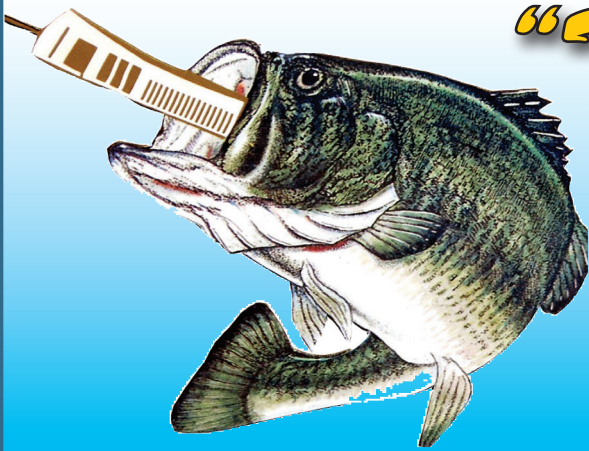


LAKE FORK "The Big Bass Capital Of Texas"



"The Fisherman's Guide, News You Can Use" "Lines To Get Hooked On"

1 Section

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Vol. 24

April, 2023

No. 284



James Adams, from Many, Louisiana won over 1500 anglers at Techron Mega Bass on Lake Fork with a 9.64-lbs. hawg. For his great catch he took home a new Skeeter ZX 200 , powered by a Yamaha SHO and \$15,000 Cash.



Levar Jenkins from Austin, Texas was fishing Lake Fork on March 27th with guide Whitt Smith when he caught this giant hawg. C.P.R.

15th Annual MEGA BASS ON LAKE FORK

By Don Hampton

For a change Mother Nature was kind to the over 1500 anglers representing 25 states and 2 countries, that came to compete in the Techron Mega Bass tournament on Lake Fork, put on by Bass-Champs. The tournament was hosted out of Lake Fork Marina.

The temperture during the night before was in the mid 40's which did not help the morning bite. Luckily it warmed through the day to 78 degrees with a mild 5 to 10 mph wind out of the southeast.

Even though the big bass didn't bite until later in the day the anglers made a good showing with bass under the 16" slot. Many anglers reported catching large bass but in the slot between 16" and 24". With this being the highest paid one day amateur tournament anglers gave it their best. First place each hour paid \$15,000 and each hour paid 10

places along with two bonus places.

In the 8 o'clock hour Jason May won \$15,000 with his bass weighing 2.33-pounds. In the 9 o'clock hour two anglers, Kurt Haggard and Dylan Washington, tied with their bass weighing 2.44-pounds. Whenever this happens 1st place and 2nd place monies are combined and they split that amount winning them \$8,000 each. In the 10 o'clock hour there was another tie between Mike Harp and Joshua Jamison with bass weighing 2.38-pounds. They both won \$8,000 to take home. During the 11 o'clock hour the first bass over the slot of 24" came to the scales. This \$15,000 bass was caught by Brandon Potter and weighed 8.38-pounds. In the 12 o'clock hour Don Penick secured his win of \$15,000 with a bass weighing 2.56-pounds. In the

(See 15th Annual....

Continued on Page 5)



Brandon Potter from Decatur, Texas caught this nice bass during the Techron Mega Bass on Lake Fork that weighed 8.38-lbs. His catch won him \$15,000 Cash. Until the last hour his bass was leading in the tournament.



On March 8th, Lake Fork lost one of the best when John Heimgartner owner of Fisherman's One Stop passed away. He was a good man and a great friend. We will miss him, may he rest in peace and God be with his family.



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"Bubba's Sacred Journal Weighs Heavy On A Superstitious Scale!"

By Don Hampton

Just how superstitious are bass fishermen? I cannot speak for all of them but I can tell you quite a bit about our Bubba!

Most bass anglers keep a seasonal journal. This is to reference what, where, and when good bass were being caught on their tournament or favorite fishing lakes. Well, Bubba keeps one of those too but he also keeps another one that is more precious to him. He guards this one and keeps it more sacred and secret than a sixteen year old cheerleader would with her daily diary. This journal Bubba uses as a format for his next tournament and is full of nothing but superstitious nonsense that he believes will make him

lucky in his endeavors to win.

Bubba even has a good luck drink. His boat won't float unless he has at least a six-pack of A&W Root Beer in it. If Bubba isn't catching any fish he just stops and drinks an A&W and bam, there's the big one! Or at least that is what he thinks!

When Bubba wins a tournament or places high enough to get a check he has his super-secret journal out scribbling down notes. He'll write down from what he had on that day including socks and underwear, to what he had for breakfast, his lunch, the snacks, to even what kind of gas he had in the boat. None of this has anything to do with catching a fish but just try to convince him of this.

He might agree in part with you, but his favorite comeback is, "If you go out feeling confident, you are going to do better." How do you argue with that? Personally I do not believe underwear with pictures of fish on them or a belt with fish on it will help you catch fish! I think they just keep you from chaffing and hold your pants up but you are not going to convince Bubba of that!

Even with the help of his journal I don't know how he keeps everything in its correct perspective, especially his favorite rod n' reel. He only carries about twenty of them with him whenever he goes to fish a tournament and he can tell you exactly which one caught the last big fish. That particu-

lar rod n' reel will be the one he starts fishing with on his next excursion and if he catches a good fish on it, it may be the only one he uses that day.

At times when Bubba is fishing with a friend and happens to be the lucky one catching most of the fish and asked what he is doing different to make the fish bite, he'll say, "You are not holding your mouth right!" At first I thought this was just one of Bubba's comical comebacks, now I'm beginning to wonder if he really means it. The next time I go fishing with him I'm going to keep an eye on his facial expressions. If he starts catching more fish than I do, you may see me making more faces than a judge at an "Ugly Con-

vention" every time I go fishing.

What most anglers consider as lucky or the things to do to improve their chances of having a better day fishing, Bubba documents as the scripture according to him! The only problem with "Bubba Scriptures" is that they may not be in effect after the next fishing trip. If it doesn't work at least two times in a row, it is scratched through and a new scripture is written in his sacred journal. Believe me he tends to go through a lot of journals.

One of Bubba's biggest superstitions before going to a tournament is his last comment to Bubbette before departing. He doesn't think he has a chance at all of winning a tournament if he doesn't

say this to her. I have even known of times that he would stop and call her to tell her if he forgot before leaving the house. I know you are probably thinking he tells her he loves her and will miss her while he's gone, he does that but that's not what I was referring to! His good-luck phrase before going to fish is, "I'm going to get you some WalMart money honey!" Bubbette may be a little superstitious too because her last words to Bubba are not "I love you and will miss you while you're gone," but rather, "Don't forget to put the plug in the boat so you can bring me some WalMart money!"

