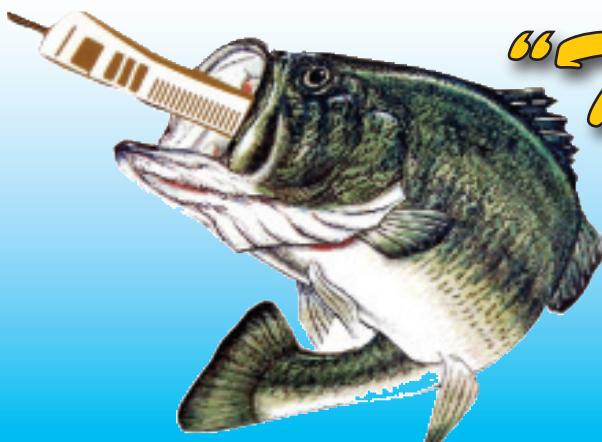


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1 Section

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Vol. 27

February, 2026

No. 317



A special thanks to Tractor Supply in Sulphur Springs. Pictured are l. to r. Tractor Supply assistant manager Bella, Manager Megan and LFSAA member Marty Jarrell with a sizeable donation of Christmas trees destined for Lake Fork to improve habitat for the upcoming spawn.

Sulphur Springs Tractor Supply Contributes to Lake Fork Habitat Project

Lake Fork Sportsman's Association member Marty Jarrell picked up a truck and trailer load of Christmas trees to deliver to Texas Parks and Wildlife for its recycling drive to create shallow water fish habitat in Lake Fork. Marty had dropped off TPWD's poster at the Tractor Supply in Sulphur Springs a

few days earlier and got the call that Tractor Supply had a large donation of trees. Marty and his son picked them up and delivered them to one of TPWD's drop off sites.

You can help in this effort to recycle natural, undecorated Christmas trees to help Lake Fork bass thrive during and after the spawn. The trees

will be placed in key shoreline areas in Lake Fork to provide structure and refuge for large-mouth bass. Drop off locations are: Caney Point Recreational Area (turn in just north of SH154 bridge and drop the trees in the marked area 1/2 mile off SH 154) For more information, call 903-566-1615, ext 2444.



Levi Weaver caught this Lake Fork hawg on Jan. 24, weighing 12.18-lbs., 25.5" in length, with a 21" girth. Weighed and paper work done at Lake Fork Marina. C.P.R.

Lake Fork By Don Hampton

Mid-Winter Eagle Count was held on Lake Fork on January 10th and 11th.

The weather was much nicer than now and twenty-two volunteers

Mid-Winter

showed up to assist in the count. There were 29 bald eagles in this year's count. This surpassed last year's count of 14.

The great news is that there were several nesting areas spotted. The

Eagle Count

locations of these areas are not disclosed to protect their environment. This projects great news for the future of eagles on Lake Fork. The TPWD Eagle Count is always the second weekend of January.



Dave Parsons was fishing with Lake Fork guide Randy Oldfield when he caught this really nice lunker. C.P.R.



Derick Hayley was fishing Lake Fork in January when he caught this nice bass. Weight not provided. C.P.R.

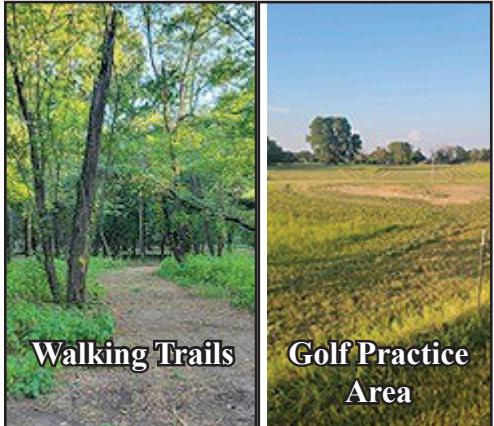


Doctor Sam Trinca was fishing Lake Fork with his good friend when he caught this nice bass. C.P.R.

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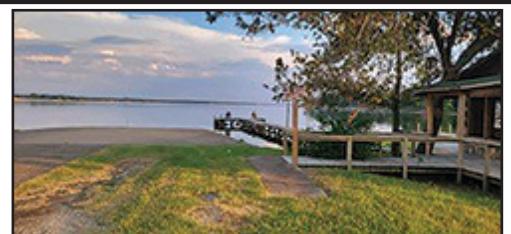
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"A Romeo Bubba Will Never Be As Long As There Are Fishes In The Sea!"

By: Don Hampton

Bubba thought hard and then he thought long...

On Valentine Days of the past...And how he'd went wrong... On this day of romance he alwaystryed his best...

But for one reason or another he never passed the test...

To Bubba's way of thinking this day must be cursed...

For each one that passed seemed to have been the worst!

On one such day he almost bought her perfume, but couldn't find the right odor... That was the one when he bought her for a year Bub-

a new trolling motor!

He's tried even to get her something in which she'd truly delight...

But she wasn't impressed when he bought her a floating crappie light!

Bubba tries so hard to show through gifts the love for Bubette he does feel...

But still she wasn't impressed with the Shimano combination rod n' reel!

The next year he just knew she'd think his gift was so devine...

But still she wasn't impressed with the spool of new braided line!

Bubba thought for a year Bub-

bette would know she was his dream...

So he bought her a subscription to BASS-MASTER magazine!

He'll never forget the Valentine's Day when he got hit with rocks...

That was the one he bought her the new bass angler's tackle box!

He thought on one such day, it would only show he loved her more...

And went out and bought her a new riding lawn mower!

But Bubba learned a lesson on Valentine's Day this past year...

That was when he bought her a floating fishing pier!

On Valentine Days

in the past Bubba has bought Bubette everything from lures to hooks...

And always finds himself the next day dodging vases and books!

Bubbette knows Bubba's love for her is so very strong...

But when it comes to buying gifts he has the tendency to go wrong!

He'll leave the house with intentions of buying perfume, clothing or jewels...

But when he gets home from town he's bought fishing equipment or tools.

Bubbette has tossed at Bubba some hints and clues...

On some of the more particular don'ts and do's!

More well defined you might could say she made a threat or two...

This way to Bubba the thought is more likely to get through!

So Bubba listened to her while thinking of his boat and the lake...

And the light went off upstairs and he knew this year he'd not make a mistake!!!

Because of the thinking long and hard, Bubba is playing it smart so he doesn't have to sleep in the yard...

He's going to go buy something with the Hallmark seal, that

tells her of the love in his heart and how he really does feel.

But also to keep him from landing in the yard, he is going to include in the package her own Wal-Mart gift card...

To My Bubbette, Happy Valentine Day! This Bubba Loves You!

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Toyota ShareLunker Program Launched 40th Anniversary Season on New Year's Day

New Year's Day 2026 launched the 40th season of the Toyota ShareLunker Program, another major milestone for Texas' highly acclaimed and storied largemouth bass selective breeding and stocking program.

Since 1986, anglers from throughout the state and nation have gone fishing on Texas lakes and cast their lines in hopes of landing a Legacy Class largemouth bass weighing 13 pounds or more.

