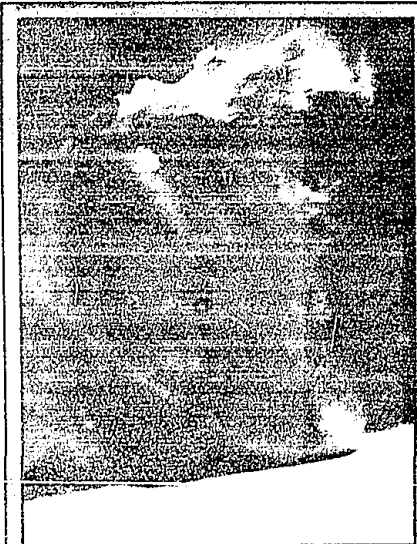
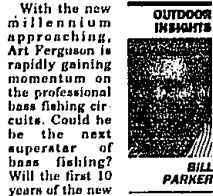


# Ferguson new kid on block in fishing



A fish story: Wally Christensen was surprised to see a big sturgeon look directly into his visor. Fish story captured on film.

Wally Christensen of Farmington was surprised by what he saw through the camera lens but quickly took the picture. What he saw was a large sturgeon poke its head out of the water, as if to have a look around and see what was happening. Christensen took the photo earlier this year at Allegre Dam on the Black River, seven miles south of Cheboygan in the northern lower peninsula. "We knew the guy who operated the dam, and we went to see the sturgeon spawning," Christensen said, adding the landlocked fish swim from Mullett Lake for that purpose. Christensen estimated the sturgeon to be nearly 50 feet in length and weighing nearly 60 pounds. "I was awed when he looked at me like that," Christensen said. "Never in my life had he seen a fish do that." He just took his head up and looked right at us." Christensen's young grandson took his picture to show the next week to use during show and tell. "He was a hero for the day," he said. Christensen has had fun with the photos, too, showing them to people and asking them to guess what it is. Some were fooled by the preceding photo, a sturgeon, and thought it was a porpoise, but sturgeon also are valuable as a source of caviar.



With the new millennium approaching, Art Ferguson is rapidly gaining momentum on the professional bass fishing circuits. Could he be the next superstar of bass fishing? Will the first 10 years of the new millennium be the decade of the "Art of Fishing?" Time will tell, but if I'm Davy Hilo, Roland Martin, Kevin Vandam or any of the other big names in the industry I'd be looking over my shoulder. There's a new kid in town, he's capable, he's hungry, and he's proven he belongs fishing side-by-side with the best bass anglers in the world. If there were any doubts about Ferguson's ability he's erased them over the past year.

**On the rise**  
Fresh off a career-best third-place showing - and a \$50,000 pay day - in the Wal-Mart FLW Forest Wood Open last month on Lake St. Clair, Ferguson, of Rochester, wrapped up an impressive 18th-place finish over the weekend in the granddaddy

of all bass fishing tournaments, the prestigious B.A.S.S. Master Classic. Held on the Mississippi River Delta in Louisiana, Ferguson got off to a sluggish start in the tournament but finished with a flurry. "I feel real good about it," Ferguson said of his top-20 finish. "I would have liked to have done better, you see, to win or finish 18th, but overall I'm pretty happy. I struggled early, but finally found some bigger fish. It was nice to come back like that." Ferguson was 18th after the first day, weighing a five-fish limit that went 9 pounds, 11 ounces. He again caught a limit on day two, but it weighed just 8 pounds, 1 ounce, which dropped him to 23rd place.

**Helping hand**  
"A buddy of mine, Randy Howell, from Arkansas, did real well on the last two days. Going into the last day he gave me a pumpkin jig-n-pig and that's what I ended up catching the bigger fish on," Ferguson said. "I caught my limit on a seven-inch Gambler red shad worm, but the bigger fish seemed to hit the jig better." The final weigh-in was held before some 25,000 fans at the Superdome in New Orleans. Ferguson jumped back into 18th place by weighing another limit on the final day that tipped the

scale at a 13 pounds, 9 ounces." The final weigh-in was pretty awesome. It was mind-blowing," Ferguson said. "I had a nice limit on the last day so it was pretty exciting to go up in front of that many people." Ferguson started fishing professionally in 1990 but didn't fare well out of the gate. Although he qualified for the Classic that year by placing third in the B.A.S.S. National Federation Championship, he lacked adequate sponsorship and nearly went broke fishing the BP Top 100 circuit. The fish didn't cooperate much either. He continued to fish in local and pro tournaments and also started a guide service - summers on Lake St. Clair and Saginaw Bay, winters on Florida's Lake Okechobee.

**Gaining confidence**  
Ferguson's success and confidence steadily increased as he gained more and more knowledge about the lakes he was fishing, the habits of the fish in those lakes, and the intricacies and rigors of tournament fishing. This year the "Art of Fishing" has arrived. At age 34 and with a ton of experience under his belt, not to mention some big-name sponsors including Marathon, Chevy Trucks, Triton Boats and Mer-

cury, he returned to the pro circuit this year and turned in top 30 finishes on the B.A.S.S. Master Top 150 Pro-Am. He was third in the Forrest Wood Open and qualified for the FLW Championship next month on Fort Gibson Lake in Oklahoma. He was also tops in the Northern Division and seventh in the B.A.S.S. Wrangler Federation National Championships, which qualified him for the Classic.

