

# THE HERON



***NEXT LJCA Meeting: Wednesday, July 22, 2009 @ 7:30p***

***NEW ADDRESS: The Lake Jackson Citizens' Association, PO Box 1267, Manassas, VA 20108A***

***Upcoming Events***

- **Board Meeting / Updates on your LJCA Board's summer plans**  
**Beatification Committee updates and Boat Inspection Appointments, Ramp key information!**
- **Road Committee Meets on: Tuesday night, July 21 @ 7:30p**

*Meetings above are at the Lake Jackson Volunteer Fire House at 11310 Coles Drive, Manassas 20112*

***LJCA's LATEST & GREATEST***

***[www.lakejacksonva.com](http://www.lakejacksonva.com)***

Hello all:

Please tell your neighbors to join the association and become more involved in our community, by contacting the Board at [ljca@lakejacksonva.com](mailto:ljca@lakejacksonva.com) (email).

[It's Summertime! We have lots of news with the board and hints and tips](#) for your boat needs:

- Bill Pierce was elected President of the association.
- Forrest has stepped down due to work obligations.
- Our "Heron" is [scheduled bi-monthly to go out at the beginning of each month in which we have a General Session Meeting.](#)
- This is our first official E-Heron. For those who have Opted in to receive it. If you haven't opted in please contact [ljca@lakejacksonva.com](mailto:ljca@lakejacksonva.com) to receive it in email form. It will come from the email address [theheroneditor@gmail.com](mailto:theheroneditor@gmail.com). So ensure your spam filters allow this email address to your inbox.
- We will have a copy of the E-Heron and membership forms posted on the website.
- Looking for a member of our community to weld three Knox Boxes to the gates at each boat ramp.

Inside this "Heron," you'll find:

Information regarding the recent dam repairs, Ideas for nature walks in LJ with your kids, plus a Beatification report on new benches and sand at Big Beach in time for the Boating Season, plus proposed welcome signs now that the ground is thawing out. Last, we have a "[Jacksons](#)list" for sale or "wanted" items among our Lake Jackson neighbors.

~ The Heron Editor

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### **REMINDER: To renew your membership this year, early if you can!**

All's ready as we are in the middle of this year's "boating season", but we need the support of members to offset key and ramp repair costs as always. Every year, your Board and other members make an effort to update the boat ramp areas and maintain boaters' and members' standards in our private community. Contact Bill Pierce to swap last year's key for this seasons (locks always change at all the ramps on the first Saturday in April each year. Bill is at [ljca@lakejacksonva.com](mailto:ljca@lakejacksonva.com)

~ *LJCA Board*

### **Why is it important for me to keep up to date with my membership?**

In the election meeting for president some residents were not allowed to vote because they had not been members for over 30 days. Maintain your membership in good standing so that it will not be too late for your vote to count when an issue important to you comes up.

### **Meeting agenda for July 22, 2009:**

- Discuss settlement offer made on lawsuit.
- Establishment of Official LJCA website
- Consider new phone/messaging system
- Discuss requested speed bump on Hilltop.
- Advertising in the Heron
- Vice President Election

### **BEAUTIFICATION UPDATE**

While money was approved at last meeting to buy sand for Big Beach, donated sand and help from the membership accomplished this at no expense to LJCA.

Meantime, welcome signs have been proposed and the Lake Jackson Volunteer Fire Department (LJVFD) has agreed to let us "plant" a sign at the corner of McGrath and Coles Roads. Plus, Bobbie Anderson, president of the LJVFD, says they will help with landscaping and seasonal flowers at our sign on the firehouse's property. Also, a larger "private community" sign has been proposed, to augment the small sign that has lived at the top of Cobb Road for years. These "welcome" signs may also offer a community information box for upcoming events – like our spring yard sales and the annual barbecue in late summer.

Big Beach Cleanup was a big success. There were several members from the community that contributed to the project. I want to thank Jeff McClung, Mariala DeKraker, Lance Blackmore, Gaylan Westman, Ryan German, Jeff Bassett, Gerry Schelhorn, Dave DeMember, Ed Bishop, Bill Pierce, Matt Catino, and John Zimmer of Zimmer Corporation for all their help and contributions to the project. All told there was almost \$1000.000 donated to the project from the members of the community. We managed to reconstruct the parking area, purchase and install a culvert, sod and seed the area, and spread new sand along the shore. Try to make a trip down and enjoy the "new" beach, and give a big thank you to everyone that gave up their Saturday to make our community more beautiful. Scott Bishop-Lake Jackson Beautification Committee Chair

### **OPTIONAL BOAT INSPECTION (By Appointment @ Big Beach)**

Scheduling a free safety check is easy. Just call Tom Musso, with the US Coast Guard Auxiliary, at 703-690-8341. He will come to your boat location or meet you at Beach Big, at convenient time. The process takes about 15 minutes and your boat does not need to

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be in the water. He will provide you with the coupon that you'll need for the West Marine discount.

