

Past turkey hunts included some unexpected surprises



BILL PARKER

Darkness always seems darker in the pre-dawn turkey woods. That thought occurred to me early one morning as I crept along a fence-row in Montmorency County on opening morning of Michigan's spring turkey season.

I'd scouted hard and knew there were several worthy toms in the neighborhood. Roosted birds had even responded to my owl hoots the evening before, so the dawning of opening day was looking pretty bright.

Creeping along in total darkness has a way of setting the nerves on edge. I'd fallen into a state of total awareness as soon as my eyes had adjusted to the faint illumination of the crescent moon.

As I crept silently along the side of an aged, weathered barn toward the edge of an open home pasture, I was acutely aware of my surroundings - a kitten scampered across my path and alighted through a broken board and into the barn, the gentle west breeze caused a thick rope handle to thump against the barn door and the goldenrod up ahead to sway.

I was marveling at the fragrance of the blooming spring forest when suddenly my melancholy world was shaken into a state of fright.

We were being raided from above - ET's revenge or something - because the sky actually was falling. Maybe an airplane was crashing. The thoughts crashed through my head. I couldn't immediately identify the source of the thunderous commotion, but my knees buckled and my head dipped instinctively in defense as I cowered close to the ground.

Heart pounding and adrenaline surging, I gazed toward the sky just as the last of

five turkey exploded into flight. I'd just unrooted a roosting tree. Once I calmed down, I laughed aloud when I realized how comical the whole incident had been. Surprises do occur in the turkey woods.

Another time, I called a gobbler down from a roost at daylight and my partner made a deadly shot at 20 yards. Another gobbler, roosted in the same tree the first bird had flown down from, remained on the roost and kept leaning forward to see through the trees in an effort to figure out what had just happened. On his third lean the bird lost its balance and literally fell out of the tree. He fell a short distance before finding his wings and gliding to the forest floor. His feet were churning as he hit the ground and he quickly disappeared into the blooming foliage as my partner and I enjoyed a good hardy laugh.

Turkey season opens Monday. Hunt safely, enjoy the season, keep your sense of humor and watch out for those unexpected surprises.

River Crab reminder

The annual River Crab Salmon Stakes Charity Fishing Tournament, which raises money to benefit troubled children and their families statewide, is slated for Saturday, April 29th. The tournament is held on the southern waters of Lake Huron and the St. Clair River and is based out of the River Crab Restaurant in St. Clair.

Money is raised through the sale of fifty-entry tickets, which are on sale now at Chuck Muer restaurants throughout metro Detroit including Muer's Seafood Tavern in West Bloomfield, Charley's Crab in Troy, Mariwethers in Southfield, Gandy Dancer in Ann Arbor, Big Fish in Dearborn and Big Fish, Too in Madison Heights. Tickets are also available by calling the River Crab at 1-800-468-3727.

The \$10 tickets entitle the holder to entry into the fishing tournament and an exciting rat-

tle featuring a four-day trip for two to Mackinac Island, a two-day trip for two to Toronto and other great prizes. The best part is that your ticket stub is also redeemable for \$10 off dinner for two or Sunday brunch at any participating Chuck Muer restaurant nationwide.

Anglers who wish to compete (shore and boat fishing is allowed) must register after purchasing a ticket.

Cash prizes are awarded to the fishing club with the heaviest total salmon weight; the largest total weight on one boat; and for the largest steelhead, coho, chinook and brown trout caught.

(Bill Parker writes a weekly outdoor column for the Observer & Eccentric! Newspapers. Hunters and anglers are urged to report their success. Questions and comments are also encouraged. Send information to: Outdoors, Observer & Eccentric! Newspapers, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, MI 48009.)

OUTDOOR CALENDAR

CLASSES/CLINICS

FLY TYING
Paint Creek Outfitters in Rochester offers a variety of fly tying classes for beginners and advanced tyers. Call (248) 650-0440 for more information or to make a reservation for an upcoming class.

MORE FLY TYING
River Bend Sport Shop in Southfield offers fly tying classes for beginners, intermediate and advanced tyers. Classes will be held at various times. To register call (248) 350-8484.

DUCK & GOOSE CALLING
The West Bloomfield Schools Community Education Department is offering a basic Duck & Goose Calling class on Mondays, beginning May 1 and lasting through May 22. The one-hour classes will be taught at Orchard Lake Middle School from 7:30 p.m.-8:30 p.m. Cost is \$40. Contact the West Bloomfield Schools Community Education Department at (248) 539-2290 for registration information.

