

SWIMMER-SCIENTISTS SAVE FLORIDA FRESH WATER LAKES ONE SWIM AT A TIME

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Who would you name as Citizen of the Year? A teacher? A philanthropist? Maybe an exemplary student? What about a hero in the fight against Harmful Algae Bloom? You've got it - the Lake Cane Restoration Society (LCRS) is a swimmer-scientist educational 501(c)3 just named Orange County's District 1 Citizen of the Year. We originally created LCRS as a protest group. Now, we are a non-profit corporation dedicated to Lucky's Lake Swim by engaging the community through a series of fun, athletic and cultural events resulting in lower levels of nutrients and phosphates in our favorite swim hole.

Making our approach an example for others is part of our mission – our volunteers provide time, service and a toolkit of engagement to take to your lake, river or beachfront. We accomplish our strategically defined water quality goals through data collection, education, and action. LCRS will facilitate other individual property owners to act as partners with public entities in defining their respective responsibilities to keep the water clean. We share how we generate revenue funding our own enterprise.

Lucky's six-day-a-week swim is registered with the Central Florida Historical Society. It is one of American's top 100 open water swimming destinations, frequented by Olympic medal winners and buoyant retirees alike. Swimming in Florida lakes takes guts. Swimmers are just the kind of people you want for water protection in an increasingly developed metropolitan area.

Embedded within the northernmost headwaters of the Everglades, Lake Cane's water basin includes a massive constituency of interested parties. Keeping Lake Cane swimmable, fishable and (someday) drinkable requires proactively protecting our aquifer-fed water resource. This means engaging people from all walks of life. Neuroscience research indicates time around water produces the cognitive and aerobic benefits required for clear thinking. This paper describes ours.

PRESENTER BIO: Jay, Valerie and Doc Lucky spend a lot of time swimming in a Florida lake, so their non-profit approach is rooted in letting nature do what nature does – their restoration project has been named Citizen of the Year for their Region of Orange County. Their exemplary experience with wetland restoration can be a model for the nearly 800 other small-sized, non-distress, private-property lakes in Central, Florida.