LAKE & COAST
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NEWS MAGAZINE

Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation

Rebuilding an Icon • The New Canal Lighthouse
Mission
As the public’s independent voice, the Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation (LPBF) is dedicated to restoring and preserving the water quality, coast, and habitats of the entire Lake Pontchartrain Basin. Through coordination of restoration activities, education, advocacy, monitoring of the regulatory process, applied scientific research, and citizen action, LPBF works in partnership with all segments of the community to reclaim the Basin for this and future generations.

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Pictured working on steel beam construction: left to right - Bobby Bourgeois, Charles Dury, John Hebert, Shawn Barrios. Photo by Mary Davis

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Introducing our new New Canal Lighthouse

By John Lopez, Ph.D.

The first New Canal Lighthouse was built in 1839 when the U.S. Congress appropriated money for a lighthouse at the entrance of the New Basin Canal at Lake Pontchartrain. The New Basin Canal extended along what is now West End Boulevard to an area just north of the Superdome. The Lighthouse was basically a cypress tower with a lantern on top set on pilings about 1,000 feet offshore.

By 1843 many of the lower timbers on the Lighthouse had begun to rot requiring a new lighthouse to be built. In 1855, a one-story, square wood dwelling was constructed on screw piles with a lantern on top of the roof. In 1880 the Southern Yacht Club was relocated to New Orleans from Biloxi, and the building blocked the light. In 1890, the Lighthouse Board sold the old Lighthouse for scrap and mounted a new, two-story building 16 feet higher on top of the original iron piles.

It was this 1890 structure that became the distinctive architecture for the Lighthouse we know from recent times. The structure is surprisingly simple, yet has a remarkably elegant appearance. The two main floors are square and of equal dimensions, each with sloping red roofs. The two roofs have matching slopes but are offset because of the porch on the first floor. The roof lines and the crowning cupola of the structure are the characteristic shape. The cupola also serves to house the light. Most lighthouses are simple, tall cylinders with a slight taper. Even on Lake

Continued on next page
The cylindrical style is common, being found at Pass Manchac, Tchefuncte River and at Pontchartrain Beach just a few miles from the New Canal Lighthouse site. The former Lighthouse at Pass Rigolets most closely resembled the New Canal Lighthouse, but it was just one floor. The architecture of the New Canal Lighthouse is truly rare, if not unique.

The New Canal Lighthouse was all but destroyed by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, but these storms were not the only ones to cause damage. In September of 1915, a hurricane with winds up to 130 miles per hour heavily damaged the station. Hurricane damage in 1926 resulted in the light being raised onto concrete piers. The final, fatal blow to the Lighthouse was a winter storm a few months after Hurricane Katrina, which destroyed the vulnerable structure. The new Lighthouse has the identical dimensions as the 1890 lighthouse structure. Colors will also match including the distinctive red roofs. One major difference is that the overall structure will be more elevated. The “first floor” will be elevated 15 feet off the ground or roughly 18 feet over normal Lake level. During Hurricane Katrina, the Lake level was about 12 feet but had waves adding as much as 6 to 8 feet to the water. This new elevation of the new structure exceeds the required Base Flood Elevation by three feet. The elevation of the light will now be 61 feet over the Lake level! With an adequate light and clear weather, it should be visible for miles. During a clear day, the Lighthouse will even be visible from the north shore with a pair of good binoculars.

To support the new structure, 46-foot treated pilings were driven into the ground. Nine concrete pile caps were poured over the pilings, which will support the concrete slab. The slab supports 16-inch concrete columns upon which steel I-beams rest to support the remaining structure. On the canal side of the Lighthouse, a tower is being built for a small passenger lift. This tower will match the bell tower of the former Lighthouse. The original cupola was cast steel and was too heavily damaged to repair. The new cupola will also be made of metal, but from welded aluminum, which should survive well on the Lake. The siding will be durable hardy board and painted white.

We will use some material from the original Lighthouse structure. Nice, old yellow pine wood planks from the old walls will be used for floors and exhibits. Some of the original shutters will also be used. Possibly the most historic element is one of the original fog bells. The bell was removed and is safely stored. The solid brass bell is 3-feet high and weighs 1,600 pounds. It is cast with the embossment “USCG 1958.” The fog bell will be displayed at the Lighthouse site once the structure is complete.

The bottom-line is that this new “New Canal Lighthouse” will be undoubtedly the finest-looking, tallest, and best-built lighthouse ever constructed at this site, and it will retain the historical accuracy and elegance of the original structure.
Nine concrete “pile caps” were poured over the tops of 46-foot pilings which are the foundation of the new lighthouse.