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TPWD Receives Grants To Help Increase Fishing and Boating

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) has been awarded a pair of R3 program grants by the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation (RBFF) to support state recruitment, retention and reactivation (R3) initiatives to increase fishing and boating participation. Texas is one of only nine states to receive a grant and the only state to be awarded funding for two separate programs.

The program grants distributed to Texas will fund initiatives that zero in on the retention of female anglers (with a special focus on Hispanic women) and the use of text messages aimed at reactivating lapsed anglers who bought a "year from purchase" fishing license.

"Women, and particularly Hispanic women, are one of Texas' fastest-growing demographic groups who like to fish — with this funding, we can reach out to further engage them in the sport," said Janis Johnson, TPWD marketing manager. "Another growth area is millennials, who buy the largest portion of our 'year from purchase' licenses. These anglers prefer texting to communicate so we'll use some of the grant money to explore ways to reach them."

RBFF is providing Texas with \$35,000 in overall grant funding to support both initiatives. To receiving funding from RBFF, the programs must focus on one of three areas:

- * Communicate the relevance of fishing and/or boating to urban, multicultural audiences to increase participation.

- * Implement angler and/or boater customer engagement strategies to retain and/or reactivate anglers and boaters to increase participation.

- * Enhance the capability of agencies to develop and implement effective angler and/or boater recruitment, retention and reactivation efforts.

"RBFF has been instrumental in providing opportunities to states via grants, which allow us to create and implement targeted marketing campaigns that we would otherwise be unable to perform," said Jason Mercer, TPWD R3 boating and fishing coordinator.

The State R3 Program Grants fund sustainable and replicable angler and boater R3 initiatives and plans that focus on increasing fishing license sales, boat registrations and participation. Proposals are reviewed and selected by RBFF staff and a Proposal Review Working Group made up

of industry, federal agency and NGO representatives.

These efforts align with TPWD's R3 strategic plan to "Recruit, Retain and Reactivate" Texas sportsmen and sportswomen.

Visit the RBFF website for more information and to view the organization's official press release.

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15th Annual Mega Bass *(Continued from Page 1)*

1 o'clock hour Curt Culbertson won 1st in the hour with a bass weighing 2.42-pounds.

In the 2 o'clock hour, the final weigh-in hour of the day, one angler had his heart broke while another rejoiced over his win. During this hour James Adams from Many, Louisiana weighed in a 9.64-pound bass. The lake warming up in the sunshine didn't hurt his fishing or his feelings. For his catch he took home not only a check for \$15,000 for winning the hour but he won the grand prize for the heaviest bass of the tournament. Added to his hourly winning James took home a new Skeeter ZX 200 powered by Yamaha.

As always Bass-Champs put on a great tournament. The big bass didn't show up as expected but the changing in the weather had much to do with the catch ratio. Many anglers reported catches in the 7 to 9-pound range but they didn't touch the 24" mark to bring them to the scales. A few anglers did mis-measure and brought their fish to the scales but only received a visit with our nice Game Wardens.

The Lake Fork Sportsman's Association are to be commended for their diligent work with their Live Release Boat. All bass brought to the weigh-in they returned to the lake in good health to be

caught another day.

For all of you anglers the weather is continuing to change for the better and more bass are getting on their beds daily. If you want to catch some big ones and have a great day on Lake Fork, I'll see you on the water. "Fish Friendly!"

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"Mother Nature Has The Last Say!"

By David Ozio

"How bout a comparison from this April to April a year ago! Quite a change wouldn't you think. Now add the fact that this spring overall has been much warmer than past years. As a matter of fact, we were catching frog fish three weeks ago in early March and that bite doesn't normally start till mid April. Bed fish were also early this year. Now what!! Mother Nature will have the final say in this matter but if the warm trend continues, look for post spawn conditions and a possible earlier deep bite to ensue.

It will be very interesting to see what happens dur-

ing the full moon which occurs near the end of the first week. Will there be a huge move to the shallows for round two of the spawn or will there be much fewer headed to the beds? It's anyone's best guess if the next wave in April will be the biggest as the main lake water temps should warm to the upper sixties just ahead of full moon. If this speculation works out this will be "game on" when the giants will be caught off beds provided you can see them. There is also the possibility that the bigger green fish 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. Giz-zard 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



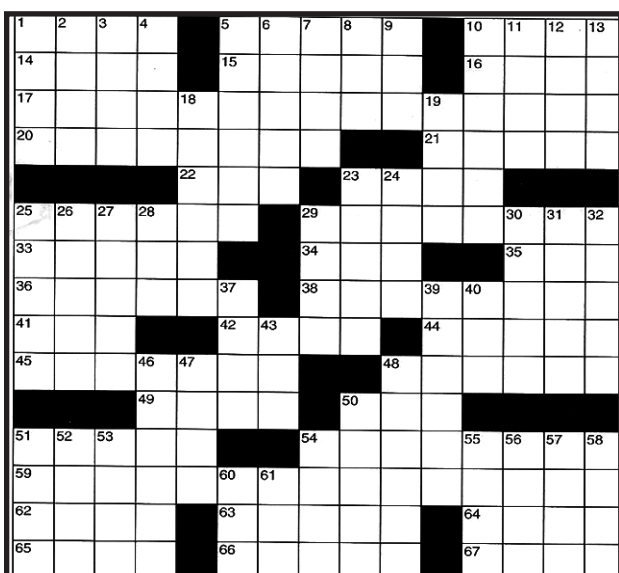
baits for the clearer water. The next step is determining which hook to rig on these giant plastic bass offerings. I recommend a 10/0 hook for the full size baits and a 7/0 hook for the minnow size swimmers. From that point you will need to focus on the right depth where the slouches will be hiding and 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 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.

The next pattern to emerge this month should be the frog bite. There is an enormous amount of flooded bank grass currently available and the monster bass will move into this vegetation and park for the month. With the lake rising, any type of topwater frog will get the job done. Covering a ton of water should ring the register for a nice heavy weight. Weightless flukes over this grass will also take it's share of toads which end up as photo op's!