During the first three months of each Toyota ShareLunker season (Jan. 1 through March 31), anglers who reel in a Legacy Class largemouth bass have the option of loaning it to Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) for captive spawning at the Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center in Athens. Its offspring will then be reared and stocked back into public lakes throughout the state, continuing to build and sustain the legacy of bigger, better bass for current and future generations of Texas anglers.

The Toyota ShareLunker Program plays an inte-

gral role in building and maintaining quality bass fisheries for the millions of freshwater anglers who go fishing on the state's lakes and rivers each year. Grabbing a pole, hitting the water, and hauling in a 13-pound largemouth bass would be a great way to kick off the new year. The cast of the line, the lure landing just right on the water, and a strike from a possible fish of a lifetime is what many anglers strive to experience.

"For 40 years, the Toyota ShareLunker Program has partnered with anglers to grow bigger, better bass and elevate Texas into a world-class fishing destination" said Natalie Goldstrohm, Toyota ShareLunker Program Coordinator. "Every Legacy Class fish shared with TPWD helps advance selective breeding and stocking efforts that benefit bass fisheries statewide. This milestone season is a celebration of the participating anglers, TPWD Inland Fisheries Division employees, our partners and sponsors, and the collaborative fisheries con-

servation efforts that make these incredible catches possible."

Anglers who catch a qualifying fish can call the ShareLunker hotline at (903) 681-0550 to report their catch 24/7 through March 31, 2026.

Anglers that catch and loan a 13-plus pound lunker earn Legacy Class status, receive a catch kit filled with merchandise donated by program sponsors, a 13lb+ Legacy decal for their vehicle or boat, VIP access to the Toyota ShareLunker Annual Awards event, a high-quality replica mount of their fish from Lake Fork Taxidermy, ShareLunker branded apparel provided by AFTCO, and Bass University will provide a swag pack and annual subscription. Anglers also receive entries into two separate drawings – a Legacy Class Drawing and the year-end Grand Prize Drawing. Both drawings will award the winner a \$5,000 Bass Pro Shops shopping spree.

(Continued on Next Page)

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The year-round Toyota ShareLunker Program offers anglers three additional levels of participation for catching bass over eight pounds or 24 inches in Texas public waters. Each of these levels provide vital data to TPWD fisheries biologists, helping them continue to create bigger, better bass in Texas. Anglers who enter data for any lunker they catch greater than eight pounds or 24 inches also receive a catch kit, a decal for their vehicle or boat, a one-month subscription to Bass University and an entry into the year-end Grand Prize Drawing to win a \$5,000 Bass Pro Shops shopping spree. ShareLunker entry classes include the Bass Pro Shops Lunker Class (8 lb.+), Strike King Elite Class (10 lb.+) and Lew's Legend Class (13 lb.+).

Once a qualified lunker is reeled in, anglers need to enter the catch data on the Toyota ShareLunker mobile app – available for free from the Apple App Store and Google Play – or at TexasSharelunker.com.

In addition to providing basic catch information, anglers have the option to send a DNA scale sam-

ple from their lunker bass to TPWD researchers for genetic analysis. Anglers who contribute a sample to the program will receive a Lew's reel while supplies last, with a limit of one reel per angler. Anglers who send in a genetic sample will also get a three-month subscription to Bass University. Instructions for submitting DNA samples are located on the Toyota ShareLunker website.

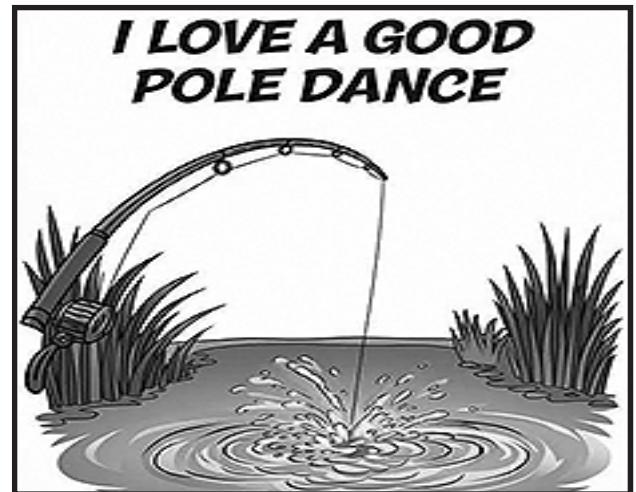
TPWD and the Toyota ShareLunker Program are once again partnering with AFTCO on the AFTCO Guide of the Year award for the 2026 ShareLunker season. The AFTCO Guide of the Year award recognizes a fishing guide who contributes to conservation and enhancement of largemouth bass in Texas.

The Toyota ShareLunker Program is made possible in part by the generous title sponsorship of Toyota. Toyota is a longtime supporter of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Foundation and TPWD, providing major funding for a wide variety of fisheries, state parks and wildlife projects.

Additional vital program support comes from Leg-

end Class category prize sponsor Lew's, Elite class category prize sponsor Strike King, Lunker class category prize sponsor Bass Pro Shops, AFTCO, Bass Forecast, Bass University and Lake Fork Taxidermy.

For updates on the Toyota ShareLunker Program, visit facebook.com/sharelunkerprogram/, <https://www.instagram.com/TexasShareLunker/> or TexasSharelunker.com



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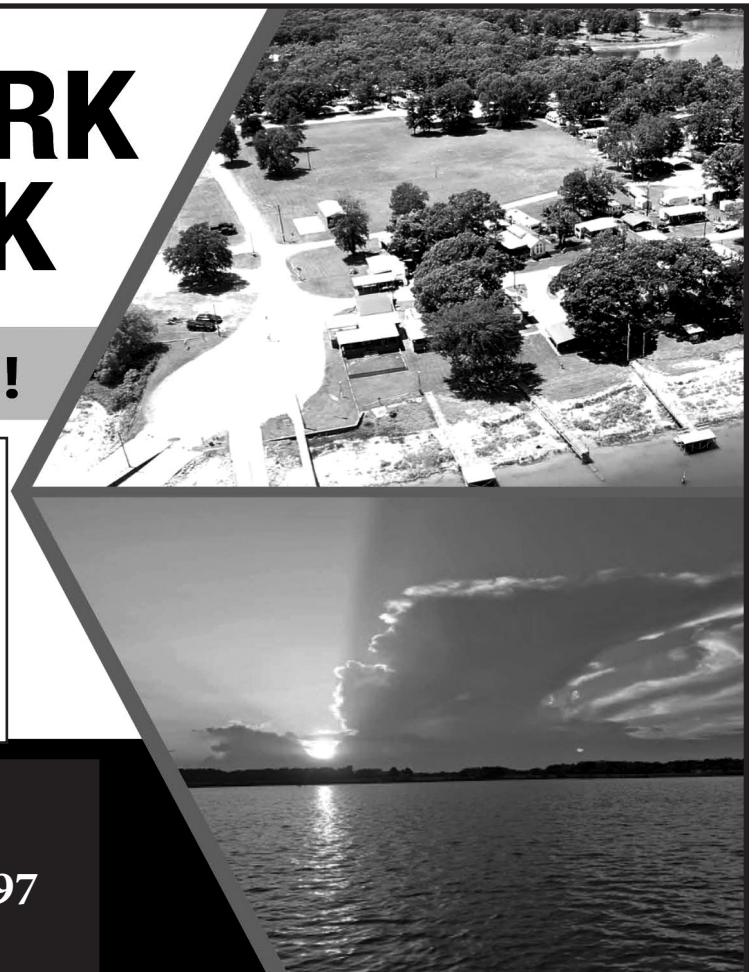


