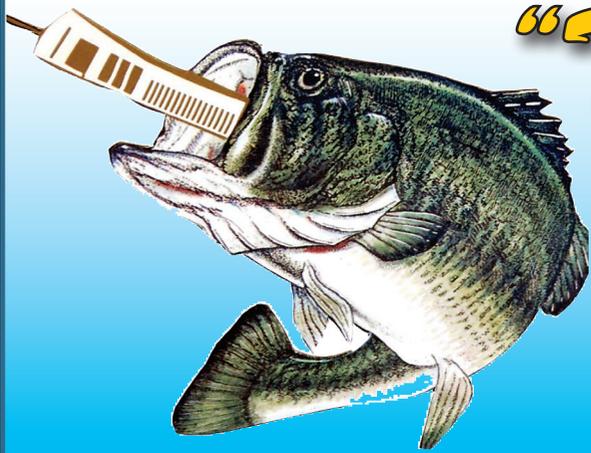


# LAKE FORK "The Big Bass Capital Of Texas"



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1 Section

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Vol. 21

March, 2020

No. 247



Steve Wells caught this nice hawg fishing on Lake Fork in February. This bass measured over 24" and is a very memorable catch. Weight unavailable. C.P.R.



Cody Broadway caught this nice Lake Fork hawg night fishing with guide Whitt Smith on 2/23/20. The big ones are feeding up for the spawn. Weight unavailable. C.P.R.

## BassChamps Mega Bass On Lake Fork March 22nd

By Don Hampton

The Mega Bass Tournament presented by Bass-Champs will be held on Lake Fork March 22nd hosted by Lake Fork Marina.

This is the highest paying single day tournament for amateur bass anglers with \$20,000 in cash pay-outs guaranteed every hour of the tournament.

The heaviest bass brought to the scales each hour will receive \$15,000; 2nd heaviest \$1,000; 3rd \$900; 4th \$800; 5th \$700; 6th \$500; 7th \$350; 8th \$300; 9th \$250; and 10th \$200. There will also be a T-shirt bonus each hour. If an angler purchases a T-shirt and is in 11th or 12th place in any hour, they will receive \$150. Even adding more excitement to the tournament, any angler that weighs

in an exact weight of 2.50-pounds, 3.00-pounds, 9-pounds, or 10-pounds, that angler will receive an extra \$500.

Mega Bass is open to all boat brands. For the angler that brings the heaviest bass of the tournament to the scales, they will not only have \$15,000 in their pocket but also be taking home a 2020 Skeeter ZX 200.

Early entries received before March 18th are eligible to win prizes in a drawing from Techron, Berkley, Abu Garcia, Amphibia, and more. For those that wish to enter at the tournament, registration will be on Saturday March 21st from 12 to 7 pm and Sunday March 22nd at 5 am.

For more information about the tournament go to [www.basschamps.com](http://www.basschamps.com) or call 817-439-3274. Check out the ad on Page 32.



David Griffin caught this nice Lake Fork bass while fishing February with David Ozio. Weight unavailable. C.P.R.



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"Spring Cleaning Has A Much Different Definition To Bubba Than Bubbette!"

By Don Hampton

Bubba and Bubbette's definition of "Spring Cleaning" is as different as night and day, black and white, and here and gone. This is because it is usually Bubba that was here but now he's gone!

To Bubbette "Spring Cleaning" is like baptizing everything in the house by immersion or sprinkling so everything to the sight and touch is heavenly clean and fresh. The problem with this is it usually comes with a list of about a thousand "Bubba Do's". This list consists of raking, pruning, burning, mowing, painting, trimming, and blah, blah, blah. That's what Bubba thinks about

this list! Everything on the list is just too doggone time consuming to Bubba and that means taking time from his fishing endeavors.

Bubba's definition of "Spring Cleaning" is clean those catfish and crappie. Breathe that clean air out on the lake while catching those bass. Keeping the boat and reels clean for the next day's fishing trip is on his list. Also the never ending task of cleaning his truck so it looks as pretty as his matching boat at the ramp or when on the road to a tournament is on his list. One thing for sure is that you will not find any of these "Bubba Do's" on Bubbette's list.

The most recent "Bubba Do" that got the

whole neighborhood fired up was when Bubbette told Bubba he had to do something with all the leaves on the property. She handed him a rake and told him to get with it! Well, he did alright! He was in a big hurry because he knew where some big sows were moving into the shallows and he had planned on going fishing instead. The way he saw it he could perform one of his shortcuts and still make it to the fishing hole! He used the rake alright, but just to make a fire break, then he set everything on fire! He took care of the leaf problem alright, not only on his property but also on half of his neighborhood's property. If he took notice of the wind when he was

going to burn something, just half as much as he does when he goes fishing, he wouldn't have had to play firefighter all that afternoon instead of getting to go fishing. One thing about it, the next time Bubbette tells Bubba to take care of the leaves, she'll be keeping a closer eye on him!

The one chore Bubbette has for Bubba that he really doesn't mind so much because he has so much fun doing it, is painting. You know how Bubba loves his stuff! Well he really got some manly work stuff last year when he bought himself an air compressor and paint sprayer. Bubbette has learned too! She doesn't ask him to paint very much! Not so much be-

cause she doesn't want a new coat of paint on something, it is more because she doesn't want the cat and dog painted, birds flying by with a new coat of paint on them, not to mention all the different colors of flowers and grass Bubba creates.

Bubbette has also quit asking Bubba to mow the lawn. Whenever he would get on the riding lawnmower, you would think he was in his bass boat in a tournament racing someone to a secret fishing hole. Heck, he could mow the whole yard in 10 minutes. Bubbette decided the yard would look much better if she would just do it herself. Bubba being filled with compassion for his lady decided he would just

let her, and to really show what kind of guy he is, he bought her a new riding lawnmower for Valentine's Day!

Come to think of it, I've seen Bubbette's "Bubba Do" list and fewer chores were on it this year than previous years and he seems to be on the lake a lot more for this time of year! I think Bubba may be a little smarter than we give him credit for!



Tears, idle tears? No quite. In addition to clearing your eyes of dust, hairs and such stuff, your tears contain substances that fight bacteria and proteins that combat eye infection.

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## An Open Letter from Barry Hatton, Owner of Oak Ridge Marina

Ten years ago, in March of 2010, we bought Oak Ridge Marina. At the time, the restaurant had been closed for a year, the tackle store was empty and there was a sign on the door that said "If you want a motel room, call this number".

Early on, we realized that, as the new owners of Oak Ridge, we were merely the current caretakers of an institution that has been here for decades. It was here long before us and would likely be here long after we're gone. In the tradition of leaving a place better than we found it, we set out to revive it.

The first summer, we remodeled and reopened

the restaurant. In those early days, we were overwhelmed by 25 customers for a meal.

That fall, we braved the cold waters and put in a new boat ramp while we learned how NOT to put in a new boat ramp.

In the spring of 2011, we restocked and reopened the tackle store. At the time, the most expensive lures we had in the store were Yellow Magic topwaters that sold for \$16.99 and we kept them in a glass display case.

That fall, we put mini-fridges, microwaves and DirectTV in the motel rooms.

In 2012, when the lake was the lowest we've

seen, we built the pavilion down in the cove. Less than a week after the posts were driven and the first decking board was put on, the lake filled to full pool.

Since then, we continue to build out Oak Ridge behind the scenes: new kitchen, new smoker, new storage, new office.

The last couple of years, we've added new boat slips and a new road sign, paved the parking lot, re-plumbed the RV park and replaced a collapsed septic tank.

Now, in 2020, the most expensive bait we stock is a Roman Made Mother, a 12" glide bait that sells for \$499 and

*(Continued on Next Page)*



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hangs on a peg in our swimbait room, located in the tackle store that now houses over 18,000 pieces of over 4,000 different products.

In January, we served our HALF-A-MILLIONTH meal in the restaurant.

In March, we will be hosting the first ever Major League Fishing tournament to be held at Lake Fork.

In ten years, we have paid out over two million dollars in wages to local employees and generated over a million dollars in taxes to the county and state.

We joke that we must be one of Wood County's biggest money-launderers. Everything we take in, we turn around and hand out to someone else.

While I am tremendously proud of our ten-year anniversary and what we have accomplished at Oak Ridge, we still have more to do. This year, we're remodeling the motel rooms and making some other pretty significant changes to the property (stay tuned).

The biggest and most important lesson we've learned is that there is NO problem so big that it can't be solved by throwing huge amounts of money at it.

The second lesson we've learned is that while it is EASY to open a business, it is HARD to keep one open. It requires commitment, dedication, a certain amount of bull-headedness and tremendous personal sacrifice.

Things don't always follow the plan and not everyone wants to see you succeed.

Sometimes, you have to make unpopular decisions to ensure the survival of your business. Even the least qualified customers can have expert opinions on "what you OUGHT to do", either because they watched Gordon Ramsey on TV or because they stayed in a Holiday Inn Express last night.

And the rumor mill... Oh, the rumor mill.

Unfortunately, over the past ten years, we've seen many area businesses come and go. In fact, some properties have turned over multiple times since then.

