

# Operation Noah's Ark aims to preserve sea life

**H**ow awful is it? Let me count the ways!

The oil fouling our gulf shorelines is about as awful as it gets. Feeding our collective high-octane demands for power has created corporate fuel-producing machines. We want to feel safe about these machines and believe that our touted high technology can control any safety or environmental contingency. Obviously, the technology is running behind.

BP did not have adequate safety measures in place. Ask the poor people in Chernobyl how they feel about the fail-safe nuclear plant in their town.

Florida right now is in Paul Revere's slot, yelling, "The oil is coming! The oil is coming!" It sure is, and it is fairly clear right now that no one really knows what to do. We are all casting about for clean-up solutions, looking everywhere from Kevin Costner to hairballs.

Americans are too inventive, too dedicated to our aqua waters to fail. Therefore, the solutions will come. Our biggest solver is probably Mother Nature, who (over time) has a way of mitigating even our most horrid environmental mistakes.

Now it is time to pull up our socks and get on with it. What proposals look meritorious? Who is looking forward? Who has experience and who may know what they are doing? I suspect there are numerous projects that bear inspection, but I have not heard of many. There is one I know about.

Our Wakulla neighbors and personal friends Jack and Anne Rudloe are positioned and offering one small optimistic plan. Keep small sea creatures in their laboratory until the Gulf is so not befouled. Release these same creatures back into the sea when the sea will once again sustain their life.

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**Merry Ann Frisby**

My View



RAY ANDERSEN / Special to the Democrat

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credentials, experience and desire to make all this happen. For 37 years they have run a laboratory filled with sea animals. They know the mechanics of pumping sea water, balancing chemicals, salinity and temperature to keep the crabs and fish alive. They are exceptionally well versed in shrimp aquaculture. The Rudloes recently visited shrimp farms in Thailand and found them environmentally and economically sound. They know aquariums, they know all the swimmers and crawlies in the Gulf of Mexico, and they know shrimp.

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The Rudloes currently use water sucked from the sea to sustain their aquariums. As the oil approaches, the lines that keep their creatures alive will become tubes of death. The lines must be severed and closed systems substituted in their place. Inland aquariums use artificial sea salts and massive filtration systems to sustain life. This proven technology is not new.

In particular, raising shrimp in aquariums is not new, either. Jack Rudloe says, "China, Japan, Australia and Cuba are already using hatchery technology to grow larvae and then are releasing them into the sea so that fishermen can catch them. In Cuba and China, biologists claim that their commercial yields have

increased 50 percent since they began releasing hatchery-raised juvenile shrimp."

The U.S. government has been raising and releasing fish for generations.

The Rudloes want to restore a submerged sea water pipeline that once ran to a now-closed shrimp farm. They propose to store 100,000 gallons of healthy sea water before the oil snakes it way into Dickerson Bay. Then they can raise shrimp larvae and marine life in their tanks. Grown shrimp can be released into nonpolluted areas in Florida, Mississippi, Texas and Louisiana, where shrimp flourish now. The Rudloes need \$600,000 to do this. They need this money now before the oil hits Dickerson Bay.

We need hope. We need positive ideas. There is a sense of helplessness in only celebrating the problem. Someone must soon put on a hero's cape and give them the money. BP, the state of Florida, the federal government, anyone who yearns to look forward for a change, pony up.