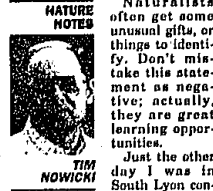
Ferguson also qualified for the 1999-2000 B.A.S.S. Top 150 and begins fishing in that circuit Aug. 25-28 on Lake St. Clair.

**Back at home**  
"I'm excited about that one. It's going to be a great tournament," Ferguson said.

"I think it will be better than the FLW because there will be more big-name pros there and there's a lot more open water to fish now," he said. "The Canadian side (of Lake St. Clair) was closed until the last day of the FLW and not many people fished it because we couldn't get out there and find the fish in pre-fishing."

Ferguson expects the small-mouth to be in a late summer pattern when the Top 150 rolls into Metro Beach Metropark, which means they'll be schooling up in deeper water and in moving water.

## People challenge naturalists with their questions



**NATURE NOTES**  
Naturalists often get some unusual gifts, or things to identify. Don't mistake this statement as negative; actually, they are great learning opportunities. Just the other day I was in South Lyon conducting a nature program scheduled by the library when I was asked a question. After the regular program, a mom and her two sons came up to me with a medium-sized McDonald's bag. "We knew you were coming today and would be able to identify what we found in the woods

of northern Michigan," the mother said. I never really knew what they had in bags, boxes or closed containers. It turned out to be several bones from a porcupine. Fortunately, they had the skull, which is the only part of the skeleton I would have been able to identify. Porcupines have a very characteristic skull which has a large infratibial foramina. Or, if you look into the nose of the skull, there are two large circles on each side of the skull.

On the same day, the supervisor of Independence Oaks County Park, Ray Delawak, brought in a huge pellet he found in the park. At first glance, it looked too big to be an owl pellet, but after I took it out of the bag it was as big as the largest owl pellet I've seen. It undoubtedly came from

a great horned owl based on its size. This pellet was interesting, not just because of its size, but because it is composed mostly of skunk remains. Owls cannot digest the fur and bones of its prey, so just above the stomach all the hair and bones collect into a compact pellet.

Before the owl eats again, the pellet is coughed up. The long, coarse hairs of the skunk are very visible in this five-inch long, 1 1/2-inch diameter pellet of fur and bones.

Skunk have a very effective means of protection, but it is not infallible. According to Roland Baker's "Michigan Mammals," coyote, red fox, gray fox, fisher, badger, bobcat and lynx are all known to eat skunk. Birds of prey, like ravens, golden eagle and, of course, the great horned owl, also prey on skunk. It's a general rule that birds have a poor sense of smell, so I can understand why they might

eat a skunk. But mammals have a keen sense of smell. Why would they take a skunk? Maybe they were REAL hungry. Skunks and great horned owls remind me of another gift that came to the nature center.

A resident watched a great horned owl capture a skunk and take it to a perch. Unfortunately, the owl misjudged the distance between its wings and the adjacent electrical wires and was electrocuted.

So the resident wanted to know if we wanted an owl with a skunk clutched in its talons. It was a curiosity, so we said yes.

When we saw the two connected and evaluated the situation, we decided it wasn't worth it; so we buried them.

Skulls, spiders, snakes, scat (poop) and pellets are just some of the gifts and presents to the naturalist. This is not a complaint. I'm glad to see people are curious about things they find in the outdoors.

**SPECIAL COUNCIL MEETING WITH THE SOUTHWESTERN OAKLAND CABLE COMMISSION**  
(Summary)  
A special meeting of the Farmington City Council with the Southwestern Oakland Cable Commission Executive Director was held on Monday, August 2, 1999, in Council Chambers 23600 Liberty Street, Farmington, Michigan. Notice of the meeting was posted in compliance with Public Act 287-1976. The meeting was called to order at 7:04 p.m.  
**COUNCIL MEMBERS PRESENT:** Bush, Campbell, Hartsock, Mitchell.  
**COUNCIL MEMBERS ABSENT:** McShane.  
**FARMINGTON CITY REPRESENTATIVES PRESENT:** Clerk/Treasurer Cantrell, City Attorney Donohue, City Manager Lauboff.  
**SOUTHWESTERN OAKLAND CABLE COMMISSION:** Executive Director Collins.  
Council met with Director Collins to hear an update on the status of formal and informal franchise renewal negotiations with Time Warner Cablevision. Discussions continued on the current environment for cable television. Meeting adjourned at 7:39 p.m.  
MARY L. BUSH, Mayor  
PATRY K. CANTRELL, City Clerk/Treasurer

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**CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS CITY COUNCIL PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**  
DATE: AUGUST 16, 1999  
TIME: 7:30 P.M.  
PLACE: City of Farmington Hills 31555 Eleven Mile Road Farmington Hills, MI 48335  
ITEM: Cluster Site Plan 58-2-09  
The City of Farmington Hills City Council will give formal consideration to Cluster Site Plan 58-2-09, which requests the approval of the City Council to utilize the Single-Family housing Cluster Option in an RA-4, Single-Family Residential District. The property involved is located on the east side of Orchard Lake Road, south of Lockshire Avenue, and is more particularly described as follows: Sidwell #23-14-178-002-003; 23-14-301-001. A part of the West 1/2 of Section 14, T1N, R9E, City of Farmington Hills, Oakland County, Michigan. Containing 9.2 Acres.

