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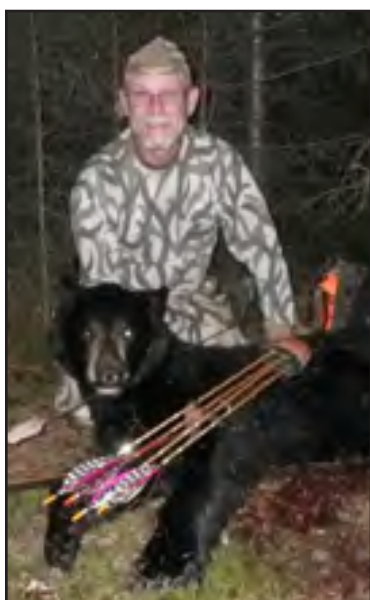
East Ascension Sportsman's League Publication

January 2020

## Guest Speaker Emile P. LeBlanc, Professional Bowhunter Society

Born and raised in Donaldsonville, LA, Emile graduated from Ascension Catholic H.S. in 1971. He attended and graduated from La Tech from 1973-1978 with a B.S. Degree in Wildlife Management and Conservation. He worked for La Dept. of Wildlife & Fisheries from 1981 – 2013, retiring after 30 years of service.

He built his first Longbow in August of 1996 under the guidance



Emile P. Leblanc - Canadian Black Bear Taken With A Homemade Longbow Shot At 6 Steps!

of Mr. Floyd Oakes of Prairieville, LA. Emile is a member of the PBS (Professional Bowhunter Society). He has a Black Bear listed in the Pope & Young Club and has been bowhunting for 47 years to destinations including Louisiana, Texas, Arkansas, Virginia, Montana, Idaho, Mississippi, Alaska, Hawaii; Manitoba, Quebec and Ontario, Canada; and Africa!

## January Presidents Message

Happy New Year fellow members of EASL. Happy new decade too. I hope you got everything done that you needed to do last year because now it's time to look forward to new things. I remember when I was about eight years old or so, I was learning stuff in school and it dawned on me then that I would live to see the year 2000. I would be very old, but still I would see a whole new century in my life time. Now it's 2020. I must really be old, right? My eight-year old views of time and age were a little depressing I guess. But hey, I'm still here and even by an eight-year old's standards, I'm incredibly old but

in good shape for my age. Who knew? Thankfully we all made it this far.

Through my life there has been a lot of changes. Color TV, plastic cars, air conditioning, mobile phones (remember party lines?), computers you can hold in one hand, and I can go on and on. You know what I mean. Then I think about how my parents must have thought about the changes they witnessed in their life. The time travels fast and no matter

what, things change. Thank God. I know that my father's "good old days" didn't sound that good to me and my kids probably feel the same about mine. I would love for things to go back to the way they were when I was eight. Maybe for a day. As much as you may wish for the past, you have to be glad you're still here for the future. I watch The Christmas Story

every year at least ten times. The story of a young boy who wants a Red Rider BB gun for Christmas and I could just kick myself for not writing the story first. As it was with most young boys in my time the story is almost

word for word our story as well. A BB



Barney Calahan presenting Mike Lambert the 2019 V J Bourque Outstanding Member Award

gun was the best gift ever.

Well let me get back to now. It's a new year. We have new board members and officers and sadly saying good-bye to some old ones who have served EASL a long time. As with all everything, things will be different. Change is not a bad thing. EASL has evolved in its journey to where it is today. The dedication of so many people has gotten us this far. We will be going

## The EASL Meeting

Held every 3rd Monday of the month at

The Gonzales Fire Department

724 Orice Roth Road, Gonzales, LA 70737

Monday, January 20, 2020 at 7:00 p.m.