We're often quick to (See An Open Letter... Continued on Page 22)



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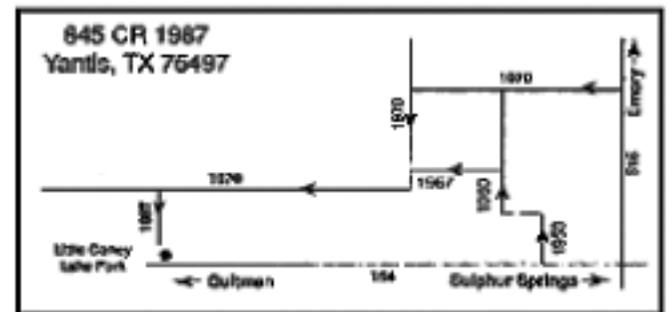


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# "Concentrate on Major Staging Points!"

By David Ozio

"The rains over the past two weeks aren't doing us any favors at the moment! Welcome to spring time on Lake Fork! As with the past several years the early rains have brought the lake back over pool and the gates are open as we speak. Not to worry as the green monsters are on schedule and heading up to the spawning areas to do their annual business. Surface temps are occasionally bumping up to 57 degrees in certain locations with main lake water temps hovering around 50-52 degrees. Find the critical staging areas and it's game on for the trophy of a lifetime.

Concentrate your focus on these pre-spawn bass around main lake and secondary points at the entrance of major creeks, creek channel edges and bends, drains and ditches that are in close proximity to spawning flats. These staging fish will feed heavily through late February and early March while waiting for water temps to reach a consistent 58-62 degrees before advancing to the bedding areas. Water temp is the single most important factor during this time of year and a huge cold front can spell trouble for the advancing bass especially if it's near the March full moon.

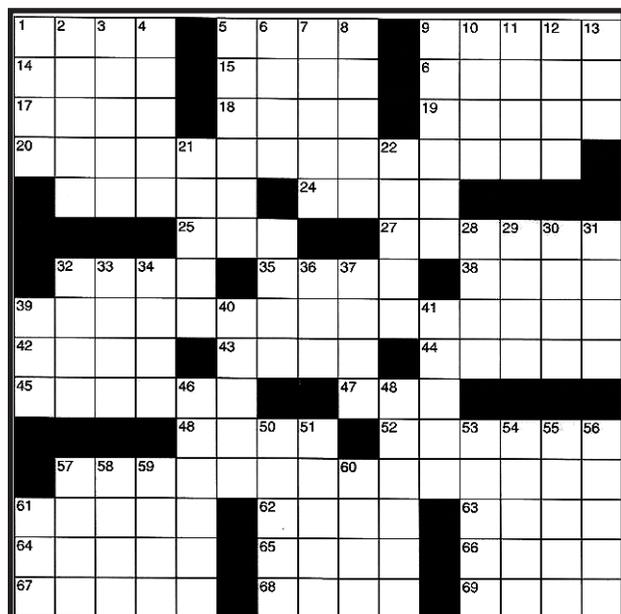
Provided all conditions are stable, start your search on the northwest side of the largest creeks and key on the current water temps in that area. The higher the thermometer reading, the better chance you have of seeing those giants cruising the shallows. Once the bass feel comfortable in an area, the ritual begins. Your job will be to target these big fish as they are setting up house. The all time best bait to capture your trophy of a lifetime will be on a big swimbait. There are several types on the market and you will need to find one that is weedless. Color choices can range from a bone color to light hitch or dark hitch. All will work under varied conditions. Throw these baits into very



shallow water in the aforementioned areas of the lake and get ready for some heart stopping action. Don't be afraid to chunk these baits into the thickest cover. They are designed to slide right out and keep on truckin.

During this time of the year, there are other patterns that will work equally as well. The Strike King 8.0 squarebill will deliver it's share of the pre-spawn giants. Shad colors work well and direct your efforts to the main lake and secondary points which are located in the near vicinity of the spawning areas. Shell beds also play a key role in how these fish will set up and spending time

(See Concentrate on....  
Continued on Page 20)



**CLUES ACROSS**

- 1. Low in degree
- 5. Aid
- 9. \_ and Venzetti
- 14. \_ Mater, one's school
- 15. A growth-regulating chemical sprayed on fruit trees
- 16. Hindu calendar month
- 17. Double-\_\_ instrument
- 18. Not very intelligent or interested in culture
- 19. Aphrodite's mother
- 20. Watch feature
- 23. Greek Island
- 24. \_\_ Frank's diary
- 25. The compass point
- 27. In a way, expressed audibly
- 32. The compass point that is one point east of southeast
- 35. A small island
- 38. Small drought-resistant sorghums
- 39. Creamy desserts
- 42. Israeli dance
- 43. People descended from a common ancestor
- 44. Walter William \_\_, British lexicographer
- 45. Musical compositions
- 47. Express delight
- 49. Monotypic genus of palms of Australasia
- 52. Type of bookworm
- 57. Marx Brothers film
- 61. Pops
- 62. \_\_ Bridges, actor
- 63. A Hindu age
- 64. Turn (obsolete)
- 65. Sunrise (Spanish)
- 66. Egyptian Sun god
- 67. Whole things
- 68. The dried leaves of the hemp plant
- 69. Russian river

**CLUES DOWN**

- 1. Large cat
- 2. Glyceryl ester
- 3. 24th letter of the Greek alphabet
- 4. Base
- 5. Challenge aggressively
- 6. Hebrew calendar month
- 7. \_\_dor, Northern country
- 8. A way to dress up
- 9. Make unhappy
- 10. Charge
- 11. Puff filled with cream or custard
- 12. Bevel
- 13. Single unit
- 21. A way to wipe
- 22. Typical geese
- 26. Blame (Scottish)
- 28. A city in the Asian part of Soviet Russia
- 29. Move upward
- 30. Ancient Greek City
- 31. Thou \_\_ protest too much
- 32. Turn away
- 33. Acquire by one's efforts
- 34. Small nail
- 36. Engine additive
- 37. Mother of Apollo in ancient mythology
- 39. Chronicles, abbr. (Biblical)
- 40. Musical passage
- 41. Escort
- 46. Chalcedonies
- 48. Grand and comic
- 50. Asian rat snakes
- 51. An item of prepared food
- 53. Moshe \_\_, Israeli leader
- 54. Able to recognize or draw fine distinctions
- 55. A desert in S Israel
- 56. Ethiopian lake
- 57. Longest division of geological time
- 58. Iranian language
- 59. The sister of your parent
- 60. Hearts
- 61. British thermal unit

Answers on Page 21

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**Buffalo Soldiers Program Celebrates 25TH Anniversary with Founders Event, New Museum Exhibit**

In honor of Black History Month, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's Buffalo Soldiers program celebrated its 25th anniversary with a founder's event and exhibit unveiling in February at the TPWD headquarters building in Austin.

Speakers at the event included Senator Royce West, Buffalo Soldiers program founders Kenneth Pollard and Tad Gose, and TPWD Executive Director Carter Smith. Texas Parks and Wildlife Commissioner Oliver Bell and former TPW Commissioner Bill Jones were also in attendance.

"The Buffalo Soldiers program has been a part of TPWD and Texas State Parks for 25 years and celebrating this monumental anniversary is a great way to kick off Black History Month," said Rodney Franklin, Director of Texas State Parks. "Texas heritage includes all of us. Sharing the story of African American heroes and heritage through a rich military history is a source of pride for all Texans, and TPWD is honored to celebrate the legacy of the Buffalo

Soldiers during the event."

The new plaque and exhibit unveiled honors the founders of the Buffalo Soldiers program with a display of items used during some of the first outreach events at schools and communities. The exhibit will be on display and open to the public at the TPWD headquarters building in Austin for a year before moving to the Buffalo Soldier Museum in Houston.

"The unveiling of the Founders Memorial plaque is a significant moment for the Buffalo Soldiers program," said Franklin. "It pays tribute to the hard-working staff and volunteers that dedicated countless hours, weeks and years bringing part of Texas History and African American history to life. It will forever serve as a homage to the legacy of the Buffalo Soldiers program and its founders."

The Buffalo Soldiers were the first free unit of professional African American soldiers in the U.S. military who served on the western frontier from 1866 to 1948 building roads, telegraphs and forts. Today, the

TPWD Buffalo Soldiers program educates school students and park visitors about the original soldiers and encourages outdoor skills and recreation.

With almost 15 years with TPWD, Pollard has established partnerships with numerous history organizations and Buffalo Soldier groups continuing their support of the program today. He's also spearheaded major victories for the program, such as working with state legislators to establish July as the official Buffalo Soldier's Month in Texas.

Gose began his almost 35-year career with TPWD at Lake Arrowhead State Park in 1978. Considered one of the founders of the Buffalo Soldier program, his largest event at the park drew more than 4,000 visitors. One of his most challenging assignments during his tenure was as a staff member on the Huff Wagon train journey. Along with more than 100 Texas youth, Gose and others rode hundreds of miles from El Paso to Houston on horse drawn wagons to bring the stories of the early frontier to life.

