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2 Sections

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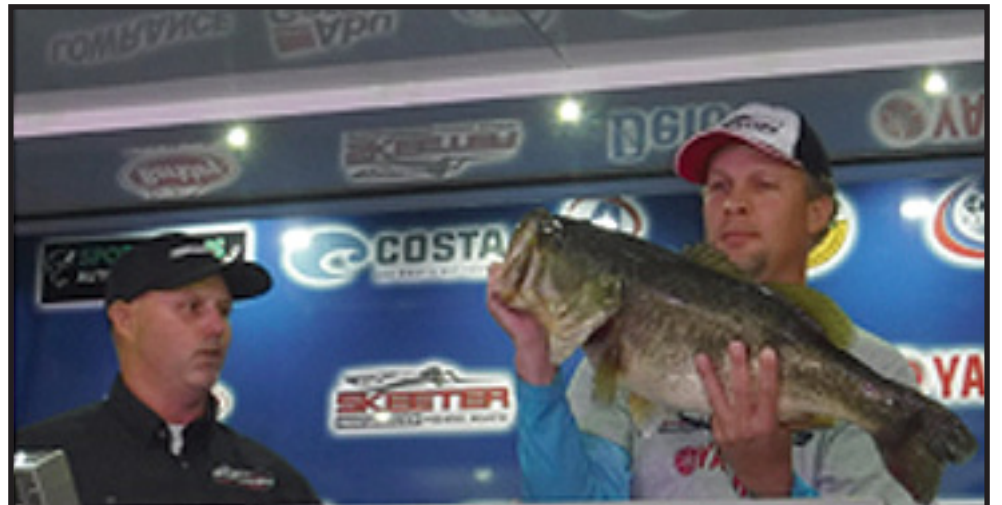
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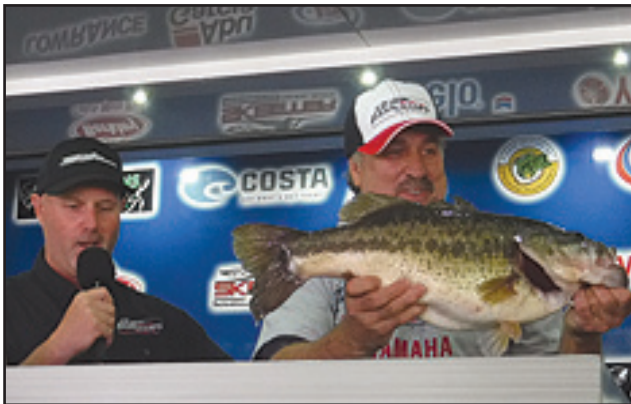
Congratulations to Jordan Lee from Cullman, Alabama and Legend Boats for his amazing win in the 2017 Bassmaster Classic.



John Newkirk from Benbrook, TX., won the 9th Annual Mega Bass Tournament with this hawg weighing 12.35-lbs. in the 9 o'clock hour.



Richard Page from Ft. Worth, TX., won the 8 o'clock hour in the Mega Bass with this nice 9.09-lb. bass.



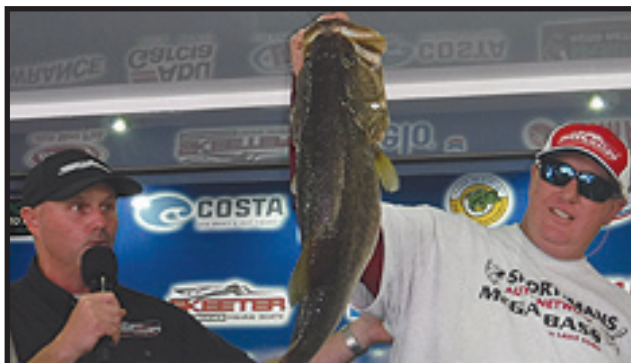
Lonny Pierce from Whitney, TX., won the 10 o'clock hour in the Mega Bass with this nice 9.96-lb. bass.



Letitia Sprayberry from Kemp, TX., won the 11 o'clock hour in the Mega Bass with this nice 10.97-lb. bass.



Cody Pratka from Whitney, TX., won the 12 o'clock hour in the Mega Bass with this nice 9.12-lb. bass.



Sam McCollum from Corsicana, TX., won the 1 o'clock hour in the Mega Bass with this nice 12.22-lb. bass. (All Photos by Sue Hampton)



Buddy Lappin from Sulphur Springs, TX., won 2nd place in the 10 o'clock hour in the Mega Bass with this nice 7.66-lb. bass.

9th Annual Mega Bass on Lake Fork See Full Story on Page 4-A

Bubbacising is not to be confused with exercising!

By Don Hampton

If you see Bubba running, he either just saw a snake, someone told him his boat was sinking, big bass are schooling, or Bubbette just rang the dinner bell. Whichever the case "DO NOT GET IN HIS WAY!"

Bubba believes in physical fitness, but his and Richard Simmon's definition of exercise are in no way similar. To Bubba's way of thinking he is in shape. After all round is a shape!

Bubba believes jogging has something to do with the fear factor. He will run to get away from something or to something he is afraid he might miss. Everything else can be handled with a brisk walk if he's in a hurry.

He has gone so far with this belief that he now, (to his way of thinking) has proof jogging is bad for you and can be fatal. He heard on the news that a man, shortly after jogging in California, had just returned to his house when an earthquake struck toppling the man's home with him inside. Bubba believes he was too tired to exercise the fear factor and run outside. He now thinks if you see anyone jogging you should trip them and it would save their life. He explained, "Those skinned up knees will heal in time, but a house falling on you is hard to recover from!"

Bubba's definition of a sit-up is something he has to do to eat at the dinner table or to watch television when Bubbette is in his recliner.

Remember the side straddle hops from

gym class? To Bubba that is something you do to keep from stepping in something.

A push-up to Bubba comes in different flavors and his favorite is orange sherbet. A chin-up is something he does after an outstanding accomplishment or feat he is especially proud of.

Especially confusing to Bubba are aerobic exercise tapes to music. In his book, when you dance you are supposed to have a partner and the slower the music the closer you get. His aerobic exercising to music consists of the "Texas Two-Step" and a nice waltz.

Words like slim fast and fat free do not have a true meaning to Bubba. None of his friends have ever gotten slim fast, especially the ones over forty. Friends of his that try dieting, it seems the older they are the slower the diet works. He will not call any names but for some it has been years with no showing results. He thinks the only way they could see themselves as slim fast is to buy one of those novelty mirrors they have in the circus. And fat free! What is completely fat free? Every item of nourishment has fat. Some may be reduced and some may have very little, but fat is in our food. He believes this is a packaging gimmick. If a consumer sees an item marked "Fat Free" they will consume twice as much believing they will get slim fast.

Bubba will not go on a diet because of one very important reason. He does not eat for nourishment, he eats because he likes to eat and taste counts. He refers to sitting at a dinner table eating as building his table muscles.

When it comes to exercising, Bubba

has his own definition of exercising. You might refer to it as Bubbacising (or sizing).

Polishing his boat builds up his arm and chest muscles. Hooking the boat up to the truck is pretty strenuous. Putting the boat in the water takes a controlled effort. Walking up and down the deck of the boat changing lures is a work out on the leg muscles. Casting a favorite lure all day is great exercise and setting the hook on the big one is muscle control and coordination.