Meal sponsored by: Herb Finnerty

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# The East Ascension Sportsman

P.O. Box 446 • Gonzales, LA 70707

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See **PRESIDENT**, page 1

through some changes this year. If you attend our meetings you already have heard some of them. This paper newsletter will be phased out. It has served our club since 1973, I believe. It will be replaced with E-mail and other digital forms of communication. Our aim is to stay in better contact with our members quickly and more economically, saving time and money that can be used for better things that EASL was meant to do. We will be starting the process of getting all our member's E-mail information and go from there. I'm excited to start a new year and get EASL up to date to allow us to get more members involved in our community's

future needs. We will be here to ensure that the resources of our environment are kept safe for the future of our kids and grandkids.

I would also like to thank EASL for awarding me the V. J. Bourque Outstanding Member Award. I appreciate it so much. I will, along with the EASL board of directors, try to do even better this year. Also, your input is needed. I invite you to our monthly meetings. We need new ideas and would like to see new faces every month. I ask that you attend and bring a friend.

Again, I hope you had a Merry Christmas and have a Happy New Year. Thank you for your time and oh yea, GO TIGERS!!

*Michael Lambert*

## Sportsman's Calendar

- Feb. 10 Board Meeting, 6pm, Ascension Parish Library
- Feb. 17 EASL Regular Meeting, 7pm (3rd Monday)
- Feb. 22 Silhouette Match (4th Saturday each month)
- May 16 (tentative) EASL Pan Fish Rodeo
- June 6 (tentative) Terry Melancon Salt Water Challenge
- July 25 tentative) EASL Kid's Fishing Rodeo
- Oct. 3 EASL Squirrel Rodeo

## Silhouette Match Calendar

Dates are not available to the editor for the championship matches in Louisiana this year - so contact Dustin Flint, 225-719-1112, or Jerry Tureau, 225-803-2773, for Silhouette and Rifle competition info):

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



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# EASL Big Fish Contest Contacts

*Deadline for entry is 7 days after month end*

To report weight for Big Bass call Jim Hebert at 225-717-6037.

To report weight for Big Speckled Trout

call Warren Singer at 225-715-1707; email: warren@icscla.com.



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## SWANS IN LOUISIANA

Jay V. Huner, Louisiana Ecrevisse, Boyce, LA

Most readers surely know the fairy tale about the Ugly Duckling that grew into a huge, handsome white swan. But, few have seen wild swans in Louisiana because, with the exception of non-native swans in parks, native North American swans rarely come here.

Only one of two native North American swans is unquestionably on Louisiana's official bird list. That is the Tundra Swan. Adults are white and are huge birds weighing as much as 20 pounds and dwarfing Snow Geese with which they are sometimes found.



It is not clear if the North American Trumpeter Swan has actually been recorded in Louisiana. Both Tundra and Trumpeter swans can be confused. Only two or three very old reports have been made for Trumpeter Swans in Louisiana. At least one preserved swan would be needed to definitively prove that Trumpeter Swans have actually been present in the state.

Swans are, for the most part, huge white birds with long bodies, long necks, huge wings and legs set well back on their bodies. They are not very agile on land because of the location of their legs/feet. Weight ranges from around 10 pounds for females to at least 20 pounds for the males. Don't let their odd movements on land fool you. An unhappy male can hurl himself all over any creature it considers a danger including a human being. Wing spans are 6-9 feet. So, if you have 20-30 pounds of flapping, angry swan attacking you, you better believe you're in trouble.

Young swans are called cygnets and are grayish in color. They hatch in late spring/early summer after 35-40 days. They soon leave their nests and are guarded and cared for by their parents. They grow quickly and are flying by the end of the summer.

It's hard to tell Tundra and Trumpeter swans apart although a huge native swan is most likely a Trumpeter Swan. Bills are black

and there is far more yellow coloring on the bills of Tundra Swans than Trumpeter Swans.

Mute Swans are exotic species that have distinct, bulbous black protrusions around their orangish bills. This is the species you're most likely to encounter in parks. They are thriving in some north central and central Atlantic states where they aren't welcome.

Black Swans, like Mute Swans, are exotic having been introduced from Australia. They are sometimes found on golf course ponds but these "black" swans can be especially

aggressive. Therefore, they aren't very popular with golfers who get too close to the swans, especially those incubating eggs or caring for their young.