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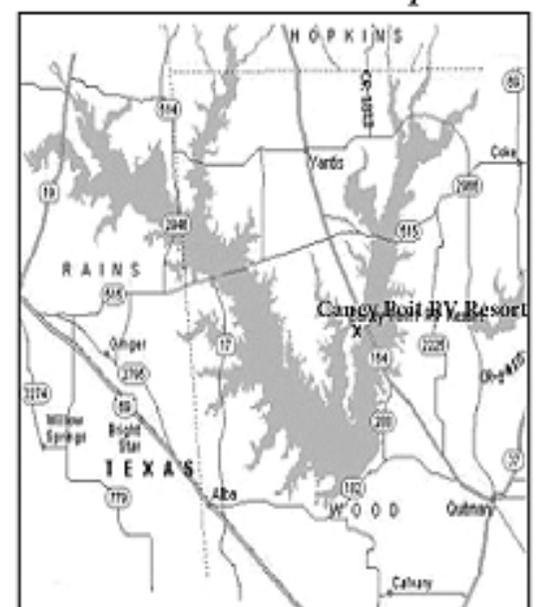
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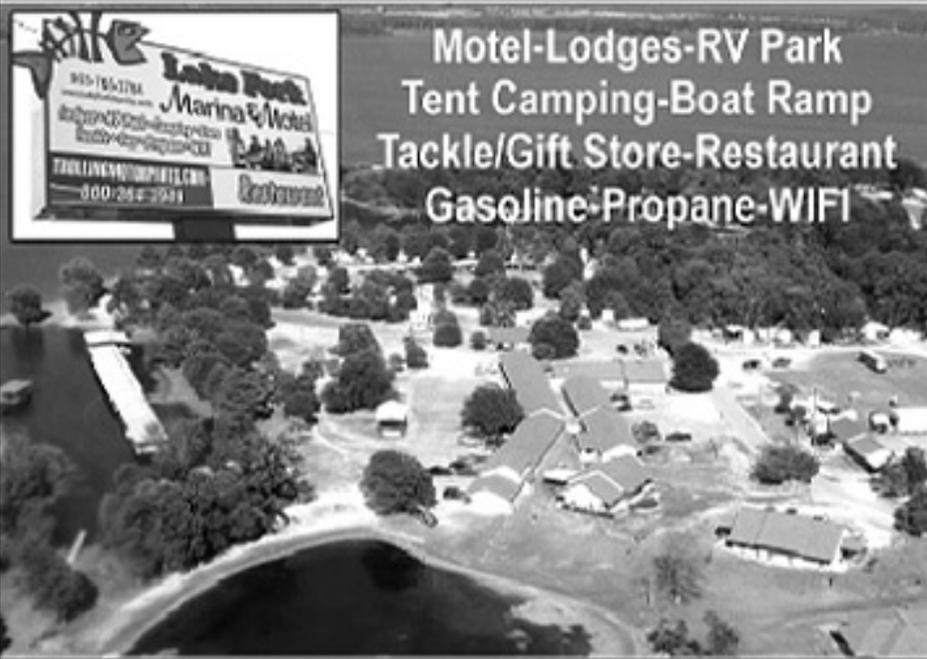
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# “The Moon Report”

## “March Pre-Spawn Crappie!”

By Terri Moon

WOW! – I thought when I left Missouri I’d leave the cold and wind behind – but it showed up in Texas the day I arrived! The water temps had reached the low 60’s a week prior and the male crappie were moving up the creeks starting their transition, seeking warmer water and following baitfish. I thought I was going to come home to ideal conditions – but, ‘Mother Nature’ had other plans hitting us hard with rain, dangerous winds, and very cold temperatures. Water temps dropped to the upper 40’s – then to top it off, they had to release water because of all the rain. So, needless to say it was a tough February on everyone!

As the water temps begin to rise back to the mid 50’s, then check on up the creeks targeting 12 to 20 ft. (the crappie will generally suspend 6 to 12 ft.) – then move in shallower as the water temps continue to rise. When the temps get in the 60’s – HANG ON – it’s gonna be fun!

Also remember this is just the first wave of crappie trying to move up. So if you’re not having any luck shallow, try structure around the nearest deep water in that area. My Lowrance Carbon Units are my number one tool especially this time of year. Keep following the baitfish!

Until they get shallow it’s going to be a light bite



– a slow motion to no motion has worked best for us and always watch for your line to just go slack.

The baits working for us have been Lake Fork Tackle’s live baby shad in Cajun cricket, black and chartreuse, or chartreuse and pearl, depending on the brightness of the day and the clarity of the water. Also, the shallower I fish, the smaller the jig head. Another way to locate the migrating crappie is to fan cast small crankbaits around structure or across flats. It’s all fun!

I look for this to be an exciting year on Fork. Everyone is loving getting to fish out of my new Skeeter Solera 205. They say the comfort level is off the chart! I sure appreciate it most when Lake Fork gets rough! Let’s all hope our weather conditions will finally stabilize making it fun for everyone! But, it is March so we know we still have some crazy weather yet to come. So, be safe out there and use

good judgment! Don’t forget March 1st the 10” minimum goes back in effect.

Now for you “Buddy” fans – (the Lake Fork Marina camp dog) – he has been so excited to be back to Texas after his road trip to Missouri. He was so happy to see all of his friends at the marina store but most of all he loved getting to go for a swim in the Lake Fork Marina pond! He is getting back in to the routine of coming home with me at night and he waits at the boat ramp for me to come in from my fishing trips. It’s been a “labor of love” looking out for this “gentle giant” and I appreciate everyone else looking after him when I can’t be around – THANK YOU! And you can see Buddy updates on my facebook page.

Sending love and prayers to my family in Missouri and wishing you all many blessings!



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**Practice C.P.R.**

# Welcome Back, Axton's Bass City

By Carolyn West

In the late 80s, Joe Axton, a well-known avid fisherman, created his dream of owning a Marina, holding fishing tournaments, providing food and housing, tackle and more than that – fishing advice and tips for Lake Fork fishermen and visitors. Joe worked the marina during the day and then, as everyone knew, night fished. Birch Creek, where he and his wife lived, was a favorite spot. Night fishing provided his daytime stories!

After Joe's untimely death, the marina dwindled somewhat. When the family sold it recently, there

was an immediate sign of renovation. The motel rooms now are being upgraded; painting continues; a restaurant opened; shelves are stocked with grocery basics; there is a full tackle shop selling baits, jigs such as Bill Baldwin's handmade "Bubba's Baits", rods, reels, boat accessories.

So, there is a newness about Bass City. There are new owners, Allen and Sarah Sheehan. There is a new manager known by so many people around Lake Fork, Mascha Taylor. There is a renovation of grand scale including dock and shoreline improvements. The Sheehans have taken the time to study the layout, make a progressive plan, pri-

oritize vital changes, assemble a waitstaff ready to serve and now have opened a legacy business. In fact, Mascha is creating a picture legacy of Axton's back to the 80s to display in Axton's Bass City.

A soft opening of the business has piqued the interest of many of us who knew the original store and also those who are recognizing that a new marina is open on the north side of Lake Fork. A grand opening was held on Saturday, February 29, 2020.

It will be a new opening of a past legacy, for sure! Welcome to Lake Fork, Allen and Sarah Sheehan. Welcome Back, Axton's Bass City.



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## Battleship TEXAS Foundation Now Accepting Proposals for Battleship TEXAS's New Home

The Battleship TEXAS Foundation (BTF) is now accepting proposals for the selection of a home port for the Battleship TEXAS after it returns from major repairs. The request for proposal (RFP) opened Jan. 21.

After the proposals have been submitted, the BTF will conduct a fair and extensive evaluation and select the location best suited to the future needs of the Battleship TEXAS. Anyone wishing to submit a proposal must contact the BTF through [info@battleship.org](mailto:info@battleship.org) to request the RFP package.

Currently, the BTF and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) are preparing the ship for transportation to a shipyard. There, repairs will include replacement of the hull from the waterline down and new paint, along with other necessary improvements.

The ship is tentatively scheduled to depart her current berth between April-August 2020 and be in the shipyard for a period of about twelve-months. Once the battleship leaves the shipyard, the ship should be arriving in its new berth around August

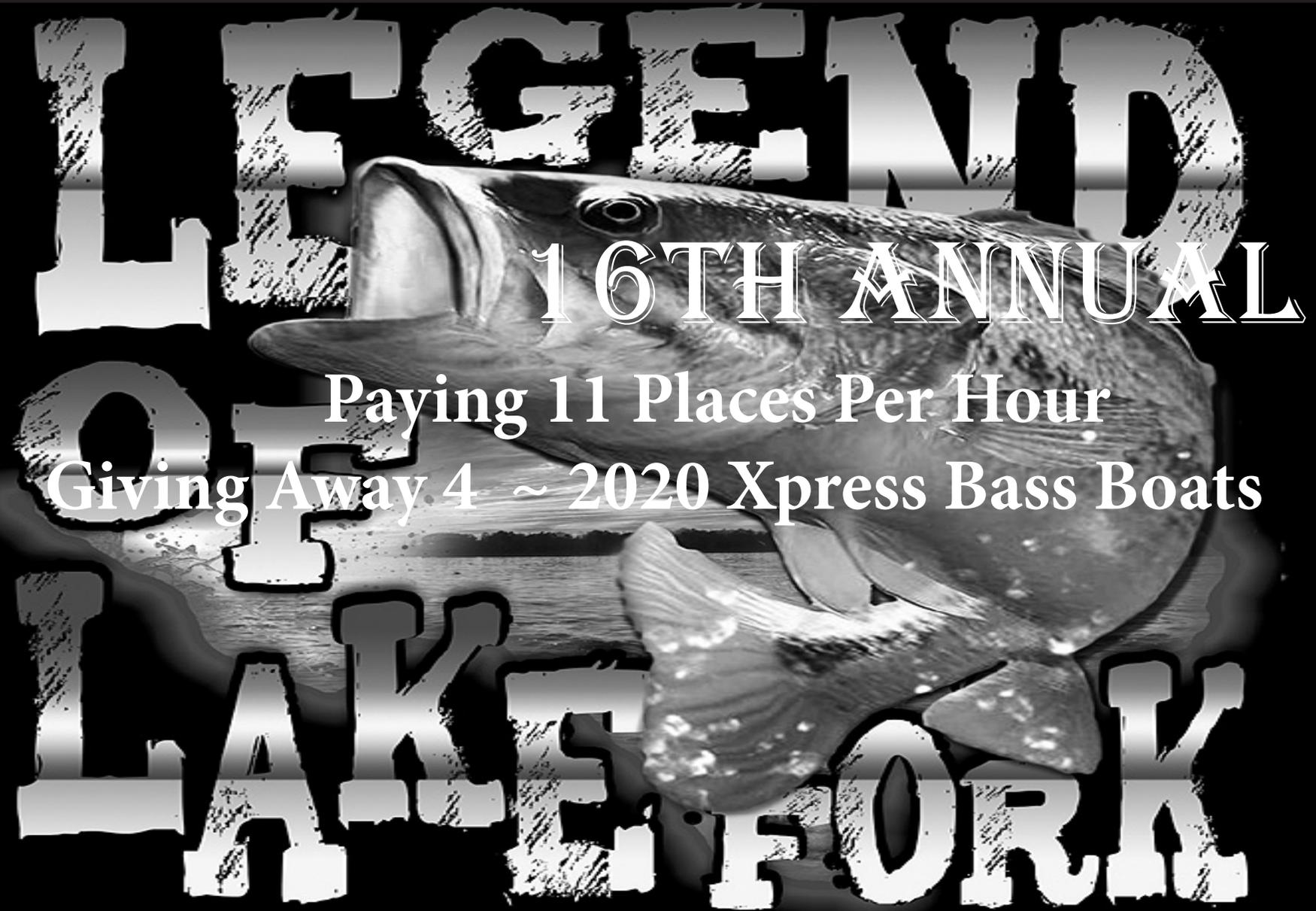
2021. Following a period to prepare the ship for reopening, the plan is to have it receiving visitors by early 2022.