Plus, your boat will be inspected ahead of the game, for the new Virginia statewide boating laws now in force. Tom is a longtime friend of the LJCA and it's a "no questions asked" inspection for your information and boater safety.

Tom can also help you save 10% on Safety Equipment! West Marine (WM) is a supporter of the Vessel Safety Check program it offers educational benefits to the boating community. During 2009, WM will offer a 10% off safety equipment for boaters who receive safety checks! This includes life jackets, safety lights, flares, horns, first aid kits, fire extinguishers and carbon monoxide detectors.

Regarding another topic...Tom is willing to teach a "safe boating class" on Lake Jackson. He had offered to do so and there may be more interest now, with silting on the lake and fast boaters. As some of you may know, the new safe boating education requirements start being phase-in this July for all operators of a PWC 20 years old or younger, so a 2009 Safe Boating Class would help us satisfy Virginia's education requirement.

Tom Musso is certified to teach this class and he's very flexible about dates that it can be offered. He will bring the class right to our community, such as at Big Beach where boaters can easily pull in.

### **Safe Boating Class Coming to Lake Jackson!**

The US Coast Guard Auxiliary will offer the America's Boating Course at the Lake Jackson Volunteer Fire Department in July. The eight hour class will be spread over three dates:: Tuesday, Aug. 11th from 6:30 - 8:30 PM, Thursday Aug. 13th from 6:30-8:30 PM and Saturday August 15th from 8AM -12 Noon. The cost is \$25 which includes a textbook, CD and handouts. The class is suitable for adults and children 13 or older. This is an excellent introductory class to

boating. Topics include boating safety, personal water craft, navigation rules, handling a trailer, boat launching, safety equipment, docking, Virginia boating laws and much more! Satisfactory completion of the class will satisfy Virginia's new education requirement for boaters! Currently personal Water Craft (PWC) operators aged 20 and under must have completed a safe boating class by July 1, 2009. Over the next coming years the law will phase in such that everyone will need to take the class. Failure to do so can result in a fine of \$100. Within three years, all PWC operators and many powerboat operators much meet this requirement.

For more information or to register, call Tom Musso at (703) 690-8341. Or send an e-mail to: [potomacam@earthlink.net](mailto:potomacam@earthlink.net). and include you name and phone number. When Tom receives your e-mail, he will give you a call. ~ *Events Committee*

### **Hi neighbors from the Board,**

By the time that you receive this edition, your 4th of July should have gone off with a "bang" and you may have taken the opportunity to make a spectacle of yourself in the Lake Jackson 4th of July Boat Parade. While on the topic of spectacles, the last meeting in May was described to me by one member as, "Better than Jerry Springer". However, many of those that attended the meeting (and did so for the first time in a long while) that were looking to constructively find ways to contribute and better our community did not find it so amusing. Clearly some people just showed up to be disruptive and disrespectful. That will NOT happen again. A microphone and podium will be set up and at the ready for all future meetings. Should our traditionally informal style of conducting the meetings become disorderly, it will be halted to set up the microphone and podium and give quick instruction for their use. Anyone talking over, commenting,

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gesturing, or causing a disturbance to the person having the floor at the podium will be asked to leave first and then removed if necessary. So, to those that were put off by the whole scene, the Board hopes that you will grant us a "Mulligan" and continue your efforts to be actively involved while we make the necessary adjustments to prevent any repeat in the future.

On the more positive note, summer is in full swing and we are absorbed in the life of privilege granted to us by living in this unique community. Many citizens have donated time, money and talents to help improve Lake Jackson...the most visible examples being at Big Beach or the "Riviara". Even though LJ has had a history and reputation of community involvement, the number of people still actively involved has diminished to only small percentage. To increase the level of involvement, we are making efforts to make it easier to connect the community through the development of an official LJCA website. Additionally, a new phone system will be proposed to make it easier for you to get to the right people that you need to make things happen.