Bubba isn't a health fanatic, he is a fishing fanatic. People may not feel like jogging at times or doing their routine of exercising, but Bubbacising, he never misses a chance to work out.

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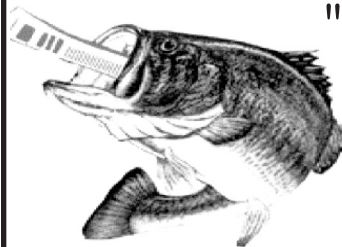
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Final Update Completes Great Texas Wildlife Trail Maps Collection

Drive on the wild side of the prairies and forests with two newly updated Great Texas Wildlife Trail maps. The updated Prairies and Pineywoods East and West maps mark the completion of the entire collection, displaying more than 920 wildlife-viewing sites all across Texas.

The nine wildlife trail maps invite nature lovers to discover the best of Texas' native wildlife including birds, butterflies, bats and more throughout different regions of the state. Highway signs mark the wildlife-viewing sites, or print maps with GPS coordinates to guide them can be purchased. An interactive version of the map is also available online to explore the region.

To view all nine Great Texas Wildlife Trails maps or to purchase a printed map, visit the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) website. Each regional map details several smaller trail loops for easy driving trips throughout Texas. The maps also list contact information, entry fees and operating hours for attractions along the trails.

To commemorate the launch of the new maps, TPWD and community partners from the City of Bonham and Fannin County held a public event at Bonham State Park Tuesday, March 7, from 1-2 p.m. The park is part of the Prairies and Pineywoods East map on the newly created Bois D'Arc Loop. The new maps

were unveiled and representatives from the community and sites along the trails were available with information about wildlife-viewing opportunities in the region. Visitors to the park can enjoy swimming and fishing in the man-made lake, as well as camping, picnicking, hiking, mountain biking and boating. Some points of interest at the park include Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) constructed footbridge, pump house, dam and fireplace.

The new wildlife maps were made possible in part from the support of a number of sponsors, including the Wildlife Diversity Conservation License Plate Program and Toyota.

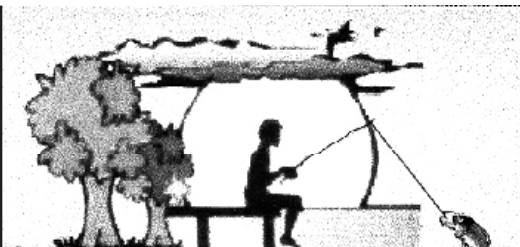


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9th Annual Mega Bass Tournament on Lake Fork

By Don Hampton

The 9th Annual Mega Bass Tournament on Lake Fork presented by BassChamps and SportsmanAutoNetwork was a mega event with mega results. It had a great outcome for some of the 1,800 anglers representing over 24 states for highest paying one day event in the nation.

With \$20,000 being paid each hour paying 15 places and first place each hour winning \$15,000, anglers were throwing their favorite go to baits trying to get in the money.

With Lake Fork being a slot lake, which means bass measuring between 16" and 24" cannot be brought to the weigh in. Many anglers reported having broken hearts by bass they caught being in that slot. There were a few that did measurement wrong. This won them a visit with our local Game Warden.

Weigh-in times were at the top of each hour with the first being the 8 o'clock hour and the last for the day being the 2 o'clock hour.

The first hour started with excitement when Richard Page of Fort Worth, Texas showed the other anglers what they had to beat to win the tournament. He weighed in an over the slot weighing 9.09-pounds

and securing him a check for \$15,000.

During the 9 o'clock hour the stage was set for the rest of the day. John Newkirk from Benbrook, Texas was fishing a chatterbait in 6' to 8' of water on the North end of the lake when he hooked on to his hawg. After a leisurely ride back to the weigh-in in order to not beat the fish up he still had time before the scales opened. The BassChamps crew did a great job showing him how to take care of his bass until he could weigh-in. Once the scales opened and his bass weighed 12.35-pounds, everyone was amazed. "This is the biggest bass ever weighed in at a BassChamps event!" exclaimed Fish Fishburne. Needless to say this won Mr. Newkirk first in the hour for \$15,000. His bass did hold up as the heaviest of the tournament also winning him a 2017 Skeeter ZX200 powered by a Yamaha SHO, Lowrance Electronics, and Power Pole.

During the 10 o'clock hour there was excitement when two over the slots came to the weigh-in. Lonny Pierce from Whitney, Texas won the hour and \$15,000 for his bass weighing 9.96-pounds. The second one coming to the weigh-in during that hour weighed 7.66-pounds and was caught

by Buddy Lappin from Sulphur Springs. He won 2nd Place in the hour and \$1,000.

The winner in the 11 o'clock hour proved to be a real trooper. While Letitia Sprayberry from Kemp, Texas was bringing her 10.97-pound bass to the weigh-in she had a misfortunate accident. In her excitement she tripped spraining her big toe and knocking off her toe nail. After jumping back up and weighing her bass in, she won the hour and \$15,000. That was enough to take away the pain.

Cody Pratka from Whitney, Texas won \$15,000 during the 12 o'clock hour when he weighed in a nice bass locking in the scales at 9.12-pounds.

The excitement of big bass wasn't finished for the day during the 1 o'clock hour. John Newkirk had to hold his breath when Sam McCollum from Corsicana, Texas came to the scales with a hawg weighing 12.22-pounds. He didn't top the weight to win the Skeeter bass boat but he did get a check for 1st in the hour for \$15,000.

Either anglers came off the lake early to beat the rush at the boat ramps to make the presentations or else the big bass bite stopped for the 2 o'clock weigh-in hour. Whichever might be the case Billy Pritchett from Kerens, Texas was very thankful for it in the amount of \$15,000.

(See 9th Annual Mega Bass.....Continued on Page 22-A)



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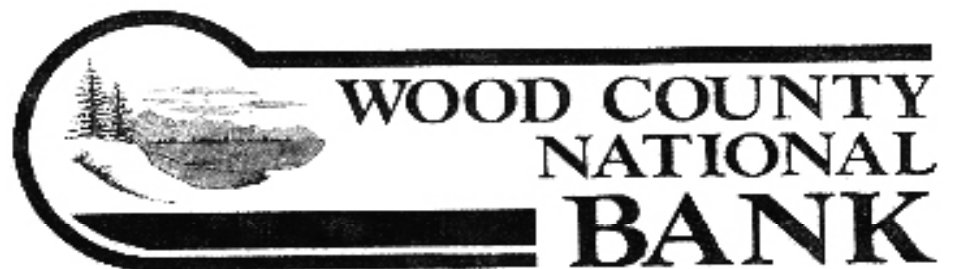
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13th Annual Legend of Lake Fork Big Bass Tournament

By Don Hampton

Anglers get ready for the premier tournament of the year. The "13th Annual Legend of Lake Fork Big Bass Tournament" will be held on May 19, 20, 21. This is not an owner's tournament. The name of the event is based on Lake Fork being a legendary big bass lake. **ALL BOATS, MAKES, AND MODELS ARE WELCOME TO COME AND COMPETE!**

We will be paying 8 places per hour with the first to be knocked out of seventh place will receive a \$100 gift certificate from one of the sponsoring businesses. This little enticement has some anglers really playing the game bringing a small bass that may weigh under a pound to the scales at the top of each hour just to be knocked out of the hour first and secure a win. First each hour will be paid \$500, second \$400, third \$300, fourth \$200, fifth \$175, sixth \$150, seventh \$125, and first out of seventh to receive the \$100 gift certificate.