It takes swans quite a lot of effort to get into the air. They run across the water beating their wings until they get airborne.

I was once duck hunting in a crawfish pond east of Sorrento, Louisiana. The pond was grown up in indigo squares with cuts between the squares. I was on one side of a square and heard quite a commotion and saw, through the indigo, a huge bird trying to take off on the other side. When it got into the air, a huge Black Swan circled over me. Never occurred to me that it was a feral bird that I could have shot. However, I'm not sure that No. 4 steel shot would have brought it down.

A few years ago, I was driving west on US 61 near Sorrento and glimpsed a huge white bird flying parallel to the highway just above the willows lining that same crawfish field complex. It was a swan. The folks at the Timberton Social Club subsequently sent me a cell phone image of a huge white swan in the large pond next to the club. It was likely the same one I saw and equally likely that it was a Tundra Swan but the image was too blurry for certain identification.

So, yes, there have been swans recorded in Ascension Parish!



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# EASL BASS CLUB NEWS

By: Jim Hebert

## "Dirk Anderson is 2019 Angler of the Year"

Dirk and his partner, Brandt Fairchild joined the EASL Bass Club together for the first time last year. They wasted no time in jumping right into the lead for AOY as they commenced to showing the rest of us how it is done by winning or receiving checks in the first 6 Tournaments of 2019. I have been a member of the Bass Club for many years and have never seen a winning streak like that one.

Dirk's Dad is J. W. Anderson from Gonzales and he has lived here all of his life. He is employed by Nova Chemicals in Ascension Parish.

Dirk has been a member of the EASL since he was old enough to be one. He has participated in the Kid's fishing Rodeo and other activities of the EASL. When he is not fishing, he also enjoys Deer hunting and cooking and is a past winner of the EASL's Big Buck contest. He is currently a member of a hunting Club in the Tunica Hills area of Louisiana and still

hunts Deer and squirrels when in season.

Dirk has a long history of being an accomplished fisherman. He has fished competitively for many years. He grew up fishing the old Thomas Marine and Ascension Marine circuits when they attracted large groups of local anglers. He and his partner at the time,

Bryan Sholar once won the "Angler of the year" in the Ascension Marine circuit.

Dirk also has spent many years fishing the Grand Isle area for various salt water species as well. When he and his Brother-in Law purchased a camp together near Belle River he and his wife Kelly and Daughter Abby started spending a lot of time fun fishing from his 20' Skiff for Catfish, Sacalait and Bass in the waters around their camp.

So how did Dirk and Brandt get together as fishing partners? Well, they have become friends as Brandt is dating Dirk's daughter, Abby. So one day Brandt told Dirk he would like to fish Tournaments and that is when they decided to join the EASL Bass Club together.

Dirk said that they enjoy each other's company and that Brandt is a very good fisherman and that they have made many



Dirk Anderson, 2019 Angler of the Year

memories during the year. The most memorable moment was when Dirk took a "Mullet" hit squarely to the forehead while running in the pre-dawn take-off. Brandt had to supply first aid while trying not to laugh at what could have been a serious event and they fished

one of them would win the AOY.

Dirk and Brandt fished together during the Classic and kept their fish separate. As it turned out, Dirk caught two Bass that weighed 4+lbs. and Brandt scratched so that was the difference in the Angler of the Year points.

Congratulations to you Dirk Anderson for winning the "Angler of the Year" for 2019. It takes a lot of effort, a good partner and some luck along the way for it to happen, and it is an accomplishment to take pride in knowing that your efforts paid off.

The EASL Bass Club will meet on January 22nd at the Fire Station to plan the first Tournament of the year that will be held January 25th. We welcome all new members and if you want more information about the Bass Club you can visit [www.easlonline.org](http://www.easlonline.org). I hope to see you all there.