The BTF is a nonprofit foundation that was founded in 1999. Its mission is to preserve and enhance the Battleship TEXAS and develop this historic ship into a premier museum and visitor attraction. In 2019 the BTF and TPWD entered a 99-year memorandum of understanding/lease with TPWD whereby the BTF would operate and maintain the Battleship TEXAS for TPWD and the State of Texas.




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## Texas Game Wardens Bite Down on Shark Finning Offenders in Houston and Dallas

Texas Game Wardens are filing several Class B misdemeanor charges on 10 restaurants and markets in the Houston and Dallas area for selling shark fins and shark fin products.

"Protecting the many shark species residing and migrating through the Gulf of Mexico, as well as the illegally trafficked sharks from around the world, offered for sale in Texas is one of our highest priorities," said Col. Grahame Jones, Law Enforcement Director at the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. "Texas

Game Wardens will continue to proactively work investigations related to illegal shark fin products and violations against the many species of wildlife found throughout the state."

The charges, which are being filed with the Harris and Dallas County District Attorney's offices, are the result of an extensive investigation involving several businesses allegedly participating in the illegal commercialization of fins from various protected shark species. The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's

Special Investigations Unit and game wardens from the Houston and Dallas area executed multiple search warrants which led to evidence seizures in both cities.

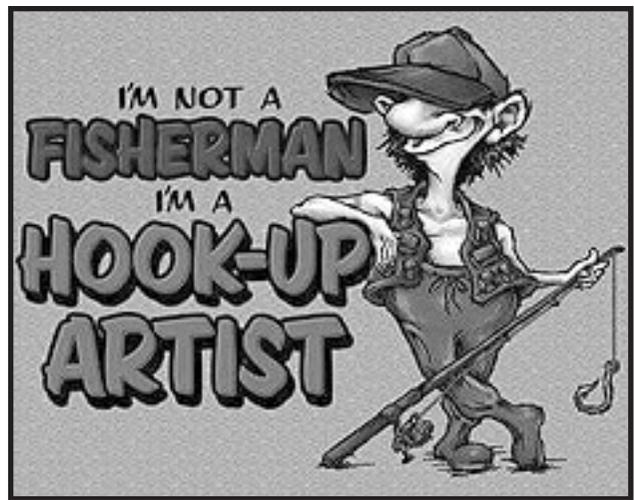
Additionally, Harris County game wardens are wrapping up an investigation from December 2019 that resulted in Class A and Class B misdemeanor charges on multiple retail and wholesale fish dealers in the Houston and Seabrook area. Charges include possession of a shark without the fins and the unlawful commercial sale or

purchase of aquatic products. During the investigation, about 30,000 pounds of shark carcasses were

found to have been sold and several hundred pounds were seized by wardens. All charges are be

ing filed through the Harris County District Attorney's office.

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# "Knowing What To Look For!"

By Michael McFarland

March madness is almost here! Are you ready for it? This is my favorite time of year simply because I know the days are growing longer and each week gets a little bit warmer than the last. With the exception of passing cold fronts, the warm trending weather is soon to bring in the waves, a big spawning bass, and the promise of some great spring fishing.

Lake Fork offers many different ways to target these big fish during the month of March. Staging bass are probably most prevalent in the northern most end of the lake where things

warm up first. Bass will be beginning to migrate up the creeks and channels to the backs of the pockets and spawning flats and with warm enough water male bass will even begin digging nests. Stopping spots like secondary points and channel bend swings are places you should expect to catch fish but also where you might catch a big fish. Funneling locations like bridges, ditches and drains, pond dam breaks, tree lines and road beds can all be used as great highways for these migrating fish. Main lake shell beds are another exceptional place to begin looking for big female bass. Once the main lake water temperatures reach a stable 54 degrees the gizzard shad will begin to spawn in and amongst the shell bed areas. Big female bass will raid these dense shell bed areas gorging on the spawning gizzard shad. These bass are nomadic which means they come and go irregularly. Its best to find a good active wind blown shell bed and stay awhile. The loon is the secret

here. If the loon is diving on the shell bed and successfully catch baitfish, you can be sure the gizzard shad are present. Now its time to set up and stay awhile. I have been known to camp on a shell bed for half the day or even longer. I look at it like a deer feeder-- when the bass come, we catch them. The month of March will produce some giant bass. Will you be lucky enough to catch one of them?



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# King Kat Tournament Trail Travels to Lake Tawakoni, TX

Catfish anglers from several states will travel to W. Tawakoni, TX and Lake Tawakoni for a King Kat Tournament Trail event presented by Bass Pro Shops Cabela's. Local and traveling anglers will be vying for cash, prizes,

and an opportunity to compete at the 2020 King Kat Classic which will feature a guaranteed payout of \$120,000 in cash and prizes.

Anglers fishing the March 7, 2020 event will be testing their catfishing

skills against other anglers and whatever Mother Nature has in store. Texas Parks and Wildlife report abundant numbers of channel and blue catfish in Lake Tawakoni along with limited numbers of flathead catfish.

The lake has long been known for eating sized catfish, but recent years has seen an increase in trophy sized fish.

The current listed record for a Tawakoni blue cat is 87.50 pounds. The beast was caught in 2014. The entirety of Lake Tawakoni will be legal waters for the early season tournament. Local anglers advise that shad is one of the best baits that anglers can use on Tawakoni.

### How to Enter

Teams may consist of one to three anglers but limits are based on a two-person team. Early registration can be accomplished on the King Kat website at [https://www.kingkatusa.com/Tournament\\_Registration.cfm](https://www.kingkatusa.com/Tournament_Registration.cfm). Teams may also enter by

calling (502) 384-5924 or by entering at the mandatory pre-tournament seminar on the night before the tournament begins. Late entries are subject to a \$25.00 late fee.

Participating anglers must be a member of the King Kat Association (KKA). Membership is \$30.00 for adults and \$15.00 for spouse and youth memberships. Other membership levels are outlined on the King Kat website. Each membership will include a subscription to the Outdoor Journal. It is the official publication of the King Kat Association and one of the top catfishing fishing publications in the nation.

### Registration and Seminar

A pre-tournament seminar will be held the day before the tournament at Lake Tawakoni Regional Chamber of Commerce, 100 W. TX 276, West Tawakoni, TX 75474. Sign up will begin at 5:00 pm. The Seminar and National Sponsor Field Test Product Drawing starts at 7:00 pm local time. This seminar is open to the public. Those individuals not fishing the event are encouraged to attend and meet top catfish anglers from several different states.