All early entries received on or before April 30th will be in the drawing for a 2017 Legend bass boat powered by Mercury and Motorguide. Anglers if you miss the chance to get in for the early entry into the tourna-

ment you will still have a chance to win one of the Legend boats to be given away and a chance to get in on the hourly pay-backs!

Anglers will be competing for two boats for the two heaviest 24" and over the slot, one boat for the heaviest under 16" and the one boat for the early entry drawing. Anglers winning these boats will receive a certificate for the boat so they might order the colors or upgrades of their choice to more personalize their 2017 Legend boat.

We will be set up and taking entries at Lake Fork Marina, the tournament headquarters, on Thursday, May 18th from 2 p.m. until 10 p.m., on Friday from 5 a.m. to 6 a.m. and 4 p.m. to 9 p.m., and Saturday the same hours and on Sunday from 5 a.m. to 6 a.m. for anyone just wishing to fish one day. Anglers can fish one, two, or all three days and still have a chance for all the prizes. Official fishing days for the tournament are May 19, 20, 21 and fishing hours are from 6 a.m. to 3 p.m. with the first hour weigh-in beginning with the 7 to 8 o'clock hour and ending with the 2 to 3 o'clock hour each day. Anglers have to be off the water by 8 p.m. each day of the tournament and cannot get on the water until 4

a.m. and cannot wet a hook until 6 a.m. The official starting time and hourly updates will be announced on FM 99.9 KMOO Radio Station. So be sure to have a radio in your boat.

Again this year we will be selling commemorative T-shirts at tournament headquarters. If you purchase a shirt and have it on or with you and win 1st place in any hour, you will receive an extra \$100 in cash on the spot. Every hour of the tournament is a T-shirt hour.

All anglers will also be able to purchase a Temple Fork Outfitters rod for only \$60. This offer is while supplies last. As popular as these rods are becoming they seem to go pretty fast, but on another note we will have a large supply.

The Chek-It-Stick is the official measurement of the tournament. Bass under the slot coming to the weigh-in cannot touch 16" and bass over can touch or exceed the 24" mark.

This tournament is fun for the entire family. Come out and enter or just bring the family and enjoy the festivities and check out the vendors.

For more information see the advertisement on Page 24-A, or call me at 903-360-6994, 903-383-7748, or email me: fishnews@lakefork.net.

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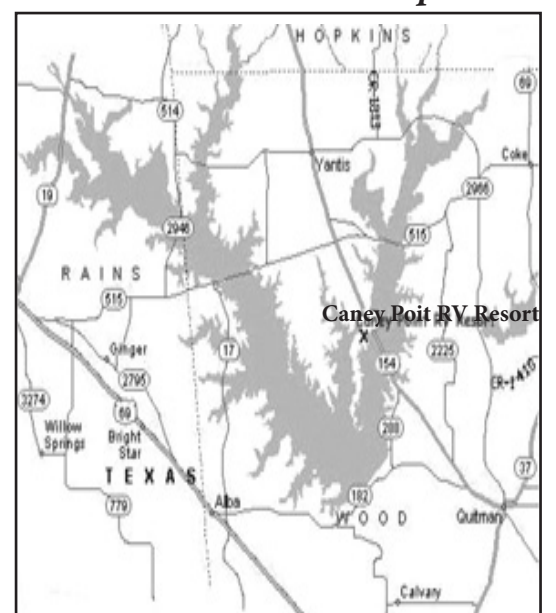
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April on Lake Fork Means Game On!

By David Ozio

"April is here and the boat ramps are filling on a daily basis. The reason, 'It's Big Bass Month'". This is the time of the year when all anglers have a true shot at a trophy bass. The shallows come alive with buck bass as they lay the foundation for the sows to do their annual business. Conditions are setting up to be perfect for several patterns and I expect a fair amount of ultra giants to be ushered in to the certified scales for the anglers to place their mark on Fork history.

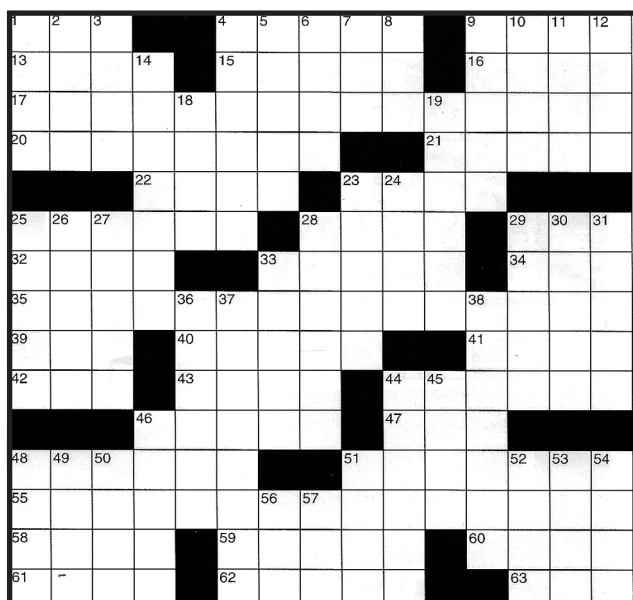
The recent Mega Bass Tournament gave an early peek as to the possibilities for April. A gargantuan 12.35 pound green fish won the event and she was followed by an equally large 12.22 pound behemoth. Can you say "Game On!"

This month will set up to be the time frame that you need to cancel plans and get on the water as much as possible. All it takes is one cast for the game changer of your fishing life. What's the best tactics you say? Let's delve into strategies that may assist you to your angling success.

March was a very warm month and the first wave of spawners pulled into the shallows late in the month. The next wave in April will be the biggest by far as the main lake water temps are in the mid sixties currently and should warm to the upper sixties by the next full moon. This is when the giants will be caught off beds but the bigger giants will be taken when the shad start to spawn. That will happen once the surface temps reach about seventy degrees and there won't be a swimbait left in sight for purchase. Fork is an excellent lake for swimbaits especially when the lake is on the clear side. Unfortunately, the pond is not as transparent as I would like to see but it will do in a rush. There are several large swimbaits being sold around the lake and you can choose the one that strikes your fancy. Huge glide baits have been the recent craze and be prepared to let loose of plenty of cash to wield one of these bad boys. Gizzard shad colors work best for the hard sided lunger catchers and always throw them on heavy mono or stout braid. For the soft plastic versions, use brighter



colors for the off colored water and more translucent baits for the clearer water. The next step is determining which hook to rig on these giant plastic bass offerings. I recommend a 10/0 hook for the full size baits and a 7/0 hook for the minnow size swimmers. From that point you will need to focus on the right depth where the slouches will be hiding and how much weight should be on the hook. Start with no weight and work your way down to a 10/0 weight weighted with 3/4 ounce. This tactic will cover the important levels in the water column and start you on your way. Next is "where"? You can never go wrong with main lake points or secondary points especially if they



