

LAKE FORK "The Big Bass Capital of Texas"



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

2 Sections

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Free

Vol. 17

July, 2016

No. 203



Eric Blane from Montgomery, TX., was the big winner in the 23rd Annual Skeeter Owners Tournament held on Lake Fork June 11th and 12th. Eric brought to the scales a lunker weighing 9.04-lbs. For his catch he took home a 2016 Skeeter FX 20 powered by a Yamaha 250 SHO plus \$700 for the hourly. (See Full Story on Page 4-A)



"Always Loved Never Forgotten!" Lake Fork lost a good friend on June 10th when Lew Conder passed away to fish on heavenly waters. Lew had many friends on Lake Fork and all who knew him will miss him. He was President of Texas Trails Bassmasters of Lake Fork for 8 years and Vice President of 'The Wish To Fish Foundation'. He loved fishing and was known best by his yellow Ford truck and yellow and black Skeeter. Many of us have lost a near and dear friend that will never be forgotten!



Simpson Rushing from Forney, TX., caught the heaviest bass under the 16" slot during the 23rd Annual Skeeter Owners Tournament weighing 2.81-lbs. For his catch he took home a 2016 Yamaha Viking Side by Side and an hourly check for \$600. (See Full Story on Page 4-A)



Congratulations to the 'Top Seven' winners in the 8th Annual Lake Fork Catfish Classic, Johnny Northcutt tournament winner 12.04 pound catfish, Phillip Lasswell second place, David Driskell third place, Roger Stroman fourth place, James Lasswell fifth place, John Compton sixth place and Royce Dollison seventh place. (See Full Story on Page 5-A)

"Bubba has a personality for every bait in his tackle box!"

By: Don Hampton

When you speak of people susceptible to personality changes, I do hope that Bubba crosses your mind. If you have ever been fishing with him, you know exactly what I mean.

Bubba is the kind of guy that has a howdy and a smile for everyone he meets. Very seldom will you find him not in a good mood. He even has a knack for cheering people up that are in a bad mood. I would say Bubba missed his calling in life. He should have been in the entertainment field instead of the hay field because when you go fishing with him it is more than fishing it is entertainment. You are not just fishing with Bubba but also with all the personalities he shifts into with each type of bait he ties on his line. We all know about Bubba's stuff. He's the one that bought a bigger boat so he could carry more stuff. If there were a Guinness Record for the largest tackle box, Bubba's name would be beside it. His boat is his tackle box. This is the reason he can't go fishing in any of his buddies' boats, he couldn't get his tackle box in it. With each name brand lure in Bubba's tackle box he has a personality he ties on with it.

When he ties on a Rebel lure, you can almost see the ghost of James Dean beside him, but with Bubba it is "Rebel With A

Cause!" When he ties on a Zoom, it becomes a "Zoom-Smackdaddy" with all the sound effects that go with it. With every cast you will hear him go "zoouooooom" and when he sets the hook on a hawg, it is always "smack-daddy".

This applies except when he ties on a Zoom Centipede, commonly known to anglers as a fry. Then Bubba becomes "Fry-Daddy".

The personality of Bubba's that I personally like the best is when he ties on a Tiki Wave Worm. With knees slightly bent he will hop from foot to foot doing his little chant that goes with it. I had to sneak to the front of the boat during this ceremony to understand what he was saying, but I got the full meaning. His chant with the Tiki Wave Worm is "umm by galla-- show me where the big bass-walla-- an I'll give em something to swalla". This one really seems to work the best for him.

Bubba could care less how the manufacturer's name is spelled when it comes to his shifting fishing personalities. A perfect example of this is Lockhart Lures. To Bubba when he ties one of these lures on it means his heart is locked on catching the big one. He is just waiting for one of those big girls (bass) to come tug on his heartstring.

If you see Bubba on the front of his boat acting like a World War II fighter pilot you know he has a "Bomber" tied on. If you hear

him singing the old song "Norman My Love" he has a DD-22 tied on. If he starts talking like a hippie and doing his Cheech & Chong impressions, he has a Berkley tied on. If he is acting wildly excited he has a "Frenzy" tied on. If you see Bubba acting like a samurai or someone out of a Bruce Lee movie you can bet he has a Yamamoto Custom Bait tied on.

When Bubba has a Terminator Lure tied on, Arnold has nothing on him. He becomes the bad boy of the lake. Whether he catches fish on his spot or not before he leaves, in his deep Mr. Arnold Schwarzenegger voice you can hear him say, "I'll be back!"

All these characters Bubba leaves on the boat until the next excursion out on a lake.

Bubette still thinks he is a Fly-Fisherman, because every time he gets the chance to go fishing, he flies out of the house.



Legend has it that sailors once thought that wearing a gold earring would improve their eyesight.



Many fishermen throw back the first fish they catch so as to appease unseen spirits.

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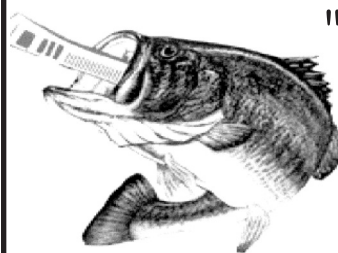
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23rd Annual Skeeter Owners Tournament on Lake Fork

By Don Hampton

June 9th thru 12th found Skeeters buzzing all over Lake Fork! The 23rd Annual Skeeter Owners Tournament on Lake Fork set a new record in attendance with over 2,200 anglers from different states coming to this great reservoir to compete. The tournament was conducted by BassChamps with funny man Fish Fishburne emceeing the event.

With the chance of winning one of the ten checks given away each hour in this customer appreciation event anglers were filled with anticipation. Not only could they win a new 2016 Skeeter FX 20 powered by a Yamaha 250 SHO for the heaviest bass caught in the tournament, if they caught the heaviest under the slot they would be taking home a 2016 Yamaha Viking Side by Side.