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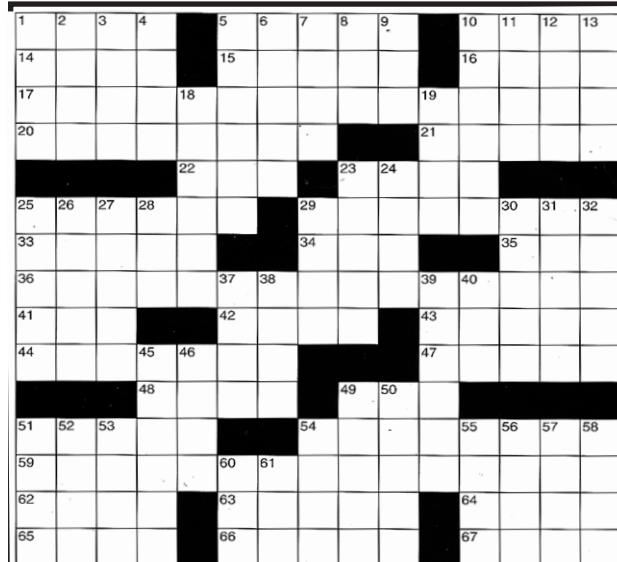
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"That February Feeling !!"

By Whitt Smith

You know that feeling you get when February rolls around and you know those Giant Pre-Spawn Bass are lurking? They're ready to test your gear and it's an exciting time to be a Bass Fisherman on Lake Fork!

**CLUES ACROSS**

- Outer garments
- Way to act
- Take back (informal)
- Negative (informal)
- At no time
- Beige
- Jane Fonda movie (three words)
- Landings
- Sustains, in a way
- Conceit
- Retail event
- ____ d', headwaiter
- Abandoned ship
- Strayed
- 007's creator
- Volt-ampere
- "Harry Potter and ____" (four words)

CLUES DOWN

- Pier on a porch
- Niels ___, physicist
- Copycat
- Partial (prefix)
- Anger
- ____ Park, Calif.
- Sheep genus
- Integer
- Work unit
- Add gas
- Outside (prefix)
- Quarry
- What belongs to us
- Exaggerate
- Competent
- Hind ends
- River in Florence
- Uppers (slang)
- Saint
- Bird genus
- Two-year-old sheep
- Having relatively few calories
- Vines

- ____ blanche, unrestricted power
- Fig and gum
- Mated
- Emit coherent radiation
- Aspects
- Brother
- Site of chemical spill
- Cleanse with soap and water
- Buckle (obsolete)
- Selected
- Posttraumatic stress disorder (abbr.)
- Nailed to the underside of a horse's hoof
- East Chadic
- Motion
- Individual unit
- Open skin infection
- Set of three
- Small merganser
- Rural free delivery (abbr.)
- Expresses distaste

Answers on Page 21

Great places to target and look for these "First Wave" of Pre-Spawn Bass are points/ secondary points with standing timber, pond dams, road beds and creek channels/ drains/ ditches leading to the spawning flats they'll eventually get on. This first wave of Pre-Spawn Bass can, historically, be some of the largest Bass in the lake.

It's still mostly a hard bait/ moving bait time for me, mostly. Jerkbait, glide baits, and Crankbaits are ideal for targeting these staging bass, especially around standing timber. Forward Facing Sonar (FFS) will identify these suspended bass, typically holding very close to standing timber. Then you can adjust your lure choices based on the depth the bass are holding in. Present your lures above the Bass and when your lure approaches the Bass, switch to an upward rod movement/position or twitch to entice these Bass into biting.

You can just follow the mid to back creek



channels on your mapping and cast Crankbaits or pitch jigs to the timber along the edges. The sweet spots will be any sharp turns in the channels. If you catch one pre-spawn Bass, there are typically others there. So, make sure you fish that spot thoroughly before moving on.

For the bass on bottom structure, such as pond dams, road beds, etc., a Carolina Rig or a jig are hard to beat.

For more barren points or "grassy" areas around the drains/ ditches, the old faithful East Texas Special red lipless Crankbait can be the deal and a great way to cover water and target Pre-Spawn Bass! Don't forget to employ the yo-yo type retrieve, either, it can be the ticket.

We're working through some problems with my business email, so if you're interested in getting a date booked, text or call me until we get the email issue resolved. Thanks and be safe out there.

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20th Annual Texas-National Archery in the Schools Championship to Draw Thousands of Students to San Antonio March 20–21

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) will celebrate a major milestone in 2026 as it hosts the 20th anniversary of the Texas State National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP) Bullseye & 3D Tournament. The event will take place March 20–21, at the Freeman Coliseum in San Antonio, bringing together thousands of young archers from across the state for two days of competition, scholarships and state pride.

More than 5,000 students representing nearly 200 schools are expected to participate this year in both the Bullseye and 3D archery disciplines. Students will have the chance to earn scholarships, awards and qualification slots for the NASP National Tournament in Louisville, Kentucky.

"Reaching the 20-year mark is a testament to the dedication of our students, educators, coaches, and partners across Texas," said Kendrick Gray, Outreach and Recruitment Manager for TPWD. "We

are especially grateful to the Outdoors Tomorrow Foundation and the Texas Wildlife Association-Texas Youth Hunting Program for many years of successful partnership in expanding school-based outdoor education. Together with NASP, these partnerships continue to strengthen pathways for young people to discover archery, outdoor recreation, and conservation."

The Texas NASP (TX-NASP) program plays a significant role in the state's hunter and bowhunter education efforts. NASP teams are co-ed and create inclusive opportunities for students of all backgrounds and skill levels. Participating schools represent a wide range of communities and campus types, from small rural districts to large metropolitan campuses, private campuses and homeschooled programs – reflecting the broad reach and accessibility of the program.

NASP also serves as an excellent example of the

North American Model of Wildlife Conservation in action. Beyond sportsmanship, archery directly supports conservation in Texas. A federal excise tax placed on archery equipment is returned to TPWD in the form of dedicated federal grants, and these funds help support many of the programs Texans value most – wildlife conservation, habitat management, public access and recreation, law enforcement, outdoor education and more. Through archery, students are not only learning skills and confidence, but they are also helping sustain the natural resources they enjoy.

The TX-NASP will award more than \$50,000 in continuing education scholarships at this year's tournament. Since the inaugural event in 2006, the program has awarded more than \$180,000 to top-performing student archers.