LIVONIA RANGE
The Livonia Archery Range is

open to the public. The range features seven field lanes and one broadhead lane and is open 10 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturdays and Sundays. The range is also open Tuesdays and Thursdays by appointment only through the end of November. Cost is \$4 for adults and \$2 for children. Livonia residents shoot free of charge. The range is located on Glendale Ave., east of Farmington Road. Call (734) 468-2410 for more information.

JUNIOR OLYMPICS
The Oakland County Sportman Club in Clarkston offers a Junior Olympic Archery Development Program beginning at 1 p.m. on

Sundays. Call (248) 623-0444.

COUNTY PARKS

COUNTY PARK REQUIREMENTS
Advanced registration and a motor vehicle permit are required for all nature programs at Oakland County Parks. Call (810) 625-6473 to register.

PERMITS
The 2000 Oakland County parks motor vehicle permits are on sale at all county park offices and many parks and recreation and township offices. Cost is \$20 through April 30 and \$25 thereafter. Call (248) 658-0908 or TTY (248) 658-1684.

CITY OF FARMINGTON HILLS PLANNING COMMISSION PUBLIC HEARING

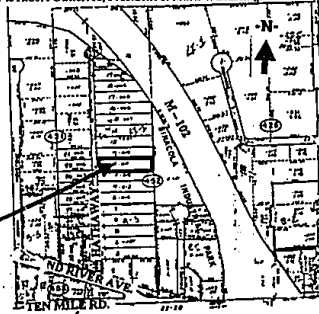
DATE: APRIL 27, 2000

TIME: 7:30 P.M.

PLACE: Farmington Hills City Hall
31555 Eleven Mile Road
Farmington Hills, MI 48338

ITEM: Special Approval SA-5-00

The City of Farmington Hills Planning Commission will give formal consideration to an application for Special Approval (SA 55-3-00) which requests approval for a roof and paint removal facility (Media Blasting) in LI-1, Light-Industrial District classification. The property involved has an address of 24030 Hawthorn, Sidwell #23-19-452-011. The applicant in this matter is Albert Outlerres, President of Mark V. Blasting.



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 9:30 a.m. and 4:30 p.m.

DALE A. COUNTEGAN, Director
Planning & Community Development
City of Farmington Hills

Item: SA 55-3-00
Phone: 248/473-9543
E-Mail: dcoutegan@ci.farmington-hills.mi.us
Publish: April 16, 2000

FREE Admission to "The 10 Commandments"
At the Farmington Civic Theatre
Bring the whole family to see this epic motion picture
Starting Charlton Heston

**Friday, April 21
6:30 p.m.**

Sponsored by
Farmington Hills Church of God

You are invited to Celebrate Easter
Sunday, April 23rd - 9:00 a.m. or 10:45 a.m.
25717 Power Road
Farmington Hills, MI 48338
248-477-9144

Easter Egg Hunt for children with snacks, crafts and stow-away
Saturday, April 22nd at 1:00 p.m.

Spring Fling

SAVE 35% TO 40% & MORE ON ALL WICKER FURNISHINGS!

Order now to enjoy the summer months.

An amazing range of materials and styles to offer furniture selections for every room of your house. Not limited to traditional wicker, these upholstery and occasional collections from "Lexington Casual" create inviting options from a host of natural and manmade materials. Available in over 300 fabrics and a dozen finishes, you can create a unique look through your home. Unique handwoven materials and timeless designs prove it's not just "wicker" anymore!



Vigen's Bay Classic wicker styling in two-by-two woven round and flat core rattan with chevron woven rolled arms. Upholstered seat and back cushions; Perma-Mesh seat construction. Available in all "Lexington Casual" indoor finishes.



Aligre. Classic wicker seating and occasional designs handwoven in round core rattan with upholstered seat and back cushions. Perma-Mesh seat construction. Available in all "Lexington Casual" indoor finishes.



Diamond. Classic Victorian style seating and occasional designs handwoven in round core rattan with upholstered seat and back cushions. Perma-Mesh seat construction. Available in all "Lexington Casual" indoor finishes.

Serving Metro Detroit Families For Over 47 years

home furnishings designs **McLaughlin's** of Southgate



313.285.5151