



Vol. 48, No. 12

East Ascension Sportsman's League Publication

December 2019

## December News Letter

I can't believe it. It's December already. Time sure flies doesn't it. It seems like just yesterday it was November. Oh yeah, it was. My favorite month. Just like Torrey wrote last month, November is fishing time. It's also hunting time and football time. It's just a great time for anybody, but for me it's fishing.

Let me tell you about my tradition for black Friday. Every year my son and I have gone fishing on the Friday after Thanksgiving. The last few years my son-in-law has been added to the tradition. Sometimes the weather is good and sometimes not, but we go fishing anyway.

It's like a black Friday sale on specks, and we try to beat everyone to the landing to be the first in the water.



Mike with a nice 14" speck



Mike, Robert, and J.P. with their black Friday catch

It's way better than early Christmas shopping. F.Y.I. early shopping for me is the week of Christmas. A lot of the time this is the first fishing trip of the fall to the marsh.

This year was typical. We stayed up the night before too late watching football and seeing how much Thanksgiving food we could eat and still ate every kind of dessert that was available. Everything was ready to go before we went to bed that night. We were up and rolling for 4 a.m. and pumped up.

The only thing between us and the landing was a stop for a biscuit and ice. We made our regular stop and made our purchases and as we went over to put the ice in the chest, we noticed it was gone, an 80-quart ice chest. I worked on airplanes in the Air

Force, and from my knowledge, I can only guess that this thing could not fly. It didn't come with a warning as a flight risk. No big deal.

We took the food out of a 48-quart chest and away we went. If you're a fisherman, you have to adapt to the situation. We got to the landing and we're not even close to being first. Our first stop was a bust, so we moved.

Our second and third spots were

the same.

Then at about 8:30 a.m., we found some nice trout. Obviously, we had gotten there too early, again. We weren't throwing fish in the boat every cast, but the fish were nice. It took all day, but hey, we had all day. Robbie, J.P., and I brought home 49 real nice specks and a big channel cat. We had all the ice chest we needed. Everything just works out.

Saturday morning, we cleaned the fish and the boat and made a plan to eat some fresh fish for Sunday dinner with the family. That's what it's about.

I hope your Thanksgiving was good and that you had a chance

to make some memories with your family and friends no matter where you were. At home, at the camp, in the boat, are wherever

you traveled too. Be thankful for all the people in your life that fills your heart with the memories of a lifetime.

Please join us on Dec. 16th for our monthly meeting at the fire station at 7:00 PM. If you miss us, have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. Thank you for your time.

**Michael Lambert**



Robert with a 2.27 lb. trout

# The East Ascension Sportsman

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## The EASL Meeting

Held every 3rd Monday of the month at  
**The Gonzales Fire Department**  
724 Orice Roth Road, Gonzales, LA 70737  
**Monday, December 16, 2019 at 7:00 p.m.**

Meal sponsored by:

**Vince Diez Jr.**

## Sportsman's Calendar

- Dec. 16 Board Meeting, 6pm
- Dec. 16 EASL Regular Meeting, 7pm (3rd Monday)
- Dec. 28 Silhouette Match (4th Saturday)

## Silhouette Match Calendar

The dates have been set for the championship matches in Louisiana this year - so mark your calendars for the following - (contact Dustin Flint, 225-719-1112, or Jerry Tureau, 225-803-2773, for Silhouette and Rifle competition info):

The Louisiana Highpower Silhouette State Championship in Zwolle is October 19-20, 2019; and The Drue Wands Memorial Louisiana Lever Action Silhouette Championship in Gonzales is December 7-8, 2019.

EASL Monthly Silhouette Match is the 4th Saturday; check with Jerry or Dustin.