(See 20th Annual Texas:.....Continued on Page 9)



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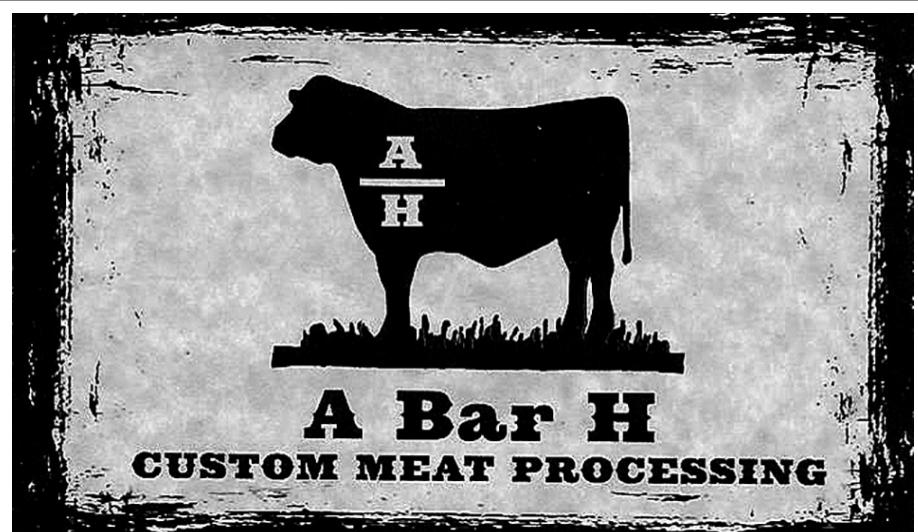
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"The Moon Report"

"February Transition Time"

By Terri Moon

Wow! It's February! That means it won't be long till those crappie start moving up the creeks starting their transition to spring-time patterns. I can hardly wait!!! In the meantime, water temperatures are running from the mid 40's to low 50's. The majority of the bait-fish are still hanging in those 35 to 50 ft. depths. Keep checking those main lake points, deep water humps, and creek channel timber. But, as the water temperatures start to rise to the mid to upper 50's, it's time to start checking secondary points. Be sure and keep an eye on the graph – especially around the new and full moon because that's when the crappie tend to be shallower.

Thinking back on past Februaries – I've realized some of our largest crappie have been caught during this month. Generally I've found the biggest crappie are the first to transition shallower – So, mid-February can be quite exciting! (weather permitting) The water tempera-



ture will be the key factor to when these transitions take place. Meanwhile keep checking those deeper spots till the water temperatures start to rise between 55 and 60 degrees and work your way shallower. The crappie are suspending in those 25 to 35 ft. depths in 30 to 50 ft. of water, (but this is subject to change daily!) – Just keep looking for the bait-fish and warmer water.

Remember that the colors of baits producing can change daily, so have a good assortment of colors available to try out. Also, be sure and have different weights of jig heads on hand.

So, if it's too cold to fish – stop by Lake Fork Marina and stock up. They've

got all your fishing needs and more! They have a great assortment of Skipper Jigs, Bonehead baits and jig heads and Limits Tackle, along with a great assortment of the latest crappie rods.

Just a quick reminder – the 10 inch minimum goes back in effect March 1st.

I know we are all hoping for some consistent stable weather for a change! No more snow and ice please!

I'm sure looking forward to the upcoming year and for those of you wanting to book a trip – my number is 903-335-0941. Leave a message and I'll get back to you as soon as I can.

My best to you all and stay safe out there!

20th Annual Texas-National Archery (Continued from Page 7)

Scholarships will be presented to the top five male and top five female high school archers, along with trophies, medals, and new equipment for top performers in all divisions. First-place male and female archers in each division will receive Genesis bows, and the highest-scoring male and female archers overall will each take home a limited-edition Genesis bow. Prize drawings will be held throughout the tournament.

Students participating in the state finals first qualified during the January statewide virtual qualifying event, which featured thousands of archers from campuses offering TX-NASP as part of their in-school curriculum.

The first-place team in each division automatically advances to the NASP National Tournament. Additional teams

may qualify based on score, and the top 1st – 10th place male and female individuals in each division will also earn a spot at nationals.

NASP is a non-profit foundation supported by generous sponsors and partners who help make youth archery programs possible nationwide.

To learn more about the Texas National Archery in the Schools Program, visit the TPWD archery website.

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Brazos Bend State Park to Host 2nd Annual Explore Bowhunting Event

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's (TPWD) Community Archery Program is partnering with Brazos Bend State Park in Needville on Feb. 7 to help the public "Explore Bowhunting."

With the help of Texas Game Wardens, Operation Game Thief, Texas Youth Hunt Program, TPWD Hunter's Education, Outdoor Tomorrow Foundation, Archery Trade Association

and other local partners, the event gives participants an opportunity to learn more about hunting with a bow and how to properly prepare to use archery equipment during hunting season.

"We are excited to once again partner with Brazos Bend for another year, to bring to the public, this one-of-a-kind archery event," said Adam Lewis, TPWD community archery specialist.

"Whether you are a seasoned archer, beginner or just starting to gain interest in the sport of archery and bowhunting, this is a great event to hone your skills, further your

knowledge and understand what it takes to be a successful bowhunter."

The workshop, scheduled for 10 a.m. – 2 p.m., is free with park entrance fee and open to anyone interested in learning more about bowhunting. Equipment is provided, so participants do not need to bring their own archery gear.

"The event will focus on the necessary gear, proper concealment, anatomy and shot placement to improve accuracy and in turn reduce recovery time and the processing of your animal after a successful hunt," added Lewis. "This is an all-ages event and is a great way to spend some time outdoors with your family and friends."

The event includes a state-of-the-art archery trailer with interactive archery games and a

(Continued on Next Page)

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range for adaptive archers, an introductory range with 3D targets focusing on anatomy and shot placement, animal processing (skinning/quartering/butchering) demonstration, cooking conversations, gear examples and hunting simulation activities for youth. Additionally, staff will be available to answer questions related to public hunting, regulations and more.

The TPWD Community Archery Program, which is facilitating the workshop, works on a "train the trainer" model — training teachers and leaders through a National Archery in the Schools Program curriculum in range set-up, safety, program design and coaching. The curriculum is built for community groups like schools, military bases, veterans' groups, scouts, camps, parks and rec-

reation departments and more. It also provides resources and certification to host a mobile archery range with an audience.

Community archery specialists provide Explore Bowhunting and Explore Bowfishing programming that introduces these skills to new audiences through activities and discussion. Some of the curriculum will be on display in the activities hosted at this event. TPWD provides the programs and the gear needed to interested instructors who have access to an existing audience. Learn more about how to contact a community archery specialist in your region on the Community Archery Program webpage on the TPWD website. Watch a video of an Explore Bowhunting event on the TPWD YouTube channel.



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Texas Trails Bassmasters of Lake Fork



49th Semi-Annual Open Tournament

Mar. 21, 2026 * Lake Fork, Texas

Oak Ridge Marina * Hwy 154 N.