The historic lighthouse fog bell was removed for safe storage during construction. The brass bell weighs 1600 pounds.

On February 16, 2012, LPBF signed a 60-year lease with the Non-Flood Protection Asset Management Authority for the New Canal Lighthouse Property. Shown at the signing (left to right) Gerry Metzger- NFPAMA, Steve Conroy-LPBF, Al Pappalardo- NFPAMA, John Lopez-LPBF, Louis Capo- NFPAMA, Charles Curtis- NFPAMA
Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation (LPBF) has worked tirelessly to rebuild the New Canal Lighthouse since it fell in 2005 and now, finally, our dream is coming true! We are moving forward to rebuild this classic structure and open it to the public so we can all share in its greatness.

The New Canal Lighthouse has had such a storied history since its arrival on the Lake Pontchartrain landscape in 1839. Built to steer mariners safely from the Lake through the New Canal passage, this beacon has been rebuilt twice and is a reminder of when maritime commerce thrived along Lake Pontchartrain and its outlets. Another notable chapter in the history of this unique lighthouse is that several women filled the role of light keeper, a position almost always held by men. Many a mariner has relied on this beacon throughout the history of the New Canal Lighthouse and by deemed salvagable in the hopes of reusing them to preserve some of the historical integrity of the building. Since 2006, LPBF has worked relentlessly in collaboration with the Coast Guard, the Non-Flood Protection Asset Management Authority of the Orleans Levee District and the city of New Orleans to acquire the necessary approvals to rebuild and take control of the New Canal Lighthouse and to create a museum and education center on the site.

It is time now for our vision of the lakeside environmental education facility to be presented to the public. The site will be a destination for visitors from near and far. There will be an entranceway that will open onto a landscaped plaza where guests will walk a brick pathway framed by palmettos and shade trees. This path will contain personalized bricks that generous donors have purchased. (To purchase a brick go to our website, www.saveourlake.org) Beyond the path will be a grassy area flanking the Lighthouse itself. The far end of the site will offer more native plantings and contain boardwalks to allow strolling the grounds. From the brick walkway at the entrance, visitors will climb a ramp to the Education Center. In the Education Center, tickets will be sold for entrance into the
lighthouse museum, and for presentations on environmental and historic topics. The Lighthouse Gift Shop will be located there as well.

Leaving the Education Center, one will cross a covered wooden deck to an expanded open deck beyond. This multi-function area will serve as a gathering place for groups to congregate and will offer a view of the Point and the New Basin Canal.

Entrance to the New Canal Lighthouse Museum will branch off from the deck. The lighthouse structure will be built up off the ground for hurricane protection. Beneath it will be an open-air site to host functions as well. This area will be accessed from the grass or from a ramp off the shaded deck. The inside of the museum will be accessed either by a staircase or an elevator from the deck. There will also be an additional staircase on the east side of the building rising up from the ground level.

Once on the first level of the museum, visitors will see a balcony that encircles the first floor with a view of the area from all sides. Entering the museum, there will be a wrap around display area for exhibits. One section will host exhibits of the history of the region, the history of the lighthouse and the roles of the entities that administered the light’s operation. Another section will contain exhibits related to the lake and coast. These exhibits will include water quality issues that LPBF has successfully addressed and continues to improve upon to further enhance the Lake as a

Continued on next page
The New Canal Lighthouse was damaged by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita, then toppled by a winter storm.

Loyal and generous friends and donors to LPBF have helped us raise the funds necessary to rebuild the Lighthouse and construction is under way! We are still in need of more financial assistance in order to make the property site complete with landscaping and educational displays. We are confident that the community will rally and continue to support LPBF as we work to bring this historic landmark back to its former glory.

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SAVE OUR COAST SAVE OUR LAKE
So what is the Lighthouse experience?

By John Lopez, Ph.D.

Imagine driving along beautiful Lakeshore Drive with friends or family. As you move along the lakeshore, you notice numerous family picnics under the majestic oak trees. Sitting along the historic seawall are fishermen and crabbers, but also couples just gazing out across the water. You stop and park along Lakeshore Drive and wander over to the seawall and notice the light breeze off the lake. Sailboats with bright colored sails billow past. Continuing to drive along the lakeshore, you notice the unmistakable shape of a lighthouse perched high above the waterline. After parking, you stroll onto the lighthouse property and realize the impressive height of the lighthouse building. You’re met at the Lighthouse Education Center door by LPBF staff who describes the history of the lakefront and the many activities associated with a healthy lake. Then you head upstairs into the lighthouse museum. You walk the perimeter porch for a panorama of the lake and Southern Yacht Club. Inside you see displays and videos on the history of the lighthouse, the lake and the coast. After a little while, your group has worked up an appetite and can smell the wonderful aromas coming from the nearby restaurants at West End. A few minutes later you’re at a waterside table ordering dinner. After the meal, on the drive back along the lakeshore, you catch the sun setting over the lake and remember why Lake Pontchartrain and our lighthouse are so special to New Orleans.