Figuring Fork will be at full pool by April so don't rule out the Carolina rig on main lake points es-

(See Mother Nature.....
Continued on Page 20)



CLUES ACROSS

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Highly excited | 41. Old world, new |
| 5. Self-cremating widows | 42. Stars |
| 10. Protects the chest | 44. East German city |
| 14. Quantity of no importance | 45. Heartbeat |
| 15. Company officers (abbr.) | 48. Pommel and vaulting |
| 16. Card game | 49. _____ von Bismarck, Iron Chancellor |
| 17. Road sign | 50. Avoirdupois unit |
| 20. Lacking sight | 51. Sir Georg _____, conductor |
| 21. Genuine | 54. Law-abiding |
| 22. Wooden or peg | 59. Kind of suit |
| 23. Bleats | 62. Material object that is worshipped as a god |
| 25. Wires | 63. Starved |
| 29. Large, heavy knives | 64. Frosts |
| 33. Metal sheath over the end of a shoelace | 65. Swindles |
| 34. Metal-bearing mineral | 66. Distributes |
| 35. Leaf | 67. Radioactivity units |
| 36. Encloses | |
| 38. Literal | |

CLUES DOWN

- | | |
|--|------------------------------------|
| 1. Andean herb | 29. Displace oneself |
| 2. Win something through one's efforts | 30. Lugs |
| 3. Lyric poems | 31. Elizabeth, in short |
| 4. Strong wind moving 34 to 47 knots | 32. Languages of Sulu Archipelago |
| 5. Succession | 37. Table or sea |
| 6. Firing | 39. Unbroken mustang |
| 7. Unshorn sheep | 40. Type of song |
| 8. I (German) | 43. Company executive (abbr.) |
| 9. Very fast airplane | 46. Amounts |
| 10. Gush | 47. About organ of hearing |
| 11. Gape | 48. Accumulates |
| 12. Asian country | 50. Indian lodge |
| 13. Seed of an Asiatic legume | 51. Invests in little enterprises |
| 18. Erase | 52. Church booklet |
| 19. Brightly colored deep-sea fish | 53. Boxing champ |
| 23. Ais | 54. Flew off |
| 24. Dicot genus | 55. Independent ruler or chieftain |
| 25. Enclosures | 56. Tax |
| 26. Awry (Scottish) | 57. Employed |
| 27. Alignments | 58. Smaller quantity |
| 28. Bulgarian currency | 60. Way to resound |
| | 61. Ace |

Answers on Page 21



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TPWD Seeks Public Input for the 2024 Land and Water Plan

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) is seeking public input to help inform future management directions of the agency. TPWD's mission is to manage and conserve the natural and cultural resources of Texas and to provide hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation opportunities for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations. Public input can be made through Friday, April 14, by completing a Texas A&M University online survey.

"In fulfilling our mission, TPWD is committed to delivering effective natural resources stewardship and outdoor recreation programs that exemplify the highest standards of quality, service and professionalism," said David Yoskowitz Ph.D., Executive Director of TPWD. "As the agency looks ahead to the next 10 years and plans our work, public input is critically important to ensuring our programs continue to meet the needs of the state and all Texans."

Survey responses will help inform an update of the Land and Water Resources Conservation and Recreation Plan (Land and Water Plan). The 2024 Land and Water Plan is expected to identify

specific strategies and science-based actions to be undertaken by TPWD over the next 10 years. It will serve to guide and evaluate the effectiveness of TPWD in delivering its mission.

The Land and Water Plan was originally developed in 2002 and updated in 2005, 2010, 2013 and 2015. In 2021, the 87th Texas Legislature adopted recommendations from the Texas Sunset Advisory Commission that led to changes in the statutory requirements for the Land & Water Plan (Texas Parks & Wildlife Code, § 11.101–106).

An update of the Land and Water Plan that conforms to these new requirements is scheduled to be completed by 2024. Moving forward, the Land and Water Plan will serve to guide and evaluate the effectiveness of TPWD in conserving the natural and cultural resources of Texas, evaluated on 5-year intervals, and will be updated every 10 years in conjunction with the update of the Land & Water Statewide Inventory.

To support the 2024 update of the Land and Water Plan, TPWD is partnering with Texas A&M University-College Station to update the Land

and Water Statewide Inventory and administer public input surveys.

Input received through this online survey will provide feedback for the 2024 update and be presented to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission for review at their August meeting.

The 2024 Land and Water Plan draft will also be shared publicly for review and feedback at that time. A final version that incorporates additional guidance from the Commission and public feedback will be presented to the Commission for final approval at the November meeting.



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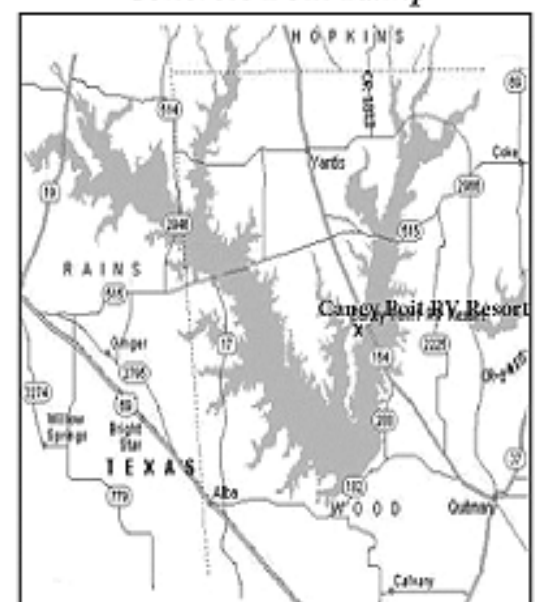
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"The Moon Report"

"Forks April Spawn Time"

By Terri Moon

Well, I don't know about you – but is it taking forever for our temperatures to stabilize? Just when the water temperatures get just right – along comes 30 and 40 degree mornings knocking the water temps back down 5 to 8 degrees! But when the water temps get back to that 62 to 68 degrees its "game on" for "Bobber Down!" Don't be surprised to probably catch about 5 different species doing this (and it's really fun on those 5 ft. ultra-lite ACC Rods!) I prefer using a slip bobber during the times when the crappie can be 2 ft. or 6 ft. down. It's an easy adjustment with a "bobber stop" to set your depth, whereas a "clip on" bobber makes it tough to cast 6 ft. of line hanging down. Those are more effective when the crappie "lock in" that 1 to 3 ft. I prefer the weighted "clip on" bobbers for that. Some days we are using just jigs and other days they just want a minnow. So, its a good idea to have both available.

Check secondary points and the backs of the coves and creeks – look around docks, timber, and edges of the grass. This is the first "serious wave" of crappie coming in to spawn. They've just been waiting for the



water temperature to get right in their area of the lake. With the lake level finally back up they have a lot of new places to hide with all the grass and bushes that took hold when the lake was down for so long. You can also tight-line jigs with long ACC poles in the grass pockets and around any bushes or timber. But, if you are going to the backs of the coves – PLEASE be cautious because when the lake was down these cattle farmers extended their fences to keep their cattle in. They are not marked and you can barely see them underwater and if the water is murky you can't see them at all. These can do some damage to your boat if you get hung on them. I sure wish there was some way they could mark them. Luckily I've spotted them before running into them!