Guaranteed Pay-Out Based on 100 Entries 903-360-6994
Drawings Held After Weigh-in for prizes



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



There will be a big bass pot ~ \$10 per person entry
Big Bass will pay Three (3) places. (Based on 100 entries)

1st Place	\$500
2nd Place	\$300
3rd Place	\$200

1. Entry fee is \$40.00 - late entry is \$45.00
2. Early entries must be postmarked by Mar. 14, 2026.
3. All entry fees must be paid before 6 a.m. Sat., Mar. 21, 2026.
4. Check in times: Fri., Mar. 20, 4 p.m. to 9 p.m. and Sat., Mar. 21, 5 a.m. to 6 a.m. at Oak Ridge Marina.
5. To qualify, contestants must check in at tournament headquarters before fishing.
6. Fishing hours will be 6:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m. (official clock at sign-in station). NO FISHING from midnight till start time.
7. Fishing will be done on Lake Fork only (trailing allowed).
8. Contestants must fish from a boat. NO-bank fishing or leaving the boat to land a fish.
9. Life jackets must be worn any time their outboard motor is running.
10. All state, federal, and local laws must be obeyed or contestant and fish may be disqualified. No slot fish may be brought to weigh-in.
11. No one may have more than five (5) fish in their possession at any time. Only one (1) may be 24" or greater.
12. Largemouth bass 12" to 16" or 24" or greater in length may be weighed. No fish under 12" or between 16" and 24" will be weighed (or state law limits at the time of the tournament).
13. All fish must be caught on artificial bait by casting. (No trolling with gas engine). Pork trailer may be used.
14. Weigh-in starts at 3:00 p.m. (official clock at sign-in). You must be in the weigh-in line by 3:30 p.m.
15. All fish must be brought to the scales in weigh-in bags.
16. No iced or frozen fish will be weighed. Ice may be added ONLY to aid in survival of fish.
17. Each contestant will be responsible for weighing his or her own fish. (No pooling of fish).
18. Dead fish at weigh-in will be penalized 1/2 (.5) pound. All fish weighed in become the property of TTB and will be released (with the exception of trophy

19. In the event of a tie for any position, prize money for that position and the following positions will be combined and evenly divided between the tying contestants.
20. Contestants may not have served as a compensated guide on Lake Fork 30 days prior to the tournament.
21. Contestants may fish with a guide on Lake Fork prior to the day before fishing this TTB tournament.
22. Use of alcoholic beverages or controlled drugs are prohibited during tournament hours. Prescription drug use should be declared at sign-in.
23. Anyone who has ever been disqualified for cheating or misconduct from any tournament is ineligible to fish.
24. Any contestant who violates any rule may be disqualified. Any act of a competitor, verbal or physical, that reflects unfavorably upon TTB's effort to promote fishing, conservation, clean waters, courtesy or safety shall be reason for disqualification from this and all future TTB tournaments.
25. Parent or guardian must accompany contestants under 18 years of age.
26. All protests must be registered in writing with the tournament judges within 15 minutes after designated weigh-in time. All decisions of the tournament judges will be final in all matters. Anyone protesting the outcome of an open tournament will have to pay for any additional polygraph test given.
27. All boats are welcome to participate. An aerated livewell is recommended to aid in fish survival for live release. Anglers cannot leave boat to land a fish.
28. All contestants are responsible to have read these rules and must agree to abide by them (by signing the entry form) while competing in this TTB event.
29. Contestants will be subject to polygraph test. Failure to take and/or pass such a test will result in disqualification.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For more information or for information on joining Texas Trails Bassmasters of Lake Fork visit our website: www.texastrailsbassmasters.com

Entry Application

Early Entry fee of \$40 must accompany mailed entry and must be postmarked on or before Mar. 14, 2026 to Texas Trails Bassmasters, 538 PR 5861, Yantis, TX 75497, or you may pay \$45 at tournament headquarters before starting time of tournament. \$10 extra for Big Bass (Optional). Print clearly.

Name: _____

Email: _____

Address: _____

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

Contestants Signature: _____

Minor's Release: Signed by _____ Parent/Guardian _____

TTB USE ONLY
Entry # _____
Entry Fee _____
Big Bass _____
Cash _____ Chk# _____



Jason and Jillian from Chicago, Illinois were fishing Lake Fork with guide Rick Carter catching Lake Fork hawgs like these two. C.P.R.

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Caprock Canyons State Park and Trailway Becomes Fifth Texas State Park to Receive Dark Sky Park Designation

Caprock Canyons State Park and Trailway is the latest Texas State Park to be designated as an International Dark Sky Park by the International Dark-Sky Association (IDA). The International Dark Sky Park designation will ensure the protection of the park's dark skies not only for the park's natural resources, but also for the local community and out-of-town visitors to enjoy.

To receive the dark sky park designation, parks are required to use quality outdoor lighting, effective policies to reduce light pollution, ongoing stewardship practices, and more.

"I am very proud of the hard work and dedication that the park staff showed during this year's long process to obtain the dark sky designation," said Donald Beard, Park and Historic Site Superintendent for Caprock Canyons State Park and Trailway. "It took each and every one of them to buy-in and

work toward the ultimate goal of the certification."

The Dark Sky designation for Caprock Canyons State Park and Trailway is something park staff can undoubtedly be proud of when they look back at their careers with the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, added Beard.

Within the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) system, there are now two International Dark Sky Sanctuaries and four International Dark Sky Parks, including Big Bend Ranch State Park Complex, Copper Breaks State Park, South Llano River State Park, and Enchanted Rock State Natural Area, designated by the IDA. Devils River State Natural Area was designated as the first International Dark Sky Sanctuary in Texas in 2019.

Caprock Canyons State Park and Trailway, shaped by wind and water over the eons, fea-

tures the rugged plains of the Texas Panhandle. Park visitors can explore the park's 90 miles of trails while viewing bison roaming the plains and bats roosting in Clarity Tunnel.

To learn more about dark sky initiatives in state parks, visit the Dark Skies Program page on the TPWD website.





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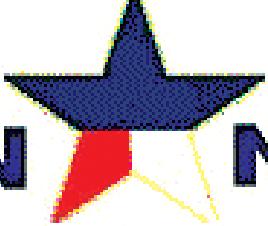
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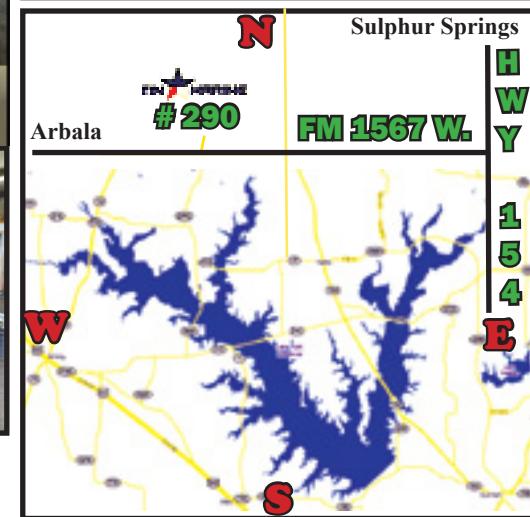
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Amendment II

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"A militia, when properly formed, are in fact the people themselves" whose ability to act in both personal and common defense must be well maintained.

Being Necessary to the Security of a Free State -
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The Right of the People -
"The whole of the people": an individual right, independent of government.

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Haden Sickles from Sulphur Springs, Texas was fishing Lake Fork in January when he caught his nice bass. C.P.R.



Wyatt Dees, 12 years old, son of Adam and Jenny Dees from Lindale shot his first banded duck on January 25th.



Lake Fork guide Randy Oldfield was fishing on Lake Fork in January when he caught this nice bass. C.P.R.