Fishing dates for the tournament were Saturday and Sunday. Pay hours were on the second half of the hour from 7 am to 3 pm on Saturday and 7 am to 12 pm on Sunday.

Lake Fork is a slot lake with any bass between 16" and 24" deemed an illegal bass. Bass in this category can not be brought to the weigh-in which made 2-pound bass and up the main money winners during the course of the tournament.

There were ten bass over the slot brought to the

weigh-in. The big bass hour started during the 11 o'clock hour of the first day when three were weighed in. Jacob Bruener from Douglas, Texas weighed in an 8.42-pound bass; Edward Holland from Allen, Texas weighed an 8.36-pound bass; Darrell Gilbert from Pleasanton, Texas weighed an 8.26-pound bass. During the 12 o'clock hour Charles Humphreys from Dallas, Texas weighed in a 7.54-pound bass. In the 1 o'clock hour David May from Plano, Texas weighed in an 8.04-pound bass. Finishing up the first day of competition Adrian Barnes from Belton, Texas weighed in a 7.76-pound bass.

On Sunday during the 9 o'clock hour Eric Blaine from Montgomery, Texas weighed in a 9.04-pound bass. In the 10 o'clock hour Randy Murphy from Henderson, Texas weighed in an 8.28-pound bass. Kevin Davis from Mustang, Oklahoma weighed in a 7.62-pound bass during the 11 o'clock hour. In the 12 o'clock hour the last over for the tournament came to the scales. Greg Guy from Austin, Texas brought a 6.93-pound bass to the scales.

Eric Blaine's 9.04-pound bass held up as the heaviest bass of the tournament and for his catch he took home a 2016 Skeeter FX 20 powered by a Yamaha 250 SHO and a check for \$700 for the hour he weighed in.

The heaviest bass under the slot was weighed

in during the last hour of the tournament when Simpson Rushing from Forney, Texas weighed in a healthy 2.81-pound bass. He came in 2nd in the hour winning a check for \$600, but also took home a 2016 Yamaha Viking Side by Side.

The 24th Annual Skeeter Owners Tournament on Lake Fork will be held the second week of June 2017. With the attendance this year, Skeeter owners better make their reservations early.

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Johnny Northcutt of Point, Texas Wins the 2016 Lake Fork Catfish Classic

By Dick Walker

(June 26 – Lake Fork, TX). The 8th Annual Lake Fork Catfish Classic concluded on Sunday with Johnny Northcutt of Point, Texas taking the \$5000 bonus prize for the largest fish weighed in the two-day tournament. Northcutt landed his 12.04-pound channel catfish on Saturday during the 11:00 to 12:00 hour.

Northcutt and all the other tournament anglers competed individually for big catfish with cash prizes awarded for the four largest fish weighed each hour and bonuses paid to those catching the largest seven fish overall. Including the hourly payout, Northcutt collected a total of \$5400 for his fish. This year's payout for all hourly and tournament top finishers was \$24,000.

Phillip Lasswell of Lufkin, Texas took second place and pocketed \$3,100 in hourly and bonus money for a 11.81 pound channel cat weighed during the seventh fishing hour on Sunday. David Driskell of Crockett, Texas captured third place and a \$1,600 reward for his 9.57 pound channel cat that he caught on Saturday along with a first and a third during the hourly payouts. Roger Stroman of Emory, Texas placed fourth with a 9.56 pound channel worth a \$800 payday. James

Lasswell of Stephenville, Texas pocketed \$300 for his fifth place 9.18 pound cat along with \$800 in hourly winnings. John Compton of Chandler, TX followed in sixth place with a 7.91 pound catfish and rounding out the top seven was Royce Dollison of Ben Wheeler Texas, with a nice 7.67 pounder.

The most active hourly winners were brothers James and Phillip Lasswell with 6 fish weighed during the course of the two-day tournament. The top youth angler was Cash Harrison of Tyler, Texas with a 5.58 pound channel cat. Tonya Brown of Lindale, Texas took top ladies honors with 6.09 pounds. Phillip Lasswell of Lufkin, Texas, topped all seniors with a 11.81 pound channel.

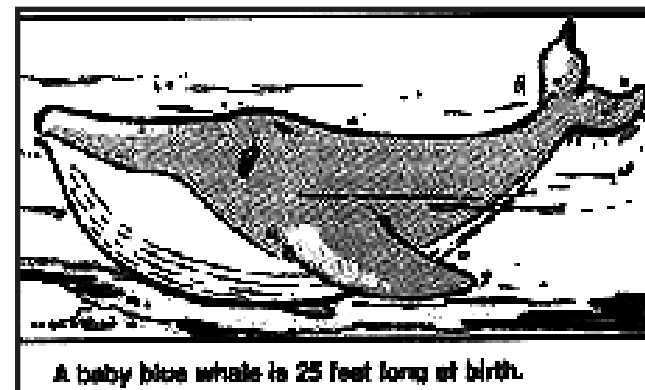
The Lake Fork Catfish Classic is organized by the Lake Fork Sportsman's Association. Oak Ridge Marina served as its host. The Lake Fork Sportsman's Association is a non-profit organization that was formed in 1999 to promote and help conserve Lake Fork as a world-class fishery. Its members are mainly lake-area homeowners, businesses, and guides. More information on the Association and its mission can be found on facebook and its web-site, www.lakeforksa.com.

The Lake Fork Catfish Classic's major underwriters are the Wood County Industrial Commis-

sion and City National Bank. Other important sponsors include Scotty's Magic Bait, and Brookshires of Emory. Contributors include True Value Hardware of Quitman, McCoy Fishing Line Company, Texas Ranch Outfitters, Bass Champs Tournament Trail, Danny King Punch Bait and Costa Sunglasses.

A special thanks goes to Don Hampton and Legend Boats for the use of their stage and scales. KMOO 99.9 FM served as the event's official radio station.