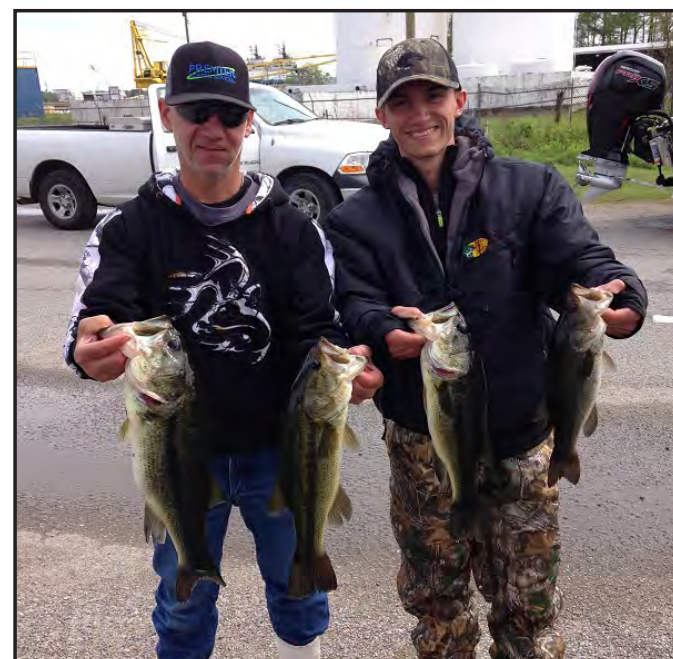
the rest of the day without incident.

Together they won the first tournament and Brandt caught the Big Bass at 5.58 lbs. That fish busted our Jackpot to get them the maximum payout. Then they went on to place in all of the next 5 Tournaments. All in all, they had two 1st places, three 2nd places and one 3rd place finish.

They both led in AOY points for the entire year. Usually, the AOY is not a certainty until the last tournament is fished but their long lead going into the Classic Tournament almost guaranteed that



Brandt Fairchild with Big Bass at 5.58 lbs.



Dirk Anderson & Brandt Fairchild



# BE FOR REEL!

## Outdoor Corner with Lyle Johnson

It's just about winter and hunting is pretty much in full swing. A lot of outdoorsmen and women have moved their focus from fishing to hunting. Not that there is plenty of folks still on the water but plenty of rods and reels have made their way to the closet.

It might seem like an odd time to bring up fishing tackle with hunting garnering its share of the outdoor world but there is a very logical reason. Those rods and reels will be forgotten until late February and early March when the light goes off, "Man, I need to get my reels cleaned and my rods repaired." Been there and done that.

Late winter and early spring brings on the beginning of the bass tournament season. Also the bass are beginning to move up to find a suitable nesting spot so even the weekend warriors are ready to hit the waterways in search of that "Big One" that we all dream about.

More times than we'd like to admit, on that first cast of the year, we let it fly (or at least we try) and a noise comes out of the reel that sounds like the spool is spinning in rocks and say in our minds, "Dang, I knew I should have gotten my reels cleaned!"

Another scenario that plays out as well; you got the fish of a lifetime, you're in a battle when it makes a surge and pops the line because the drag was stuck. We all like to be accurate with our casts as lure placement is a big part of our success. But it seems like the bait is landing a few inches short on every cast.



Jett Brownlee; 8 yr old Jett Brownlee killed his first deer opening weekend of rifle season with his mom and step dad. He shot the doe at 60 yards and was shooting a 243.

Let's face it. Our fishing tackle needs upkeep that includes some preventative maintenance. Unless you're mechanically inclined and have enough time to take your reels apart, finding someone to work on your reels is important.

I have a fair amount of perspective on this issue owning Lyle's Reel Repair when I lived in Prairieville for a fair amount of years. I always liked taking my own reels apart to clean or repair them and knew that lots of other folks needed that service, so the business was opened and successful over the years.

A few folks had the drill down and brought their reels in for cleaning and repair in the winter during hunting season but most just let them sit in a closet or rod box. The panic button usually gets hit about a week before the first fishing trip or bass tournament is happening and all heck breaks loose.