CLUES ACROSS

1. WB's cartoon "devil"
4. Soft-finned fishes
9. The back of the neck
13. Australian ostrich
15. _____ Castell, maker of pens
16. Toward the mouth
17. Where teams line up for a new play
20. With as little pain as possible
21. _____ Bucket, trophy of Purdue-IU football game
22. To refuse
23. To check an ID
25. Beyond the sea
28. A savory Spanish snack
29. Mayan language
32. Inclined
33. Wasting of the body during a chronic disease
34. _____-Wan Kenobi, Jedi master
35. _____ of the Apocalypse
39. Holds
40. Eskimo
41. Raised spot on skin
42. A mined mineral
43. An Irish _____ or light tune
44. Spoke
46. Garlic mayonnaise
47. _____ Howard, formerly Opie
48. Rouse from sleep
51. Maker of Japanese electronics
55. Where the true fans sit
58. Loony-_____
59. Coils of worsted yarn
60. Opposite of west
61. Of sound mind
62. A piece of candy or a gift
63. "Mr. Rob _____," song by rock band Styx

CLUES DOWN

1. _____husa, sought a different site for Apollo's temple
2. One not accounted for, _____ (abbr.)
3. Pueblo dweller of New Mexico
4. To insult
5. Frederick _____, French statesman
6. Basics
7. Of she
8. _____ Lanka, island off of India
9. Wanderer
10. Arrack (var.)
11. A gofer
12. Adam and Eve's place
14. Going-away party
18. Evergreens with oily, one-seeded fruits
19. Mire
23. Henry _____ Lodge, American politician
24. One who mimics
25. Even though (slang spelling)
26. Indian province
27. Harold _____, Brooklyn Dodger
28. South Pacific island
29. Tropical American bluejay-like bird
30. White aspen
31. Dug for
33. Strumpet
36. More fatty or greasy
37. Union member
38. To come from
44. The Far East
45. College army
46. One-seeded fruit
48. The divisions in a play
49. Stops a horse!
50. Eon (var.)
51. First Chinese dynasty
52. Italian goodbye
53. One who throws the party
54. Interested in or involved with
56. Norway (abbr.)
57. "_____ whizz!"

Answers on Page 21-A

BEER • WINE • SPIRITS

DOUBLE H

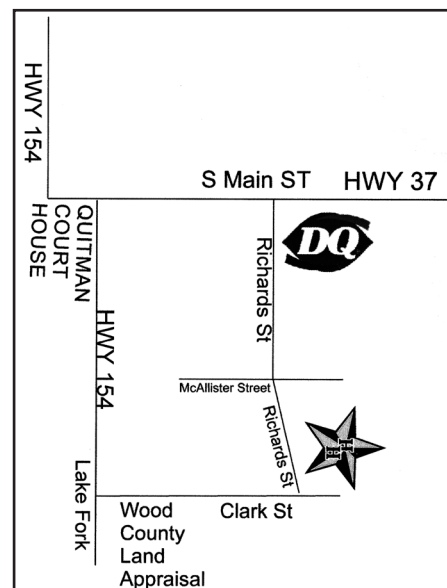
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(See April on Lake Fork....
Continued on Page 20-A)

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Winners in the Texas Trails Bassmasters of Lake Fork 34th Semi-Annual Tournament held on March 18th were (from 1st thru 10th), Craig Massengale, Rich Michaels, Chris Large, David Laymance, Steve Wood, Robert Tatomirovich, Neal Crossan, Curt Blount, Joe David Hicks, and Freddie Steivwinder. Big Bass of the tournament was won by Craig Massengale with a bass weighing 2.48-pounds, 2nd Big Bass was caught by Neal Crossan weighing 2.29-pounds, and 3rd Big Bass was caught by Chris Large weighing in at 2.11-lbs. Fifty anglers came to participate in this club's semi-annual event and \$2,080 was paid out in prizes. Many of the anglers and spectators took home some great prizes they won in the raffle. A big thank you goes out to all the sponsors that help this club put on such a great tournament.

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"The Moon Report" "Crappie Industry Growth"

By Terri Moon

I'm being amazed at the rapid growth of the "Crappie Industry" just within the last few years. Next year will be my 20th year of guiding for crappie on Lake Fork and we are finally starting to see the "fishing industry" take the crappie fishermen serious. We are now seeing better boats that are catering to the crappie world – better rods, reels and tackle – better electronics and most important bigger payout tournaments. Sponsors are recognizing the importance of being present in this growing industry.

The first two Saturdays in April Lake Fork is hosting 'Crappie Fest' and 'Crappie Masters'. There should be record turnouts and record crappie caught. You can find more info on these online. So, if you're in the area, stop in and check out the weigh-ins or better yet, sign up and fish it! The timing of these tournaments couldn't be better as far as water temperatures. I only hope they take good care of the "Giants" they will be catching and that they are released in good shape. I love the practice of releasing the "Giants" – (That's the only way we'll get a new lake record!)

We've been fishing shallow this week (mainly to get out of this crazy wind we've been having) – but, it has been pro-



ducing. We are having fun with the Bonehead "Slim Stick" in blue-grass and black and chartreuse when it's over-cast and in bright conditions white and chartreuse. Also Lake Fork Tackle's blue and pearl and Cajun cricket live baby shad is working. And for those of you who like the Chenielle jigs "Bubbas Baits" in electric chicken or grey/blue tail are great for shooting docks and bridge pylons. We are catching males shallow and the girls are staging in – so basically you can catch them anywhere between 1 to 12 ft. This is the time of year when I'd sure like to have a set of MinnKota TALONS for fishing shallow especially when dealing with the wind and you sure hate to run the trolling motor through that shallow water. What a brilliant invention! That MinnKota has "got it going on!!!"

A big thanks to all the com-

panies putting their time and energy into the "Crappie World." The growth of this sport is headed off the charts with their help.

Also thanks to all you fishermen for supporting these sponsors!

Good luck to all fishing these tournaments! Be sure and stop by Lake Fork Marina if you haven't seen their new tackle store. It's incredible! They've got it ALL!

If you're there on Saturday night, don't miss out on Joe's "Smoked Ribs" at Tiffany's. I'd get there early – they go fast! I'm usually the first in line! They taste like "home" to me!

A big "thank you" to all that have traveled to Lake Fork to go fishing with me this year. It's been great fishing with "old friends" and with "new friends" – "It's ALL FUN" My best to you and be safe!