Photos by John Lopez

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Often when I’ve taken folks to the Bohemia Spillway on the east bank of the Mississippi River, I tell them that the boat they are in at that moment is a time machine. It’s true. By traveling a few miles into Bohemia, you enter areas of our coast that have not changed for hundreds of years. On one end of the spillway there is Harris Bayou, which flows off the natural relief along the river and toward the marsh and sound. When the river is high, water flows over its banks connecting the many, main channels of Harris Bayou. Does this sound familiar? This type of bayou is exactly what Bayou St. John was when New Orleans was settled nearly 300 years ago. Due to development, Bayou St. John is now a long pond that, albeit scenic, retains little function as to its true nature. But in Bohemia, the river is still connected to our wetland landscape and bayous because of the removal of river levees 85 years ago. Thus Harris Bayou is a “living” Bayou St. John as was seen by Bienville and the initial settlers of New Orleans in 1718. Since the removal of the river levees in Bohemia, every spring some river water flows into the adjacent wetlands and into beautiful, little bayous such as Harris Bayou.

The Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation (LPBF) has been conducting research in Bohemia Spillway for several years. In 2011, we conducted a major hydrologic survey. No one knew how much water was actually flowing through the spillway. What we found was that the spillway still has modest flows through it but not as much as decades ago. A report on this work will be released this summer.

There were two areas where the water actually cut a channel through the road in Bohemia during the 2011 flood. As the flood waned, we went back to survey these areas and found one of the new cuts had more flow than when the river was higher. Surprised, we investigated further and quickly realized that a new channel was actively being cut by the ongoing river flow. The new channel was elongating itself by incising into the river bank toward the river. As long as the river had some modest water level, the channel continued to flow and would get closer and closer to reaching the river. At times, the nascent channel had spectacular waterfalls. Who would think of waterfalls in our flat land?

In late summer, the river fell so low that the new channel stopped flowing, but the river rose in December and re-started the process. A second high water came

The Magic of Mardi Gras Pass

By John Lopez, Ph.D.

LPBF’s Coastal Sustainability Program staff inspect Mardi Gras Pass in February. On Mardi Gras Day 2012, it was
in February; and on Mardi Gras day, I went to investigate with professional photographer Nathan Arthur. It was then we discovered the new channel that now at the river bank and was just 20 feet from cutting entirely through to the river. Within two weeks, the cut was complete and established a new free flowing channel of the Mississippi River. Scientists call this a distributary since it is an extension of the river and helps distribute the river’s flow. It is also called a river pass since these channels often have been used for navigation.

We chose to call it Mardi Gras Pass because of its discovery on that day and because this is a very special, exciting development. First, this natural channel development is rarely documented, but also the location of Mardi Gras Pass is midway between the delta and New Orleans. It’s now the most up-river distributary of the Mississippi River. But what was truly extraordinary was that as soon as the Mardi Gras Pass established its channel connection to the river, it became full of life. The Pass was thick with schools of pogy feeding on bits of plant material washing in from the river; as a result, it was immediately invaded by river otters feasting on the fish. Beaver also arrived, and their gnawing at trees was evident. It added to the complexity of snags, logjams, and eddies now in the Pass. The lush willow forest covering the river bank creates an idyllic setting bustling with life.

These developments for nature lovers or natural scientists are thrilling to see. The power of the river and the capacity of our critters to not just adapt, but thrive is amazing. Yet there is another remarkable development. The state legislature will approve the new State Master Plan. This is a bold, new plan to address coastal restoration and flood protection.

The plan recommends river diversions as a necessity for long-term sustainability of our coast. The plan includes a large river diversion in Bohemia Spillway just a mile away from Mardi Gras Pass. The cost to build this artificial diversion would be at least $220,000,000 of tax dollars. It may be possible to let Mardi Gras Pass provide the same or better benefits at a fraction of the cost. In addition, any new diversion would take a decade or more to construct. Why should the otters and beaver have to wait?

To learn more about LPBF and the Bohemia Spillway, please visit SaveOurLake.org (go to Coastal > Technical Reports > Bohemia Spillway Documentation).