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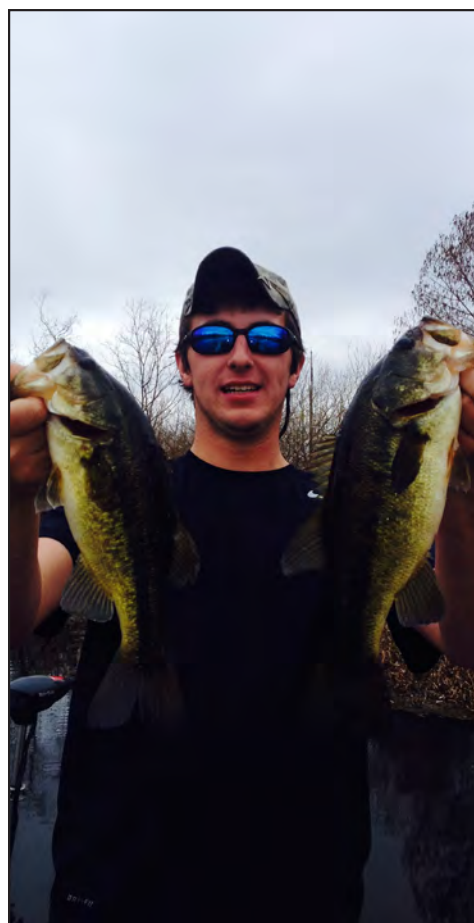
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## EASL Big Fish Contest Contacts

*Deadline for entry is 7 days  
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To report weight for Big Bass  
call Jim Hebert at 225-717-  
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To report weight for Big  
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call Warren Singer at 225-715-1707;  
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# DARK-EYED JUNCOS AKA SNOW BIRDS IN LOUISIANA

Jay V. Huner, Louisiana Ecrevisse, Boyce, LA

Dark-eyed Juncos are sparrows that visit Louisiana during the cool months before returning to the far north or more southern but high-altitude mountain areas to breed. The common name “snow bird” suggests a white bird but, in fact, adults generally have gray heads, necks, and breasts, gray or brown backs, and a white belly. They have conspicuous white outer tail feathers that flash distinctively in flight or while foraging on the ground. Bills are usually pink.

Dark-eyed Juncos do winter throughout the lower 48 states and show up in areas where it snows regularly when snow starts to fall. So, that’s why they are called “snow birds” and they do show up quite well when foraging in snow, especially around bird feeders.

Juncos first start appearing in Louisiana and adjacent states in late October and can persist into late April. They are more common in the northern parts of the state but strong cold fronts will induce them to move to the coast. In fact, LSU ornithology Professor George Lowery, Jr. reported finding flocks on Cameron beaches during a major freeze with snow covering the ground all over the state in the early 1940s. He noted that this was the only place where there was open ground where the birds could forage for food!

Junco taxonomy generally confuses birders and ornithologists! At one time, there were as many as seven different species of juncos in North America. This was based on variation in color patterns from gray heads, backs, wings and tails to grays, browns, oranges, and pinks in the same areas. Eventually, ornithologists determined that these various species were actually interbreeding subspecies!

The subspecies accounting for most of the juncos encountered in Louisiana is the Slaty-backed Junco. This bird is gray above and white below with the characteristic white outer tail feathers and pink bill. Some Oregon Juncos do show up and are a kaleidoscope of colors but the pink bill and white outer tail feathers are consistent with the other subspecies!



The name “junco” refers to the Latin word for reeds. This is a bit confusing because juncos are rarely found around wetland habitats where reeds are normally found!

Adult juncos feed almost entirely on seeds but will eat insects and other small invertebrates. The nestlings, however, are fed large quantities of animal food which they require to be able to grow quickly and leave their nests.

White millet seed is the best feed to attract juncos to your yard. They tend to feed on the ground and prefer feeders associated with shrubs and bushes where they can find cover if predators like Cooper’s or Sharp-shinned hawks are around. Don’t worry about wasting white millet as Chipping and White-throated sparrows will gobble it up as will doves and House Sparrows.