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Audie Long, Dallas, TX.,



Mike Perkins
Lake Fork



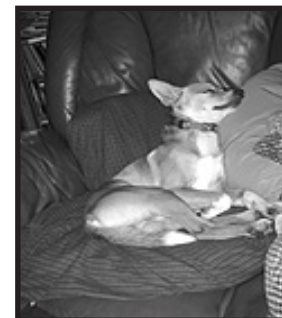
Bill Eberline
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Me having fun
Crappie fishing



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Brett Bretthouer 83, Iowa
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Elliot Laborde
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David & Wanda
Honeycutt



Lori Stevens of Patriot
Paws with sister Diane



Jerry Rosich
Oklahoma City, OK.,



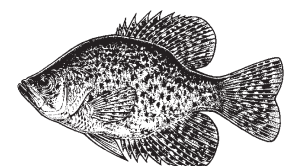
Elliot Laborde on
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Billy Seirles, Nacogdoches



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Marty Painter was fishing Lake Fork on 3/3/17 when he caught this nice 9.68-lb. bass. C.P.R. (Courtesy Photo Minnow Bucket Marina)



Luke from St. Louis was fishing Lake Fork with guide Tom Evans when he caught this hawg. C.P.R. (Courtesy Photo Tom Evans Guide Service)



James Jennings was fishing with local Bill Morgan when he caught this nice 12.01-lb. hawg measuring 25.25", fishing Lake Fork on 3/6/17 C.P.R. (Courtesy Photo)



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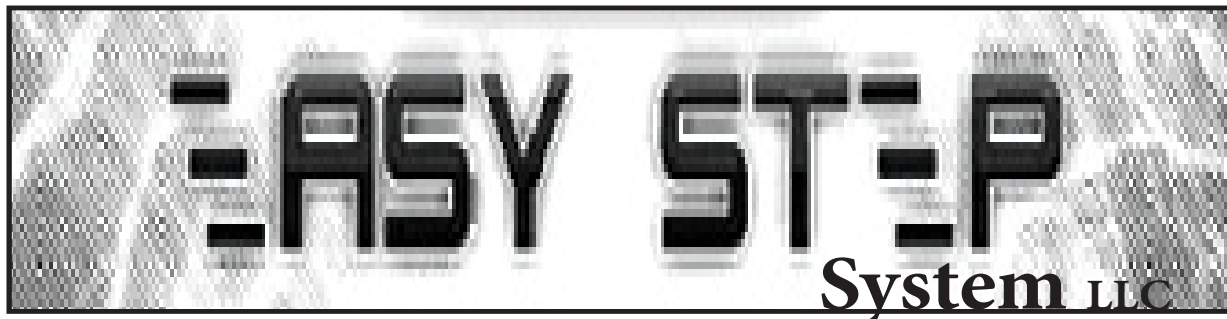
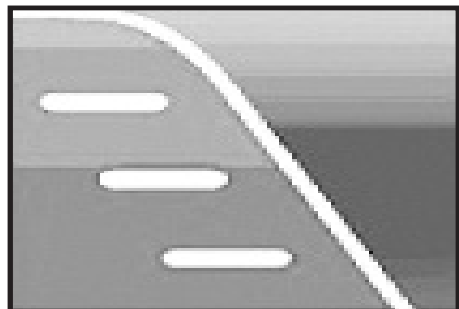
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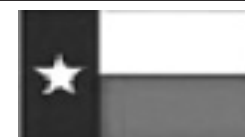
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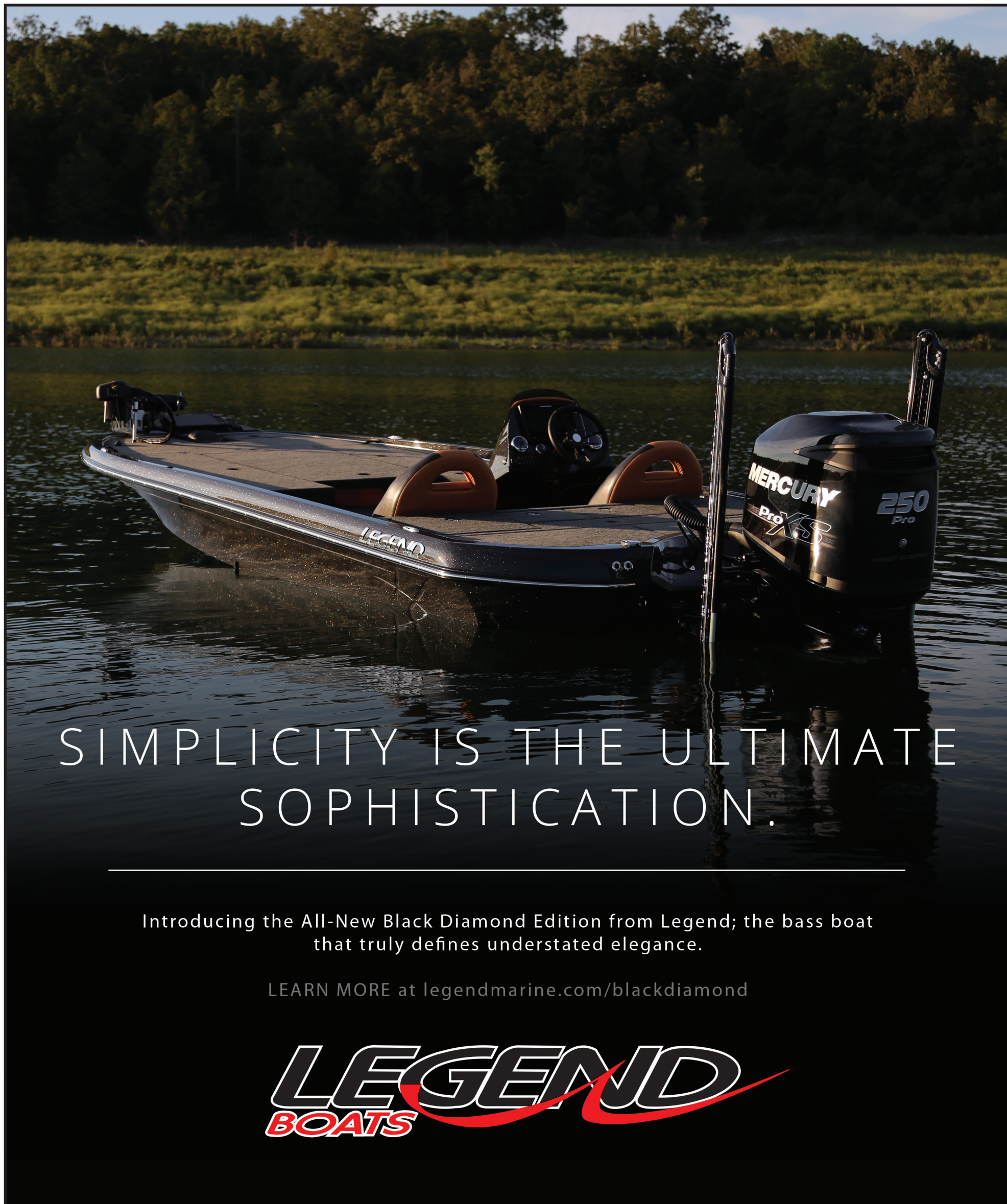
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Hunting Prospects Promising for Spring Turkey Season

With a significant carryover of mature gobblers and an influx of young birds to match wits against, hunter patience as much as skill may be put to the test during this year's spring turkey season.

According to biologists with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), Texas Rio Grande wild turkey numbers have boomed over the past few years thanks to timely rainfall and relatively cool summer conditions that have set the stage

for optimum reproduction and recruitment. As a result, turkeys are making a comeback in many areas where they had been lost due to extended periods of drought and that's good news for turkey hunters hoping to bag a bird this spring.

More turkeys may not guarantee immediate success. Biologists predict the early spring green-up and abundance of juvenile hens could have a profound impact on breed-

ing behavior or at least on a gobbler's willingness to come to the call this season.