The 2017 event is tentatively scheduled for June 24 and 25, 2017. Details and other information will be posted on the Lake Fork Sportsman's Association facebook page and web-site as they are developed.



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"Summer bite is on!"

By David Ozio

"This summer is in full fledged blister mode right now and, believe it or not, it's the perfect time to be on the water to bag a true trophy bass. This happens to be my favorite time of the year as the behemoth green fish start to group up on deep structure and make easier targets for all skill sets of bass fishermen. Kids, especially during this time frame, love the action because we use a lot of drop shots and Carolina rigs to entice the trophy bass to the net. This is astronomical fun using light line and a vertical presentation will get the job done in rod bending fashion.

We have had plenty of rain this year and the lake is in awesome shape. The high water has produced great spawns over the past two seasons and

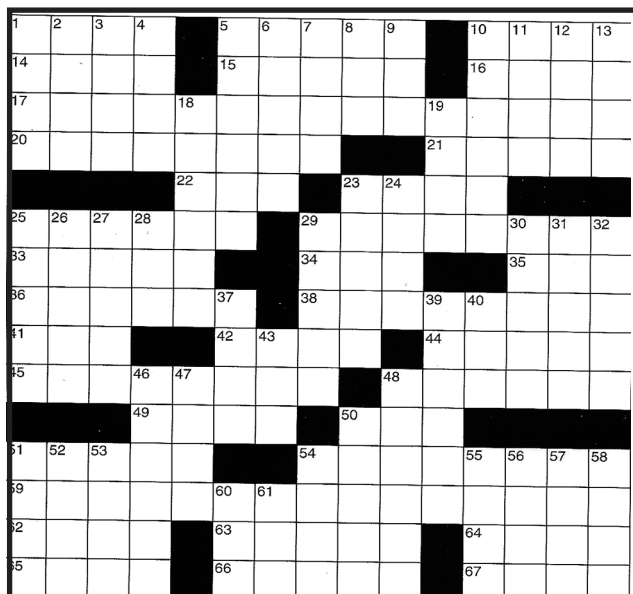
the future for Fork couldn't be brighter. There are tons of small bass rambling the lake and these will grow to the next generations share-a-lunker. July is a great month to target all sizes of bass using top water, crankbaits and drop shots. It's all about locating the fish and then it's game on. Electronics play a huge roll in finding these huge schools of bass and the more time you spend graphing the key locations, the greater the chance to have a monumental day. Main lake points, ridges, road beds and pond dams should be your locations of focus and pay close attention to the 18-24ft range. Even if you only see a group of ten fish at a given depth, pitch out a marker buoy and spend fifteen minutes to see if you can get the bass to commit. If nothing rattles your cage, move on to the next location. Let's say you see a ton of good arc's at the next spot. My first choice is the drop shot rigged with a Talon Carolina Worm or a Robo-worm. Use any color you want as long as it is red. Drop straight down to them and barely jiggle the rod tip. Active fish will load the rod and you may think your hung up. Set the hook and figure out the rest later. If the drop shot is not your game, throw a Carolina rig or a football jig to the area where you first spotted the bass. On the C-rig, you might try a fluke, brush hog or a Zoom magnum trick worm. Under bright sun, I will use redbug or



plum colors and when it's cloudy, any version of green pumpkin will suffice. As for the jig, PB&J, Mexican Heather or black/brown/amber will do the trick. Match a craw trailer to the jig and your in business.

The topwater bite will be good early and late on main lake points and a Zara Spook is the ticket. Yellow Magic's will catch their share of fish but the spook bags the big one's. This bite only lasts about an hour but it is well worth being on the water early as daylight has it's own majesty. Once this bite stops, move the boat out to about 15ft and throw a C-rig, squarebill or jig up to the 5-7ft range and work it back slowly. This will account

(See Summer bite....
Continued on Page 20-A)



CLUES ACROSS

1. Picasso's mistress
5. Turned
10. Wainscot
14. Algae
15. Oak fruit
16. _____ Blyton, children's author
17. An angler's tale
20. Cyclical
21. Pulls
22. Nothing
23. 24 hours (Old English)
25. Fixing
29. Capital of Malta
33. Flows
34. Potato state, abbr.
35. Mineral
36. Widen
38. Column carved in the shape of a person
41. Shock therapy
42. Imitates
44. A long, narrow range of hills
45. Regenerates
48. Motions
49. Wood file
50. Unprocessed
51. Sus scrofa
54. Pariahs
59. Salinger novel, with "The"
62. Herbaceous plant
63. Host
64. Fallow deer
65. Cheap lodging (slang)
66. Baked goods
67. Card game

CLUES DOWN

1. Computer Apples
2. Wings
3. Largest known toad species
4. Tabloids
5. Feline treat
6. Number system base 8
7. German Chancellor Helmut
8. Before
9. Dun & Bradstreet, abbr.
10. College award
11. Small buffalo
12. Ring
13. Lyric poems
18. Unostentatious
19. Romantic interlude
23. Fathers
24. Winged
25. Secrete milk
26. Cost
27. Tartan skirts
28. Environmental agency
29. Bad habits
30. Holdalls
31. Stale
32. Yellow-fever mosquitoes
37. Sensory receptors
39. A name of God
40. Bird genus
43. Make lively
46. Hints
47. Commitment
48. Lists
50. _____ Dubos, French naturalist
51. Carangid fish
52. Ring
53. Native American people
54. -ory, of the walnut family
55. Danson and Turner
56. Persian Gulf country (var.)
57. Molding
58. Chair
60. Old World, new
61. Returned material authorization, abbr.

Answers on Page 21-A



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TPWD Kicks Off Fourth Year of Youth Arts Contest

Texas State Parks and the "Get to Know" organization are partnering for the fourth annual Youth Arts Contest. The contest runs through Nov. 1 and anyone 19 and under can enter works of art inspired by the natural beauty in any state park. "Everyone enjoys state parks in different ways and this is a fun way for young people to express their experiences," said Russell Fishbeck, deputy director of Texas State Parks.