Anyway, we're still getting mostly males up shallow and the fe-

males are still staging out deeper. The next full moon ought to be AWESOME for us bobber lovers! This is a great time to let the kids or grand-kids fish off the bank or a dock and let the fish entertain them. That's how I got started! I've always been grateful that my grandparents loved to fish and let me tag along making "lifetime memories!"

I hope you all get a chance to enjoy the Spring Time Fun on Fork!



Texas is known for its oil but the state is also a leading wind energy producer with wind projects generating over 1,200 megawatts.

Fish Friendly

Practice C.P.R.



This angler had a great day fishing on Lake Fork in March with guide Danny Holder and caught a few nice bass. C.P.R.



Lake Fork guide Mark Stevenson showed this angler a great day in March and caught some really nice bass. C.P.R.



David Banks was fishing Lake Fork in March with guide Brian Duplechain when he caught this really nice Hawg. C.P.R.

If you have news or photos on
Lake Fork Contact Us!
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TPWD Reminds Hunters of Mandatory Harvest Reporting in Select Texas Counties Ahead of Season Opener

As the Texas spring turkey season rapidly approaches, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) reminds hunters that all counties with a one-bird bag limit have mandatory harvest reporting requirements. Hunters must report their harvest within 24 hours through the My Texas Hunt Harvest app or the TPWD website. Counties with a one-bird limit for Rio Grande wild turkeys include Bastrop, Caldwell, Colorado, Fayette, Jackson, Lavaca, Lee, Matagorda, Milam and Wharton counties. The season for these counties runs April 1-30. For Eastern Wild Turkeys, the season runs April 22 – May 14 and includes Bowie, Cass, Fannin, Greyson, Jasper, Lamar, Marion, Nacogdoches, Newton, Polk, Red River, and Sabine Counties and has a one-bird limit. In addition, all hunters who selected a digital tag this year also are required to perform mandatory harvest reporting on all harvested wild turkeys. All hunters must properly tag their turkeys as well as have the confirmation number from the app or website. Additional turkey hunting regulations, bag limits, zone maps, and proof of sex requirements can be found in the Texas Outdoor Annual. Mandatory harvest reporting will allow TPWD to better manage the wild turkey population by accurate population estimates, which can be used to assess the long-term survivability of the species.

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Chronic Wasting Disease Discovered in Deer-Breeding Facilities

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) and Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) received confirmation of seven new cases of chronic wasting disease (CWD) in three separate deer-breeding facilities in Zavala, Washington and Gonzales counties. These cases mark the first detection of the disease in each county.

Three cases in a Zavala County facility and one case in a Washington County facility were detected through antemortem (live animal) testing conducted prior to their transfer from the properties to registered release sites. Three cases in a Gonzales County facility were detected by antemortem and postmortem testing, as required by a CWD Herd Plan established after the facility received CWD-exposed deer from an Uvalde County deer breeding facility in which CWD was detected in 2021.

The samples were submitted to the Texas A&M Veterinary Medical Diagnostic Laboratory in College Station and were ultimately sent to the National Veterinary Services Laboratory in Ames, Iowa, where the presence of CWD was confirmed in all seven samples. Officials have

taken immediate action to secure all deer at the facilities; TPWD and TAHC plan to continue working together to conduct additional investigations looking into the extent of the disease within the facilities.

"It continues to be imperative for producers to stay diligent with testing susceptible species for CWD," said Dr. Andy Schwartz, TAHC executive director and state veterinarian. "With an incubation period that can span years, the first indication of this degenerative disease in a herd may likely come through testing, rather than observing clinical signs. Early detection and proactive monitoring improve the state's response time and can greatly reduce the risk of further disease spread."

Since November 2021, when the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission adopted a requirement to antemortem test deer for CWD prior to liberation, this disease surveillance tool has detected CWD in five deer breeding facilities where it was not previously known to exist. Transferring even one CWD-infected deer from a breeding facility could ultimately affect all deer in the vicinity of the transfer, with irreversible impacts.

"With disease surveillance, our goal is to monitor and identify disease expeditiously to minimize the impact of outbreaks," said Dr. Hunter Reed, TPWD wildlife veterinarian. "This is a continuous process that hopefully results in little to no disease being detected since [ideally] our disease management strategies are effective in limiting transmission. This additional surveillance from antemortem testing not only allows us to respond more quickly to an outbreak, but it also provides us with a robust, continuous testing baseline that can further elucidate the epidemiological uncertainties related to the origin of the disease outbreak, in addition to guiding future changes to our disease management strategy."

In Hunt County, TPWD and TAHC received confirmation of CWD in a white-tailed doe harvested on a release site located adjacent to a breeding facility already known to have CWD. This is the first positive detection in a free-range deer in the county.

First recognized in the U.S. in 1967, CWD has since been documented in captive and/or free-

(See Chronic Wasting Disease.....

Continued on Page 12)

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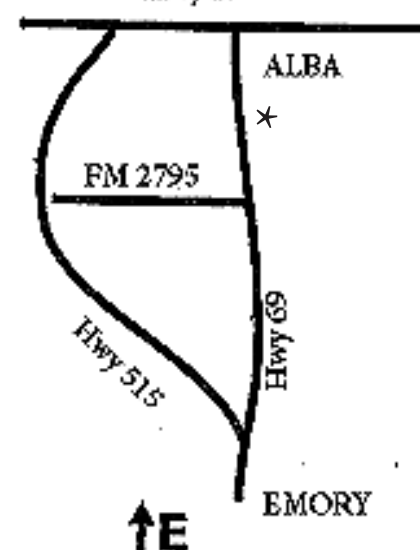
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Chronic Wasting Disease (Continued from Page 11)

ranging deer in 30 states and three Canadian provinces.

In Texas, the disease was first discovered in 2012 in free-ranging mule deer along a remote area of the Hueco Mountains near the Texas-New Mexico border and has since been detected in 471 captive or free-ranging cervids — including white-tailed deer, mule deer, red deer and elk — in 20 Texas counties. For more information on previous detections, visit TPWD's CWD page.

CWD is a fatal neurological disease found in certain cervids, including deer, elk, moose and other members of

the deer family. CWD is a slow and progressive disease. Due to a long incubation, cervids infected with CWD may not produce any visible signs for several years after becoming infected. As the disease progresses, animals with CWD show changes in behavior and appearance. Clinical signs may include progressive weight loss, stumbling or tremors with a lack of coordination, excessive thirst, salivation or urination, loss of appetite, teeth grinding, abnormal head posture and/or drooping ears.

To date there are no known cases where CWD has infected a

human; however, recent research suggests that CWD transmission from infected animals to humans should not be ruled out. Consequently, as a precaution, it is recommended that hunters test harvested cervid species for CWD, and that no one consumes the meat of infected animals.

For more information about CWD, visit the TPWD website or the TAHC website.