"Field observations indicate flocks have already begun to break up and toms have been strutting for weeks," said Jason Hardin, TPWD Upland Game Bird Program specialist. "That means many hens could become interested in breeding near opening day of the season, effectively hampering a hunter's chances of luring love-struck gobblers. If you do go early in the season some of the best hunting could be mid-day after hens split off from males."

"However, by mid-season most of the hens should be bred and incubating eggs leaving a large number of mature gobblers looking for love," he noted. "Also, if conditions remain mild and if we get a few more timely rain events, Texas can expect another good year of nesting and populations growth."

The spring season for Rio Grande turkey got under way March 11-12 with a youth-only weekend in the South Zone, followed by a general season that runs March 18-April 30 and then culminates with a youth-only weekend May 6-7. In the North Zone, the youth-only weekend seasons was March 25-26 and May 20-21. The

(See Hunting Prospects.....Continued on Page 16-A)

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Two TPWD Staff Receive National Wild Turkey Federation Awards

Two Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) staff were recognized by Executive Director Carter Smith as recipients of National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTF) awards for their outstanding work in various fields at a recent meeting in Austin. Micah Poteet Recognized by NWTF as Wildlife Manager of the Year

Wildlife biologist Micah Poteet from the Pineywoods region has been awarded this year's Joe Kurz Wildlife Manager of the Year award by the NWTF for his longstanding and distinguished career in managing the wild turkeys of Texas.

By serving as a technical guidance biologist, Poteet provides insight and direction to other biologists managing close to 14 million acres and 27 East Texas counties about the Pineywoods ecoregion.

He has been highly involved in the eastern wild turkey restoration efforts in East Texas and was a key designer of the TPWD's new Eastern Wild Turkey Habitat Sustainability Index. This new approach incorporates habitat evaluations at multiple scales to identify focal landscapes throughout the region, geographic information system evaluations of proposed turkey

release sites and on the ground habitat measurements.

Poteet also took the extra initiative to spearhead research efforts examining the behavior of wild turkeys in relation to the scale and season of fire in Texas. This research was executed this past winter with over 80 eastern wild turkeys marked with very high frequency and GPS transmitters. Game Warden Dean Fitzpatrick Awarded the NWTF Officer of the Year Award

Game warden Dean Fitzpatrick has been recognized as the recipient of this year's NWTF Officer of the Year award. Fitzpatrick currently serves TPWD as a lead

overt investigator for the criminal investigation division of special operations within the law enforcement division.

Sgt. Fitzpatrick has taken a lead role investigating numerous critical incidents, threats on employees and theft related cases involving de-

partment equipment.

A 19 year veteran of the law enforcement division, Fitzpatrick has become a respected and active member of his com-

munity. Outside of his roles at TPWD, he spends his free time supporting the local youth baseball program as a coach and league president.

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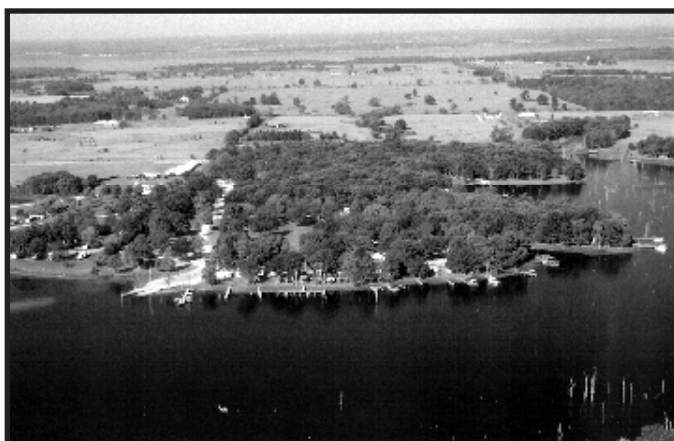
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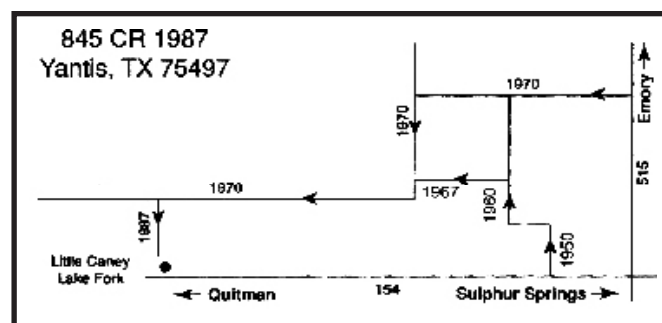
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Hunting Prospects *(Continued from Page 14-A)*

North Zone general season opens April 1 and runs through May 14. A special one-gobbler limit season runs April 1-30 in Bastrop, Caldwell, Colorado, Fayette, Jackson, Lavaca, Lee, Matagorda, Milam, and Wharton counties.

Hunters who were on birds last year can expect more of the same in East Texas this spring. "They should be there again this spring," said Hardin. "We do not expect to see a significant population shift from the 2016 season."

Eastern spring turkey hunting in the counties having an open season is April 15-May 14. Hunters are required to report harvest of eastern turkeys electronically to TPWD within 24 hours of harvest. Reports can be made through the TPWD My Texas Hunt Harvest App or online from the TPWD turkey page at www.tpwd.texas.gov/turkey. The app is available for free download from Google Play or the App Store. Hunters will be issued a confirmation number

upon completion of the reporting process. Hunters still have to tag harvested birds.

The new harvest reporting app can also be used as a tool for voluntarily reporting and tracking harvests of other resident game species, including Rio Grande turkey. With My Texas Hunt Harvest, hunters can log harvested game animals and view harvest history, including dates and locations of every hunt.

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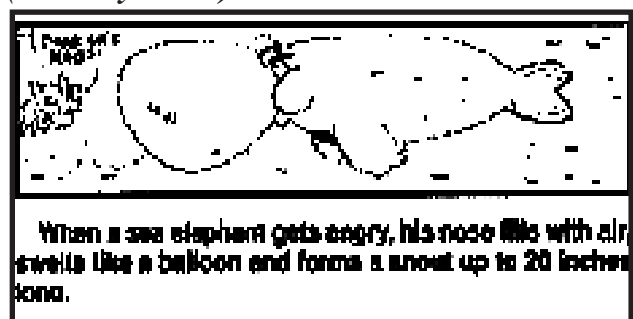
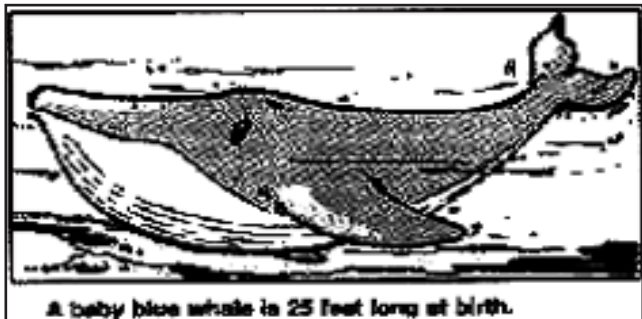
Local angler Jim Martin caught this nice bass while fishing Lake Fork in March. CPR Weight not provided. (Courtesy Photo)