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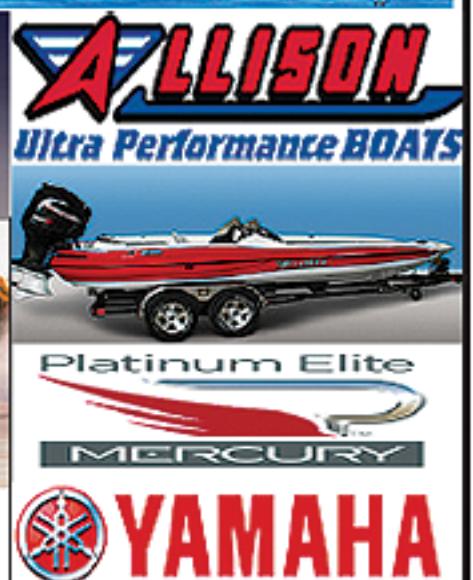
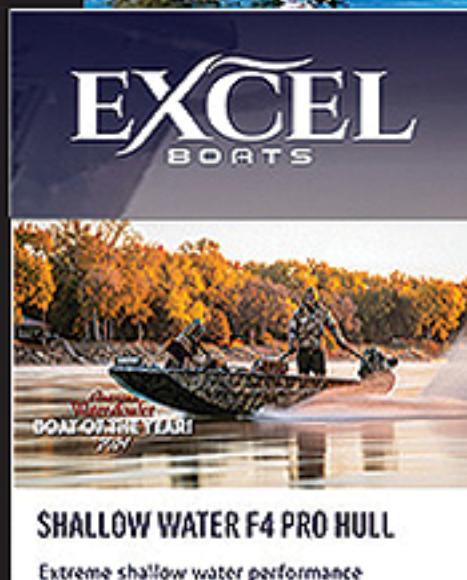
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Lake Fork Sportsman's Association "Preserving the Legend That is Lake Fork"

By Don Hampton, LFS President

At the January meeting of the Lake Fork Sportsman Association we welcomed three new members to assist in Promoting, Protecting and Preserving the Legend that is Lake Fork. We welcome Kenny Moser, Rick Carter and Whitt Smith.

Jake Norman, TPWD Marine Biologist assigned to Lake Fork was the guest speaker about the condition of the lake. Lake Fork Sportsman's Association Director Marty Jarrell had picked up a truck and trailer load of Christmas trees to deliver to Texas Parks and Wildlife for its recycling drive to create shallow water fish habitat in Lake Fork. Marty had dropped off TPWD's poster at the Tractor Supply in Sulphur Springs a few days earlier and got the call that Tractor Supply had a large donation of trees. Marty and his son picked them up and delivered them to one of TPWD's drop off sites. Mr. Norman explained that our lake is in terrific condition. He continued to explain on the placement of the habitat to be placed,

how they were to be bundled and the different locations. The habitats will not be placed for deep water fishing but rather in two to four feet of water near spawning areas to better protect bass on their beds and the fry once hatched. Upon completion there was an extensive question and answer session where all members were given excellent answers to any concerns they might have regarding our great reservoir or the importance of the placement of the habitats.

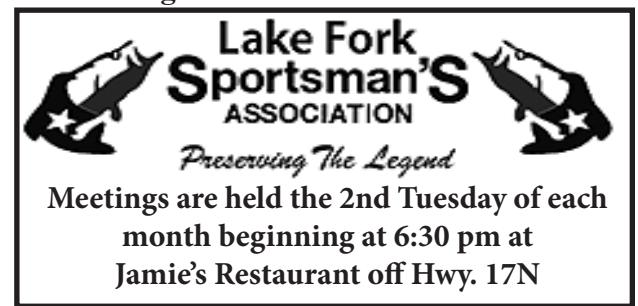
I'm sure there was a lot of knowledge learned about our lake that would be great information for all concerned. If you are not a member, come to a meeting as a guest. We will welcome you as part of the family.

Our February meeting will be February 10th with guest speaker Cassandra Gann with CrappieFest.

If you would like to become a member of this great organization and help "Preserve the Legend that is Lake Fork", you can contact me at 903-360-6994 or email fishnewslakefork@gmail.com. Hope to see you!



For the past 26 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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*For Scheduling or More Info Contact: Don Hampton, Founder & Program Director
visit our website: www.wishtofishfoundation.com*



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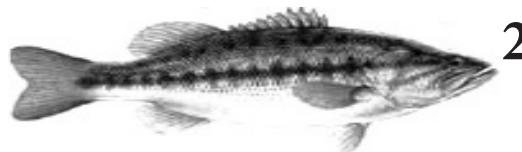
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February

Feb. 21 ~ BassChamps Team
Lake Fork Marina
Feb. 28 ~ JC Outdoors Teams
Minnow Bucket



March

Mar. 7 ~ JC Outdoors Solo
Minnow Bucket
Mar. 21 ~ Tex. Trails Open
Oak Ridge Marina
Mar. 28 ~ JC Outdoors Teams
Minnow Bucket



April

Apr. 4 ~ JC Outdoors Solo
Minnow Bucket
Apr. 12 ~ Mega Bass, BassChamps
Lake Fork Marina
Apr. 25 ~ JC Outdoors Teams
Minnow Bucket



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TPWD Files Proposed Amendments to Proof of Residency Requirements for Recreational Hunting and Fishing Licenses, Permits

On January 12, 2026, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department filed proposed amendments to the department's rule re-

garding proof of residency requirements for issuance of recreational hunting and fishing licenses and permits with the Texas Secretary of State. The proposed amendments would require a person to produce, at the time a license is purchased or obtained, a driver's license or personal identification certificate issued by the state or territory of the United States of which the person is a resident that complies with the REAL ID Act of 2005. Additional documentation options are provided for residents of a state or territory of the United States including a United States passport or passport card,

United States military identification card, immigration-related documents issued by the United States Government, or a certified birth certificate; and for residents of Texas a concealed handgun license. If the person is a resident of a foreign country, the person must produce a driver's license or personal identification certificate issued by the person's country of residence, accompanied by a valid foreign passport and other documents required for entry into the United States. The proposed rule amendments will be published in the January 23, 2026, issue of the Texas Register.

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**FOR THOSE
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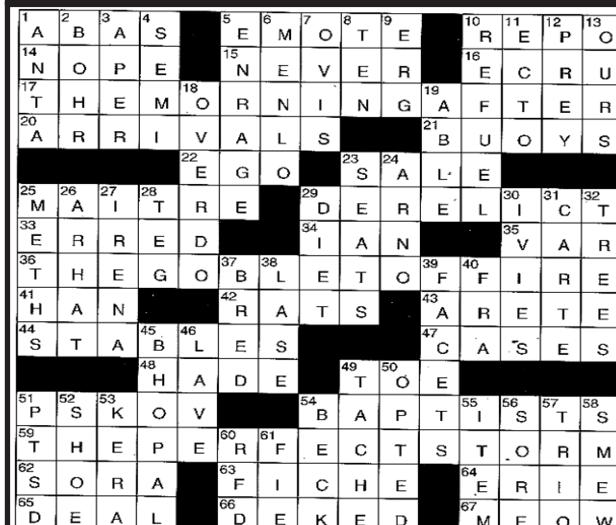
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Just The Right Answers

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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.

