

Nature lovers will like developer's plan

By **BECKY EMMONS**

Tribune Staff Writer

I was tramping through the wilds awhile back and trekked through rugged woodland enhanced by rolling hills, lakes and streams. Did I mention that I was in Mishawaka?

It's the new Estates East at Barrington, an expansion of Barrington Estates off of Jefferson Boulevard out near the Capital Avenue bridge. The new development is situated on pristine land to the east of Barrington and includes real estate packages that may especially appeal to nature lovers.

The subdivision, wedged between Jefferson and the St. Joseph River, has been divided into 28 lots that are on some type of natural water. They back up to either the St. Joseph River, an eight-acre spring-fed lake, a three-acre pond or Willow Creek.

"It's a unique piece of property," says Bob Stevens, owner of Prime Development Corp., Mishawaka, of the land he is developing. "I don't know of anyplace in St. Joe or Elkhart County with a nice, sandy beach that Darnell Lake has."

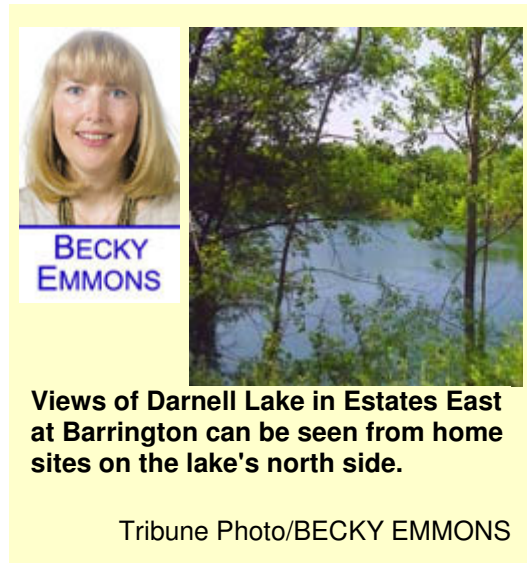
Darnell Lake may be known to Mishawaka east siders as a former sand pit that was excavated by a cement company. Stevens and his cronies used to swim in the "lake," as did the Michiana Marlins, who sometimes practiced there. More recent generations have ridden trail bikes through the woods.

"I used to sneak back here to fish, and back then, I thought what a great place it would be to live," Stevens says.

Stevens named the old pit Darnell Lake after a partner, Frank Darnell.

"What makes this unique is having such large lots that seem to be in the country, yet they're on city sewer and water," Stevens says. "It's never been logged. This is as natural as it gets."

He wants to keep it as close to country as he can. He wants to encourage wildlife to stick around. He wants to cut as few trees as possible. Most lots range from four to six acres. Among the most



prime sites are three on the St. Joseph River and three on the south side of Darnell Lake. Seven lots on the north side of the lake aren't so bad either; across the road from them is the pond.

Were I choosing, I'd pick Lot 8. It still has this great rope swing hanging over the lake.