When the river level fell, the eroded bank of the Mardi Gras Pass channels were exposed creating a very rare sight for the Mississippi Delta - waterfalls.
In January 2012, the State released a draft of Louisiana’s Comprehensive Master Plan for a Sustainable Coast, otherwise known as the State Master Plan, for public comment and review. The master plan was developed by the directive of the Louisiana legislature which in 2006 passed Act 8 that created the Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA). The CPRA was directed to develop and release a master plan every five years which would address the land loss crisis that exists in Southern Louisiana. The 2012 plan is the second plan created under Act 8; the first plan was released in 2007.

The 2012 plan represents a comprehensive effort by the state to use the best technology, analytical techniques and the best minds available to develop a strategy that incorporates the landscape scale, coastal restoration and structural and non-structural protection into the planning process. The plan relied heavily on Multiple Lines of Defense Strategy, developed by the LPBF, to determine critical landscape features that provide the maximum protection and restoration benefit for coastal communities. The primary decision criteria that the state used to determine project efficacy was flood risk reduction and land building potential. The state has assigned half of the available funding towards flood risk reduction, such as levee construction and non-structural alternatives, and the other half to land building; such as sediment diversions and marsh creation projects.

There are many proposed projects in the Pontchartrain Basin in flood protection and marsh creation. Major levee protection projects in the Basin include

Map shows projects included in 2012 Coastal Master Plan. Map provided by CPRA.
increasing flood protection around New Orleans from a 100 year level to a 500 year level and a ring levee around Slidell. Three sediment diversions included into the Breton Basin or Sound area are located near Caernarvon, White Ditch, and in the Bohemia Spillway. A diversion at Blind River would influence the Lake Maurepas area and help restore the Maurepas Swamps. The Violet Diversion would support the Central Wetlands. There are also marsh creation projects proposed for the New Orleans Landbridge, in the Biloxi Marshes, and along the southern end of Lake Borgne. Oyster reefs are planned in the Biloxi Marsh. There are bank stabilization projects proposed for the rim of Lake Borgne and along the MRGO. Lastly, there is a proposed ridge restoration for the Bayou La Loutre Ridge.

LPBF also supports the evaluation of potential barrier structures into Lake Pontchartrain’s passes as long as the hydrology and environmental integrity are not compromised. In 2011, LPBF released a report titled “Framework for Environmental Assessment of Alternative Flood Control Structures on Chef Menteur and Rigolets Passes within the Lake Pontchartrain Estuary, Southeast Louisiana” which should be utilized for the environmental assessment. In addition, LPBF has requested to be represented on an advisory group for the technical analysis.

Overall, LPBF supports the State Master Plan. Comments were submitted during the public comment period that supported the methodology used by the state in the development of the plan. LPBF also supports the funding allocations between flood risk reduction and land building, the state's emphasis on critical landscape features (such as the Orleans Landbridge and the Biloxi Marshes) that provide "Lines of Defense", the inclusion of several MRGO related restoration projects and the use of the river to build land where possible. One major criticism LPBF has is that during the development of the plan, ecosystem services, including strategic locations and economic values of these services, were not thoroughly analyzed and integrated. LPBF recommended that in future efforts of plan development there be a more thorough analysis and integration of ecosystem services and that it be incorporated into the criteria used when considering land-building projects. All comments made by LPBF on the State Master Plan can be found under coastal technical reports at saveourlake.org.

The State Master Plan represents a milestone for Louisiana and the nation as a whole. It demonstrates the application of science, engineering and economics to a complex coastal crisis that could be applied elsewhere to conduct effective planning for any environmental crisis. Groundbreaking methods and analytical techniques were used to integrate the landscape scale, coastal restoration and structural and non-structural flood risk protection into the planning process. In the plan, the emphasis placed the importance of functional and sustainable wetlands to protect our communities and protect the levees that protect our communities represents an important step forward in developing a plan that protects the coastal environment and the people who live there.
1. **Wetland Watchers Park**  
This wetland area has picnic tables, fishing pier, marsh overlook and boardwalk nature trail.

2. **Laketown in Kenner**  
This recreation area has picnic tables, benches, fishing pier, playground and boat launch. LPBF water quality testing site

3. **Bonnabel Boat Launch & Park**  
This recreation area has picnic tables, tot lot playground, dog park, fishing pier, and boat launch. LPBF water quality testing site

4. **Jefferson Parish Linear Bike Path**  
The bike path stretches the entire length of Jefferson Parish’s lakefront (some parts closed due to levee work).

5. **Bucktown Marina**  
This recreation area has boat slips, picnic tables, benches, kiteboarding area, and view of a mitigated marsh.

