

For immediate release:

Wild Shiners Have a Ball

Let's face it, fear can be immobilizing, or it can be a great motivator. Ask any zebra. But fear in humans more often than not is the former. Take for example the Wild Shiner Ball coming up on Friday, January 29 at the Chalet Suzanne air field. Now, you have probably always wanted to experience for yourself this other-worldly night of exuberance, but something...something that is part inertia, part complacency, and part...yes, part fear, has kept you from pulling back that flap of the Big Top and stepping into the seldom seen aquatic black-light environment of the Wild Shiner Ball. But fears can be conquered. And the result is often rewarding, exhilarating, and yes, even liberating!

Now you probably know that wild shiners are a popular bait fish. Farm-raised shiners are also used, but are believed by some to be inferior to the free-living kind. You may not know that Wild Shiners also come in human form as well. The Loyal Order of Wild Shiners is a group of Fish/Humans that appear to exist for the sole purpose of promulgating the Wild Shiner Ball to give humans a once-a-year opportunity to experience their watery world. This mischief has been carrying on for a quarter century now.

The Wild Shiner Black-Light Ball always features non-stop live (bait) music. This year the music will be generated by two classic rock bands, Junior & the MDs and Station 6. Starting at 8:00 pm via an ingenious method known as "leap-frogging," the bands never allow a break in the music until the Exalted Ruler pulls the plug around midnight. This consistently results in a darned good party and severely exhausted dancers. Another ingenious innovation of the Shiner Ball is the allowance of BYOC, which can be best be deciphered to mean "bring your own cooler," although some participants have translated it to "bring your own chauffeur." The former translation puts the burden of selecting the beverage of choice squarely on the shoulder of the attendee or group of attendees, and is not too dissimilar to the better known concept of "tailgating." Are you feeling your fear turning into excitement yet?

To better experience the event, party-goers are encouraged, but not coerced, to alter their appearance to any degree they desire, preferentially to resemble bait fish or at a minimum to glow under the influence of the black-lights that are strewn about. All this good revelry will cost you is \$15 per person or \$40 a couple (do the math and wonder, then create your own strategy to save ten bucks). Tickets are only sold at the door by a group of fearsome Wild Shiner henchmen who you must muster your best act of fearlessness to pass by. (Keep foremost in your mind that they are harmless bait fish while they sneer at you.) The ball will be under the Big Top on the airport runway at Chalet Suzanne on State Road 17, two miles north of Lake Wales. Look for a Shiner Ball sign on the north side of SR 17. Rooms within walking distance are available at the Chalet's Inn (not a bad idea) which includes breakfast. For room reservations, call 863/676-6011. For more info about the ball, go to www.shinerball.com.