They would call me on the phone or show up at my front door with a pleading, sorrowful voice, "I need my reels cleaned by next week. Can you help a brother out?" The problem with that scenario is that I already had 30 or 40 reels dropped off by two or three other anglers with the same problem. They needed their reels cleaned and repaired as soon as I could.

The problem with this scenario is that a lot of folks that do reel repair have another job that supports the family and do the reel stuff on the side which doesn't afford them or the angler the much needed component of this whole effort; time!

A proper reel cleaning takes a minimum of an hour to perform, most longer. The reel needs to be totally disassembled to ensure proper cleaning of every part. Then you have to put it back together in the same place they came from without having any parts left over.

Doing this properly doesn't give the mechanic enough spare time to clean a hundred reels a week. Man, they used to pile up in the early spring at the Johnson house. It would get to where I enlisted my wife and my son to help me take the reels apart.

Deborah saved all of the round, plastic butter and whipped cream containers to store them in so I could clean them and put them back together. So I begged and pleaded with all my customers that I knew hunted during the winter and stopped fishing to bring me their reels. Business was slow in the winter so I always dreaded the big rush I knew was coming.

Eventually I made a decision to run for political office a couple of times causing me to sell my

business because of a lack of spare time. Folks still ask me about cleaning reels but I don't do it anymore.

Although I never got into the rod part of the angling repair business, those need repair as well. During the year, a rod tip or two gets broken so just like the reels, they get put in the closet (I have one in my rod closet now) then panic sets in when we need them right away.

So that's why I bring this subject to light. You're hunting or just don't fish in the cold months and the tackle gets put out of sight and unfortunately out of mind causing panic to take place a few months down the road.

Fortunately, we have someone in our area that performs maintenance and repairs on reels. David Bourque owns Olive Branch Rods that can handle both rod and reel repairs and builds custom rods as well.

His business is located on 39008 Whitfield Rd in Gonzales just off Babin road. He can easily be contacted at 225 806-0342, olivebranchrods@yahoo.com and on Facebook. com/olivebranchrodsllc. He'd love to service your tackle or build you a rod but like me, he'd ask you to bring in your reels in the off season.

Take it from me, get those reels out of the closet or rod box and get them to David Bourque at Olive Branch Rods and save both of you some headache!! 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!!



Gabby Gomez killed her first deer in late November making a 40 yard shot using her 308. She was hunting in Hazlehurst Mississippi with her dad, Ryan.

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# LET'S TALK ABOUT IT

## by Goosie Guice

### DO WE REALLY WANT FRESH WATER OR NOT

I must admit that I'm ready for the rainfall totals to get back into more of a normal pattern. Although the high rain totals with extended high river flooding has been a hindrance of some degree to many folks across the nation and south Louisiana, the benefits of it all will probably have positive effects on our estuaries in the future. On a recent trip to the Fourchon, Grand Isle area, I noticed something that was very different from the last several years. The difference was the color and health of the vegetation in the marsh. The vegetation is now green and healthy versus the brown and dying look of the past. This is definitely a result of the amount of fresh water the area has received in the past several months.

For the past twenty or so years, diverting fresh water from the Mississippi River into our coastal wetlands has been one of the hottest topics of those years. I would like to say a big percentage of people agree that that this needs to be done to help save this spectacular

environment. Now that the freshwater has inundated much of our central and southeast Louisiana marshes, I'm beginning to

hear a lot of negative comments about the situation. The effects of the river water does have some immediate negative impacts for the short term. The death of some marine life such as dolphins and sea turtles have been blamed on the water. Commercial fishermen have accused the lack of oysters, shrimp and crabs on the sweet water, but species such as the blue crab have been on a decline long before this event took place. It's true that the fresh water has affected catches of saltwater shellfish and fin fish in different areas but the benefits of it will pay off in the future.

One of my fears in particular with the opening of the Bonnet Carre spillway is



Bonnet Carre Spillway

the possibility of invasive species of fish such as the silver carp invading our waterways. Silver carp are the fish you see jumping behind

the wake that outboard motors make. Those fish are a nuisance and we don't need them.