Readers may find the opening paragraph of John James Audubon’s account of the Dark-eyed Junco which he referred to as the “little Snow-bird” of interest:

***“This is one of our winter visitants from the north, which, along with many others, makes its appearance in Louisiana about the beginning of November, to remain a few months, and again, when spring returns, fly off, to seek in higher latitudes a place in which to nestle and rear its young. So gentle and tame does it become on the least approach of hard weather, that it forms, as it were, a companion to every child. Indeed, there is not an individual in the Union who does not know the little Snow-bird, which, in America, is cherished as the Robin is in Europe. I have seen it fed by persons from the Old Country, and have always been pleased by such a sight. During fine weather, however, it becomes more timorous, and keeps aloof resorting to the briar patches and the edges of the fences; but even then it is easily approached, and will suffer a person on horseback to pass within a few feet of the place where it may be searching for food on the road, or the rails of the fences on which it is perched....”***



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# EASL BASS CLUB NEWS

By: Jim Hebert

## "Donald Braud wins EASL Bass Club Classic"

Donald Braud is no stranger to winning on the Tournament Trails and this time he beat out 19 other very good competitors on a tough day for catching fish. He went into the Atchafalaya Basin at flood stage along with a few other boaters and returned to the scales with a very impressive 5 Bass limit that weighed in at 16.02 pounds. He then commenced to win "Big Bass" too with his lunker that weighed 4.31 pounds.

He was joined on the winning stage by Murray Alexander and George Valentine, both of whom are also experienced members with many years of winnings under their belts. All three of them fished the Atchafalaya Basin and reported catching lots of fish throughout the day.

The EASL Bass Club met on November 12th to plan this tournament. Before the meeting got under way, we enjoyed a delicious dinner of Chicken and Sausage Sauce Piquant over pasta, with drinks and bread pudding for dessert. Thanks Warren Hebert for preparing the meal for the Club.

Mike opened the meeting after P.J. Valentine signed up 19 members to fish the tournament. Mike asked for nominations for the weigh in time and everyone agreed on a 3:00 PM weigh in.

We then discussed Officers and Board Members for next year. There was a nomination to keep the Officers the same followed by a "unanimous second." Mike Guitreau and George Valentine will remain in office as President and Secretary/Treasurer in 2020.

We then discussed the Board Members for 2020 as well. I came off the Board as my one year expired as "Past President". We then discussed two other members coming off the Board. They were replaced by volunteering thus we didn't need to have an election. Our Board Members for 2020 will be Julian Day, Brandt Fairchild, Warren Hebert and Terry Molea.

Once a year at the November meeting, we discuss any needed changes to the

Bylaws and Rules. This year there were no suggestions for changes so I would think that this indicates that we have a pretty solid set of Bylaws and Rules.

Our last order of business was to nominate and vote on the location for our annual two-day away Tournament for 2020. Mike took nominations which included Lake Bruin and Toledo Bend. The Club voted to again have next year's Tournament at Toledo Bend headquartered out of San Miguel State Park. The Board will meet in January to set the date for that event and the rest of the Tournaments for the 2020 season.

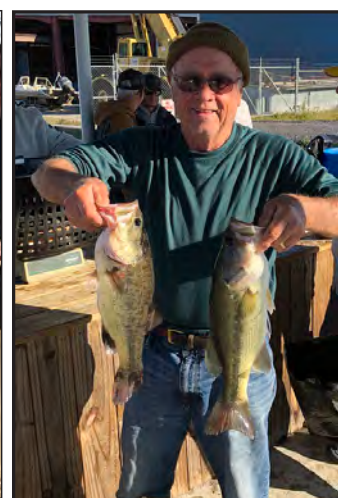
We then adjourned for the night and everyone left anticipating a good Tournament.

Saturday morning we got all of the boats into the water at Doiron's Landing and waited for safe daylight. It was a very cold and clear morning. Everyone had their foul weather gear on and seemed to be wishing for warmer days. When daylight broke, everyone left hoping for a good day of fishing.