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



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Game Warden Field Notes

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

—Blindsided— One late afternoon, a Texas Game Warden received a call from the lease master of a hunting property regarding poaching on a neighboring property. The lease master stated that his son and daughter-in-law were walking to their deer blind when they crossed paths with a male subject carrying a rifle. The hunters asked the man where he was going, and the man stated that he was headed to his

deer blind. The hunters explained that he was hunting on private property. The man replied that he had been hunting on the property since 1986 and would continue to do so, no matter what. The warden arrived at the ranch property and located the man hunting illegally inside a deer blind hidden in the brush. The male subject was identified and charged with hunting without land-owner consent and criminal trespass.

—Fly, Eagles, Fly— Warden Joann Garza-Mayberry responded to an injured bald eagle call. She arrived to find the mature

bald eagle un-able to fly. Warden Mayberry captured the eagle for transport to Austin Wildlife Rehabilitation Center in Elgin. Along the way, she visited a local school for an impromptu wildlife program on eagles. Veterinarians determined that the eagle suffered a broken right wing. It was not clear what caused the injury. The attending vet chose to explore medical opinions on the best course of treatment for the eagle.

—Underage and Overheard— Patrolling a popular lake for night-time hunting violations,

(Continued on Page 24)

**THERE'S A FEELING YOU GET FROM
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Tips On Tailgating At Home And Away

By Sue Hampton

You can easily and easily preparation throw a terrific tailgating party at the game or at home if you follow a game plan that includes these tips:

* Keep it simple. Go for foods with quick

* For quick and easy cleanup, line your grill grates with Reynolds Wrap Aluminum Foil. Make holes for drainage and heat circulation in a sheet of foil with a large grill fork. Place the foil on the hot grill grates and the food on the foil.

the foil into a packet, place it on grill.

* To keep foods from sticking and for easy cleanup, line your grill grates with Reynolds Wrap Aluminum Foil. Make holes for drainage and heat circulation in a sheet of foil with a large grill fork. Place the foil on the hot grill grates and the food on the foil.

* Flame-cooked foods are favorites at tailgate parties. Burgers and hot dogs are great, but ribs and bratwurst

are easy too when you make them in foil packets.

Try this recipe to get your fans cheering:

Saucy Foil Packet Barbecue Ribs

2 Sheets (18X24 inches each) Reynolds Wrap Heavy Duty Aluminum Foil
 $\frac{3}{4}$ cup barbecue sauce
 2 tablespoons orange marmalade
 2 teaspoons hot pepper sauce
 4 pounds pork baby back ribs

Preheat grill to medium heat. Combine barbecue sauce, marmalade and hot

sauce; set aside. Cut ribs into 2- or 4-rib sections. Place half of ribs on each sheet of foil. Bring up long sides of foil. Double fold top and one end to seal. Add 3 to 4 ice cubes to foil packet. Double fold remaining end, leaving room for heat circulation inside packet. Repeat to make 2 packets. Grill covered 45 minutes or until ribs are cooked through.

Remove from foil. Make drainage holes in a sheet of foil with a grilling fork. Place foil on grill grate. Immediately place ribs on foil. Brush ribs with barbecue sauce mixture. Continue grilling uncovered an additional 10 to 15 minutes, turning every 5 minutes and brushing with the remaining sauce. Makes 10 servings.

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Our Lake Clean**



Saucy foil packet ribs are tasty to eat and easy to create and clean up!! Terrific game plan!!



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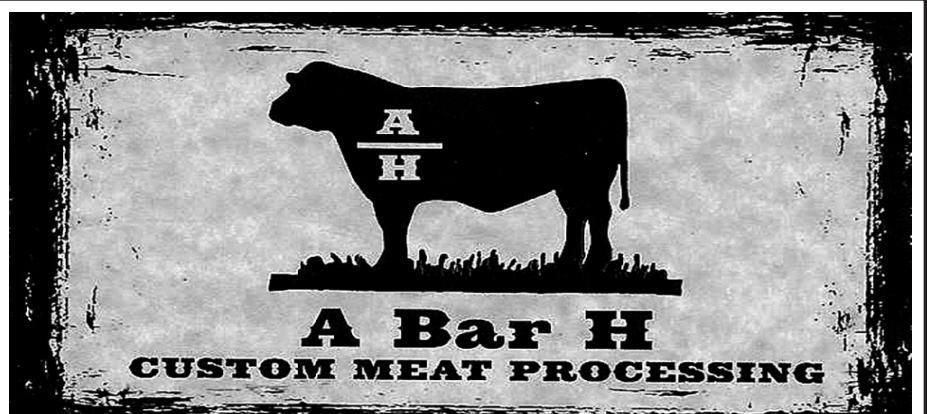
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Game Warden Field Notes

(Continued from Page 22)

McLennan County Game Wardens found an illegal bonfire on a deadend roadway with a large group of underaged subjects consuming alcoholic beverages. Before making contact, a warden snuck up to the group and overheard two subjects discuss a previous illegal hunting incident. Upon contact, the subjects were pulled aside for further questioning. Wardens and sheriff's deputies issued citations for minor consumption of alcohol and released other group members to responsible parties. Following up on the lead, the wardens obtained pictures and verbal admission that a whitetailed buck was killed with a .22 rifle at night off the public road/right of way. The wardens identified three suspects and found the whitetailed buck carcass dumped in a large culvert pipe with its antlers removed. Multiple charges were filed. Cases pending.

—You Never Even Called Me by My Name—

While patrolling Cedar Creek Lake, Anderson and Henderson County Game Wardens investigated a

potential Boating While Intoxicated case. The violator gave consent for a blood sample resulting in an arrest. The wardens assisted with returning the boat to shore since the other occupant was not familiar with operating a boat. Once on shore, one warden walked into the boat ramp parking lot. A vehicle sped into the lot and parked in a handicapped space. The driver then yelled an obscene greeting at the warden, who thought maybe the driver failed to recognize his uniform in the dark. The warden turned on his flashlight to ensure the driver saw his badge. Sitting in the passenger seat, the driver's son commented on his mother's regretful choice of greeting. The warden conducted sobriety tests and determined the driver, now belligerent, was intoxicated. The local police department arrived and transported them to a hospital, where the driver consented to a blood specimen. The test determined that along with her intoxication, she was also suffering from low blood sugar. Her sugar level was treated, and she was placed in jail for a

DWI.

—Boat Over Troubled Water— After a long period of heavy rainfall in Trinity County resulting in high water, swift currents and excessive debris, a Trinity County Game Warden received a call from dispatch regarding a boater who was sinking in a nearby river. The warden spoke with the distressed boater and advised him to put on a life jacket immediately. He then called the local fire department for backup. The boater dropped an accurate pin for his location, and the warden quickly found him hanging on the top bow of a vertically floating vessel, half submerged. The warden pulled up to the vessel, allowing the boater to jump in. The vessel then completely submerged. However, the warden successfully tied the boat's bowline to a nearby tree stump, saving the vessel, which was later towed to a local boat ramp. Together, the warden and boater recovered an ice chest with fish and a couple of fishing poles. The boater explained

(Continued on Next Page)

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**I GO FISHING
BECAUSE
WITHOUT IT,
I'M BASICALLY A
2-YEAR-OLD
WHOSE BLANKIE
IS IN THE WASHER.**

that there were a lot of floating trees in the swift water. While he was fishing, a huge floating tree came over his motor, pushing the back of the vessel underwater. The boater was very appreciative and tired.