6. **West End Park**  
This recreation area has picnic tables, playground, fishing pier, and boat launch.

7. **New Canal Lighthouse Museum and Education Center**  
LPBF’s site will soon open as the New Canal Lighthouse Museum and Education Center.

8. **The Point**  
This is a fishing area and overlook.

9. **New Orleans Lakeshore Drive**  
This scenic drive along the southshore of the Lakefront has picnic tables, benches, playgrounds, biking and fishing opportunities along the seawall.

10. **Old Beach**  
This recreation area is used as a swimming area and has picnic benches. LPBF water quality testing site

11. **Bayou St. John**  
This recreation bayou waterway is used for kayaking and canoeing. There is a bike path for joggers, walkers and cyclists. LPBF water quality testing site

12. **Pontchartrain Beach**  
This is a beautiful, large sand beach open to the public. LPBF water quality testing site and bait shop (expected to open by summer 2012).

13. **Seabrook Bridge Boat Launch**  
This area has fishing pier and boat launch.

14. **St. Tammany Parish Fishing Pier**  
This recreation area has a fishing pier with fish cleaning stations, pavilions, restrooms

15. **Northshore Beach**  
This is a small, sand beach open to the public. LPBF water quality testing site

16. **Big Branch Marsh National Wildlife Refuge**  
This is part of the Southeast Louisiana Refuges Complex. It has canoeing, fishing, hiking
and birding along with a nice boardwalk.

17. Fontainebleau State Park
This is a beautiful, sand beach with picnic areas, a fishing pier, splash pads, hiking, playgrounds, cabins and camping (fee). LPBF water quality testing site

18. Bayou Castine
This area has a boat launch and marina. LPBF water quality testing site

19. Mandeville Seawall
This scenic drive has picnic benches, walking path, and gazebo.

20. Sunset Point Pier
This recreation area has a fishing pier.

21. Tchefuncte Boat Launch
This is a boat launch and fishing pier. LPBF water quality testing site

22. Pass Manchac WMA
This recreation area has a marina, a boat launch, and fishing spots.

23. Frenier Landing
This recreation area has a public boat launch, fishing spots, and picnic tables.

For more information and to view our interactive web map visit: saveourlake.org/recreation.php

Map Source: National Geographic & ESRI
The Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation has been collecting water samples weekly at ten sites around Lake Pontchartrain since 2001. We test several water quality parameters including water temperature, dissolved oxygen, salinity, clarity, and fecal coliform bacteria. The bacteria levels in the Lake are particularly important as this is one of the main reasons Lake Pontchartrain was considered unsafe for swimming in the 1980’s. However, our data shows that the Lake has come a long way and bacteria counts are, in general, very good. Good enough for swimming!

We’ve put together data from three sites around the Lake, Laketown (at the end of Williams Blvd. in Kenner), the old Pontchartrain Beach (at the end of Elysian Fields in New Orleans), and Fontainebleau State Park (in St. Tammany Parish). See map on pages 14-15 for the locations of these Lake access points.

When we plot the data over time, we see that the bacteria counts are low. The Louisiana Department of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) states that a safe fecal coliform bacteria level is 400 “Most Probable Number” or “MPN” of bacteria in 100 milliliters (or almost ½ cup) water. As can be seen in Figure 1, the sites have been under 400 MPN since 2001. Only on occasion, when there is rainfall, do the bacteria counts spike. As always, it is best to wait at least three days to enter the water after it rains. However, if you are more than ¼ mile offshore in a boat, the water quality is good 100% of the time.
After looking at the data over time (Figure 1), we wanted to look at the data by month - to see which months have low bacteria counts and which months have higher counts. The other three charts (Figures 2 - 4) show the bacteria counts by month for each site. The graphs are called box and whisker plots. (See insert on how to read a box and whisker plot) Each box and whisker shows the spread of all of the data collected in a certain month at a certain site. For instance, all of the January data for Fontainebleau State Park is quite low, with the top of the whisker reaching only 150 MPN fecal coliform. Also, on each graph we put the LDEQ state standard of 400 MPN and we also put the standard LPBF uses - 200 MPN.