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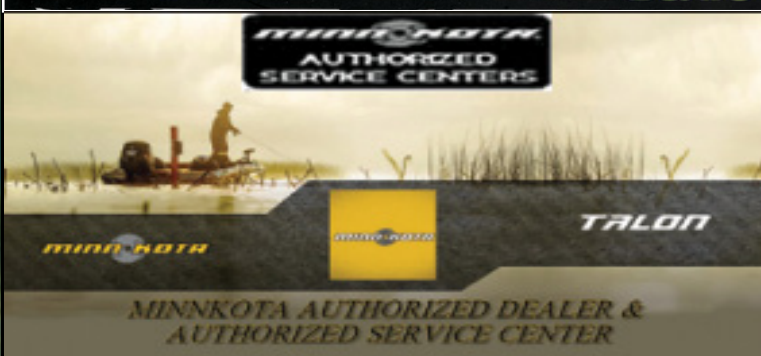
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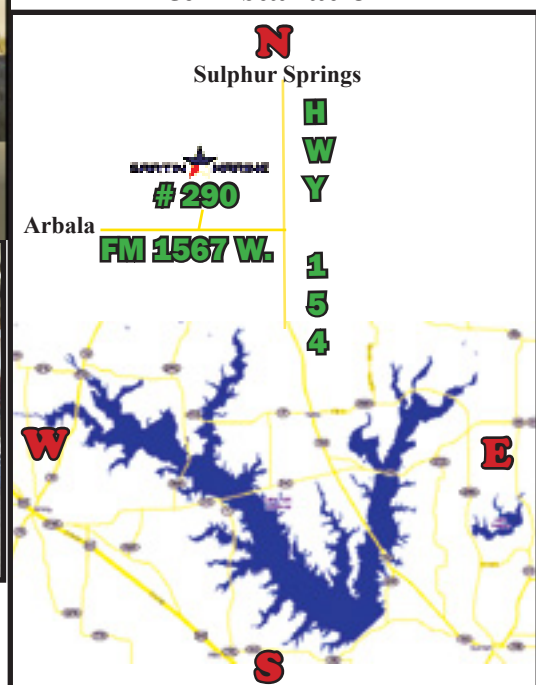
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2023 Bird City Texas Recipients Announced

Audubon Texas and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) are excited to announce Austin and Cedar Hill as the newest additions to the Bird City Texas flock. This certification program recognizes cities efforts to ensure birds, wildlife and people thrive in their communities. Austin and Cedar Hill have displayed leadership as Bird Friendly Cities by excelling in three criteria areas: community engagement, habitat enhancement and protection and creating safer spaces for birds. Their Bird City Texas certification will continue through 2026.

Since the Bird City

Texas program began in 2020, eight other cities have been certified. Certified cities participate in the community-focused program to protect birds and their habitats where people live, work and recreate. To do this, cities employ science-based bird initiatives and community-centric action. The Bird City Texas communities are able to leverage this designation to attract 2.2 million bird watchers in Texas, a major component of the \$1.8 billion economic impact from Texas wildlife viewing across the state.

"Where birds thrive, people prosper," said Chloe Crumley, Audu-

bon Texas engagement manager. "Human-dominated landscapes can support functioning ecosystems. Bird City Texas is an opportunity for communities to commit to standards that elevate urban areas to be ecologically richer and in turn offer us more beautiful, resilient and healthful places to live. We are excited to see more cities across Texas commit to this program."

"As development continues across the state, reducing viable habitat for resident and migratory birds, cities that engage their community to maintain or create habitat are crucial

(See 2023 Bird City
Continued on Page 21)

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Cases of Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease Expand in Texas

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD), with the help of the National Wildlife Health Center (NWHC), has detected the eastward expansion of Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease Virus 2 (RHDV2) in the state. First found in dead rabbits in El Paso, Terrell, Brewster and Reeves counties, RHDV2 cases have expanded to Gillespie County.

The detection in Gillespie County represents the first wild case of RHDV2 in the Hill Country. TPWD continues to receive and respond to mortality events in wild rabbits and hares across the state. If you notice sick or dead wild rabbits, contact a local TPWD wildlife biologist. Learn more about RHDV2 in wild rabbits on the RHDV page of the TPWD website.

Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease (RHD) is a highly contagious viral disease that can affect both domestic and wild rabbit species including hares, jackrabbits and cottontails. This disease is nearly always fatal and affects rabbits of all ages. The viral agent, Rabbit Hemorrhagic Disease Virus (RHDV), is a calicivirus with two strains, RHDV1 and RHDV2, both being reported in North America in recent years. RHDV appears only to affect rabbit species (lagomorphs). It is not known to affect humans, livestock or pets.

However, pets should not be allowed to consume dead animal carcasses.

Often the only clinical sign is sudden death. In less acute cases, clinical signs in rabbits have included dullness/apathy, not eating, bleeding from the nose and eyes or watery, congested eyes. Some may also exhibit neurological signs such as incoordination, excitement or seizure-like episodes.

This highly contagious disease spreads between rabbits easily through direct contact with infected rabbits or carcasses in addition to contaminated meat, fur, food, water, insects or materials and objects they may encounter. RHDV2 is resistant to desiccation and can persist in the environment for a very long time. These factors make disease control efforts extremely challenging once it is in wild rabbit populations.

Domestic rabbit owners who have questions about RHDV2 or observe sudden death in their rabbits should contact their private veterinarian. Private veterinarians are requested to contact the USDA-APHIS or the Texas Animal Health Commission (TAHC) to report any suspected cases at (800) 550-8242. Rabbit owners or breeders should practice biosecurity on their farms and in their homes. Report all unusual mass morbid-

ity (sickness) or mortality (deaths) events to the TAHC.

Find more information about RHDV on the U.S. Department of Agriculture Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service fact sheet.



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*For Scheduling or More Info Contact: Don Hampton, Founder & Program Director
 visit our website: www.wishtofishfoundation.com*



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

By Terry Long, President 2023 LFSA

LFSA will be holding their annual Spring and Fall Raffles again this year. Mrs. Susan Jerrell will be the Chairperson for these events with past President Mrs. Carolyn West and past Secretary Mr. Ed Swenson assisting. Please stop by our booth during your tournament registration to purchase your raffle tickets. We will be at the following tournaments; Mega Bass, Legend, Sartin Marine, Skeeter, Sealy and Berkley. You can also stop by GoFish Lures at 3736 TX-154 and buy your tickets. Tickets are \$5.00 each or 5 tickets for \$20.00. The Spring Raffle drawing will be held Sunday, June 11, 2023 at 2:30pm during the Skeeter Tournament at Lake Fork Marina. I would like to thank the numerous company's and individual's that donated to LFSA's Spring Raffle. You do not have to be present at the drawing to win. LFSA appreciates your continued support.