-Playing Possum- A Karnes County Game Warden received a call from a witness who discovered a man lying on the ground next to a dead deer. The complainant found the man after hearing a shot from a nearby county road and yelled at the man to ask what he was doing. The man stood up and ran into the brush. Wardens coordinated with sheriff's deputies and witnesses to identify the subject. When interviewed, the subject indicated that, after partaking in a couple of beers, he shot the deer illegally for food. The warden issued a citation and restitution fee. The deer was donated to the witnesses for food.

-Riding Shotgun- While Potter and Deaf Smith County Wardens patrolled the Canadian River Off-Highway Vehicle Area, they received information from multiple parties about adult males off-roading and shooting rifles illegally near the hiking trails

around Lake Meredith National Recreation Area, Rosita Creek Flats. Walking through the flats, the wardens located three adult males who displayed multiple anti-police tattoos and clothing. One of the individuals carried two rifles, an AK-47 and a .308 caliber, as well as paper targets. Some of the individuals were from out of state; the wardens additionally observed that their vehicle did not display a Texas OHV decal. Upon checking with the Potter County Sheriff's Office, the wardens learned that one was a convicted felon with outstanding warrants for various charges. The wardens arrested the individual without incident. A National Park Service Ranger arrived on scene and issued a federal citation to the individual who had been illegally target shooting. The owner of the vehicle also received a citation for failing to display proper decals required by law.

-Never Split the Party- A Williamson County Game Warden responded to multiple reports of two men spearfishing and keeping a large quantity of fish. The warden contacted the individuals as they were ex-

iting the woods and returning to their vehicle. During their conversation, he noticed they did not have any fish or spears in their possession. He learned that the reporting party threatened the men with calling the police. Nervous about police interference, they said they released the fish and stashed their spears in the woods. The warden followed the men into the woods to retrieve the spears. During their walk, one of the gentlemen walked slowly while the other walked further ahead at a quicker pace. Realizing that they were trying to split up, the warden ran to catch up to the man furthest away, catching him with two spears in his hand and a bag with 70 speared and gutted fish including sunfish, blue-gill, Rio Grande cichlids, fresh-water drum, undersized black bass and channel catfish. Neither man possessed a fishing license. The warden issued multiple citations.

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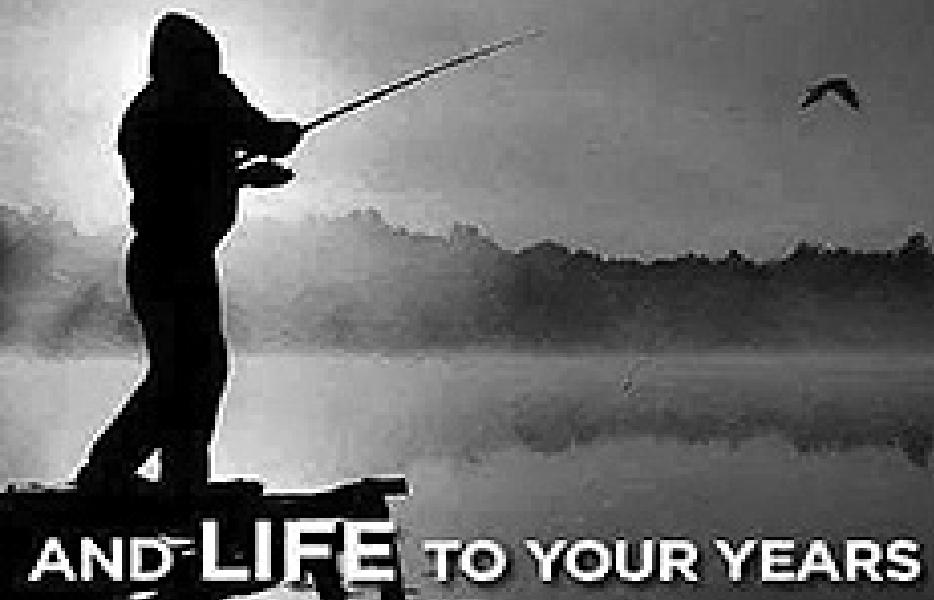
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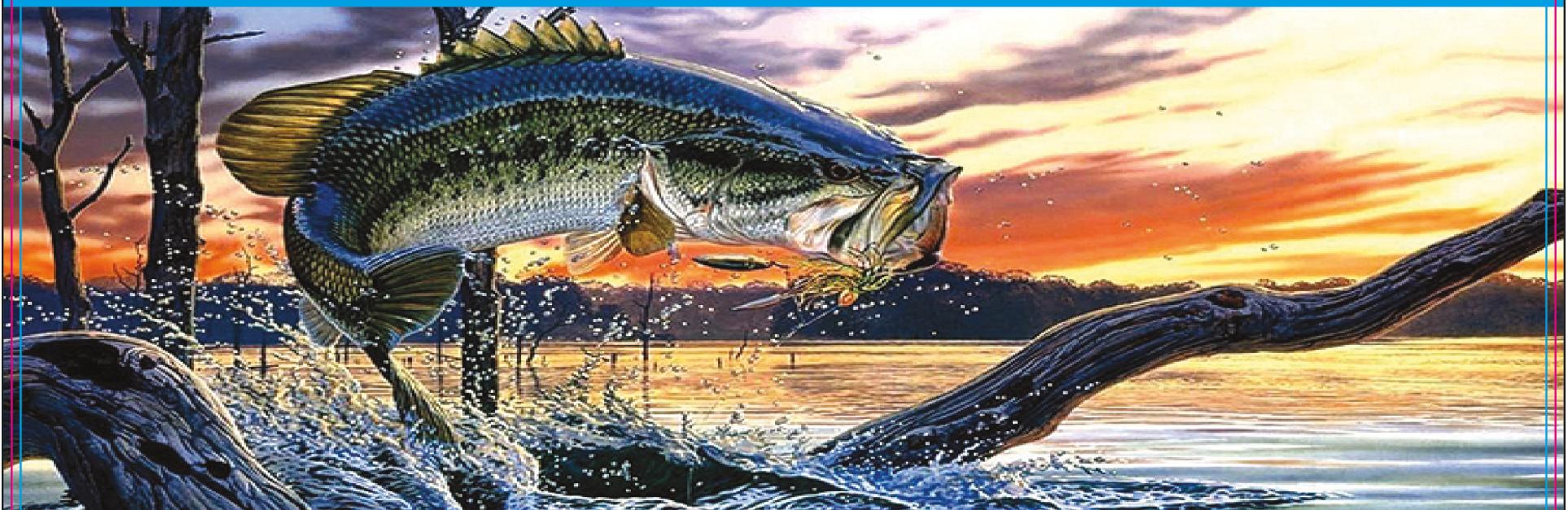
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