Looking at the graphs (Figures 2 - 4), we see that the bacteria counts are generally low at all sites. Only at Fontainebleau State Park in November does the box cross the 200 MPN mark (and that’s not swimming season). At Lake town, the bacteria count is low in the summer months - none of the whiskers cross 200 MPN from May through August. Pontchartrain Beach is especially low, with only a few whiskers crossing the 200 MPN mark. In May – October, the traditional swimming season, none of the whiskers cross 200 MPN.
To put some numbers to it:

- At Pontchartrain Beach - LPBF took 572 water samples 2001-2011. In 86% of samples, the bacteria count was under 200 MPN and in 93% of the samples it was under 400 MPN.
- At Laketown - LPBF took 569 water samples 2001-2011. In 83% of samples, the bacteria count was under 200 MPN and in 92% of the samples it was under 400 MPN.
- At Fontainebleau State Park - LPBF took 564 water samples 2001-2011. In 84% of samples, the bacteria count was under 200 MPN and in 94% of the samples it was under 400 MPN.

Maurepas WMA Expansion - Saving Our Swamps

By Theryn Henkel

On Friday, March 2, 2012 the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) with the Louisiana Coastal Protection and Restoration Authority (CPRA) announced a 29,630 acre property acquisition in Pontchartrain Basin which will be added to the existing Maurepas Swamp Wildlife Management Area (WMA). This expansion brings the total acreage of the Maurepas Swamp WMA to 103,374 acres. With the Manchac WMA, there is now approximately 140,000 acres of swamp and marsh under conservation in the area.

The land was purchased by the Conservation Fund from landowner M.C. Davis in April of 2011 with help from the McKnight Foundation. The state purchased the property from the Conservation Fund for $6.5 million through the CPRA’s Coastal Forest Conservation Initiative (CFCI). The CFCI program was established with $16 million in funds from the Coastal Impact Assistance Program (CIAP) to "conserve critical coastal forest habitat for storm damage reduction and the protection and restoration of rare, declining, or ecologically significant habitats." The CFCI program...
is voluntary, relying on willing landowners to apply to place land in the program either for fee title or a conservation servitude. The CFCI program began accepting applications in May, 2010. This acquisition is the first under the CFCI program. The land was acquired with $4.5 million in CIAP funds from the CFCI program and an additional $2 million from the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Foundation. The new acquisition covers portions of Livingston, Ascension, St. James and St. John the Baptist parishes.

This acquisition places more acreage of important cypress swamp habitat under conservation. Swamp habitats are important for shoreline stabilization and protection, floodwater retention, nutrient removal, supporting aquatic food chains, carbon storage, wildlife habitat and have a cultural significance to local people. This habitat type is disappearing in southeast Louisiana as swamps are killed by saltwater intrusion, are converted to marsh because of subsidence, and some have never recovered from former intense logging activities. Conserving swamps in the Lake Maurepas area is especially important to maintain the Manchac Landbridge and prevent the rim of Lake Maurepas from eroding.

Ray Herndon, the Louisiana director for the Conservation Fund, who was instrumental in bringing this tract of land to LDWF’s attention and in acquiring the land, expressed the importance of this acquisition saying, “Over the past two decades, we’ve worked with our partners to conserve bits and pieces of vital coastal wetland in the Lake Maurepas and Pontchartrain Basin. The significance of this project is how it connects a number of those fragmented areas, establishing a large landscape of permanently protected natural habitat. This connectivity will help to maintain the integrity of a quintessential Southeast Louisiana environment for the benefit of wildlife and the surrounding communities.” This purchase is six years after a boat tour LPBF provided to Ray Herndon of the purchase area that inspired Ray to pursue acquisition of the swamp.

The LDWF plans to begin work restoring the hydrology to the area by bringing in freshwater to combat saltwater intrusion and provide nutrients. The area would be benefited by the Blind River diversion proposed in the 2012 State Master Plan. The area supports a variety of water fowl, migratory birds and songbirds, supports important aquatic species, and provides storm surge protection to local communities. This large tract of land will also provide many recreational opportunities to local citizens including hunting, fishing, birding and hiking. This important acquisition is a positive step forward in the conservation of cypress swamps and coastal forests in general.
We are all very accustomed to keeping an eye on the weather forecast. Weather can often affect our daily plans. It is reported several times a day on the local news, and some networks are dedicated solely to reporting the weather. These networks invest heavily in the research and release of weather information, and they take pride in having the best weather tracking technology and most knowledgeable meteorologists.

Maps are customized to show all the critical factors that might influence the weather. The forecast for rain is a central issue. Where will it rain? How much will fall? We tend to sometimes overlook the fact that all this rainwater goes someplace.