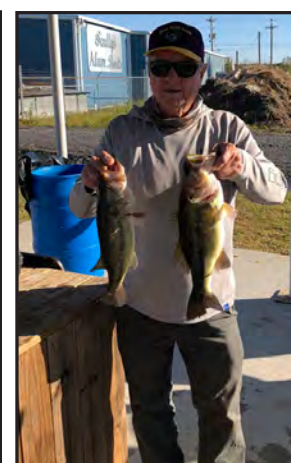
Tournament fishing is all about the decisions that we make. I made a bad decision by not going into the Atchafalaya Basin because I was in there on Friday and didn't do well. I



**Donald Braud 1st Place**



**Murray Alexander 2nd Place**



**George Valentine 3rd Place**

had found excellent conditions but one day makes all the difference and I should have returned, but I talked myself out of it. Live and learn. I ended up fishing from Doiron's to the Marsh and was only able to catch two keeper fish. By 3:00 p.m., everyone had returned to the launch and picked up the boats.

Chris Keller weighed the fish and others logged the results. There were only 5 limits of fish brought to the scale. Four of them came from the Spillway and only one came from the Verrett side. Most everyone else

struggled with two or 3 fish weighed in.

All three winning stringers came from the Spillway. P.J. Valentine fished with his Dad, George and almost had an identical weight as his Dad but just missed out and came out in 4th place by .8 pounds.

When the weigh in was complete Mike announced the winners. First place was Donald Braud with his stringer weighing 16.02 pounds. He also won "Big Bass" check and the "side pot" as well. Second place was won by Murray Alexander with his limit weighing in at 12.93 pounds. Third Place was George Valentine with his limit weighing 11.8 pounds. He also won second place "Big Bass" check with his lunker that weighed in at 3.16 pounds.

Dirk Anderson weighed only two fish that went 3.92 pounds. but this was more than enough weight to secure his win as "2019 Angler of the Year." He will be honored with a monogrammed Jacket and a \$100 check at the January meeting.

Congratulations to the winners of the Classic Tournament and Angler of the Year. For more information on the EASL Bass Club see the website [www.easonline.org](http://www.easonline.org). I hope to see you all at the January Meeting in 2020. Happy Thanksgiving and Merry Christmas to all of the members.



**Left to right, Donald Braud, Murray Alexander, George Valentine, Dirk Anderson**



# BAM AND PEDDIE

## Outdoor Corner with Lyle Johnson

With all the political chaos and divisiveness going around now, it can be very easy to get discouraged, bringing thoughts about will our nation and its people survive this mess we have seemed to get ourselves in. I sometimes have doubts myself.

But then a story comes along that makes you just say, "Wow"! So here's the story of Bam Fink and Peddie Brooks.

I've had the privilege of knowing Bam Fink for a few years, knowing him as an avid outdoorsman. He and his daughter, Ashlee have sent in outdoor photos to Ascension Outdoors TV that have graced our picture segment on more than one occasion.

Bam is 56 years old and started his hunting career back when he was three years old. Fink was born in Nevada as his dad Roy "Rabbit" Fink served our country in the Air Force but soon moved back to Gonzales where he was raised.

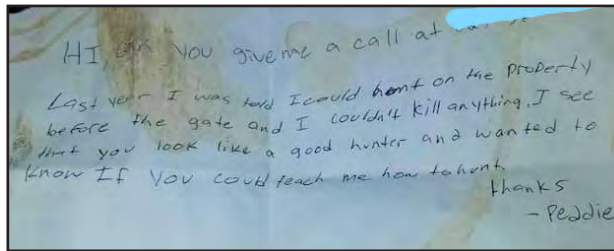
"My older brother got a BB gun for Christmas so I pitched a fit to my dad about getting me one," Fink stated. "He told me if I could cock the gun, he'd go down to the Gonzales Sport Shop and get me one. I cocked it and he went and got me one. That's how it all started."