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's Youth Arts Contest encourages youth to share their outdoor experiences using art, writing, photography, video and music. Works will be entered in both the state and national Get to Know Contests. This year's contest will have three age categories: 14-19, 10-13 and under 10. Prizes will be awarded to an overall winner, as well as to first through fourth places for

each age category.

To enter, visit <http://www.get-to-know.org/contest/us/>. See this year's entries in the Texas State Parks Gallery page.

The contest is part of TPWD's Arts in the Parks program and aims to motivate Texans of all ages to connect with the outdoors through art.

For arts and crafts events in state parks, visit the TPWD Arts & Crafts calendar page.

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"The Moon Report" Hot July Crappie

By Terri Moon

Can you believe this year is half over? It seems the older I get the faster it goes! But here we are in the middle of "hot weather" summer and it seems the hotter it got – the better the fishing! Unless you caught a day that they were releasing water then it was a little tough! But we've been catching some really nice crappie and also releasing several over 16 inches! A big thanks to all who chose to release the BIG ONES after a photo!

The crappie seem to be settling into their summertime pattern. We're finding them anywhere from 8 to 12 ft. in 16 to 24 ft. of water depending on the time of day or if it's sunny or cloudy. Their depths will change throughout the day so keep monitoring your depth finder to watch for any changes.

We've been having fun with Lake Fork Tackle's new curly tail and paddletail shad baits. Chartreuse pepper, electric chicken and bluegill colors are working for us. Some-

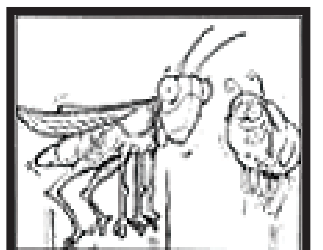


thing else Lake Fork Tackle has available is the "Lake Fork Unleashed" chip. Its pre-impoundment aerial photos showing contours, accesses, submerged roads, creek channels and structures. I've found that this is an awesome tool to help plan the placement of new brush piles. I'm really excited about it! A big thanks to Ron and Cody for all their help with the new brush piles. We had fish show up in them the next day! This chip is compatible with the Lowrance HDS gen1, gen2 and gen 3 units. This is another great tool for the serious fisherman!

Well, it's been a month of great memories and thanks to all who came to fish with me!

I'm looking forward to a summer full of great fishing because there are some big bream starting to show up and you never know when a big bass might strike! It's all good!

My best to you all and wishing a speedy recovery to my dad in Missouri and also to Ken Donahue of Lake Fork Marina. They've both been through "BIG" surgeries recently and I wish them all the best!



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22nd Annual Kidfish on Lake Fork

By Don Hampton

There were plenty of smiles to be seen at SRA Headquarters on June 4th, not only by the children catching fish, but also by the parents seeing their children experience the joy of fishing.

At the Wood County Kidfish held at Lake Fork on June 4th there were over 250 kids that showed the rain didn't bother them when it came to fishing! For some of the children this would be considered their first tournament of many more to come in their lifetime. The love of fishing for these children could be accredited to Kidfish.

Wood County Kidfish celebrated its 22nd Anniversary of introducing children to the sport of fishing. The first Saturday of June is the designated time for this event celebrating the first of June being National Kidfish Week. During this event no one participating in the event is required to have a fishing license. This gives parents that do not usually fish an opportunity to spend this time with their children and perhaps introduce the love of fishing to the whole family.

Each year this event is hosted by the Wood Coun-

ty Sheriff's Department, Texas Parks and Wildlife, Sabine River Authority, and Game Warden Peace Officer's Association and is held at Sabine River Authority Headquarters on Lake Fork. All are to be commended for their diligent hard work and the many hours they put in to make this event such a success for our children.

The event is free to all children and their parents. If the children do not have their own fishing equipment, rod n' reels are furnished along with all bait and tackle. Cold drinks, refreshments, hot dogs and chips are provided for the parents and children. This year serving the children, parents, and guests were the Mineola and Holly Lake Kiwanis Clubs.

The format of this event is a mock tournament, and divided into age group divisions. These divisions included 4 years old and under, 5 to 8 year old, 9 to 12 year old, and 13 to 16 year old. Each child weighing in the heaviest fish of the tournament wins a trophy and a year's worth of bragging rights. Wood County Sheriff, Jim Brown

(See Annual Kidfish.....Continued on Page 17-A)



Brianna Swaim from Yantis won heaviest fish at the KidFish on Lake Fork when she brought this monster 16.08-lb. buffalo to the scales.



Colby Chandler
Shreveport, LA.,

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Surge in Water Fatalities a Stark Reminder to Practice Safe Boating

An alarming spike of boating-related fatalities on Texas waterways, including many involving paddle craft such as canoes and kayaks, is prompting a call for boaters to wear life jackets, avoid drinking alcohol and follow other safety practices heading into the peak summer boating season.

Texas Game Wardens report more than a dozen boating-related fatalities have occurred thus far in the state during 2016 and almost half involved kayaks. Another four open water fatalities took place across the state the last weekend of July, including drownings and boating accidents involv-

ing motor and paddle craft.

"These tragedies represent an alarming trend we're seeing not just in Texas, but nationwide," said Texas Game Warden Asst. Cmdr. Cody Jones, TPWD's head of boating law enforcement. "In 2015, over 40 percent of boating-related fatalities in Texas involved paddle craft."

Weather conditions, including heavy rains that caused flooding and increased water flows along most rivers and creeks, have been the most significant contributing factor in paddle craft fatalities this year. TPWD Boating Education Manager Tim Spice stresses that many of those tragedies could have been avoided with safe boating practices.