We need lots of help and input to pull of the agenda of the next meeting on Weds. July 22. Most importantly we need to fill the seat for VP. We will be taking any nominations from the floor and proceed to vote as necessary. Pete may need help getting the Safe Boating Class organized at the Firehouse for the latter part of July. This class will fulfill the new Virginia laws that went into effect July 1. See inside for details. We need help and ideas in the forming of a new LJCA official website, a new phone system that will better serve us and the potential for a summer LJCA picnic at Big Beach. Additionally, we would like to get ideas on creating official names for the LJCA common areas. Many such as Big Beach, Lester Boat Ramp and Cobb Boat Ramp have long been accepted. But, the old "Jensen Street Launch" that has

been recently referred to as Shady Beach and the "RNR" or Red Neck Riviara may be desirous of a more flattering designation. These names will be used in on proposed welcome signs to residents to be posted at each area. Additionally, we will discuss the possibility of keeping donated "community boats" at common areas for use by the membership. Having a canoe, row boat and kayak at designated common areas will eliminated the burden carrying a boat or having too many boats being stored in those areas. The desire to place a speed bump on Hilltop has been a call for help to curb speeding concerns. We will discuss and propose solutions as a community. Lastly, we will catch you up to speed on the current lawsuit against LJCA and will ask the membership to make some decisions in its course of action.

Hope to see you all there and out on the Lake. **-Bill Pierce, LJCA President.**

### **Dam Update**

While trying to get the tainter gate to close properly, the chain on the lifting hoist broke and got caught up in debris in front of the gate leaving the it open approx. 4". The hoist is 70 years old, each of the 2 chains weigh 900lbs apiece and this type of chain is not readily available leaving quite a dilemma. As a result, the gate was retrofitted with a cable. In the process of lifting the gate to retrieve the cain, debris and a large stump (root ball and all) lodged under the gate while in the up position. This caused the draining of the lake making it impossible to remove the stump with all the water flowing under the gate against it. Once the water lowered, cables and come-a-longs could be used to remove the stump. The gate is now closed.

The County is in the process of redesigning the cable system since the current one is ad hoc. Installing the final

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cable design "should not" affect water levels in the future.

Regrettably events were inconvenient and many may have experienced damage and hardships. However, the County is and has done everything possible under the circumstances and could not have foreseen the sequence of events that were encountered.

WRT any boats left in the water, hopefully the engines or IO was trimmed up, and the boats were tied loosely enough so that it will sit on the soft muddy portion of good old LJ. Hopefully there were not any folks with rocky areas under their boats (especially for those with inboards). While the boats should refloat as easily as they settled, the biggest caution is to make sure your water intake is clear of mud before you start your boat and then keep an eye on your temp gauge (for those that have one) for the first 30 min. For outboards and IOs this will be a series of vertical holes with a screen right below your cavitation plate in the lower drive. For inboards and v-drives, you will have a through hull in the bottom of the boat.

- Bill Pierce-LJCA President

***Reminder: Lock the gate when you launch your boat. The gates have been left unlocked as of late. If they are left unlocked non-members will be able to gain access to the lake including the general public.***

### Save 10% Discount on Safety Equipment!

West Marine is a supporter of the Vessel Safety check program and the educational benefits it offers the boating community. During 2009, they will offer a 10% discount on safety equipment for boaters who receive a safety check! This includes life jackets, safety lights, flares, horns, first aid kits, fire extinguishers and carbon monoxide detectors. Scheduling a free safety check is easy. Just call Tom Musso, US Coast Guard Auxiliary, at

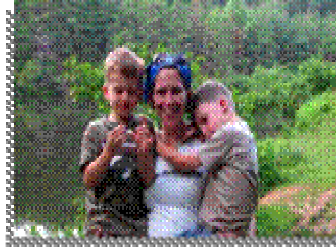
703-690-8341. He will come to your boat at a time convenient to you. The process takes about 15 minutes and your boat does not need to be in the water. He will provide you with the coupon you'll need for West Marine.

### GOT ROOF PROBLEMS? NEED HOME IMPROVEMENTS?

Thanks to John Zimmer, of ZCI, Inc. and Matt Catino of M.A. Catino, Inc for helping with equipment and labor to move the beach sand. John can do big roof jobs (703) 895-4480 and Matt lives here on the Lake for your roofing emergencies (571) 247-4823.

An big additional thanks to Eric Larson, of EML Home Improvement (703) 330-2066 and Dave Demember, of Emerald City Construction, (703) 407-7083 for giving above and beyond of their time and resources to improve the common areas in our community. If your considering any projects, give them a call and tell them thanks from the LJCA.

### TAKE A NATURE WALK



**by Rebecca P. Cohen**

{Reprinted courtesy of The Green Parent}

I am a gardening coach who believes that time outside transforms our lives for the better, and as a parent, I'm blogging more about outdoor ideas for families like ours, with young children. The inspiration for this was a recent 4th birthday party for my son, Warner. The "Outdoor Adventure" party was the most low-key and wildly successful of the at-home birthday parties we've had in my six years as a parent (my older son, Harmond, is six and a-half). We started with a nature walk, then had an educational animal show, followed by lunch, and water play. The theme for the birthday party stemmed from one of our

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favorite activities as a family, the "nature walk."