My concern now turns toward the future of the politics that will now come about with the negative complaints of some involving water diversions. Our state has been awarded an enormous amount of money from the BP oil spill to help our state restore our coast, marsh and swamps. Some water diversion projects have been studied for more than twenty years now. Some are nearing the beginning of construction. If these proposed projects are again put on hold for future study or opposition, it would be devastating to the amount of money and time that has already

been spent. I don't think that I have to tell you what will happen to all of that BP money if it stays in the hands of government officials for another ten years.

During a recent TV clip our lieutenant governor was being interviewed about coastal restoration and the BP money involved to carry out these projects. At the end of his interview he made the statement "All I can say is if we waste this opportunity, then shame on us."

I hope that we don't waste our opportunity, but it wouldn't surprise me at all if we do. For the time being everything is great on the water. Fresh water fishing has been fantastic and saltwater fishing has been just as good where you can find saltwater. All in all it's hard to please everyone and that includes me...

*Until Next Time,  
Never Satisfied,  
James "Goosie" Guice*



### EASL Wild Game Recipe

#### VENISON FAJITAS

##### Ingredients:

2 teaspoons seasoned salt, 1/4 teaspoon garlic salt, 1/2 teaspoon black pepper, 1/2 teaspoon cayenne pepper, 1 teaspoon dried oregano, 1 1/2 pounds venison, cut into 2 inch strips, 4 tablespoons vegetable oil, 1 medium red bell pepper, cut into 2 inch strips, 1 medium yellow bell pepper, cut into 2 inch strips, 1 medium onion, cut into 1/2-inch wedges, 12 fajita size flour tortillas, warmed.

##### Directions:

Combine seasoned salt, garlic salt, black pepper, cayenne pepper, and oregano to make the fajita seasoning. Sprinkle two teaspoons of the seasoning over the sliced venison. Mix well,

cover, and refrigerate for 30 minutes.

Heat 2 tablespoons of oil in a heavy frying pan. Cook bell peppers and onion until starting to soften, then remove. Pour in remaining oil, then cook venison until browned. Return pepper mixture to the pan, season with remaining fajita seasoning, and reheat. Served with the warmed tortillas.



### Sportsman Comic Corner



**It's A Fact!** Deer can have a homeland range which can span 30 miles. They move about depending on food availability

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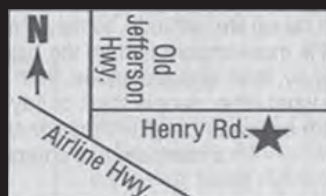
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## EASL BOARD MEETING DECEMBER 9TH 2019 - GONZALES, LA LIBRARY

Board members in attendance: Mike Lambert, Barney Callahan, Herb Finnerty, Darlene Bourgeois, James Guice, Warren Hebert, Marcia Jimmerson, Bettye Lambert, David Miles, Charlie Moore, Warren Singer.

President Mike Lambert call meeting to order: 6.08 pm

Guest Speaker for December: None

Meal Sponsor: Herb Finnerty

Group discussion began with plans for December (Christmas) membership meeting. Since no cooks are available, several board members volunteered to order and pick-up food from local vendors and others offered any needed help.

Warren Hebert, membership chairman, is in the process of contacting all membership via email, phone, mail-outs, Facebook or other means to notify lapsed members to renew their memberships immediately and requested an urgent need for everyone to submit a correct email contact for them.

From this request, a lengthy group discussion began on needed changes to the monthly newspaper. For many months (years) we have discussed the need to discontinue the monthly mail-out newspaper in exchange for a more efficient and cheaper communications, via electronic contacts like email, Facebook, and EASL's website. Although it has been a favorite for generations, the current newspaper is costing us far too much money to



**EASL 2020 Officers & Board Members: Byron Gautreau, Francis Gautreaux, Treasurer Goosie Guice, Bettye Lambert, Secretary Barney Callahan, President Mike Lambert, David Miles, 1st VP Herb Finnerty, Marcia Jimmerson, Darlene Bourgeois, and Membership Chairman Warren Hebert (front row). Not present were 2nd VP Charlie Moore, Emile Leblanc and Rodney Dupre.**

continue as it is. Editing, printing and postage fees have all increased beyond our control and are draining the budget toward an end that we can avoid if we take action now.

