

CADDO LAKE NEWS

NEWSLETTER OF THE GREATER CADDO LAKE ASSOCIATION OF TEXAS

JANUARY 2011

caddolakenews.org

What We Do, Have Done, and Promise to Continue to Do

One of the most frequent questions asked of GCLA Board Members is, what does GCLA do?

This issue of our Newsletter is devoted to outlining the major efforts in which GCLA has been involved since its founding in 1978. That's right; this organization has been protecting Caddo Lake for over 30 years! However, we can't take all of the credit. Many other organizations and individuals have been involved. I hesitate to list them at the risk of forgetting someone. Here are some of the groups that come to mind: The City of Uncertain, Caddo Lake Chamber of Commerce & Tourism, Friends of Caddo Lake National Wildlife Refuge, Caddo Lake Institute, Cypress Valley Navigation District, Greater Caddo Lake Assoc. of Louisiana, The Nature Conservancy, . . . , and many individuals too numerous to name. . . We do want to recognize the original founders of GCLA: John Echols, Robert Speight, Sr., Richard Fredrick, L.B. Stewart, Flo Daniels, Gene Walker Sr., George Williamson. Let us know if we missed anyone.

On to answering the question: What has GCLA done for Caddo Lake?

Road Improvement

GCLA was formed in 1978 with the stated purpose of improving the roads around the lake (which were much WORSE than they are today) and to control dangerous floods. While the roads still need improvement, they are in much better shape than they were in 1978.

Paper Mill on the banks of Big Cypress

We successfully fought against a large paper mill proposed to be located on the banks of Big Cypress bayou

“Caddo Lake Compact”

Successfully fought against the ‘Caddo Lake Compact’. This ‘compact’, between Texas and Louisiana, would have raised the weir 2 to 4 feet to supply water to Shreveport. John Echols and then County Judge Richard Anderson (the same) went to D.C. and testified before congress as to why this was not a good idea.

Lake o’ the Pines Hydro Electric

Opposed a hydro-electric generator being placed on Lake o’ the Pines spillway

Chicken Processing

Fought against a chicken processing plant being located on Little Cypress bayou. Poultry processing uses huge amounts of water. That use of water would have been at the expense of Caddo Lake.

Lake Marshall

Spent years opposing the so-called ‘Lake Marshall’ being built on Little Cypress by the Little Cypress Utility District. This project would have cut flows to Caddo and provided land speculators with a boondoggle, get-rich-quick scheme and very little extra water for the City of Marshall.

Pilgrims Pride

Fought against Pilgrims Pride’s efforts to dump poultry processing waste into Big Cypress bayou at Pittsburg

Daingerfield Reach

Opposed the “Daingerfield Reach”, a barge canal proposed to run from the Red River to Lone Star, Texas, passing thru Caddo Lake and Lake o’ the Pines

Ramsar Treaty

GCLA supported the designation of approximately 20,000 acres of the Caddo Lake area as a “Wetland of International Importance” under the Ramsar Treaty.

Wildlife Management Area

Supported the creation of the Caddo Lake Wildlife Management Area from land donated by the Nature Conservancy

Marshall, Again

Joined CLI in opposing Marshall’s efforts to sell water to Entergy for a combined cycle power plant southwest of Marshall

Caddo Lake National Wildlife Refuge

Supported the creation of the Caddo Lake National Wildlife Refuge within the former Longhorn Ammunition Plant (a superfund site)

Industrial Park

Opposed the use of part of the Longhorn Army Ammunition property for an industrial park. Special interests in Marshall had pursued the use of 1000 acres within the National Wildlife Refuge, to be used as an Industrial Park. GCLA believed that this was totally inconsistent with the purpose of a National Wildlife Refuge.

Water Hyacinths

Started the first non-agency invasive aquatic vegetation control program on Caddo Lake targeting water hyacinth.