These days the Bam Fink family has a small lease in Livingston parish where they deer hunt. Returning from an afternoon hunt Bam Fink accompanied with Ashlee found a hand-written note on his trailer.

Fink picked it up and read it; "Hi, can you give me a call at (phone number). Last year I was told I could hunt on the property before the gate and I couldn't kill anything. I see that you look like a good hunter and wanted to know if you could teach me how to hunt." Thanks, Peddie. Bam was impressed, "Wow, I need to give this young man a call and see what he's all about."



**Peddie Brooks (L) and his first deer ever and mentor, Bam Finks.**  
*Courtesy photo*



**Here's the note that got it all started for Peddie Brooks & Bam Finks.** *Courtesy photo*

Enter Peddie Brooks, a 17 year old junior that attends Walker high School that's had a desire in his heart for the outdoors since he was 6 yrs old. "I'm not interested in playing sports at all and nobody really hunts in my family," stated Brooks. "I started out just shooting guns so hunting came along sort of naturally."

Peddie started out hunting small game like rabbits, squirrels and racoons. "I really got interested in big game hunting last year but I never saw anything. The property he hunts borders the Fink property. "I say this truck and tried to catch whoever was hunting to talk but never hooked up. The truck looked like it belonged to an experienced hunter so I just found an old piece of paper and wrote a note. I was hoping he would help me."

So began a new relationship between an experienced hunter and his student that was hungry to learn. The pair walked the property allowing Bam to discover the lay of the land, pointing out the best spot to put a stand.

Peddie had found an old 16' tall stand that needed some repair and a new seat. After the repairs were done, Bam helped him put the stand on a straight, sturdy tree ensuring that the young hunter would be as safe as possible.

Fink helped Peddie clear out some brush, cut some small trees and made some clear shooting lanes. He put out some corn and even let him use his 12 gauge Remington 1100 shotgun with 00 buckshot for ammo. The first two hunts were unsuccessful as far as seeing a deer or getting a shot.

The old saying, "The third time is the charm" came to pass on the next hunt for Peddie. It was an afternoon hunt around 5:00, just about prime time for the deer to get in some last minute feeding accomplished before bedding down for the night when Brooks saw some movement.

A nice sized spiked buck was trotting toward the stand and stopped about 25 yds away. Before the buck could wind and smell anything amiss, Peddie put a load to the kill zone with the Remington. Another round was added when the buck tried to get up and

it was done!

"I'd never fired a shotgun before but my adrenaline was rushing so hard the I didn't even feel the recoil from the shot," exclaimed Peddie. "The buck weighed in at 145 pounds, it was so great. I now have a friend and hunting buddy and I'll never forget it. He even helped me clean my deer."

This wasn't the first time Bam Finks helped another person with the opportunity to kill their first deer (double digits) but this one was quite special. "This was one of a kind feeling and something cool from not knowing him to just a week or so forming a friendship and now I have a life-time hunting buddy. The smile on his face was worth a million bucks to me."

Bam Finks helped Peddie Brooks accomplish his dream of a lifetime. It came as no surprise to Ashlee Fink (Bam's daughter), "I was there when dad found the note on his trailer and it was so touching as it meant a lot to daddy. Peddie was sooo grateful for someone to help him. Daddy called me and Peddie told me the story of his first kill and you could hear the pride in his voice and I'm not sure who was more excited." This story could bring a warm spot to your heart and a tear to your eye.

I also had the opportunity to bring a kid to the outdoors as my Grandson, Canaan Watts joined me on a fishing trip on the Diversion Canal and the Amite River. We spent about five hours on the water and brought home 35 sac-a-lait, 2 bass, 2 bream and a catfish caught on jigs. Canaan wore the same smile as Peddie as he landed some really nice fish!

Pay it forward introducing a kid to the outdoors. It usually brings you as much or more pleasure seeing the youngster have fun. So until next time, remember to keep the slack out and set the hook hard, be safe in the outdoors and may God truly bless you!!