### The Weigh-In Site

The tournament weigh-in will be held at West Tawakoni City Park, 1208 E. Hwy 276, West Tawakoni, TX

(See King Kat...  
Continued on Page 21)



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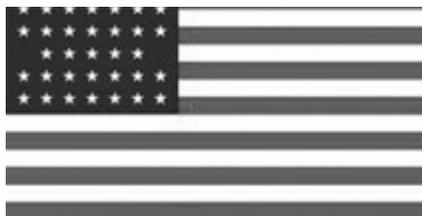
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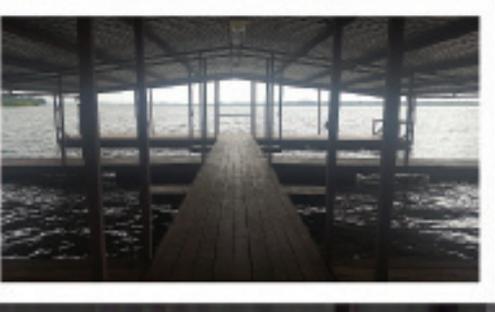
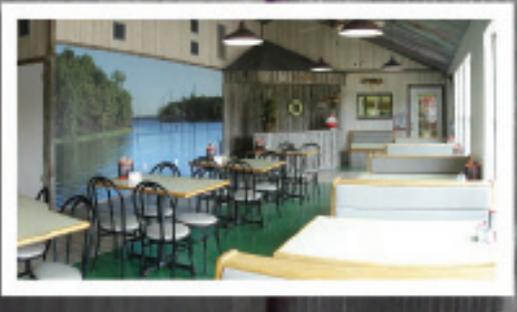
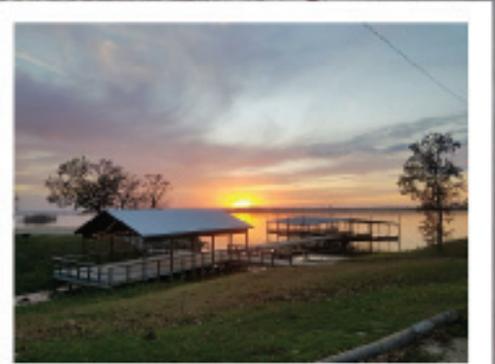
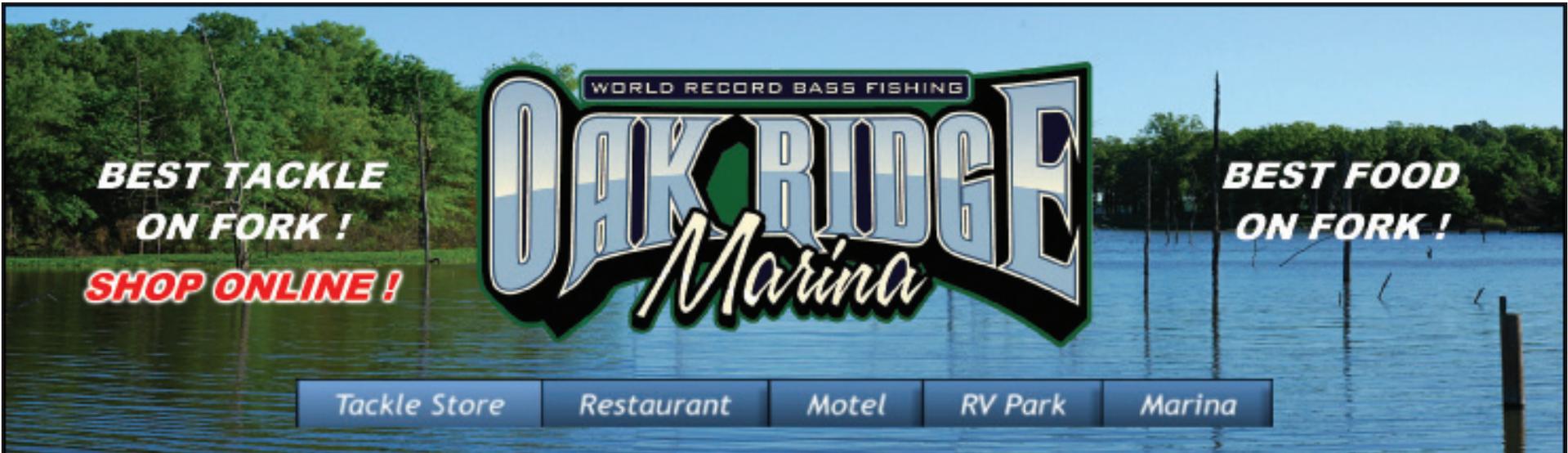
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**TPWD Seeking Public Input on Freshwater Fishing Regulation Proposals for 2020-2021**

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) is now accepting public comment on proposed changes to freshwater fishing regulations for 2020-2021. The proposed changes include modifying harvest regulations and gear restrictions at five water bodies located in Cooke, Williamson, Tom Green, Grayson and Starr/Zapata counties.

TPWD will be taking public comment on the following pro-

posed changes to the 2020-2021 Statewide Recreational and Commercial Fishing Proclamation, with input to be considered before any action by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission at its March 26 public hearing:

**Moss Lake (Cooke County)** – Modify the 14-inch minimum length limit for largemouth bass to a 16-inch maximum length limit

**Brushy Creek Lake and Brushy Creek**

(Williamson County) – Modify harvest regulations for Brushy Creek Lake by changing from an 18-inch minimum length to the statewide 14-inch limit for largemouth bass. On the section of Brushy Creek downstream from the lake to the Williamson/Milam County line, reduce blue and channel catfish daily bag limit from 25 to 5 fish and remove the 12-inch minimum length

*(Continued on Next Page)*



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limit, and add gear restrictions (pole and line angling only and anglers limited to two poles)

**Lake Nasworthy (Tom Green County)** – Modify harvest regulations for black and white crappie by removing the current 10-inch minimum length limit

**Lake Texoma and the Texas waters of the Red River below Denison Dam (Cooke and Grayson Counties)** Standardize harvest regulations for blue, channel, and flathead catfish in the Texas and Oklahoma waters of Lake Texoma and on the Red River below Lake Texoma. In Lake Texoma, remove the 12-inch minimum length limit for blue and channel catfish, and for flathead catfish, remove the 18-inch mini-

mum length limit. In the Texas waters of the Red River below Lake Texoma (from Denison Dam downstream to Shawnee Creek), in addition to the removal of the minimum length limits for catfish, reduce the daily bag limit for blue and channel catfish from 25 to 15 fish.

**Falcon International Reservoir (Starr and Zapata Counties)** — Continue the five fish daily bag limit for alligator gar. This regulation was designated for review and possible continuation during this year. The public is encouraged to provide comment on the proposed regulation changes. Opportunities to provide comments for or against these proposals include:

**Online:** Once the proposed regulations

are published in the Texas Register, comments on the changes can be provided on the TPWD public comment page until March 25.

Phone or Email: Comments on the proposed changes may be submitted to Ken Kurzawski at (512) 389-4591, email: ken.kurzawski@tpwd.texas.gov.

**In person:** The TPW Commission will take public comment on the proposed changes at their meeting on Thursday, March 26 in Austin. Public testimony will normally be limited to three minutes per person.



By Don Hampton

The 7th Annual CrappieFest on Lake Fork will be held on March 28th. For those crappie enthusiasts looking to make some extra mon-

ey doing what you love there is \$38,700 guaranteed total payouts.

This is an individual 'Big Fish Tournament' and the entry fee is \$75 per person. CAT membership is not required

to participate. Fishing hours will be from 7 am to 1 pm. All anglers must be line by 2 pm at Rains County High School in Emory.

(See CrappieFest... Continued on Page 24)

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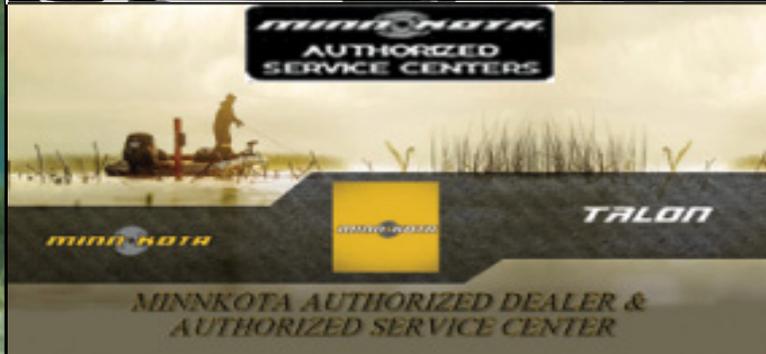
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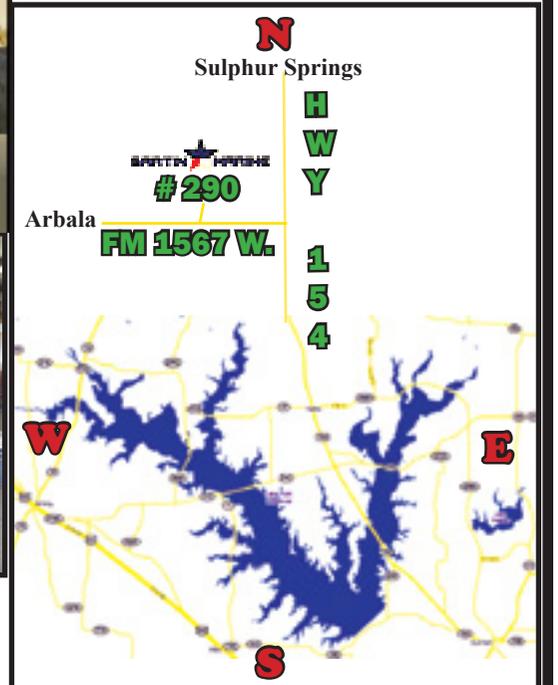
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## Lake Fork Sportsman's Association "Preserving the Legend That is Lake Fork"

By Larry Marler, President  
Lake Fork Sportsman's Association

Tournaments have begun and spring has started. Lake Fork Sportsman's Association is ready to support the Lake Fork fishing tournaments with our release boat operation. We are already scheduled for most tournaments and look forward to a great year. We have completed our plans for our Spring Raffle so visit our booths at all of the major tournaments. We have great raffle items totaling over \$5,000, so stop by and see us. Lake Fork Sportsman's Association supports projects on Lake Fork that benefits all of us. Come join us and be part of Preserving the Legend that is Lake Fork. Our Mission:

- Promote sportsmanship and the protection of natural Resources
- Promote the quality of Lake Fork Fishery and other outdoor recreations
- Promote the future of Angling through youth programs
- Promote a Spirit of Cooperation with Local, County, State and Federal

Government Agencies and other Civic organizations for the purpose of improving Lake Fork and its surrounding communities

- Promote items of interest of the membership at large

The Lake Fork Sportsman's Association's most visible presence on Lake Fork is a 24 foot Live Release Boat purchased in 2000. The Boat is equipped with three 100 gallon aerated tanks and is provided to tournaments at no charge. Lake Fork Sportsman's Association members participate in training sessions, explaining the proper operation of the Live Release Boat. Experienced members explain the aeration system and monitoring equipment, along with proper flogging techniques to save Bass. The fishermen catch the Bass and we release them back into the Lake. The Lake Fork Sportsman's Association is an organization of dedicated Sportsman whose goal is to promote this great Fishery, and stand ready to protect it as the needs arise.