Mr. Jake Norman, Region 3 District Supervisor - Inland Fisheries Manage-

ment, TPWD was LFSA's guest speaker on Tuesday March 14, 2023. Mr. Norman discussed the state of the Lake Fork Fishery in depth and mentioned several TPWD proposed programs for the lake this year. Lake Fork is to receive approximately 500,000 bass fingerlings in May. A test of floating planters to spread seedlings/vegetation within the lake. LFSA will assist with these first

two projects. Also, rock pile will be established in 15 to 25 feet of water near the SRA point to act as a fish attractor.

LFSA conducts their monthly meetings at 6:30pm on the second Tuesday of the month at Moser's Restaurant located at Lake Fork Marina. We at LFSA would love to grow our membership in order to continue Preserving the Legend of Lake Fork. I look forward to meeting you at our next meeting. Tight Lines!



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 Pat Kostial, 760-458-7885 or Terry Long, 214-206-7504 for more information or to arrange a donation.



For the past 24 years Lake Fork Sportsman's Association has been Preserving the Legend that is Lake Fork with their Live Release Boat at tournaments releasing catches back healthy in the lake, planting new grasses, and establishing fish habitat.

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"Mother Nature Has The Last Say!" (Continued from Page 6)

pecially 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 swim-baits should do the heavy lifting. Choose dark colors for heavily stained water 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 would also like to thank Okuma Fishing, Talon Custom Lures and Dakota Lithiums 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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2023 Bird City Texas (Continued from Page 15)

for our dwindling bird populations," said Judith Green, TPWD urban wildlife biologist. "We need everyone's help! We all have the ability to make a difference in our homes, schools, businesses and public city spaces by adding native plants and following environmentally friendly practices that support safe, healthy areas for birds and us."

As we approach the start of spring, certified communities will host a variety of events across the state in support of breeding birds migrating back to northern nesting territories as well as World Migratory Bird Day on May 13. Interested participants are encouraged to visit the websites of certified cities, Audubon Texas and TPWD for opportunities to celebrate and learn more about how to support birds.

Communities interested in applying for a

2024 Bird City Texas certification can find general information here and view criteria information. The next Bird City Texas application cycle will begin in late spring of 2023. About Texas Parks and Wildlife Department The mission of the

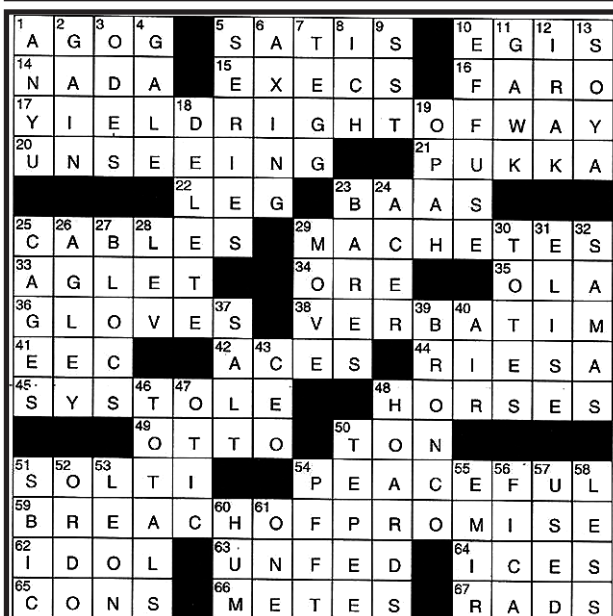
Texas Parks and Wildlife Department is to manage and conserve the natural and cultural resources of Texas and to provide hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation opportunities for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.

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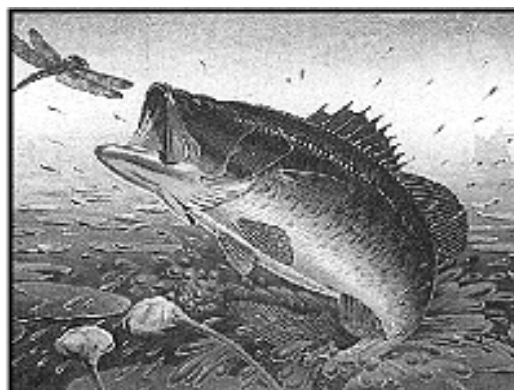
Fruit Find

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

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BLUEBERRY
CURRANT
GRAPE
GRAPEFRUIT
GUAVA
HONEYDEW

KIWI
LEMON
MANGO
ORANGE
PAPAYA
PEAR
PINEAPPLE

A H O N Y T R F E P R G
P O N E N O M E L P P A
L N A E V L E N O A E V
E E M L U E R A E P N A
C Y A P L E B Y R A R U
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Game Warden Field Notes

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

--This is Hawkward-- A Hardin County game warden was at the Beaumont District Office when he received a call from the manager of the local Office Depot store. The manager said they had a small hawk flying around inside the store and couldn't get it to leave, even though they had the front and back roll-up doors open. The warden recruited a licensed falconer who was experienced in handling and trapping birds of prey to help him catch the hawk. After the fal-

coner arrived on scene with a hawk trap and some live bait, they soon discovered that although the bird resembled a hawk, it was in fact a large nightjar or "nighthawk," which feeds on insects, rendering the trap idea useless. Undeterred, the warden and his falconer friend resorted to the old game warden standby — a ladder and a net. After what resembled a scene from America's Funniest Home Videos, they were able to finally corral the bird in a back hallway and catch it in the dip net. It was released outside, where it flew off unharmed. The manager of the Office Depot store was very grateful that the

bird was removed and would not be setting off the alarm system after closing.

--Bad Idea, This is--A Hays County game warden received an image from a cellphone game camera showing a man and woman trespassing and digging an archeological Native American burial site. The warden went to the property and found the couple in a large hole previously dug by trespassers. Before the warden could say anything, the man stood up immediately and said he wasn't digging for arrowheads and hates diggers. The couple were husband and wife out on a date.

(Continued on Page 24)

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Celebrate Spring With A Delicious Brunch

By Sue Hampton

Delicious and satisfying, Tomato-Bacon Quiche is perfect for a springtime brunch. Better yet, it's fast and easy to make. The frozen pie crust is ready to bake in its own pan and the ingredients take only a few minutes to assemble.

Tomato-Bacon Quiche

1 Pillsbury Pet-Ritz frozen deep-dish pie crust
6 slices bacon, cooked, crumbled
4 medium green onions, sliced
3 medium plum tomatoes, seeded, chopped
¼ teaspoon salt



Try this delicious springtime brunch and top it off with an all-time favorite dessert "Brownie Cupcakes"! Happy Easter everyone!