"Just as you wouldn't get behind the wheel of a vehicle without first learning safe driving practices, it is critical to become familiar with paddle craft safety and operation before you launch," said Spice.

According to the U.S. Coast Guard statistics at least 85 percent of people who drown in boating accidents were not wearing a personal flotation device (PFD) at the time.

"It is important to wear your PFD at all times when in, on and around the water," Spice said. "This is especially true in the case of small boats or paddle craft due to the increased chance of capsizing. A canoe or kayak can capsize even in calm waters. PFDs can save lives, but only when worn."

When choosing a PFD, always ensure that it has the ability to support your size and weight and is approved by the U.S. Coast Guard. The U.S. Coast Guard requires one wearable PFD for each person onboard, of appropriate size for the person intended.

TPWD offers online resources for a wide range of boater education and safety training, including a free online paddle craft safety course, on the agency boater ed web page. Also, anyone born on or after September 1, 1993 must complete a boater education course to operate a personal watercraft or a boat with a horsepower rating of more than 15 hp.

Boaters are reminded that Texas game wardens actively monitor water activities throughout the year and particularly during the summer months to ensure safe boating practices. Last year during the Fourth of July holiday weekend, game wardens made contact with over 30,000 boaters and arrested 58 operators for boating under the influence.

Water safety extends beyond boating and with most of the state's reservoirs at or near capacity, game wardens are urging extra vigilance to stay safe heading into the busy Fourth of July holiday weekend.

(See Surge in Water Fatalities...Continued on Page 16-B)

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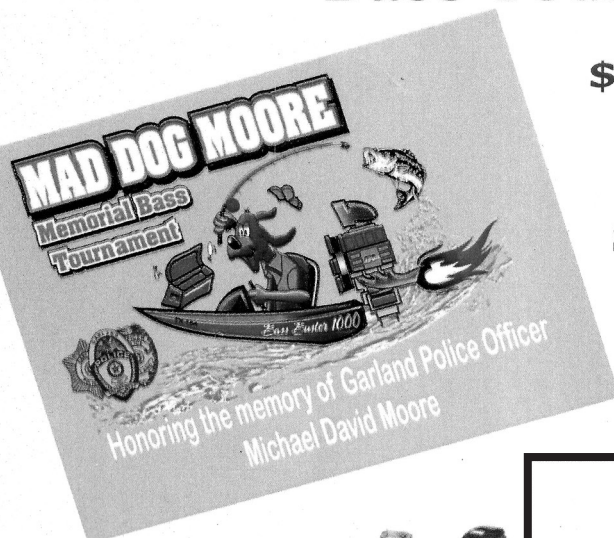
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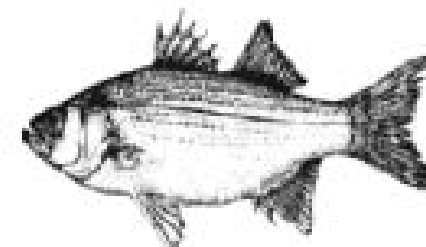
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Hook N' Cook Sand Bass Tournament



Saturday, August 13, 2016

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Tournament Committee: Don Bubba Hampton

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Drawings will be held after weigh-in for door prizes

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5th Place	\$200.00

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Payback



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Big Bass will pay Three (3) places. (Based on 100 entries)

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3rd Place	\$200.00

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Payback

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1. Entry fee is \$25.00.
2. Early entries optional (No Discount)
3. All entry fees must be paid before 6 a.m. Saturday, Aug. 13, 2016.
4. Sign Up: Friday, Aug. 12, 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. and Saturday, Aug. 13, 5 a.m. to 5:30 a.m. at Fisherman's One Stop.
5. Tournament is open to any person with a Valid Texas Fishing License. Minors can compete but must have signed release form.
6. All State and Local Laws Apply.
7. No alcohol or drugs allowed during tournament hours.
8. Trailering is allowed.
9. Iced Fish Will Be Allowed.
10. Trolling with big motor is allowed.
11. Each contestant may weigh-in only 5 fish.
12. 10" Minimum Length. Live bait is allowed.
13. No pooling of fish, all persons in boat must be paid entry.
14. Contestants can only fish with as many rods as they can.
15. Contestants must agree to submit to a polygraph.
16. Tournament Director & Committee Decisions Are Final.
17. Mail in entries must be received by July 31, 2016
18. All fish become property of tournament to be fried.

Entry Application

Entry fee of \$25 must accompany mailed entry and must be postmarked on or before July 31, 2016 to Wish To Fish Foundation, 538 PR 5861, Yantis, TX 75497, or you may pay \$25 at tournament headquarters before starting time of tournament. \$10 extra for Big Sandie (optional). Print clearly. No Checks Accepted at Tournament Sign In.

Name _____ Email _____

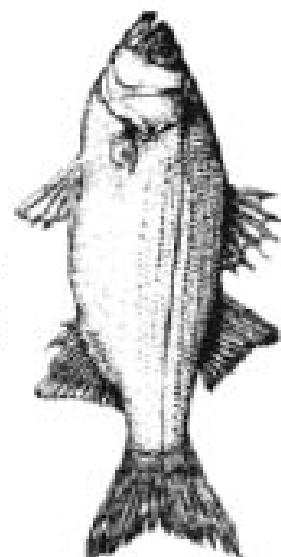
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City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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

Contestant Signature _____

Minor's release: Signed by _____ Parent/Guardian



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Entry Fee _____

Big Sandie _____

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Contestant(s) weighing in the first 2.50 exact weight bass each day of the

tournament will win \$5,000. The contestant who weighs in the heaviest bass under the slot during the 3-day tournament will win \$5,000. In addition, all contestants are eligible to win a 2016 Triton 189 TRX Powered by Mercury, equipped with Minn Kota and Lowrance in the famous "Elimination Drawing".

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Children ages five to twelve may participate in the Little Anglers Division and win Academy gift cards and trophies/medals for their winning catches of bass, catfish, crappie or perch.