The applicant in this matter is Stanl Harb, Forest at Orchard Lake, L.L.C., who seeks this approval in order to build (21) detached cluster housing units on the site. Any person who is interested is invited to participate in the discussion of the Cluster Site Plan request. The Site Plan and the Zoning Text and Map may be reviewed at the Planning Office, City of Farmington Hills, on any business day between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.  
DALE A. COUNTRYMAN, Director Planning & Community Development  
Item: Cluster Site Plan 58-2-09  
Phone: (248) 473-0543  
Publish: August 8, 1999

**CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING NOTICE**  
DATE: AUGUST 16, 1999  
TIME: 7:30 P.M.  
PLACE: Farmington Hills City Hall 31555 Eleven Mile Road Farmington Hills, MI 48335  
ITEM: Special Approval 55-5-99  
The City of Farmington Hills Planning Commission will give formal consideration to an application requesting application for a Certificate of Need for a wireless communication facility including site plan approval in an RP-6, Special Purpose District classification. The property involved has an address of 28500 Eleven Mile Road, Sidwell #23-18-951-004. The applicant in this matter is Randall Reeves, Nextel Communications.

Any person who is interested is invited to participate in the discussion of the Special Approval request. The application for Special Approval and the Zoning Text and Map may be reviewed at the Farmington Hills Planning Office on any business day between 8:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.  
DALE A. COUNTRYMAN, Director Planning & Community Development City of Farmington Hills  
Item: Special Approval 55-5-99  
Phone: (248) 473-0543  
Publish: August 8, 1999

**CITY OF FARMINGTON COUNCIL PROCEEDINGS (Summary)**  
A regular meeting of the Farmington City Council was called to order by Mayor Bush at 8:30 p.m. on Monday, August 2, 1999, in Council Chambers, 23600 Liberty Street, Farmington, Michigan. Notice of the meeting was posted in compliance with Public Act 287-1976.  
**PRESENT:** Bush, Campbell, Hartsock, Mitchell.  
**ABSENT:** McShane  
**OTHERS PRESENT:** Clerk/Treasurer Cantrell, Attorney Donohue, Director Cline, Director Gushman, City Manager Lauboff, Assistant City Manager Richards (arrived at 8:04 p.m.).  
The Agenda was approved as submitted. Minutes of the Special and Regular meetings of July 6, 1999 were approved as submitted. Minutes of other boards were received and filed. Council appointed Mayor Bush as a delegate to the October Annual Meeting of the Michigan Municipal League and Councilman Hartsock as an alternate. Council cast their vote for seven members nominated as Worker's Compensation Fund Trustees by the Michigan Municipal League Governing Board and directed the Clerk to complete the ballot. Council granted permission to Our Lady of Sorrows Parish to use Shilohs Park for varsity and junior varsity football practice. Council tabled a decision on House Bill 4777 and requested that a letter be sent to the City's State Representative voicing Council's opposition. Council approved the closing of Case and Macomb Streets for a block party. Council appointed Mark McConnell to fill an unexpired term on the Zoning Board of Appeals ending June, 2000. City Assessor Bailer presented the Board of Review Summary Report for 1999. Council approved M.K.A., Inc. as construction manager for the Civic Theatre renovations. Council approved the proposal of Peripheral Vision to complete the LANOIS Computer system. Council renewed an agreement with Oakland County for Personal Property Assessment. Council approved a Maintenance Agreement for Farmington Road with the Road Commission for Oakland County. Council authorized a Suburban Mobility Authority for Regional Transportation (SMART) Agreement for the transfer of municipal and community credits. Council authorized Final payment and Change Order #2 on the 1999 Concrete Paving Program. Council authorized payment on Construction Estimate #1 for Asphalt Repairs for the 1999 Paving Program. Council authorized payment to Jack Dohney Supplies, Inc. for emergency repairs to the Water and Sewer Department Vector Truck. Council approved the retention of Miller, Canfield, Paddock and Stone, P.L.C. as Bond Counsel for the issuance of debt to fund the purchase and renovation of the Civic Theatre. Council adopted a "Notice of Intent" resolution to issue debt to purchase and renovate the Civic Theatre. Public comments were heard. Council received and filed the Building Department Quarterly Report, April 1, 1999 through June 30, 1999. Council received and filed the Public Works and Water and Sewer Department Quarterly Report, April 1 through June 30, 1999. Council approved the Monthly Payments Report for July, 1999. Meeting adjourned at 9:15 p.m.  
MARY L. BUSH, Mayor  
PATRY K. CANTRELL, City Clerk/Treasurer  
Publish: August 8, 1999