**Canaan Watts (L) and his Paw Paw (Me) with our catch.**

*Photo by Deborah Johnson*



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# LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

by **Goosie Guice**

## SLOWLY MELTING AWAY

It was truly a beautiful sight to see as the fluffy flakes of snow began to cover every available surface of our neighborhood. I had taken vacation from work for several days to do some deer hunting but had decided to stay in the comfort of my home on this particular morning. I watched the unusual weather event for our area unfold.

The white stuff was really falling heavily out of the sky and it did not take long to build up four or five inches of accumulation on the ground. With the excitement of a young child, I decided to put on some warm clothing and be a part of the winter wonderland. As I first stepped into the soft fluffy stuff the first thing that came to my mind was to give life to a snowman.

I collected the frozen precipitation off of the ground and hoods of

our vehicles and slowly began to construct our new monument. He had arms, eyes, mouth, a nose and a hat. At some point my wife finally woke up and began to enjoy the outside event. We spent a good portion of that day outside. We had a snowball fight and even put together a tripod deer stand that I had gotten for Christmas as the snowman stared on.

I woke up before daylight the next morning to go hunting and as I approached my truck, I noticed my new family member standing strong as he was the day before. My hunt that morning consisted of a missed shot at a young pig, which kind of frustrated me. But it was quite a sight to see the wilderness thaw out as the sun rose that morning.

At one point I decided to get out from under the large trees while

the thawing was taking place. The weight of the ice had caused large limbs to fall from many of the trees, and as the temperature rose large chunks of snow and ice were falling nonstop.

When I got home, I noticed the snowman had lost his mouth, so I picked it up and recreated it. Before daylight on day three after the snowstorm, I checked the old boy again before going hunting. His size had diminished, and his arms had fallen off. He was definitely showing signs of aging. Day four's observation was not a pretty sight of my creation. All body parts had deteriorated, and his main frame was a chunk of ice about one foot tall.

It was in the pre-dawn on the fifth day after the storm when the snowman's life cycle had come to

an end. As I approached my vehicle with my rifle in my hand, I noticed that with the exception of a very small piece of what was once a snowman had finally melted away.

I must admit that a sad feeling came over me as I climbed into my truck and headed out for a morning in the great outdoors with family and friends. The vanishing snowman made me realize that in many ways our lives are no different than his was. From the moment we're born, our life on earth begins to come to an end. Enjoy your time on earth, because in reality you are slowly melting away...

Till Next Time,  
Make The Best Of It,  
James "Goosie" Guice

*It's A  
Fact!*

*Mallards can fly nearly vertical, if needed. This includes taking off from the water almost straight up.*

## Sportsman Comic Corner





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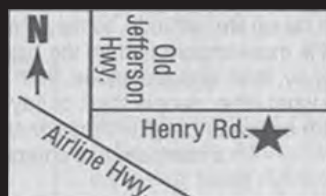
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## EASL MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETING

### Gonzales Fire Dept. Training Center

### 11/18/19

President Mike Lambert called meeting to order @ 7:10 pm with Pledge of Allegiance and Conservation Pledge lead by all veterans in attendance stepping forward for recognition of their military service.

Chef KD called for a moment of silence for passing of member Henry Simoneaux and blessed meal.

Meal sponsor and cooking provided by Gautreaux Family Barney: Minutes of 11/11/19 Board Meeting not available at this time

Financial Report. Month's end review shows some \$22,759.46 in account.

Jim Hebert announced August Big Bass winner Philip Valentine with a 3.78lb. Fish

No Big Speck entrees for September

No Shooting Sports report

Big Buck Contest on going, no entries as of yet to report

Jim Hebert announced results of November Bass club Rodeo and recognized 2019 "Angler



**Veterans at the Nov. meeting lead us in the pledge to our flag. Thank you all for your service.**

of the year" award to Dirk Anderson.