Registration is now open online for the Big Bass Splash Presented by Sealy Outdoors benefitting St. Jude Children Research Hospital. To enter, visit www.sealyoutdoors.com. Early Bird Registration Deadline is Friday, September 2. Onsite registration will be at Lake Fork Marina from 10 AM – 8 PM on Thursday, September 15. Registration will continue each morning from 5 AM until 6 AM on days of the tournament. Tournament entry fees are \$160 for one day, and \$210 for two days, \$260 for three days: The Little Anglers Division entry fee is \$10 per day.

All participants and spectators ages 18 years of age and up can get in on the action. Come out to the tournament site, enjoy the festivities and get your free ticket for the Open Drawing beginning at 12 noon Sunday, September 18.

The Big Bass Splash events are considered to be the world's largest grassroots amateur big bass fishing tournament of its kind. The Big Bass Splash attracts thousands of amateur anglers to these weekend events. It's what we call "Fishing, Family and Fun" for everyone. A portion of the proceeds from registration fees will go to St. Jude Children's Research Hospital.

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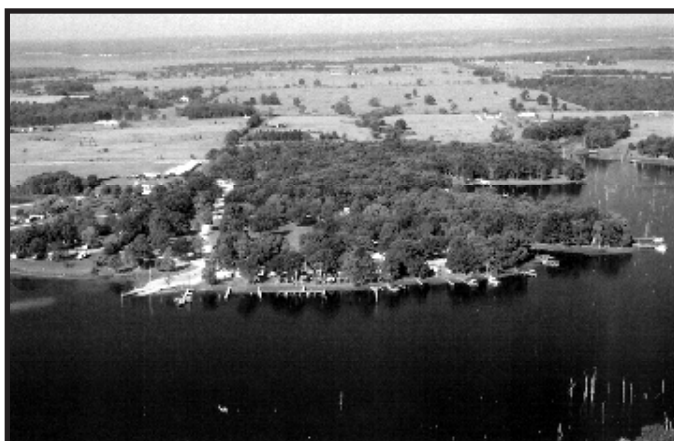
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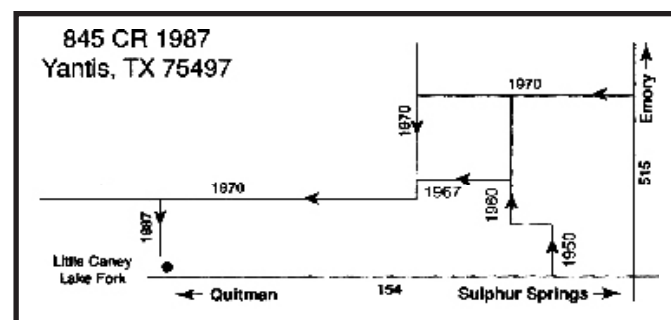
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Surge in Water Fatalities a Stark Reminder to Practice Safe Boating (Continued from Page 10-A)

There have also been more than 34 non-boating related drownings reported in Texas since January; over a third of those fatalities have occurred just since May.

"Enough is enough," said Texas Game Warden Col. Craig Hunter, TPWD Director of Law Enforcement. "A day on the water in Texas should

be all about the fun and following the basic rules of water safety can help keep your loved ones from harm. If you don't know how to swim, learn and if

you are impaired or unfamiliar with the water conditions, don't put yourself in jeopardy by taking unnecessary risks. Keep an eye on kids especially. It only takes a second to turn a fun day on the water into a tragedy."

The American Red Cross offers swimming lessons by certified instructors across the state on its swimming web page.

Video documentaries online at TPWD's water safety page put water and boating-related accidents into perspective, including "Never Happens," the true stories of water tragedies told by teen witnesses and survivors, and "Beautiful but Gone," which tells

the story of boating and swimming-related accidents from the parents of teens featured in "Never Happens."

Also, a video news report is now available based on the "Never Happens" longer video. See it on the TPWD YouTube Channel or download a high resolution version on the TPWD FTP site -- look for file "VNR_ Never Happens."

Stressed in the "Never Happens" video are four basic precautions for boaters of any age: --Wear a life jacket. Most persons who have died in a boating accident would be alive today if they had worn a life jacket.

--Use the ignition safety switch. Commonly

called a "kill switch," it stops the engine if you fall overboard so you won't be stranded or run over by your boat.

--Learn how to swim.

--Closely supervise children.

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Annual Kidfish on Lake Fork (Continued from Page 9-A)

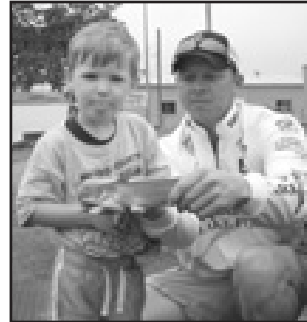
was present to congratulate the winners in each age category and present them with their trophy. Weight Masters for Kidfish are all members of the Lake Fork Texas Trails Bassmasters.

This year's winner of the 'Traveling Trophy' was Brianna Swaim from Yantis. This trophy is awarded to the child that catches the heaviest fish in the tournament. The trophy will have her name engraved on it and kept on display at Yantis Jr. High School. Brianna won this year with her catch of a buffalo weighing 16.08-pounds.

No child leaves the event without a prize furnished by the many sponsors. This year's prizes ranged from bicycles, fishing equipment, and many other items for each child's enjoyment. All

of the children and parents always have an excellent time at the event.

A special thanks goes out to all of the great sponsors that made this event possible, after all, our children are the future.