¼ teaspoon pepper
1 cup half-and-half
2 tablespoons all-purpose flour
2 eggs
½ cup shredded Swiss cheese (2 oz.)
½ cup shredded Cheddar cheese (2 oz.)

Place cookie sheet on oven rack. Heat oven to 375 degrees. Remove crust from freezer; let stand 1 minute. Prick crust with fork. Bake on cookie sheet 9 to 11 minutes or until very light golden brown.

Sprinkle bacon, green onions, tomatoes, salt and pepper in crust. In medium bowl, stir together half-and-half, flour and eggs. Stir in cheeses. Pour over tomato mixture.

Bake on cookie sheet 25 to 30 minutes longer or until knife inserted in center comes out clean. Let stand 10 minutes before serving. Makes 6 servings.

As far as dessert goes, there's nothing better than a cupcake! The recipe comes together quickly in a single pot on the stove top. Top the cupcakes with a sprinkling of powdered sugar or a drizzle of glaze. For the full cupcake effect, traditional buttercream frosting dresses up the brownie cupcakes!

"Brownie Cupcakes"

3 oz. (3 squares) unsweetened chocolate
½ cup butter
1-1/2 cups sugar

3 eggs
1-1/2 teaspoons vanilla
1 cup all-purpose flour
1 cup chopped walnuts
1 cup Sun-Maid Raisins

Heat oven to 350 degrees. Grease or line 12 (2-3/4-in) muffin cups with paper baking cups.

In large saucepan, over very low heat, combine chocolate and butter, heat just until melted, stirring occasionally. Remove from heat. Stir in sugar; blend well.

Blend in eggs and vanilla. Stir in flour, walnuts and raisins. Spoon batter into prepared muffin cups, filling almost full.

Bake at 350 degrees for 30 minutes. Cool on wire rack. Sprinkle with powdered sugar or frost as desired.

Buttercream Frosting

1 stick (8-oz.) butter, softened
1 box (16 oz.) powdered sugar
1 teaspoon vanilla extract
Dash of salt – 2 to 3 tablespoons milk
Frosting

In small mixing bowl, combine first four ingredients and 2 tablespoons of milk. With electric mixer, combine on low until blended. Continue to beat on high until fluffy, adding additional milk as needed for spreading consistency.



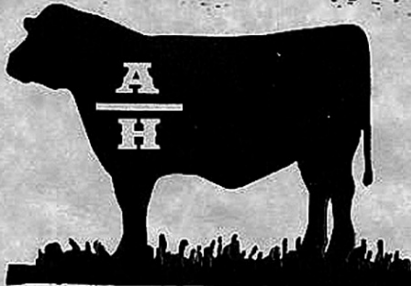
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Game Warden Field Notes (Continued from Page 22)

They were both detained in handcuffs and separated at the front and back of the warden's vehicle. The man admitted that he had a glass pipe in his pocket that he uses to smoke CBD oils. After a quick examination, the Baby Yoda glass pipe revealed small, clear and white crystals that looked like crystal meth. The warden placed the pipe on the hood and went to the back of the vehicle to speak with the woman. She said she didn't know the property was private, despite walking past multiple no-trespassing signs. The warden then walked back to the front of the vehicle and noticed the pipe was no longer on the hood. The man said he didn't know where the pipe went. Several feet in front of the vehicle, the pipe was found broken in half in the middle of a fresh footprint. Upon further examination of the hole where the couple was found, the warden found a small hand saw and freshly disturbed dirt. The woman's purse contained several gray rubber gardening gloves, each containing four Native American artifacts. The San Marcos Police Department took the couple to the Hays County Jail. While en route to jail, the man said he believed he had the coronavirus. He leaned forward against the partition and aggressively coughed toward the officers. Both subjects were charged with criminal trespass and Antiquities Code violations. The husband was also charged with possession of a controlled substance, tampering with evidence and harassment of a public servant. Cases pending.

--Fool Me Once--A Hays County game warden was contacted by a Hays County sheriff's detective about trespassers digging for Native American artifacts on a private property in Buda. The landowner installed several game cameras hidden in trees to monitor the dig sites and caught a man, on two separate occasions, digging for artifacts. The images were of high quality and showed the man's face and unique tattoos on his arms. The following year, the warden assisted a special agent with the Bureau of Land Management with a federal case involving the removal and sale of Native American corpses/bones and sacred burial beads from an archeological burial site. The warden shared game camera images of the Buda property trespasser with the agent, and the agent recognized the man as an associate of the suspect he was actively investigating. The agent provided the name, and the trespasser was identified. The warden and the agent interviewed the trespasser and confirmed his identity through his unique tattoos. The trespasser handed over 18 Native American artifacts that were taken from the Buda

property. Arrest warrants were obtained for Antiquities Code violations and criminal trespass. The subject turned himself in. Cases pending.

--The Scope of the Problem-- A Freestone County game warden was contacted by a landowner who said he allowed a man to hunt feral hogs on his property but had killed a deer in addition to the hog. The landowner explained that while driving his property, he found a fresh hog carcass, along with a fresh white-tailed doe. The landowner asked the hunter what happened and was told that he "accidentally shot the doe when he was shooting at a hog." The warden contacted the man, who admitted to shooting the doe, saying his "scope was off." Charges include hunting a white-tailed deer in closed season, failing to take hunter education and hunting without a license.

--Look Out Below--A Freestone County game warden arrested a suspect in an ongoing investigation that began in February relating to hog hunting from a helicopter. A husband and wife were working cattle

(Continued on Next Page)

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on their property when a helicopter began to hover over their property and shoot feral hogs. The husband waved his arms at the helicopter and it flew off. After the investigation, it was clear that the helicopter owner did not have a landowner authorization permit for the property in question. Charges were filed for using an aircraft to manage wildlife without having a landowner authorization permit.

--Fishing for Trouble-- A Williamson County game warden was contacted by a retired law enforcement officer who was fishing the Dickerson River Bottom of the San Gabriel River in Circleville when he saw a man using a cast net and catching white bass. The retired officer said there was a group of six men, and one was using the cast net. When the warden arrived on scene, he saw the man catching white bass with a cast net, then give it to another fisherman to manually hook the fish in the mouth onto a stringer. The warden contacted the men and found that none of them had a fishing license. The man using the cast net caught 20 of the 25 fish on the stringer, two being undersized. Citations and civil restitution were filed, and the fish were donated to a needy family.

--No Sale-- A game warden was contacted about an Operation Game Thief incident in progress regarding an individual in Killeen selling crappie and catfish on a social media website. The warden located the post and found the seller's address. After arriving at the seller's

location, the individuals admitted to the warden that they had been trying to sell the crappie and catfish they caught at Stillhouse Hollow Lake on social media for the last two days, but no one purchased them. The warden issued a citation for the sale of protected game fish and seized seven blue catfish, one yellow catfish and a bag of crappie meat. Case pending.