Please watch for us at the upcoming tournaments and visit our Live Release

Boat and booth. Based on all the reports we are receiving from local experts, this should be an outstanding fishing year. Lake Fork Sportsman's Association meets on the 2nd Tuesday each month 6:30 P M at Tiffany's Restaurant at Lake Fork Marina.

Please come visit, meet our members and join us in Preserving the Legend of Lake Fork.



**Lake Fork Sportsman's Association**  
*Preserving The Legend*

**TACKLE DONATIONS NEEDED**  
Rods, reels, tackle, and fishing-related equipment are needed to support the High School Fishing Tackle Program sponsored by Lake Fork Sportsman's Association. LFSA requests donations of new and used fishing articles that will be cleaned, assembled, and refurbished. Items will be further donated to area high school fishing teams. Call Larry Marler, 336-413-3053, or Mike Kostial, 760-458-7885, for more information or to arrange a donation.



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Sat. ~ 8 a.m. to 1 p.m. Closed Monday**

**"Concentrate on Major Staging Points!"** *(Continued from Page 6)*

with a local guide can be the big bass education you've always needed. They will show you what to look for and how to cover the right water to locate the "always elusive" slouch's. Like I said before, cold fronts can be a game changer when pursuing trophy bass so pay close attention to the areas that you are fishing. Fish will pull back during these conditions and you will need to back out and target wood in the 6-14ft range to collect your trophy prize. A black/blue jig will gain the starring role and be sure to stay in contact with the jig to

feel the bite. Big bass will often bite very softly so you will need to control the slack line to feel the jig as it scours the bottom.

If you are headed out to Lake Fork in March 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/Lake-ForkGuideDavidOzio>. I post my daily trip results on this page. 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."

**DAVID OZIO LAKE FORK GUIDE SERVICE**  
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David Griffin with David Ozio



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**King Kat Tournament** *(Continued from Page 14)*

75474 beginning at 3:00 pm and anglers must be in the weigh-in line by 4:00 pm. This is the perfect opportunity for non-competitors to learn how the big ones are caught. Interviews of the top 5 teams are conducted following the final weigh-in.

**Sponsor**  
The West Tawakoni EDC welcomes all King Kat anglers and their guests to the area and invites them to take the opportunity to enjoy the local attractions.

**Host Lodging Site**  
Host lodging is Anchor Inn Marina, 800 Tomahawk Dr., West Tawakoni, TX 75474

903-447-2256. The number of rooms in the area may be limited. It is recommended that participants make their reservations early.

**Free Kids Fishing Rodeo**

A FREE Catfish Kids Fishing Rodeo will be held in conjunction with the tournament. Sign up is Saturday morning at West Tawakoni City Park, same as the weigh-in location.

The event is free of charge and open to all youth 12 years old and younger. An adult must accompany all participating children. Sign up is from 8:00 am until 9:00 am with fishing from 9:00 am until 11:00 am. The Fishing Rodeo is a chance for children of the area to get out and enjoy nature, do a little fishing and win some prizes. All participants are eligible for a chance to win one of six \$1,000 scholarships presented by Outdoor

Promotions. The scholarships are awarded annually at the Cabela's King Kat Classic.

Outdoor Promotions and participating anglers have contributed \$360,000.00 to youth scholarships since 1997. They are very proud to be a part of the education

process for the youngsters who participate in the tournaments as adult/youth teams and those who fish in the Outdoor Promotions Kids Fishing Rodeos.



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903-360-6994 [www.wishtofishfoundation.com](http://www.wishtofishfoundation.com)

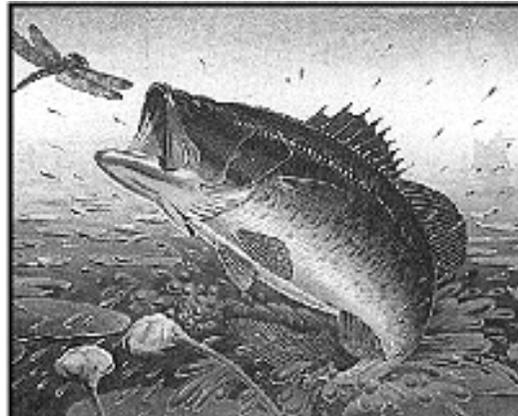
P	O	O	R		H	E	L	P		S	A	C	C	O
A	L	M	A		A	L	A	R		A	G	H	A	N
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U	N	I	T	S		S	E	S		N	E	V	A	

**Weather Find**

There are 14 weather terms hidden throughout the scrambled puzzle below. See how many you can find and circle. The words go horizontally and vertically, backward and forward.

TEMPERATURE	FRONT
BAROMETER	JET STREAM
DEGREES	DEW POINT
CUMULUS	MAP
METEOROLOGIST	WIND CHILL
WEATHER	HUMIDITY
RAIN	FORECAST

W P A F R O N T E P R S  
E E C E T S A C E R O F  
A O A D E R A T E I E T  
W C Y T I D I M U H N S  
E O K P D B B S R A R I  
A N O T D A O O K Y S G  
T E M P E R A T U R E O  
H T A I W O O I A S P L  
E R P S P M L B P E V O  
R P N T O E K E N E W R  
E A A A I T R I C R A O  
R N R P N E A L A G W E  
J E T S T R E A M E R T  
G L U E A E L P T D E E  
P R E S U L U M U C M M  
W I N D C H I L L A P V



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**An Open Letter** *(Continued from Page 5)*

wish for new businesses, new dining or shopping opportunities and we even have economic development organizations whose primary objective is to promote those efforts. However, we all too infrequently call for support of our mature, established businesses.

For a change, I'd like to encourage people to patronize the Lake Fork area businesses who have the same owners today that they had in 2010 when we bought Oak Ridge. In other words: the SAME BUSINESS has been open under the SAME NAME and the SAME OWNER for at least ten years. I'm going to call them Lake Fork "Dou-

ble Digit" businesses. These are businesses that are obviously doing something right and deserve our community's support.

- Fisherman's One Stop (19 years)
- AJ's Fish House (16 years)
- Lake Fork Marina (14 years)
- Verona's Italian Café (12 years)
- Oak Ridge Marina (10 years)
- Neon Moon (almost 10 years)
- Tiffany's Restaurant (almost 10 years)
- Minnow Bucket Marina (7 years)

Admittedly, ten years is an arbitrary line in time and there are businesses that have been operating for nearly as long so

I've included some of them too. I also focused on businesses who are "out here on the frontier" around the lake as opposed to having the traffic of one of the local towns. However, every community has similar long-term businesses that deserve our support. If I've missed anyone, I apologize; it was not intentional.

To those businesses that have survived the last ten years with us, I have tremendous respect for you. To the customers that have supported us the last ten years, I thank you. To those who want to open new businesses, I wish you all the luck in the world and hope to see you on the "Double Digit" list someday.



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## Bird City Texas Certifies Four Inaugural Communities

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and Audubon Texas, partners in the Bird City Texas Initiative, are proud to announce that four communities have received certification during the inaugural application cycle. Bastrop, Dallas, Houston, and Port Aransas have been recognized as the leaders in community action and bird conservation. These certified communities took action in three categories: community engagement, habitat management, and threat reduction for birds. The Bird City Texas certification lasts through 2022.

"We're excited to join Audubon Texas in recognizing these four communities for the incredible work that they've done for birds, wildlife habitat, and connecting people with nature," said TPWD Urban Wildlife Program Leader Richard Heilbrun. "It's not easy to become a Bird City Texas community; it takes dedication and vision. We are confident that their accomplishments will lead to stronger, more resilient communities for people and birds."

The sponsors would like to recognize some accomplishments and commitments these communities have made.

After the Bastrop County Complex Fire of 2011, Bastrop has been committed to restoring their rare Lost Pines ecosystem for birds and other wildlife that are dependent on it. They have also chosen to address light pollution by being a Dark Sky Community, specifically choosing not to light a prominent bridge in town for the benefit of migratory birds.

Dallas has restored hundreds of acres of native prairies throughout their city, benefiting many grassland bird species. They have worked to reduce to the amount of pesticides used to remove invasive plants during these restoration projects. They've also created an innovative outreach program that provides birding backpacks for urban youth.

Houston has done a fantastic job of creating nature centers throughout their entire community, providing outreach and bird-friendly resources for a wide range of demographics. This includes providing substantial resources about bird-friendly buildings. They have also promised to increase the number of prairies that are restored within their city limits.

After Hurricane Harvey, Port Aransas committed significant resources to restore coastal ecosystems and fix damages to birding amenities caused by the storm. They clearly understand the link between bird habitat and ecotourism, and have a brilliant nature preserve

system that is managed to provide excellent bird habitat for coastal and migratory birds. They are continuing to acquire surrounding land to buffer these preserves.