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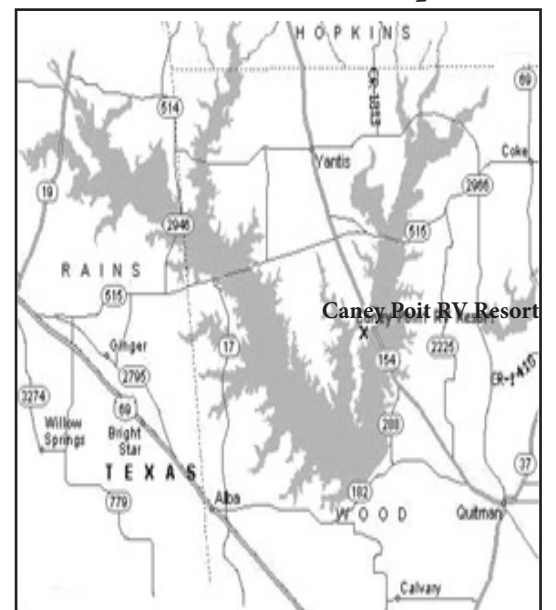
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"Pack of Knowledge" "Deep Cranking Session"

By Andrew Grills

Summertime in Texas... Yep, it's hot. It doesn't get much hotter than a midday deep cranking session. It's about the most physically strenuous scenario we face on the water. However, the burning forearms, the sweat dripping down the forehead, the soreness of the wrist... it is all forgotten in the moment you feel the head shake and a big bass has engulfed your crankbait.

The fact of the matter is a deep diving crankbait has the power to trigger bites from bass that ignore other presentations, and it delivers big bites.

This is why a deep-diving crankbait is one of the first tools I reach for in the summer for big fish.

It's no mystery to me why deep cranking produces big sacks of fish consistently. Bigger bass are often duped by a "reaction presentation" of some sort. Whether it's a lipless bait ripping through grass, a heavy jig falling in front of their nose, or a crankbait careening through their hangout, big bass are fooled when they make a hasty decision.

In deep cranking, there is always a "sweet spot". It may be a rock or laydown log, but there is something down there that triggers a reaction when the crankbait deflects off of it. Often, it takes the perfect cast, at the perfect angle, to unlock an area's true potential. When that precise spot and angle are pinpointed the crankbait can do things I believe nothing else will.

When approaching summertime fishing, we are looking at typical deep structure such as points, humps, and roadbeds. I rely on my graphs to tell me whether the fish are present. Once that is established, I like to make a few casts with a crankbait to try and "fire up" the school. Getting that first bite can lead to triggering a frenzy of activity. I find that I get more bites paralleling the structure with the crankbait, as opposed to casting from deep to shallow or vice versa.

I never throw a crankbait if I can't reach the bottom with one or make contact with some form of

cover. For instance, we will occasionally see bass suspended in tree tops that are well beneath the surface. Even if I'm in 35 feet of water, if the top of that tree is in a crankable depth I will still try to hit the branches with my crankbait. Nearly every bite I can recall that I've had cranking has been while my lure is making contact with something. Therefore, if the fish are suspended and I can't bang the crankbait against something near them, there are probably better lure choices.

When I do hit something with my crankbait, I like to hit it hard. I want to wake up whatever lives down there. That is why I use a 7.2:1 ratio, high-speed reel. I know that kind of goes against the old school logic of low geared, slow retrieve reels for deep cranking. Yes, using a lower speed ratio takes a little torque off of the forearm, but I feel like I get bit better with a fast retrieve. My typical retrieve is nearly as fast as I can turn the handle.

The perfect cranking reel for me is the Shimano Curado. I like it because it has a large spool capacity which is important for long casts. My favorite thing about the Curado is that it will cast a crankbait a mile. The biggest challenge in deep cranking is getting the lure out far enough to get it down to the desired depth. I pair the Curado with a G. Loomis Deep Flex Crankbait rod. I use the 7'5" heavy action. It's a stout rod for cranking but

(See Deep Cranking....Continued on Page 21-A)



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Record Funding from Texas Legislature Fuels Giant Salvinia Awareness Effort

Bolstered by a record appropriation from the Texas Legislature, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, river authorities and other partners are stepping up the war against aquatic invasive species, including one of the most noxious pests--giant salvinia.

With the busy summer boating season getting underway, a major public awareness campaign is calling for boaters to help stop the spread of this destructive invader, which can severely limit fishing, swimming and boating access and displace native beneficial plants that are used as habitat by fish.

Giant salvinia, a non-native plant first found in Texas in 1997, is a free-floating fern that can double in size in just a few days and can form mats up to three feet thick. It can take over an entire lake cove in a matter of weeks, choking out all aquatic life below its thick mats and making boating, swimming or fishing impossible.

Once giant salvinia becomes established in a lake, it is nearly impossible to completely remove, though Texas Parks and Wildlife Department staff have been successful in eradicating giant salvinia in some lakes when it was spotted early and confined to the area immediately around a boat ramp.

This summer's awareness campaign reminds boaters to "Clean, Drain and Dry" their boats, trailers, and gear before traveling from one lake or river to another, since

boats are the main way aquatic invasive species like giant salvinia are spread. Although the emphasis is on encouraging people to do the right thing voluntarily, it is illegal to possess or transport any exotic aquatic plant or animal listed as harmful or potentially harmful, with possible fines of \$25-\$500.

The giant salvinia awareness campaign is funded primarily with state dollars, with additional contributions from the Sabine River Authority and Brazos River Authority. The "Clean, Drain, Dry" campaign includes targeted online and radio ads, billboards, gas station advertising, and emails. The campaign includes humorous

videos starring the "Lake Dudes," animated characters designed to engage boaters and encourage social media sharing.