Barney Callahan ran thru latest update in nominations for Board of Directors and accepted two additional nominations from the floor. The current list of nominations is as follows:

Mike Lambert, President, 1st VP, Herb Finnerty, 2nd VP. Charlie Moore, 3rd VP. Vince

Diez Jr., Secretary, Barney Callahan, Treasurer, Goosie Guice, other Board Members: Darlene Bourgeois, Byron Gautreaux, Warren Hebert, Marcia Jimmerson, Francis Gautreaux, David Miles, Bettie Lambert, Rodney Dupre and Emile LeBlanc. Hearing no further nominations all were voted in by acclamation. Swearing in ceremonies will be conducted during December membership meeting

Guest Speaker, Malcolm Smith, a local Director of "Fishers of Men, Christian Ministry Bass Tournament Trail", in Louisiana. Anyone

with Christian beliefs and completing interest in helping his fellow man is welcome to fish this tournament trail. This program focusses on leadership and companionship to aid struggling men in overcoming adversity in their lives thru Jesus Christ.

Meeting adjourned: 8:45 pm



### EASL Wild Game Recipe

## CREOLE BRAISED DUCK

Prep Time: 3½ Hours - Yields: 4 Servings

#### Comment:

I first prepared this dish for Bob Kellermann with Lodge Cast Iron at the log cabin at Palo Alto Plantation. It is an old recipe from the Creole kitchens of New Orleans, but when slow braised in a Dutch oven, it takes on new and dynamic flavors.

#### INGREDIENTS:

6 teal or wood ducks, dressed  
salt and ground black pepper to taste

granulated garlic to taste

¼ cup bacon fat

1 cup flour

2 cups diced onions

1 cup diced celery

1 cup diced green bell peppers

¼ cup minced garlic

1 (10-ounce) can diced tomatoes, drained

1 (10-ounce) can RO\*TEL®

1 (10-ounce) can tomato purée

2 cups chicken or game bird stock

½ cup Kendall-Jackson Highland Estates  
Alisos Hills Syrah

1 tsp chopped thyme

2 cups sliced mushrooms

¼ cup chopped parsley

½ cup sliced green onions

#### METHOD:

Preheat oven to 350°F. Season ducks well with salt, pepper and granulated garlic and set aside. In a large Dutch oven, heat bacon fat over medium-high heat. Dust ducks lightly with flour, shaking off excess. Place ducks in hot oil and brown lightly on all sides. Remove ducks

from pot and set aside. Add onions, celery, bell peppers and minced garlic and sauté 5-7 minutes or until golden brown. Add tomatoes, RO\*TEL®, purée, stock, wine and thyme, scraping the bottom to release browned bits. Return ducks to pot and add mushrooms. Cover and bake for 3 hours or until meat is tender. Remove from oven and stir in parsley and green onions. Cover and let rest for 10 minutes. Adjust seasonings with salt, pepper and granulated garlic if necessary. Serve hot over steamed white rice or grits and garnish with parsley.



## CASUAL OBSERVATIONS THE CABIN

by Torrey Hayden



Christmas time can be magical for those who love the outdoors. Many of us get time off from work or school to go on extended hunting or fishing trips. In my formative years between Christmas and New Year's my buddies and I would go on a hunting trip and stay in a cabin my Uncle Andy built.

This was a picture-perfect cabin made of red oak hewn from the cabin site with flagstone floors and a stone fireplace made from rocks gathered from the area. Behind the cabin there was an out-house complete with a moon cut in the door.

There was a creek that ran beside the cabin with a beautiful waterfall just upstream. This was a great place to keep beer and other items that needed to be kept cool. There was no electricity or any other modern conveniences. Actually, on some days the creek kept the beer from freezing solid instead of keeping it cold. After a couple years we decided as a group, liquor was better suited for this trip during the winter.

For some reason that week was always the coldest week of the year in the mountains around Talladega Alabama. The first order of business getting the fire going, which was the only heat source. Once we got the rock floors warmed up the temp was pleasant inside the cabin.