Much more inspiring to a child than just "walking," on a nature walk, I help the boys notice so much more about the plants, animals, and insects around them. I ensure that they are safe, and allow them to climb trees, cross creeks, and go "off road" to find a new way home. This tradition started at our last house, where there weren't too many large trees around, due to the new construction. So, we'd go find them, and walk to and through a nearby patch of forest, where we found a foot path beyond the paved path and a stream to cross.

At our current home, the boys consistently ask to go on nature walks, and I have taken their play dates on our nature walks with us. So, I thought that our little guests and their parents would enjoy a nature walk for a birthday party too. We started the nature walk at 10:30a.m. in order to avoid the impending heat of the day.

Upon arrival, each child's parent received a brightly colored sheet of paper with an itinerary on the front and instructions on the back, which read "[Child's Name]'s Outdoor Adventure." There were three destinations on the walk, which began on a mulched path at the end of our street: a footbridge over a creek, a picnic shelter, and a campfire.

At the footbridge, children had to answer a multiple-choice question about the animals that Warner has seen in the woods around his house. At the picnic shelter, the children colored a picture of a bald eagle printed from the internet – that also had a few facts about bald eagles (there happens to be a bald eagle's nest on the lake near our home). At the campfire, their colorful picture of the eagle got them a marshmallow to roast on an open fire. Yes, it was only around 11:00a.m. and yes, the s'mores were a huge hit with kids and parents! In hindsight, the specific activities weren't needed on the walk.

The kids had just as much fun noticing the spider webs, animal tracks, and places

where animals may live, as we do with any walk when it's just our family. If you don't have the location for a campfire, but do have a microwave, the kids can walk back home and pretend to make a campfire with sticks they've collected on the way while you pop some marshmallows and chocolate between two graham crackers in the microwave for a few seconds. We do this for our nature walk play dates. To the kids, it tastes just as good as one around a campfire! Read more about "green parenting," by my friend, Rebecca and others at:

<http://www.thegreenparent.com>.

The consistent, impromptu compliments about the party and our ease during the party told me that there was something different about this celebration, not only for myself, but also for others. There was something about a meaningful activity for the kids and parents that brought everyone together, and it's something that I'll look to repeat, not only for parties or play dates, but also in everyday life.

### **About Rebecca Plants LLC**

*Rebecca P. Cohen believes that time outside transforms our lives for the better. As a garden designer and gardening coach, Rebecca's simple gardening and outdoor ideas inspire families to spend more time outside. You can find out more about Rebecca's company and read her blog at <http://www.rebeccaplants.com>. Rebecca can also be reached by email at:*

[rebeccapcohen@mac.com](mailto:rebeccapcohen@mac.com).

*Here's her other contact information, if you need some great gardening advice and support – she's super! Contact her at:*

Rebecca Plants, LLC

Website: <http://www.rebeccaplants.com>

Email: [rebeccapcohen@mac.com](mailto:rebeccapcohen@mac.com)

Facebook: **Fans of Rebecca Plants LLC**

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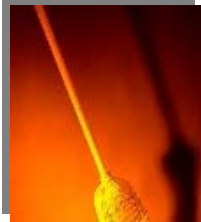


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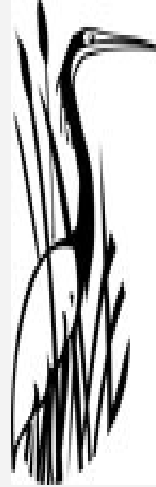
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**Personal Announcements**

If you have any announcements that you would like featured in the next Heron please email [runadi@gmail.com](mailto:runadi@gmail.com). Announcements can be birthdays, anniversaries, parties, or any other announcement you would like to make to the Lake Jackson Community.

**CONTACTS:** Feel free to contact your Board Members below,

	<b>Bill Pierce</b>	President	<a href="mailto:tarzandc@msn.com">tarzandc@msn.com</a>
	<b>Open</b>	Vice President	TBD
	<b>Marianne Jetten</b>	Treasurer	<a href="mailto:jettmax@comcast.net">jettmax@comcast.net</a>
	<b>Robert Grinstead</b>	Correspondence Secretary	<a href="mailto:Robert.grinstead@comcast.net">Robert.grinstead@comcast.net</a>
	<b>Jason Curtis</b>	Recording Secretary	<a href="mailto:jasocurtis@gmail.com">jasocurtis@gmail.com</a>

*The* Lake Jackson Citizens' Association  
PO Box 1267  
Manassas, VA 20108A

TO:



***It's Summer Time!!!***

**WE'LL SEE YOU AT THE JULY 22<sup>ND</sup>  
MEETING**