Lake Fork guide John Morris caught this nice bass in March while fishing Lake Fork. CPR (Courtesy Photo)



Kathy Scheumack was just having fun catching and releasing on Lake Fork when she caught this 8+ pound bass. CPR (Courtesy Photo)



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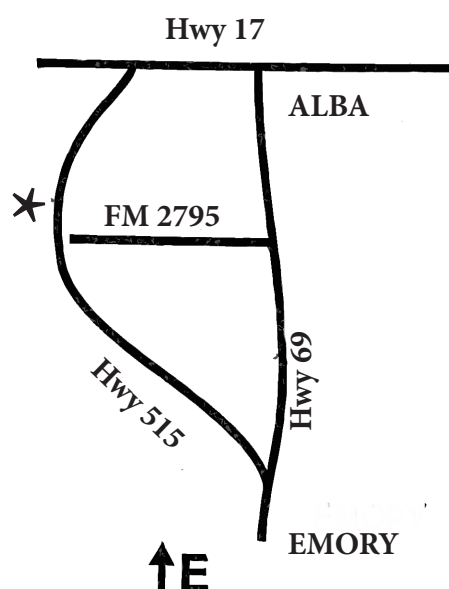
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"Pack of Knowledge" The Big Bass Mindset

By Andrew Grills

We live on an incredible fishery. I moved here all the way from Eastern Kentucky just to be close to this lake and have an opportunity to fish it on a regular basis. It's amazing that Lake Fork has continued to produce big bass with all the odds stacked against it. However, this is still the best lake in the United States for a chance at a double-digit bass.

Bass over 10 pounds are rare. Even south of the border, they still aren't common place. For many, it is the fish of a lifetime. I've been very fortunate to see quite a few happy customers land fish

over 10 pounds, and I have caught a few as well. I always try to keep my boat in a position where a double digit is possible. That means doing the right thing, in the right place, at the right time.

Of course, there are times when a customer just wants a bite because it's been a tough day. However, I remind folks, that wherever they came from, there's probably a pond where they can catch all the two pounders they want. If you travel all the way to fish Lake Fork, put yourself in a position to catch one of the fish this lake is famous for.

Having a big bass mindset doesn't always mean throwing big lures. It's more about location and approach in my opinion. Turning the sonar off when you don't need it, fishing areas with deep water close by, fishing slow, being mindful of trolling motor noise, paying attention to boat positioning... The little things that others might overlook can mean everything.

I also rely on history a great deal. If there was a big bass there before, it was there for a reason. There is likely to be another, maybe even bigger, using that same area. Year after year some of the same little spots continue to produce giant fish, and it's not by accident.

It's important to remember that big bass are a structure oriented fish. People often confuse "structure" with "cover". Cover is what we have in

the form of stumps, flooded bushes, aquatic vegetation, etc. Structure is bottom contour. Big bass relate to elevation changes more than anything, in my opinion. Points, ridges, drop off's, humps... these are what interest big fish more than cover. Of course a big bass loves a stump as an ambush point, however that fish is using that stump because

(See Pack of Knowledge....

Continued on Page 21-A)



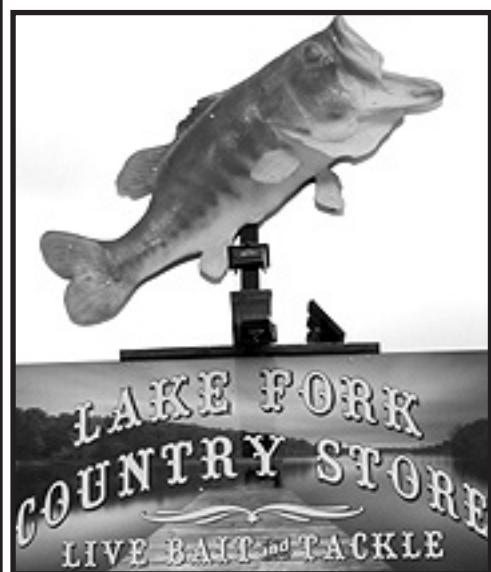
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Mission Reach Paddling Trail Announced as Official Texas Paddling Trail

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department recently announced the San Antonio River Walk: Mission Reach Paddling Trail would be joining 71 other inland and coastal trails as an official Texas Paddling Trail.

The 8-mile long trail winds through restored natural habitat on the San Antonio River and features more than 30 canoe shoots to help paddlers pass through riffles during low flow periods. A float on the entire trail takes about three to five hours, but designated alternate access sites allow paddlers to shorten the trip or stop and explore points of interest along the way.

"We are very excited that San Antonio is now home to two official paddling trails," said Shelly Plante, TPWD's nature tourism manager. "To be able to enjoy views of downtown San Antonio and the historic missions as well as the natural habitat and wildlife that call the river home make the Mis-

sion Reach float a unique experience for paddlers and visitors in the city."

Paddlers looking to float through history have the opportunity to visit the San Antonio Missions National Historical Park and four UNESCO World Heritage Sites along the way by taking out at designated spots near Mission Concepcion, Mission San Jose, Mission San Juan Capistrano and Mission Espada.

Wildlife and fishing opportunities are also abundant on the trail as the plentiful natural habitat attracts several species of migratory birds and provides shade and structure for popular sport fish like largemouth bass and catfish.

The Mission Reach Paddling Trail is easily accessible by

visitors to San Antonio and those looking to see the city from a new angle. The kayak and canoe put in at Roosevelt Park is located minutes from downtown San Antonio and several local vendors offer kayaks and canoes for rent to explore the trail.

The designation of the San Antonio River Walk: Mission Reach Paddling Trail into an official Texas Paddling Trail was a collaborative effort between Bexar County, the City of San Antonio, the San Antonio River Authority, TPWD and San Antonio Missions National Historical Park. The Texas Paddling Trails program helps promote habitat conservation through sustainable economic development, while providing additional recre-

ational opportunities the Mission Reach access points and to the public. To Paddling Trail, and points of interest, learn more about to download maps visit the Texas Paddling Trails website. the trails, including with canoe/kayak dling Trails website.

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April on Lake Fork Means Game On! (Continued from Page 6-A)

have a channel swing close by. Use a long rod and keep casting until something gives. It may be your arm but that's why they make Advil.

More than likely the lake will hover around a couple feet below pool for the month so don't rule out the Carolina rig on main lake points especially following the days right after a cold front. The big bass have a habit of not chasing baits during high pressure so the C-rig will pick up the slack. Magnum lizards, creature baits and even small swimbaits should do the heavy lifting. Choose dark colors for heavily stained wa-

ter and translucent colors like watermelon red for clearer water on sunny days. Big jigs will also play a roll on these points with the same colors schemes as the C-rig. Graph the points before you make a cast and check for activity. If something shows up on the radar as my clients call it, drop a waypoint and start casting. Also, with cold fronts in mind, don't give up on the shallow fish entirely. You can back out to the first breakline and throw a Texas rig or a senko. Use the lightest line possible under the high skies to get the bites you are looking for. Once you get the bite, you can figure out how to get the beast in the boat.