An informal but unanimous consent was agreed upon by the board to press forward and eliminate the current hand-delivered newspaper in exchange for an economical communications system in early 2020.

The "newspaper" will still be published as a "newsletter" available only in electronic form and

the same format with various article, stories, pictures and membership interests will still appear in the newsletter.

Final discussion for the evening was a unanimous vote to continue EASL's membership in the local Ascension Chamber of Commerce, However, Barney will contact the Chamber to confirm that their membership dues have increased substantially and may be a deciding factor to discontinue our membership with them come next year.

Meeting Adjourned: 7:45 pm



**Jerry Jimmerson wins the 50-50 raffle**



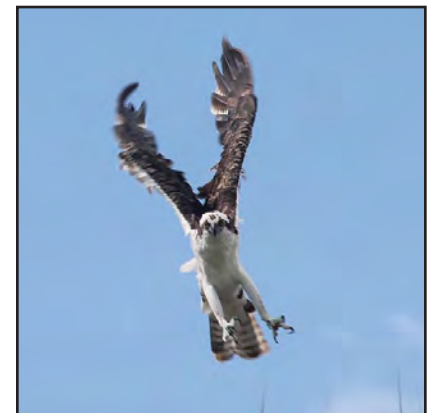
**Christmas Meal Being Served**



**Warren Hebert presenting Jim Hebert the 2019 Membership Sales Award**



**Osprey Taking Flight by David Miles**



**Osprey On The Wing by David Miles**



**Osprey at War by David Miles**



# CASUAL OBSERVATIONS HOPE

by Torrey Hayden



As I write this article there is a lot of hope in Louisiana for 2020. Both the Saints and the Tigers have a good shot at winning championships. By the time this article is published I hope LSU has won it all and the Saints are headed to the Superbowl. Normally football is not high on the priority list but excitement is contagious and everyone likes Coach O, even Bama fans.

(Before I finished this article there was no longer hope for Saints to win the Superbowl after an unsuccessful Wild Card Game against the Vikings.)

Most deer hunting opportunities end in January. Those who have not gotten one yet are hoping the good lord will send a nice one walking by their stand.

January is also the tail-end of most of the good fishing until it picks up again in April. Marshes and roadside spots are still producing. Many fishermen are hoping for one more "meat-haul" before the lean times start.

When it comes to the outdoors you just can't sit back and hope that something happens. My Dad had this saying when I was growing up and wanted something. I will paraphrase as not to offend those with delicate sensibilities – "Wish in one hand and do something smelly and gross in the other and see which one gets filled first." Meaning if you want something to happen make it happen.

Each year we go on a sac-a-lait fishing trip during the winter to Lake Eufala which is on the Georgia/Alabama boarder. We catch a lot of fish because each year prior to us fishing we drop trees in buckets filled with cement to attract fish around the pier to which we are fishing. A lot of work but we hope to catch a lot of fish each year.

Successful deer hunters hoping to get that January deer look forward to this time because deer are rutting. They have prepped food plots, studied sign and placed stands in the places that offer the best opportunities.

There are however some times when hope is the only option. One instance I recall is the time James, Keelon and I took our first trip to the White River in northern Arkansas to fish for trout. We threw the 1950 Sears and Roebuck boat in the back of the truck and headed to Arkansas.

This was before extended and crew cabs became popular in pick-ups. People who owned them actually used trucks to haul



**Roadside Fishing Success - 9 people 225 trout**

horsepower outboard. Up until this time the boat had only seen action on Highland Lake which is a beautiful mountain lake in north Alabama that does not have moving water.

The White River is a "tailrace river" which means that water comes from a dam upstream at a high rate of speed and it's cold, making great habitat for German brown, rainbow and other types of trout. Did I mention the water was moving fast?