On the coast, that rainfall mixes with seawater from the Gulf, resulting in a coastal system called an estuary. Like the weather, this coastal system is continuously changing. Many of the external influences on an estuary are the same influences that affect the weather, like rainfall or winds; but the estuary is also impacted by an additional set of factors, including tides or river diversions. This daily interaction of freshwater and seawater is as complex as our local weather, and it is almost as important. The movement of water in an estuary and the salinity of the water there have tremendous influence on the fish, crab, and other sea life. Many of these species are critical for both commercial and recreational fishing. Even more importantly, this daily change ultimately affects the very fate of our marsh in the coastal.
crisis. Monitoring the ebb and flow of the water is essential to our basin. The only problem is no one has been monitoring it.

Lake Pontchartrain Basin Foundation (LPBF) is well on its way to addressing this need. We see a parallel between water monitoring and weather forecasting. Just as weather networks and websites use maps to forecast the weather, LPBF will use a map to show water movement and salinity. One well-known website, Weather Underground, wunderground.com, has a great map they call the “Wundermap.” The Wundermap has a nice interactive display of radar, land features, wind information, etc. LPBF has been developing a similar map display for the basin hydrology. We call our map the “Hydrocoast Map.”

The Hydrocoast Map will be updated weekly and will show the most current and relevant influences on the water within the Pontchartrain Basin. We use recent satellite images of the water surface called “MODIS” and indicate all the freshwater inflows throughout the basin from rivers and from river diversions. We illustrate the winds and tides. All this and more information is used to show the weekly-interpreted salinity distribution throughout the basin. The changes from week to week illustrate the dynamics of the basin and will often influence fishing. We expect that both recreational and commercial fishers will find the map very useful, as well as scientists who study and manage our coastal resources. The Hydrocoast Map will be operational for the summer of 2012, and we will continue to improve it.
Connie Glockner
Profile in Courage

By John Lopez, Ph.D.

If Connie Glockner was not the first to say “Save Our Lake,” she was probably the first to dare to think it. She and her late husband Cliff lived and fished on the waterways of the Pontchartrain Basin all their lives. First, they were in St. Bernard and then on Lake Pontchartrain. It was in the Lake that they saw the ill-effects of shell dredging and pollution. They were the very first to dare to suggest something should actually be done about the Lake. In the 70’s and 80’s when environmental activism was no longer cool, they fought the status quo. They were not long-haired college kids; they were straight-laced, blue collar adults with a serious work ethic. They were the first to fight for our Lake.

A few others, such as Dr. Oliver Houck, were also the forefathers of LPBF. They may have given us scientific data and helped to form our mission, but it was Connie who gave us a cause with a heart. Connie and Cliff were always there when needed, participating in special events, and serving on our Board of Directors, but most importantly they were on the water and were not afraid to speak of what they saw. Connie is a natural leader, not because she could give orders, but because she could inspire others to do what was right. I can remember Connie standing up in a crowd, waving her index finger in front of a hushed audience, and telling one of the most powerful politicians in the state at the podium sternly “I’m watching you”. When it came to Lake Pontchartrain, Connie’s instinct was like a female bear protecting her cub. You better think twice before crossing her. She was just as protective over LPBF.

Connie and Cliff opened a restaurant, which they lost in Hurricane Katrina, near Lacombe adjacent to the Refuge. She now lives near her family in Covington and cares for her grandkids and teaches them about our Lake.

Connie’s role in the creation of the Big Branch National Wildlife Refuge on the north shore of Lake Pontchartrain. She and a cadre of north shore friends started the discussions to save a small tract of land, which Connie saw could be much greater. This inspiration, with a lot of hard work, led to the establishment of the Big Branch NWR in 1994.

One of Connie’s great accomplishments was her role in the creation of the Big Branch National Wildlife Refuge on the north shore of Lake Pontchartrain. She and a cadre of north shore friends started the discussions to save a small tract of land, which Connie saw could be much greater. This inspiration, with a lot of hard work, led to the establishment of the Big Branch NWR in 1994.

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Robert Lambert, Connie Glockner, and Barbara Barnes

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Aside from guiding LPBF into a credible and successful organization, one of Connie’s great accom-
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saveourlake.org
How Well Do You Know Lake Pontchartrain?

It’s amazing that so many of us live right next to Lake Pontchartrain, and yet still have much to learn about it. LPBF has worked for 22 years and has taught how we all work together to SAVE OUR LAKE. How many of these fun facts do you know?
Do you know that Lake Pontchartrain...

1. ... is swimmable again. It was removed from the EPA’s impaired waterbodies’ list in 2006. There are always inherent risks associated with recreation in natural waterways. Please use extreme caution.

2. ... is not a lake, surrounded by land. It is an estuary, open to the Gulf of Mexico.

3. ... contains brackish water, a mix of salt water from the Gulf and fresh water from rain and rivers. You can find saltwater and freshwater fish in it.