If you are headed out to Lake Fork in April searching for the trophy of a lifetime, I would love to be a part of this trophy quest. I also have gift certificates available if you have friends or loved one's who have dreamt of landing a huge bass. You can contact me at 409 782-4269 or e-mail me at skeet21c@aol.com. You can follow me on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/davidoziolakeforkguide>. I post my daily trip results on this page. I run a Skeeter FX21 with a Yamaha 250SHO and it is gased up and ready to go. I would also like to thank Okuma Fishing and Talon Custom Lures for making my job the blast that it is. I hope to see a lot of you on the water. Romans 10:13. "Everyone who calls upon the name of the Lord shall be saved". I wish all of you a blessed day."

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Pack of Knowledge (Continued from Page 18-A)

of the bottom contour around it. I try to keep that in mind. Instead of fishing stretches of cover, I pay more attention to smaller areas with the right structure. Cover is just a bonus.

Another thing is staying positive. I remember hearing Rick Clunn talk about this. He referred back to his guiding days, when he would see how a negative attitude affected his customer's results. Now that I've been guiding a little while, I have definitely seen it in myself and others. When a customer gets frustrated or loses confidence, it's over. I've never seen a customer who wasn't having a good time or believing in what he was doing catch a big bass. Not once. Sometimes, I'll get frustrated with various things on the water. I have to remind myself about this often, take a deep breath and believe.

Lastly, I try to pay attention to those who have been successful. When I came here I was in awe of some of the veteran guides, and the multiple giant bass they had on record. Whenever I have an opportunity, I ask to hear their big fish stories. I listen to what they have to say. I ask questions. Questions like: "What was the weather like when you caught her?" "How deep was the fish?" "What type of structure was she relating to?" The older generations offer a goldmine of information and experience.

I also read all the books or articles I can

find that were written by documented trophy hunters. As a teenager, I read "In Pursuit of Giant Bass" by Bill Murphy. That book totally changed the way I looked at bass fishing. Some of the best books on the subject were written decades ago. Although the methods mentioned may be outdated, the ideas are

as relevant as ever. People go out and catch big fish all the time on Lake Fork without planning on it, but to do it consistently is something special. That's what the big bass mindset is all about. Here's to hoping our biggest bass is yet to come.

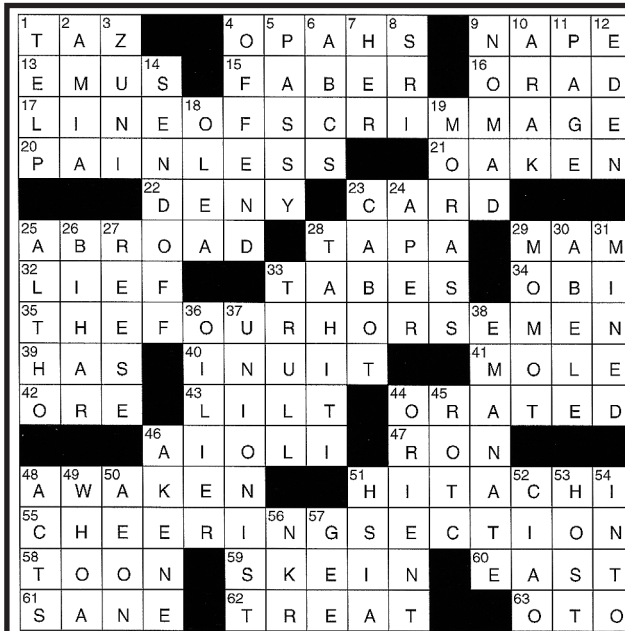
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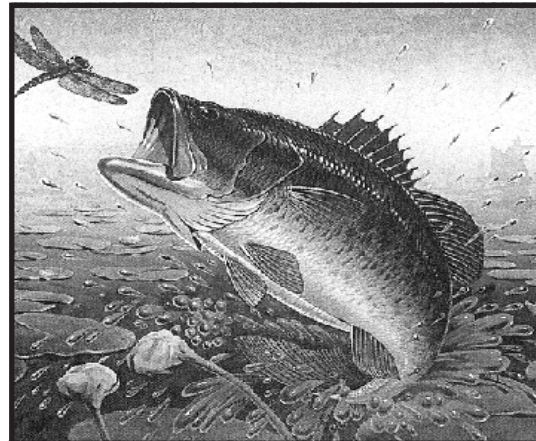
Celebrity Search

The last names of 14 talk-show hosts are hidden throughout the scrambled puzzle below. See how many you can find and circle. The words go horizontally and vertically, backward and forward.

GIFFORD
JONES
LAKE
LENO
LETTERMAN
O'BRIEN
O'DONNELL

OSMOND
PHILBIN
POVICH
RAPHAEL
SHORT
WILLIAMS
WINFREY

W I L L A M S O N E S H
I L E T T E H M A N H E
N B N P L I O G R S L M
F O R N A M R E T T E L
R N O I H I T F W I A L
E Y F B P W O F I C H P
Y N E L A O P R N F P H
P O V I C H S D F E A I
H S O H L A H E E G R L
I M E P O V O B R I E N
B O N H W I T N E F R Y
S N J O N E S N P F I O
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9th Annual Mega Bass *(Continued from Page 4-A)*

His bass weighing 2.60-pounds held in first place for the last hour of the tournament. I'm confident that he is still smiling. He definitely deserved it after being knocked out of winning a new boat during the last hour of the Berkley Tournament held on Lake

Fork this past October. "We look forward to this event every year," said Chad Potts, President of BassChamps. "We appreciate everyone for making the trip to fish with us from so many states. All of you help make this event bigger and better, and we look forward to

seeing everyone who has fished with us before and meeting those coming out for the first time. Congratulations to all of the winners in this event. We look forward to seeing you in our upcoming events!"

Practice C.P.R.

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Billy Pritchett from Kerens, TX., had every reason to be smiling at the Mega Bass Tournament. He won the 2 o'clock hour for \$15,000 with a bass weighing 2.60-lbs.

If you have news or photos on Lake Fork

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Stephen F. Austin State Park Reopens After Almost a Year of Flood Repairs

After almost a year of repairs from the flooding last Memorial Day, Stephen F. Austin State Park reopened its gates to visitors March 1.

Last Memorial Day, the park was under almost 7 feet of water after torrential rain hit the area. Most of the park's facilities were under water including the park store, cabins, screened shelters, the Bullinger Creek Group dining hall, Bullinger Creek Lodge and nature center.

After months of clean up by park staff and volunteers, the park opened their doors once again to visitors.

"Our staff has been

working very closely with the community since last summer to rebuild the park and bring it back to the people of Austin County," said Martha Garcia, park superintendent at Stephen F. Austin State Park. "The park positively impacts our community due to its location off IH-10, so it was very important to us to reopen and get back to business."

Although some areas are still closed, the majority of the park is open for guests to enjoy - including the large overnight group shelter. The three areas still marked as closed include the Bullinger Creek

Group dining hall, Bullinger Creek Lodge and nature center.

"We are looking forward to having park visitors spend some time at the park," said Garcia. "There are still great times to be had at Stephen F. Austin State Park and we can't wait to see everyone again soon."

The park is now taking reservations. To reserve a campsite, visit the Texas State Parks reservation page on the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department website.

For more information about Stephen F. Austin State Park, visit the park's webpage.

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