

Day at the Lake scheduled for April 10th, 2010

By: Corine Burgess

Did you know that Highlands County is home to more than 113 lakes? We are fortunate to have such beautiful surroundings and a wide variety of recreational opportunities so close to home. Thanks to a grant from the Peace River Basin Board of the Southwest Florida Water Management District, the Highlands Soil and Water Conservation District is able to host a “Day at the Lake” for anyone and everyone who wants to join in the festivities. This fun filled day will be an interactive lakeside experience designed specifically to encourage wise and safe recreation on the water. All are welcome and there will be something exciting for all ages and interests.

The event will be held at the City of Sebring Pier from 10:00 a.m. until 3:00 p.m. on Saturday, April 10th. Not only is this a fun way to learn about our lakes and what opportunities are available, it is a chance to win some great prizes. A “Passport to Fun” will be given to each youth attendee. There will be 6 events to participate in and 2 educational booths to visit; once all of this is accomplished and the passport is full, kids can turn in their passport for a choice prize. Adults will also have the chance to get in on the competition and fun. Bait casting contests, Jeopardy type competitions, canoeing and lakeside cleanups are all ways to compete for terrific prizes.

A free lunch of hot dogs and beverages will be supplied and there will be plenty of free give-a-ways from visiting agencies. The participants to date include the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Ridge Rangers, Highlands County Recycling, Highlands County Extension, Archbold Biological Station, Division of Forestry, Southwest Florida Water Management District, Friends of Istokpoga, and the Highlands County Lakes Association. Rich Patterson with Scuba Central will be on site to demonstrate how scuba and snorkel gear is used.

Activities will include bait casting, dip-netting and seining, canoeing, safe boating Jeopardy, and demonstrations, SCUBA and snorkeling demonstrations, touch-tank, insect roundup, angler’s challenge and a lakeside cleanup.

The goal of the Highlands Soil and Water Conservation District is to increase awareness, encourage active participation and stewardship, and promote safe and wise recreation on our local lakes. While educating participants and having tons of fun are important components of the activities, we also hope to get Lake Jackson cleaned up in the process. The best prizes will be offered to those who collect the most trash from around Lake Jackson’s shores! Of course, trash bags, trash grabbers, gloves and safety vests will be provided by Highlands County Recycling.

Whether you’re looking for some free activities for the family, you have the desire to know more about the lakes and what they offer, you have a competitive side and want to win great prizes or you just want a free lunch and some free give-a-ways, this is your chance to get out and enjoy the day. There is no admission fee.

As with any event, the success depends on the generous donations of our sponsors. The Southwest Florida Water Management District, Highlands Soil and Water Conservation District, Highlands County Board of County Commissioners, City of Sebring, and the Highlands County Lakes Association are all partners for this special day. Ridge Rangers, Earth Team Volunteers and staff will be available to see to your needs and answer questions.

For more information about this fun filled event, give us a call at (863) 402-6545.