4. ... has tides that come in and out from the Gulf of Mexico.

5. ... is fed directly by two rivers, the Tangipahoa River and the Tchefuncte River.

6. ... is 630 square miles in area and is approximately 25 miles across north to south.

7. ... is very shallow, averaging only 12-15 feet deep.

8. ... has three beautiful beaches open to the public, Pontchartrain Beach on the south shore, Northshore Beach in Slidell, and Fontainebleau State Park beach on the North Shore.

9. ... has great fishing opportunities with 11 artificial reefs attracting fish. Go out and catch some!

10. ... has shrimp, crabs, clams, sharks, dolphins and manatees visiting in its waters. Keep an eye out and you may see some.

504-836-2215
Our 2012 Events are off to a Great Start!

LPBF’s 16th Annual Save Our Lake & Coast Golf Tournament was held on March 12th at Chateau Golf & Country Club. Thanks to our many sponsors, players and volunteers, the tournament was a big hit! We are especially grateful to our Honorary Chair, Sheriff Newell Normand, for his support and help in making this event a success!

Even a little rain toward the end of the day didn’t dampen our spirits. With all the delicious food and great prizes, we still had a blast!

We have many more events on the horizon and we hope you’ll come out and join us. Check out our Events Calendar on the next page or visit us at www.saveourlake.org.

See you soon!

Golf Classic Winners

1st Place Team
River Parish Disposal
Brother Frommeyer
Ken McLaughlin
Brent Couture
Robert Heidingsfelder

2nd Place Team
Representative Joey Lopinto
Ed Olsen
Chris Rivers
Jeremy Rivers
Daniel Theriot

3rd Place Team
HGI Facility Management
Steve Hebert
Blaine Gahagan
Barry Blakely

Longest Drive
Chris Rivers

Closest to the Hole
Brother Frommeyer
The weather is warming up so let’s enjoy our lake!

June 2nd and 3rd is our 23rd Annual Back to the Beach Festival! You’ll find great music and food and unique arts & crafts. A Fun Run/Walk, Fishing Rodeo, a Bikes at the Beach Motorcycle Rally and a fabulous Classic Car Show are also part of this fun filled weekend!

Above – Festival crowds enjoying the day at Back to the Beach.

Left – Our Classic Car Show rolls in to the Back to the Beach Festival on Sunday.

How can you help LPBF?

As a non-profit organization, LPBF has some needs:

• Welder for flagpole at the New Canal Lighthouse site
• Carpenter to build box for New Canal Lighthouse bell
  • Volunteers – become a Coastal Crew member
  • Sponsors for our many exciting events
• Funding – buy a personalized brick

See our website, saveourlake.org, for more information.

Calendar of Events

Save Our Lake & Coast Fishing Rodeo
June 1st and 2nd

Back to the Beach Festival
June 2nd and 3rd

BTB Run/Walk
June 2nd

BTB Bikes at the Beach
June 2nd

BTB Patron Party
June 23rd

Beach Sweep
September 15th

Let’s Make Waves Northshore Party
November 2nd

For more information, to purchase tickets or to sponsor an event, please call (504) 836-2205 or visit us at saveourlake.org
SAVE THE DATE
Join Us For The 23rd Annual Back To The Beach Festival
June 2nd and 3rd, 2012 at Laketown (end of Williams Blvd. in Kenner)
Fun for the whole family!
FUN RUN/WALK
FISHING RODEO
BIKES AT THE BEACH
CAR SHOW
Music, Food, Arts & Crafts & Much More

RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

BECOME A PART OF HISTORY
Now you can help rebuild this historic icon by purchasing a personalized Lighthouse brick for yourself or as a gift. Bricks come in three price levels:

4”x 8” for $200.00 - 3 lines of text
8”x 8” for $500.00 - 4 lines of text or 3 lines of text and Lighthouse logo
8”x 8” for $1,000.00 - 4 lines of text or 3 lines of text and a personal logo

Logo must be in vector format

All bricks have a maximum of 18 characters on each line. Each space and punctuation counts as a character. You may list your name, the name of a loved one, friend, old boat, camp, pet, club, the date, etc. It’s up to you!

For more information email: info@saveourlake.org

LPBF Annual Memberships
Lake and Coast Included with Membership

☐ $20 Senior Citizen ☐ $100 Sustainer
☐ $25 Individual ☐ $250 Preserver/Corporate
☐ $50 Family ☐ $500 Patron
☐ $50 Club/Organization/School ☐ $1,000 Life Member
☐ Other Donation: $_______ ☐ Recurring Monthly Gift Amt. $_______

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