--Fishy Business-- A Harris County game warden was notified through a Facebook post of an individual selling crawfish and oysters from a truck. Contact was made with the seller at the location posted online, and when the warden arrived, a transaction was occurring. When asked whether the seller had current licenses, he said that he did and went toward his vehicle. After a few moments the warden realized the individual was taking too long to retrieve his paperwork and shortly thereafter the individual admitted to not possessing a commercial license. When the warden asked about the invoices for the product, the seller was only able to produce a receipt from the crawfish and was unable to produce any documentation for the two boxes of crab or the 11 sacks of oysters. The seller was issued the appropriate citations.

--Spring Breaking the Law-- A group of spring breakers celebrating their time off at a house in Concan decided to begin spring turkey season a little early. One March morning, a Uvalde County game warden was contacted by an individual who had seen several boys

use turkey calls to call up a gobbler. One of the boys killed the turkey and retrieved it from the brush. The warden, along with a Real County game warden, arrived at the house and contacted the boys. When asked about the turkey, the guilty party readily cooperated, admitted what he had done and showed wardens where he had hidden the bird.

--You Can't See Me-- A Karnes County game warden was on patrol when he noticed a deputy's patrol vehicle on the side of the road near the San Antonio River bridge. The deputy approached the warden and told him that there was a truck that had been there for a short while without any occupants. The warden looked in the bed of the truck and found a fishing pole. The deputy and warden looked under the bridge and found two individuals fishing. They watched for a short time to make sure the individuals were both fishing before announcing their presence. When the warden called out to the fishermen, the two individuals squatted down. The warden watched with his binoculars, and both men still didn't move. The warden called out to them again and told them to stand up. The two men then stood up and came to talk with him. Neither of them had a fishing license and both were issued citations.

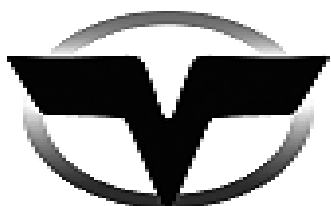
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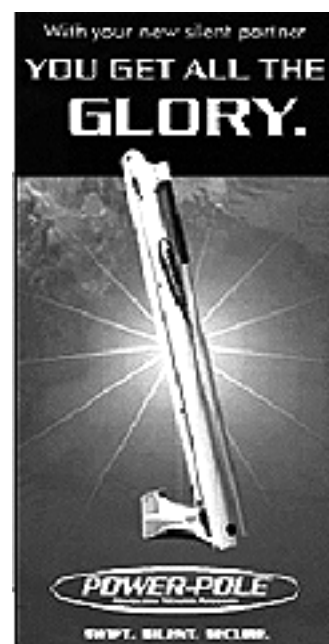
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Minnow Bucket

Apr. 29 ~ Media Bass

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Apr. 30 ~ JC Outdoors Individual

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May

May 7 ~ Media Bass

Minnow Bucket

May 13 ~ JC Outdoors Teams

May 19, 20, 21 ~ Legend of Lake Fork

Lake Fork Marina

May 27 ~ 14th Annual Sartin Marine

Minnow Bucket

May 28 ~ JC Outdoors Solo

Minnow Bucket



June

June 3 ~ Wood Co. Kidfish

SRA Park

June 8 - 11 ~ Skeeter Owners

Lake Fork Marina

June 10 ~ JC Outdoors Teams

Minnow Bucket

June 11 ~ JC Outdoors Solo

Minnow Bucket

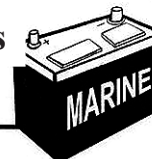
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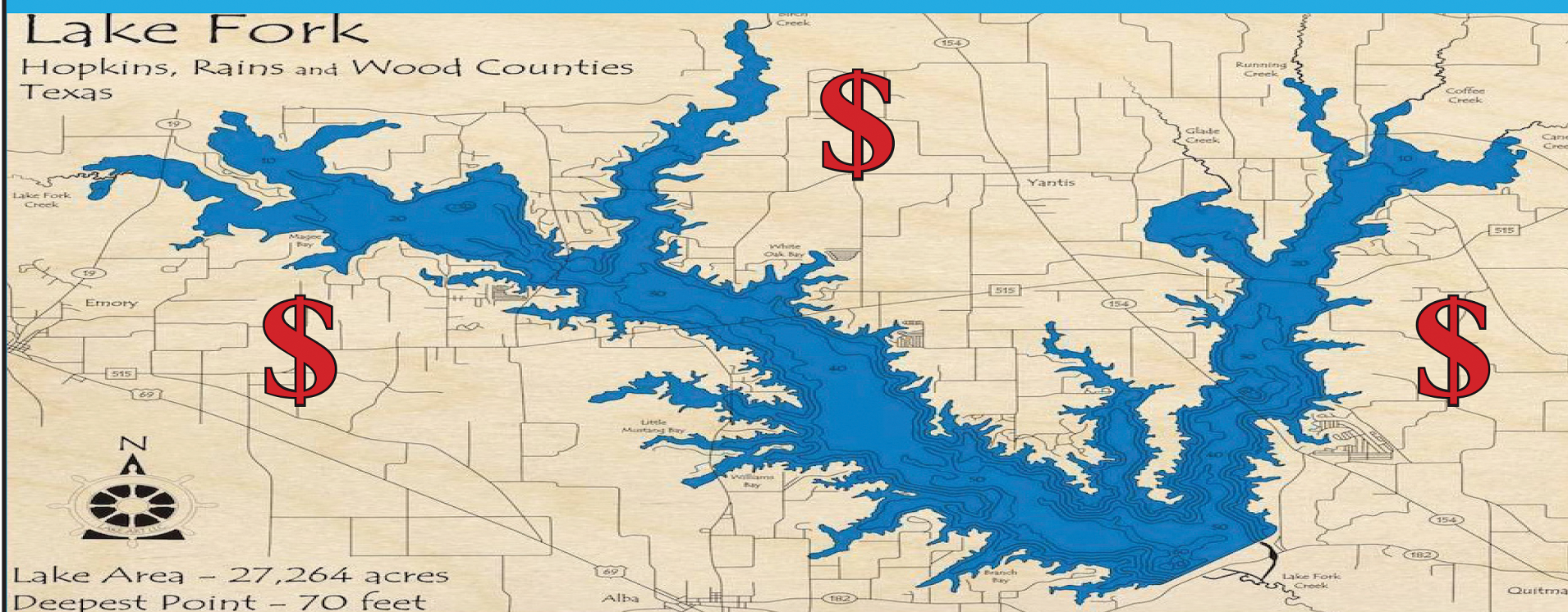


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