In our excitement we did not take into consideration the motor usually did not crank on the first hundred or so attempts. James shoved off and we immediately started heading downstream. This would not normally be a life threatening situation for most places we have fished. However, about a couple hundred yards downstream there was a set of what appeared to be at least class four rapids and a waterfall.

When I was a kid in the Boy Scouts we loved taking canoes over such water hazards so much so that when the wild ride was finished we would haul the canoe back upstream and do it again. A boat full of gear pointed backwards would be just as exciting but not nearly as much fun.

James was in the front of the boat and grabbed the paddle in an effort to slow us down. Keelon was sitting in the middle, coaching and offering encouragement to get the motor cranked. Self-appointed literary censors would not approve of Keelon's coaching vernacular so I will not go into detail. At this point I ordered everyone to put on life jackets and prepare for the worst and hope for the best. The best would be the motor cranking.

Our hopes and prayers were answered as we were about to be swept over the waterfall, and as my arm was about to fall off from trying to crank the motor and Keelon had gone hoarse from

stuff. Seating was a bench seat so the three of us had to sit butt to butt for several hundred miles. The truck was a four speed with the gear shift on the floor. The guy in the middle had to operate the gear shift and coordinate changing gears with the clutch action of the driver.

Once we arrived at our destination which was the confluence of the White and Buffalo Rivers, we checked in, unloaded and prepared to go fishing. We launched by carrying the boat to the river then attaching the ancient Kiekhaefer-Mercury 9.8

his coaching. James just kept paddling for all he was worth. The motor sputtered and a little puff of blue smoke came out. On the next pull the outboard roared to life and spit out a huge cloud of blue smoke which settled like a haze over the cold river.

I twisted the throttle as far as it would go and the bow of the boat shot skyward. As the bow settled back down the boat was just sitting there not moving forward or backward a few feet from the brink of the waterfall. I yelled for James to keep paddling to help the engine. Slowly the boat started creeping upstream.

That was a great trip. We would go up the Buffalo River to catch smallmouth bass and fish the White River for trout. The scenery was spectacular.

## Jesus said "Follow Me and I will make you Fishers of Men"

*Matt 4:19*

The Fishers of Men National Tournament Trail is a nonprofit, nondenominational ministry whose mission is: To introduce Jesus to fishermen and their families and to invite them into a relationship with Him, through bass fishing tournaments.

Malcolm Smith is the director of Fishers of Men South Louisiana Division. Fishers of Men (FOM) is the largest Christian Bass Tournament Trail in the US. Its ministry covers 26 states with 32 divisions and has 4000 members. Locally, Fishers Of Men South LA Division has over 100 members that fish 6 tournaments a year and compete for a chance to qualify for nationals.

### DIVISION EVENTS:

*January 18, 2020*

*February 22, 2020*

*April 4, 2020*

*May 9, 2020*

*June 6, 2020*

*July 19, 2020*

*Lake Verret*

*Spillway*

*Lac des Allemands*

*Gibson*

*Lac des Allemands*

*Open to all waters*

Bass fishing is only a small part of Fishers Of Men. The main focus is helping anglers come to know their Lord Jesus Christ as our savior. The message is given during a mandatory meeting on the Thursday night before each tournament, where there is food, prayer and fellowship among the anglers.

Some of FOM's sponsors and contributors are: Geaux Signs and Graphics; Cajun Outboards; Vecta Environmental Services; BuckHorn Companies; Chick Fil A; Catamaran Industrial Services; PWI; Cordell Insurance; Ascension Living and Outdoors; Z's Tackle; Southern Punch; Purvis Industrial; Speed Tank Wash; and Cabelas. 1st place winning is over \$4,000 in cash and prizes for all 6 tournaments. The 2020 Tournament Trail is starting January 18th at Lake Verret. We encourage and welcome you to join in the support of our ministry.

Contact Malcolm if you would like to join our ministry or be a sponsor of Fishers Of Men.

**Malcolm Smith, 225-773-5333**

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