Salvinia

Organized some of the early efforts to respond to the threat of Giant Salvinia including building a barrier fence, researching methods to kill Salvinia and pursuing ongoing funding to establish a permanent spray program. We also organized community education meetings to inform everyone of the problem.

Support for the Science of Caddo Lake

Supported CLI and The Nature Conservancy’s efforts to create a flow regime for Big Cypress and Caddo Lake to better understand what Caddo Lake needs to be the viable natural resource we have all come to love.

Being Good Neighbors

GCLA has supported, financially and with resources, the Clean Up efforts both around the lake and in the lake. Other partners in this effort have been Harrison County and the City of Uncertain.

The Lost Soul Patrol

Although not part of the charter of GCLA, our board members frequently get calls from people lost on the lake, out of gas, etc. Below is a report from John Winn and how he handled one of those requests and, no doubt, avoided an international incident!!

How to Make a Friend on Caddo

By John Winn

One afternoon I got a call from my friend, Jay Webb with the Harrison County Sheriff’s office, asking for assistance in searching for two guys who were lost on Caddo. These guys were from the U.K. and came to

Caddo to kayak, had no map, and got lost. Jay and Darrin, our local game warden, were already out in the patrol boat looking for them. The guys had called 911 from a satellite phone, but from what I gather, it was a one-way conversation because dispatch was unable to call them back (something about their U.K. number). They were able to tell dispatch where they put in, and that they could see a lot of little houses that were falling down-- and that was all. To make matters worse, one of the guys was diabetic and didn't have his medicine, and it was about to get dark.

I met with Jay and Darrin, and then went looking up into Lone Pine Stretch, worked my way up into Bird Roost and, eventually, Lower Hole Bird Roost. As I went along, I would stop and blow an air horn and listen for a response. It was starting to get dark, and with the tree frogs starting up with their chorus, I was afraid I wouldn't hear anything over the racket of the frogs if they did respond. Just as I was about to give up on using the horn, I heard a faint, "Hey! Hey!" off in the distance. As I worked my way toward the sound of the calls, I looked through the cypress and, sure enough, there are the two Brits standing in a duck blind ("a little house" to them!) waving their arms like crazy, making sure they got my attention. They must have thought I was blind, because they didn't stop waving their arms until I got right up on them. These guys had resolved themselves to spending the night in a duck blind before they heard me. Needless to say, the first thing they told me was, "We are really glad to see you!"

After many thanks on the way back to where they had launched, I finally was able to return them to where they had longed to be—to their car. As we were loading their kayaks, one of the guys tried to give me some money for rescuing them, but I turned it down and just told them to help the next person they saw in need. Then, after several more handshakes and words of thanks, I departed and left them waving their arms, much like the first time I saw them. This time, however, it was out of gratitude, rather than desperation. These guys were truly grateful for help, and this was something they would not soon forget. There have been several people over the years I have rescued, lost or broken down here on Caddo, and I have yet to meet any that weren't very grateful for being rescued. All of a sudden, you make a new friend when you come across them. Just think! I just made two new friends, from the U.K., no less! Friends for life!

Special Thanks to Robert Speight for much of the history detailed above.

We Don't Know what the next threat to Caddo Lake will be. But, we do know that there will be a threat and we need your help to protect the Lake.

Check your Mailing Label If your membership has expired, please help us to Keep Caddo Lake Natural by renewing your membership. We can handle dues for more than one year!

Local Residents – We have an opening for one Board member. Contact a Director if you are interested.

GCLA OFFICERS

PRESIDENT: Terry Echols VICE-PRES.: Sam Canup
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Jack Canson	Gary Kempf	Dan Fulghum	Jim Lambright	Doug Parker
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The Greater Caddo Lake Association of Texas is a tax exempt organization under Section 501 (c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code, and has received a determination letter from the Internal Revenue Service establishing that contributions to GCLA are tax deductible to the contributor. Dues, however, are not tax deductible.