would like to be on the Tussock Committee, please call Debbie Galloway.

Meet Your Directors

Debbie Galloway

Debbie recently retired from the funeral service industry as a funeral director and funeral home manager. She remains active in the funeral industry as a Bereavement Facilitator and Programs Advisor. She currently holds memberships in The National Funeral Directors Association, Association for Death Education and Counseling, and the American Academy of Bereavement.

Debbie moved to Lake Istokpoga two years ago and loves the outdoors, gardening, entertaining

and people. Her personal commitment is to work diligently to preserve Lake Istokpoga so her children, grandchildren, and future generations can enjoy the natural beauty of the lake as she does today.

Don Linton

Don is a veteran of Korea and a graduate of Florida State University. While at FSU he played on their first undefeated football team. After college he became an educator many different classes and served as a Jr. High assistant principal, and principal. He earned his Masters at Barry University and served as Assistant Area Superintendent. He retired with 31 ½ years in education. He also served as Executive Secretary for Principals, Assistant Principals and County Administrators.

Walter Monroe

Walt is retired from the US Air Force, a veteran of Korea and Viet Nam.

While living in Thailand, after retirement, he had a fishing charter service. He has been fishing in Florida since 1954 and a resident on Lake Istokpoga for the past 3 ½ years. He spends 4 days a week on the lake, weather

permitting. He loves bass fishing at night and is a great believer in "catch and release". He has a strong desire to keep this lake and others as wild and natural as possible.

Jim Wilkins

After five years of service with the US Marine Corps during the Korean Conflict, Jim is a retired insurance executive of 35 years. He has been a homeowner on Lake Istokpoga the past ten years and has been a permanent resident for the last four years.

He is very interested in maintaining and improving the lake, not only for the present but also for future generations.

He is presently a director of the Sebring Park Homeowners Association and a member of the Elks, Moose, American Legion and VFW.

Message from the Fund Raising Committee

HELP! HELP! HELP! We are in desperate need of your help. Currently there are only two on this important committee, Debbie Galloway and Bill Dwinell. We need your help to keep the membership dues at \$5.00 per year, and we are

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