This is the first time since 2011 that TPWD has been able to fund a giant salvinia awareness campaign, made possible through a record funding increase in state dollars to manage aquatic invasive

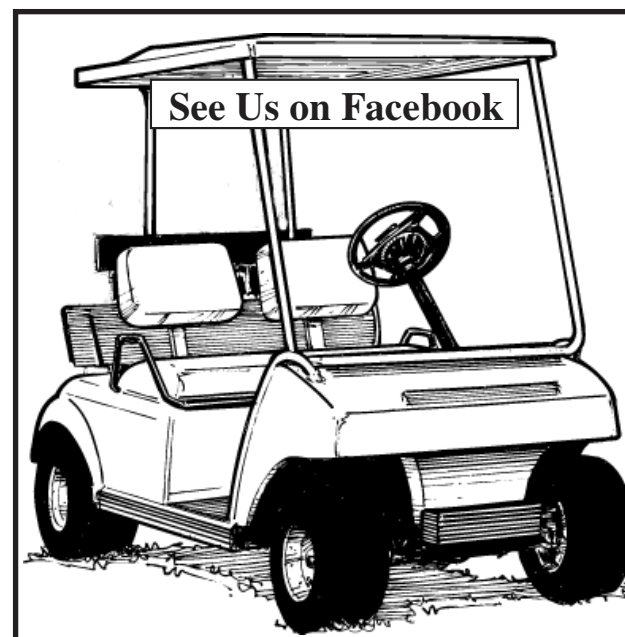
species. In 2015, the Texas Legislative appropriated \$6.6 million to Texas Parks and Wildlife Department for the 2016-2017 biennium to address statewide management of aquatic invasive species, an increase from \$1.1 million in the previous two-year funding cycle. The salvinia campaign is part of a broader, statewide effort that uses the

increased funding to control giant salvinia and other aquatic invasive species.

The public can learn more about giant salvinia at <http://texasinvasives.org/giantsalvinia>.



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"Summer bite is on!" (Continued from Page 6-A)

for extra bites to fulfill the morning. A Texas rig blue fleck power worm fished with a 3/8 ounce tungsten weight in that same depth range will also deliver some rod bending results.

If you are headed out to Lake Fork in July searching for the trophy of a lifetime, I would love to be a part of this trophy quest. I still have a few dates open in July and some in August. 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 run a Skeeter FXi with a Yamaha 250SHO and would like to thank Skeeter for making my office on the lake the best in the country. I would also like to thank G-Loomis, Shimano and Talon Lures for making my job the blast that it is. A special shout out to Nautical Mile Marine in Tyler for all their help in keeping me on the water seven days a week, no issues. 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



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Deep Cranking Session (Continued from Page 18-A)

has an incredible parabolic bend. This helps with casting as well as landing fish. I normally use 15lb fluorocarbon line, occasionally stepping down to 12lb test if I need to get a little deeper.

We have been fortunate over the past several years to have some important advancements in lure design available. Crankbaits are diving deeper than ever. There was a time hitting that 20' depth was the Holy Grail of cranking. These days it's not unusual to be digging bottom in 25' or deeper with the right equipment. My deep crank of choice is the Duo Realis G87. There is a deep model (15A) and an extra deep model (20A). I honestly believe it's a game changer when it comes to crankbaits. The lure has a built in magnetic weight transfer system.

I could go into detail about how it works, but I'll just put it this way: I can cast it 30% further than any other crankbait on the market. It casts like a bullet, even into the wind. It gets down deeper with less effort as well.

Next time you've marked a few fish, but can't get them to bite

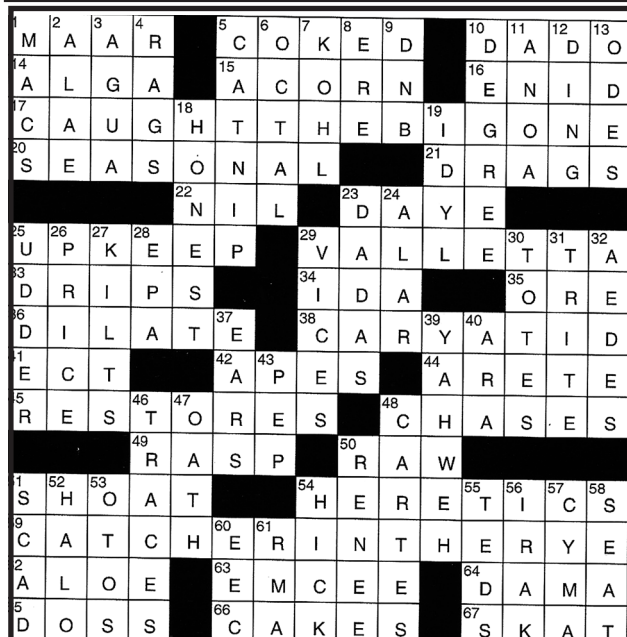
the jig, Carolina rig, or spoon, try knocking on their door with a crankbait. Sometimes I see my customers cringe when I break out the deep divers. Yes, it may seem too much like work to some, however it's a valuable tool that definitely has a place in our pursuit of big bass.

Just The Right Answers

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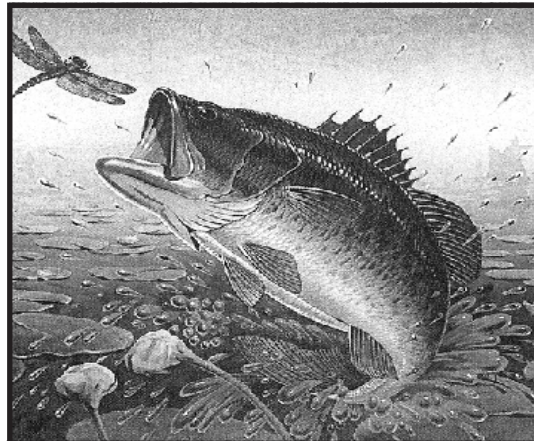
Vacation Search

There are 14 items that people may need while on vacation 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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C O O L E R H A E B R A
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L K B I N C U L M A T E
A O E N T T N E T C E Y
R O A G R L G R E H R E
M B C S T N L E N T A N
T E T H A T A C R O C O
I D D O U A S U S W L N
U I I E S L S C R E A P
S U N S C R E E N L T B
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