The key to this operation was to heat the back of the chimney first so that smoke would be drawn up and out. One time we forgot to follow this procedure and the cabin filled with smoke from ceiling down to about knee level. If you crawled around on your hands and knees everything was fine but if you stood up you could not see or breathe.

James had a habit of arming himself with his Grandfather's (General Mason) WWII heirloom weapons and running around the woods in a red flannel union suit complete with a backdoor flap. He accessorized by wearing an Elmer Fudd type hat with ear flaps and black leather combat boots.

Those who know James were not fazed or even looked up when he went running out the door of the cabin wearing the afore mentioned ensemble

doing his rebel yell carrying an antique M1 Garand rifle with bayonet fixed blazing away at a squirrel. However, the family who were lost and drove up to the cabin at the same time in a jeep were quite alarmed to see this spectacle.

They were just out for pleasant family



James after successful summit of Two Snicker Mountain



The Cabin

made a wrong turn. I did not know jeeps could do wheelies going up a steep, mountain side logging road. James commented "They weren't very friendly, didn't even stop to say hello."

The cabin sat between two mountains, one of which we named "Two Snicker." It was named that because it took about two Snicker bars to get to the top. Len and I decided to race to the top one day with guns in hand.

Upon reaching the summit we were met by a flock of wild turkeys approaching the size of ostriches. They just stood there, heads cocked sideways looking at us because we posed no threat. We were so winded we could not raise our arms to shoot. Once we quit hyperventilating and became somewhat composed the turkeys casually stepped off the other side of the mountain and flew away. We just laid down and continued to try to breath normally again.

Keelon who was, and still is the brains of the group usually hung around the cabin to man the fire. He also kept a close watch on the liquor and rationed it out accordingly.

One evening we were hunting about a mile from the cabin. I told James to meet me back at the truck when it got dark to ride back to the cabin. Around three that afternoon, I got cold and walked through the woods to Grandma's house. She had mentioned she might bake a coconut cake. After having cake and coffee I noticed the sun had long since set, it was very cold and snowing. She wrapped up some cake and made a pot of coffee for me to take back to Keelon and James.

Did not think twice about walking in the very cold, snow and very dark night through the mountains about two miles to meet James at the truck. Upon my arrival his teeth were chattering, and he had turned slightly blue.

He still complains to this day that he sat on a cold mountain hunting then sat in a cold truck waiting for me while I was in my



Keelon and James ready for the hunt

Grandma's warm kitchen eating coconut cake. I have yet to understand the point of his conversation on that matter. I asked him why he did not crank the truck and turn the heat on. Key was in the ignition. He still needs constant supervision to this day.

Keelon volunteered to stay back at the cabin and keep the fire going. That is also where the whisky bottle was.

One year I took co-workers from the Boy Scout office. They wanted to see the place. My Uncle Tom, a former Marine and had a home on the farm, knew we were going to be out there. About an hour after we arrived Bob, who was on a nature hike came running down Two Snicker Mountain, panic stricken as hard as he could go while babbling incoherently.

Apparently upon recognizing the timid one of the group, my Uncle Tom who has an odd sense of humor and was dressed in camo from head to toe, carrying a bowie knife, a deer rifle and had a Clint Eastwood "Dirty Harry" pistol strapped to his leg snuck up on Bob and told him he didn't take kindly to trespassers snooping around his still.

There was no still. Bob did not hang around to find out. A few minutes after Bob's hasty arrival, I saw Tom walking toward the cabin with a grin which resembled a jackass eating briars. He then regaled us with the story of the fastest man he had ever seen in the

woods. Everybody thought it was funny except for Bob who never fully recovered.

I need to get back to that cabin. It has been at least 20+ years since I have been out there. Nothing but fond memories. Most of the time during Christmas Holidays it snowed. The cabin, the mountains, the creek, the snow and James running around in a red flannel union suit carrying an infantry rifle would make a great cover for a Christmas card.



Torrey, James and Keelon enjoying the warmth of the fire - a long time ago.