By undertaking these actions, these newly certified communities help their residents and their birdlife. Bird City Texas communities can use their bird-friendly designation to attract more of Texas' 2.2 million birdwatchers who are major drivers in the state's \$1.8 billion wildlife-viewing industry.

In the coming months, certified communities

will host a variety of events to continue promoting the importance of birds and healthy habitats. We encourage interested participants to visit each community's Chamber of Commerce website, as well as TPWD and Audubon Texas' websites for updates.

For communities interested in applying for certification, the 2020 Bird City Texas application cycle begins in early summer. Please visit [www.birdcitytexas.org](http://www.birdcitytexas.org) for more information on how to apply for certification.



### Texas Trails Bassmasters of Lake Fork

## 39th Semi-Annual Open Tournament

April 18, 2020 \* Lake Fork, Texas

Oak Ridge Marina \* Hwy 154 N.

Guaranteed Pay-Out Based on 100 Entries **903-878-2529**

Drawings Held After Weigh-in for prizes



1st Place	\$1,040.00
2nd Place	\$780.00
3rd Place	\$520.00
4th Place	\$260.00
5th ~ 10th	\$100.00



30% Pay Back



100% Pay Back

There will be a big bass pot ~ \$10 per person entry	
Big Bass will pay Three (3) places. (Based on 100 entries)	
1st Place	\$500
2nd Place	\$300
3rd Place	\$200

1. Entry fee is \$40.00 - late entry is \$45.00

2. Early entries must be postmarked by April 11, 2020.

3. All entry fees must be paid before 6 a.m. Sat., Apr. 18, 2020.

4. Check in times: Fri., Apr. 17, 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. and Sat., Apr. 18, 5 a.m. to 6 a.m. at Oak Ridge Marina.

5. To qualify, contestants must check in at tournament headquarters before fishing.

6. Fishing hours will be 6:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. (official clock at sign-in station). NO FISHING from midnight till start time.

7. Fishing will be done on Lake Fork only (trailer fishing allowed).

8. Contestants must fish from a boat. NO bank fishing or leaving the boat to land a fish.

9. Life jackets must be worn any time their outboard motor is running.

10. All state, federal, and local laws must be obeyed or contestant and fish may be disqualified. No slot fish may be brought to weigh-in.

11. No one may have more than five (5) fish in their possession at any time. Only one (1) may be 24" or greater.

12. Largemouth bass 12" to 16" or 24" or greater in length may be weighed. No fish under 12" or between 16" and 24" will be weighed (or state law limits at the time of the tournament).

13. All fish must be caught on artificial bait by casting. (No trolling with gas engine). Pork trailer may be used.

14. Weigh-in starts at 3:00 p.m. (official clock at sign-in). You must be in the weigh-in line by 3:30 p.m.

15. All fish must be brought to the scales in weigh-in bags.

16. No iced or frozen fish will be weighed. Ice may be added ONLY to aid in survival of fish.

17. Each contestant will be responsible for weighing his or her own fish. (No pooling of fish).

18. Dead fish at weigh-in will be penalized 1/2 (.5) pound. All fish weighed in become the property of TTB and will be released (with the exception of trophy or dead fish).

19. In the event of a tie for any position, prize money for that position and the following positions will be combined and evenly divided between the tying contestants.

20. Contestants may not have served as a compensated guide on Lake Fork 30 days prior to the tournament.

21. Contestants may fish with a guide on Lake Fork prior to the day before fishing this TTB tournament.

22. Use of alcoholic beverages or controlled drugs are prohibited during tournament hours. Prescription drug use should be declared at sign-in.

23. Anyone who has ever been disqualified for cheating or misconduct from any tournament is ineligible to fish.

24. Any contestant who violates any rule may be disqualified. Any act of a competitor, verbal or physical, that reflects unfavorably upon TTB's effort to promote fishing, conservation, clean waters, courtesy or safety shall be reason for disqualification from this and all future TTB tournaments.

25. Parent or guardian must accompany contestants under 18 years of age.

26. All protests must be registered in writing with the tournament judges within 15 minutes after designated weigh-in time. All decisions of the tournament judges will be final in all matters. Anyone protesting the outcome of an open tournament will have to pay for any additional polygraph test given.

27. All boats must be 18 ft. in length or longer. An aerated livewell is recommended to aid in fish survival for live release. Anglers cannot leave boat to land a fish.

28. All contestants are responsible to have read these rules and must agree to abide by them (by signing the entry form) while competing in this TTB event.

29. Contestants will be subject to polygraph test. Failure to take and/or pass such a test will result in disqualification.

**ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

For more information or for information on joining Texas Trails Bassmasters of Lake Fork visit our website: [www.texas trails bassmasters.com](http://www.texas trails bassmasters.com)

**Entry Application**

Entry fee of \$40 must accompany mailed entry and must be postmarked on or before Apr. 11, 2020 to Texas Trails Bassmasters, 538 PR 5861, Yantis, TX 75497, or you may pay \$45 at tournament headquarters before starting time of tournament. \$10 extra for Big Bass (Optional). Print clearly.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Having read and understood all the tournament rules, by my signature I agree to accept all decisions of the judges final, by my signature I waive, release and hold harmless all members, officials and sponsors of any and all alleged liabilities to me or my equipment.

Contestants Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Minor's Release: Signed by \_\_\_\_\_ Parent/Guardian

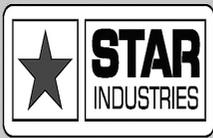
TTB USE ONLY

Entry # \_\_\_\_\_

Entry Fee \_\_\_\_\_

Big Bass \_\_\_\_\_

Cash \_\_\_\_\_ Chk# \_\_\_\_\_



# 7th ANNUAL CRAPPIEFEST

Saturday, March 28, 2020

Lake Fork

Tournament Hours—7:00 AM—1:00 PM  
Must be in Weigh-In line by 2:00 PM @ Rains High School, Emory, TX

**INDIVIDUAL – BIG FISH TOURNAMENT**  
\$75 Per Person Entry Fee  
CAT Membership NOT required to participate

**\$38,700** Guaranteed Payout



Fish from Boats,  
Banks or Docks

### TOP 20 BIG FISH PAYOUTS

- \$1,250 to the Top finishing CAT Member
- \$7,500 "SeaArk Boats Monster Crappie Bonus" for 3 pound Crappie (if more than one 3 lb. crappie is caught the bonus money will be split)
- \$500 for the FIRST Crappie weighing exactly 1.00, 1.25, 1.50, 1.75 and 2.00 lbs.



Adult participants NOT weighing in a "Top 6 Fish" are eligible for a chance to win!! (Drawing after the Tournament!!)

**MUST BE PRESENT TO WIN ONE FISH WEIGH IN**

Jr. Anglers (2 Divisions—ages 10 and under; 11-17)  
Are encouraged to participate (NO entry fee, Prizes only)



Please visit our Website [www.crappieanglersoftexas.com](http://www.crappieanglersoftexas.com) for membership, meeting information, tournament entry forms and complete tournament rules.

## 7th ANNUAL CRAPPIEFEST

(Continued from Page 17)

Anglers in the tournament can fish from a boats, banks or docks.

There will be payouts for the Top 20 Big Fish of the tournament with \$1,200 to the top CAT member. Also there is a "SeaArk Boats Monster Crappie Bonus"

for a 3-pound crappie paying \$7,500. If more than one is brought to the weigh-in, the money will be split. For more incentive, there will be \$500 for the first crappie weighing exactly 1, 1.25, 1.5, 1.75 and 2-pounds.

For adults that participate and not weighing in a 'Top 6 Fish' are eligible for a chance in a drawing for one of the 4 Golden Tickets worth \$1,000 each! The drawing will be held after the tournament.

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**IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR!**

# Game Warden Field Notes

The following items are compiled from recent Texas Parks and Wildlife Department law enforcement reports.

**--Illegal Fishing--** Harris County game wardens were patrolling for fishing violations when they observed three Hispanic males pulling a jonboat from a bayou near Clear Lake. Wardens made contact with the group and discovered the boat was unregistered, and had a large illegal gill net onboard. When questioned, the suspects initially denied having any form of identification. When one of the men kept walking toward the driver side door of his vehicle, and continued to ignore commands, one of the wardens detained the subject fearing a weapon might be in the vehicle. The warden searched the vehicle and discovered a Kel-Tec .40 caliber semi-automatic rifle with two fully-loaded magazines, as well as a large machete. The firearm was made safe, and the wardens attempted to locate valid identification for the suspects to no avail. A local Immigration and Customs Enforcement agent was contacted, and it was determined that one of the men was an illegal alien. The suspect was cited for the use of the illegal gill net and the unregistered vessel. Upon request, the firearm was seized for transfer to the ICE agent for purposes of a separate federal prosecution for illegal possession of a firearm by an illegal alien.

**--Coordinated Rescue--** Jasper County game war-

dens received information recently about a missing elderly man who had been kayaking on Sam Rayburn Reservoir. A family member who had spoken with the man earlier in the day indicated he seemed disoriented. Three wardens responded to the call with help from the Jasper County Sheriff's Office, which was able to "ping" the individual's cell phone location. The cell phone information placed the elderly man in a creek on the Jasper/Sabine County line. Eventually, phone contact was made and the individual informed responders he was stuck in a grass mat and was experiencing muscle cramps. One of the wardens located the individual from land while the other wardens approached by water. The man was in good condition, other than experiencing slight dehydration, and was reunited with family members at the scene.

