

EXCLUSIVE REPORTS

[Houston](#) > [Print Edition](#)

[Subscribe to Houston Business Journal](#)

Friday, June 22, 2007

Eternal Reef 'balls' drop anchor in Gulf

Firm mixes concrete and ashes to make memorials for dearly departed

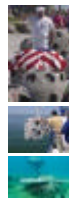
Houston Business Journal - by [Greg Barr](#) Houston Business Journal

[Print](#) | [Email](#) | [Reprints](#) | [RSS Feeds](#) | [Add to Del.icio.us](#) | [Digg This](#) | [Comments](#)

Related News

- [Hutto seeks money for park](#)
- [Investing in our state parks must be a priority](#)
- [Comptroller says state parks contribute significantly to Texas economy](#)
- [Foundation gets permanent home](#)

Growing up in Louisiana, Kay Van Cleave recalls how her mother would ship the kids off to school and head for a nearby lake to fish. When the family moved to Houston in the 1950s, her mom made regular trips to Galveston for offshore fishing.



"She loved to fish and would go every chance she could," recalls Van Cleave.

After her mother's death in 1989, Van Cleave scattered half her ashes in the Irish Sea and kept the rest. She later read an article about a company called **Eternal Reefs** and knew she had found the ideal final resting place for her mother's remaining ashes.

Eternal Reefs mixes concrete with remains to make reef balls, underwater memorials that provide a habitat for fish.

"That was so cool. The best thing I ever heard of," says Van Cleave.

Her mother's ashes are part of a memorial reef ball placed on the Gulf floor near South Padre Island in 2004.

The combination of angling and environmentalism made a fitting dual tribute, she says.

"She loved fishing, and here was a chance to do something good for the ecology," says Van Cleave. "I thought about how tickled my mother would be about this. And it gave me closure."

Reef balls roll off Freeport

George Frankel hopes to hear from others like Van Cleave.

The CEO of Atlanta-based Eternal Reefs is looking for prospects who want to preserve the remains of family members -- even pets -- in the company's first Houston-area reef ball placements off the coast near Freeport.

The balls will become part of the George Vancouver fishing reef created from a sunken World War II Liberty ship about seven miles offshore. The site is under permit and maintained by the **Texas Parks and Wildlife Department** (see box):

Frankel says Eternal Reefs has seen growing interest in Texas, especially Galveston, which lacks the reef stuff.

"The area around Galveston doesn't work so well because the bottom is too soft and there are so many oil and gas transmission lines around," Frankel explains. "Freeport has several established reefs."

Six families have signed up to be part of the Freeport memorial. As many as 15 separate commemorative reef balls will be placed in a cluster 50 feet below the

Search for Jobs

powered by onTargetJobs

[View Houston Jobs - 3809 jobs today](#)

Business Resources

Starting a Business

Sponsored by [iContact](#)

Couple blends a couple blends a gourmet shop with catering.

Sales & Marketing

Sponsored by [Hoovers](#)

Use your blog as a way to reach out to sales prospects.

Business Strategy

Changes in eating habits, quest for better nutrition drive innovations for Freshens.

Technology

System uses Google Maps to show where web traffic comes from.

HR & Hiring

The software giant is increasingly looking south of the border for talented developers.

Email Alerts

Get the latest local business news delivered to your inbox. [Sign up Today!](#)

Featured Jobs

powered by onTargetJobs

- [RETAIL SALES REPRESENTATIVE](#) - Verizon Wireless
- [Retail Leadership Development Program](#) - Verizon Wireless
- [Senior GIS Analyst \(Geographer\)](#) - Half Associates
- [Internal Medicine](#) - confidential
- [Sous Chef](#) - St. Martins Episcopal Church

[Search Jobs](#) | [Post Resume](#) | [Online Degrees](#)

[Post a Job](#) | [Feature a Job](#)

Houston Real Estate

powered by LoopNet

Featured Property

Rate: \$19.20-\$19.20
Building Size: 19,102 SF
Use Type: Lease

[More Houston Real Estate](#)



Sponsored Links

[Bankruptcies](#)

Houston Business Directory

[Texas Articles](#)

surface when the late-October dedication takes place.

Reef balls are available in varying sizes and price ranges, depending on personal preferences.

The Mariner, the largest, weighs nearly 4,000 pounds and can accommodate up to four sets of remains for a cost of \$6,495.

The cost for placing remains in a community reef to commingle with ashes of non-family members is \$2,495.

Pet owners can consign the remains of a beloved dog or cat to a permanent ocean resting place on the Pearl reef ball for a price of \$895.

A father's request

Don Brawley founded Eternal Reefs in 1999, a year after he was asked to include his father's remains in a reef ball. Brawley had earlier set up Reef Ball Development Group to produce concrete reef "balls" to help repair ecologically important reef structures.

The memorial castings are done under subcontract by Reef Innovations in Sarasota, Fla.

Print Email Yahoo! Buzz

Pages: 1 2 Continue Reading »

READER COMMENTS

(0) Comments

You must be logged in to add a comment. Please [Login](#) or [Register](#).

Contact the Editor Need Assistance? More Latest News »

More News Headlines Popular News Stories

Latest News

- [PFDC offering Ike recovery help to Pearland businesses](#)
- [BHP Billionaire Petroleum buys Colombian exploration rights](#)
- [House rejects bailout bill](#)
- [Bill Heard files Chapter 11](#)
- [Repro's Therapeutics sells shares](#)

Business Pulse Survey

[Rate CenterPoint Energy's performance in getting the lights back on in Houston after Hurricane Ike](#)

CITY GUIDE SPOTLIGHT - HOUSTON



- [Attractions in Houston](#)
- [Cocktails in Houston](#)
- [Hotels in Houston](#)
- [Restaurants in Houston](#)

Search Press Releases

- [View all Houston Press Releases](#)
- [View All Press Releases](#)

Search by Company, Organization, or Keyword

Content provided by PR

News wire. [Learn more about this service.](#)

Use of, or registration on, this site constitutes acceptance of our User Agreement and Privacy Policy.

A publishing partner with Portfolio

ONLINE: [Home](#) | [Business News](#) | [Print Edition](#) | [Advertise](#) | [Marketplace](#) | [Business Resources](#) | [Community](#) | [About Us](#) | [Search](#) | [RSS Feeds](#) | [Site FAQ](#) | [Contact Info](#) | [Company Profiles](#)

PRINT EDITION: [Subscribe to Print Edition](#) | [Advertise](#) | [Book of Lists](#) | [Download E-edition](#) | [Article Reprints Rights](#)

BIZJOURNALS: [bizjournals](#) | [BizSpace.com](#) | [Jobs](#) | [bizwomen.com](#) | [Green](#) | [Houston Online Directory](#) | [Houston Business Travel](#)

AFFILIATE PUBLICATIONS: [Portfolio](#) | [SportsBusiness Journal](#) | [SportsBusinessDaily](#) | [Mass High Tech](#)

© 2008 American City Business Journals, Inc. and its licensors. All rights reserved. The material on this site may not be reproduced, distributed, transmitted, cached or otherwise

used, except with the prior written permission of bizjournals.