**--Caught by the Tail--** A state trooper observed an alligator tail sticking out of an ice chest during a recent traffic stop, and contacted a Jasper County game warden. The trooper noted there were no tags or documentation on the tail. The warden made contact with the Hardin County resident and seized the alligator tail. Several citations are pending along with civil restitution.

**--Bass Caster--** While patrolling along the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway for bank fishermen, an Orange County game warden made contact with a fisherman throwing a cast net for bait. When asked

if he was having any luck, the fisherman said that he had caught some mullet. During an inspection of the man's bait bucket, the warden found large-mouth bass that had been taken illegally with the net along with the mullet. The bass were still alive and released back into the water. The cases are pending.

**--Treasure Hunt--** A Montgomery County game warden used his side scan sonar to check the water around public boat ramps on Lake Conroe for dumped vehicles. While scanning the Scott's Ridge boat ramp, the warden recorded an image that looked like a vehicle submerged in the water. The Montgomery County Precinct 1 Constable dive team was called out to assist with determining what the object was. They recovered a late model Mercedes Benz sedan that had been reported stolen on June 25. The investigation as to how the vehicle got there is ongoing.

**--Stuck in the Weed-** Texas game wardens were conducting water safety enforcement patrol on Falcon Lake when they got a text from a Falcon State Park police officer about a report of a suspicious boat entering Texas waters from the Mexico side of the lake. Wardens contacted the fisherman who made the report and determined the approximate location of the suspicious vessel. While searching the area, wardens observed a "panga" style boat

(See Game Warden....Continued on Page 26)



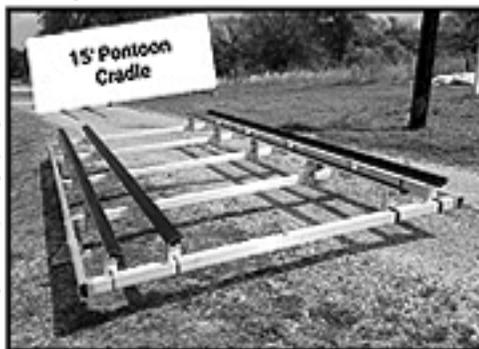
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*"We take pride in protecting your family as our own family"*

## Game Warden Field Notes (Continued from Page 25)

operating at a high rate of speed heading toward the Texas shoreline. During the ensuing pursuit, wardens chased the panga into a backwater cove more than three miles from the U.S./Mexico boundary line. After closing the distance, the wardens were able to prevent the escape of the suspect vessel and approached the area with caution. They found the vessel abandoned and beached on the Texas shoreline, approached and cleared the area without incident. Forty-eight bundles of marijuana were hidden under camouflage tarps and filled the vessel from bow to stern. The total cargo weighed approximately 1,100 pounds and was turned over to U.S. Border Patrol agents, Zapata Station. The boat and motor will be processed as abandoned property by Texas Parks and Wildlife Department personnel and the Zapata County courts.

**--Got a Spare Key?--** Aransas County game wardens received a call concerning two individuals on a jet ski in Copano Bay who had gotten separated after the driver was thrown from the vessel with the kill switch lanyard still attached to his arm. Without the kill switch, the passenger was unable to restart the vessel and floated away from the operator. Friends of the two individuals located the jet ski and passenger but could not locate the operator. After searching the area and hearing

faint a yell from the bay, the wardens and sheriff's deputies were still unable to locate the operator. The United States Coast Guard was notified and a helicopter requested to aid in the search after dark. The USCG helicopter located the operator and guided the game warden boat to the victim's location where he was transported to his vacation residence. Both individuals were unhurt and now have a new respect for the bay and for life jackets. A job well done by the three agencies involved in the search. The outcome could have been a much different and tragic one.

**--A Shocking Discovery--** Webb and La Salle County game wardens were patrolling the Rio Grande River when they spotted two boats fleeing towards Mexico. Although the first vessel made it back to the Mexico side of the river, the wardens were able to stop the second vessel and its three occupants. After making contact with the individuals, the wardens spotted a wooden hand-crank fish shocker used to stun fish. The wardens seized the fish shocker and released several large catfish back into the river.

**--Sneaky Snake--** Presidio County game wardens used a rubber grey-banded king snake decoy to sack a couple of subjects violating reptile and amphibian hunting regulations. After dark, the

wardens deployed the fake snake along a stretch of river road in the southeastern part of the county popular among reptile collectors. Several vehicles had driven by the decoy without reaction before one took the bait just before 11 p.m. The driver drove by the snake, hit the brakes and then reversed quickly while the passenger shined a flashlight out of the window. The wardens watched from bushes nearby as the driver jumped from the vehicle with a flashlight while the passenger attempted to capture the snake. The passenger realized the snake was a fake, and let his partner know, but was told to pick it up anyway. As the passenger picked up the decoy, the wardens came out of the brush and announced themselves. The snake hunters had a hunting license with a reptile and amphibian endorsement but were told they had violated several laws including: hunting with artificial light from a motor vehicle, hunting from a public roadway, no reflective safety vest, and stopping on a public roadway. Appropriate charges were filed and are pending.

**--One Thing Leads to Another--** Game wardens have long memories and hoodlums tend to have a habit of repeating bad choices. While assisting the

*(See Game Warden....Continued on Page 28)*

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## “Recipe Welcomes the Return of Springtime Fishing in Style!”

So, what’s the best part about the return of warm weather and spring and summer boating? Spring and summer fishing, of course. And anywhere there is fishing, there’s sure to be a fun and exciting seafood meal not far behind. After all, what better way to kick back and relax after a long day of fishing in the sun than by cooking up your unique interpretation of the catch of the day?

This season, get your own seafaring excursions off on the right fin with this easy-to-prepare delight featuring fresh tuna steaks center stage. This delicious recipe is perfect for smaller lunch



Enjoy a fresh taste of the sea with these “Tuna Steaks with Orange Butter and Zucchini Garnish”!

gatherings or intimate dinner get-togethers!

### TUNA STEAKS WITH ORANGE BUTTER AND ZUCCHINI GARNISH

- 1 portion Orange Butter Sauce (recipe to follow)
- 1 tablespoon butter
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 pounds small, firm zucchini, tips trimmed, slice into thin rounds or dice
- Salt
- Freshly ground black pepper
- 1 sprig fresh or dried rosemary
- 4 small, thick tuna steaks about 6-1/2 ounces each at room temperature
- Cherry Tomatoes to garnish

Firstly, prepare the Orange Butter Sauce and keep warm until ready to serve.

In a large pan, heat one tablespoon butter and two tablespoons of the oil, then stir in the zucchini until it is cooked but still crisp. Season with salt, pepper and a few needles of rosemary.

When the zucchini is almost done, turn your attention to the tuna. Sear one side in a very hot nonstick pan containing the remaining oil; turn over as soon as it has browned, after about one minute, lower the heat, cover and cook for a further four minutes. Season with salt and pepper.

Place zucchini in the center of each plate, top with tuna, pour the butter over the tuna and serve immediately. Cherry tomatoes can be added for a nice touch of color. Accompany with a white

Chardonnay!

### ORANGE BUTTER SAUCE

3 oranges, reserve zest of one orange and juice all three

- 1 glass dry white wine
- 2 shallots, peeled and finely chopped
- 1-1/4 cups chilled butter, cubed small

To make the sauce, combine orange juice, wine and shallots in a small sauce pan. Bring to a boil, reduce heat and reduce until only 1 tablespoon of liquid remains. Over very low heat, gradually whisk butter cubes into the reduced liquid, then finish by adding the zest. This orange butter sauce – which as you see takes no effort whatsoever, should be kept warm until you are ready to serve.

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### Game Warden Field Notes *(Continued from Page 26)*

Sabine County Sheriff's Office in a search for allegedly stolen sound equipment at the residence of an individual who had purportedly killed an alligator illegally a year earlier, a Sabine County game warden discovered pieces of an alligator hide. When questioned about the hide, the subject claimed he and a friend had found a dead gator floating in Toledo Bend Reservoir and kept some of the hide. The man was informed it is illegal to possess any alligator parts without proper documentation and a hide tag. After located more pieces of hide, the warden also looked inside a cooler

and found a live baby alligator. The individual received several citations. The investigation is still ongoing.

**--Poor Night Vision--** Shortly after midnight, a Hidalgo County game warden came upon two men standing on a county road about 100 feet in front of their pickup truck. Their rifles were affixed to tri-pods and outfitted with night vision scopes; one with a suppressor attached. When confronted about hunting on a public roadway being illegal, one of the men explained that they were simply scanning for feral pigs and would have actually entered onto private property

they had permission to hunt and then taken a shot if the opportunity had presented itself. He provided the game warden with the contact information of the person who granted permission. The following morning, the warden contacted the consenting party only to learn that the two men were not even near the correct property. Both men were issued citations for hunting from a public roadway, and educated about two more serious potential violations of hunting without landowner consent and criminal trespass with a firearm.

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*For Scheduling or More Info Contact: Don Hampton, Founder & Program Director*  
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Mar. 7 ~ JC Outdoors Teams  
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Mar. 13-18 ~ Major League Fishing  
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Mar. 14 ~ Media Teams  
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Mar. 15 ~ JC Outdoors Solo  
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Apr. 11 ~ JC Outdoors Teams  
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Apr. 18 ~ Tex. Trails Open  
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Apr. 18 ~ Media Teams  
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Apr. 26 ~ Little Kids Open  
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