

HUNTING, FISHING & MORE

spring **FEVER** outdoor guide



Miles boys claim MWA medals in slalom

Rural Rosebud resident "Wild Bill" Miles (steering, above) and Columbia paddler Scott Swafford won the men's OC2 slalom race on Sunday during the 51st Missouri Whitewater Association Championships held at Millstream Gardens Conservation Area along the on Saint Francis River near Fredericktown, Mo. They are pictured turning behind a rock outcrop to set up their approach to the next set of hanging gates. Miles also placed second in the open canoe tandem division when he teamed up with another Columbia boater, Jeff Barrow. Miles' son, Willow, 12, (left) was the youngest competitor during the association's championship weekend. He placed second in the under 18 novice kayak division on Saturday. He is shown steering the boat to make an upriver gate. He made the gate cleanly without a touch.

PHOTOS BY DAVE MARNER

March 21, 2018 | Pages 1B-12B | A SPECIAL SUPPLEMENT TO THE

GASCONADE COUNTY **Republican**



RETIRED IRONTON, Mo., dentist and Missouri whitewater boating expert Chuck McHenry (bib No. 49) gives the safety talk prior to the downriver sprint race held Friday evening on the Saint Francis River. The event was part of the 51st annual Missouri Whitewater Association Championships. "Wild Bill" and Willow Miles were among 50 participants in the race. **MILES LOOKS** back briefly to make sure his OC2 partner Jeff Barrow clears a downriver gate as they set up to descend the approaching "Big Drop" rapid. Miles made a quick correction from the front of the canoe to help Barrow clear the gate cleanly. Time penalties are assessed for touches by either the body, paddle or boat or for missing gates completely. They placed second in the division.

PHOTOS BY DAVE MARNER



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“WILD BILL” AND WILLOW MILES display their Missouri Whitewater Association Championships medals on Sunday beside the well-recognized “curly” pine at the Millstream Gardens Conservation Area. Miles and his OC2 (open canoe, tandem) partner Scott Swafford (below) won the men’s race. They are pictured setting up their approach to a sequence of downstream gates (Nos. 6 and 7) after cleaning clearing the upstream No. 5 gate without any touches. This was the 51st year for the Missouri Whitewater Association’s race weekend. **PHOTOS BY DAVE MARNER**



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DRIFTWOOD OUTDOORS

Kayaking opportunities abound across Missouri



by **BRANDON BUTLER**

There are many advantages to a kayak. They're usually light, making them easy to transport and control. One person can handle most. You can take them anywhere. They'll fit on top of most vehicles. Kayaks also provide exercise. They don't use gas or batteries, so they're environmentally sound. The list can go on. Here are a few Missouri

waters where kayaks are great to paddle:

MISSOURI RIVER

Urban areas rarely receive the recognition they deserve in terms of outdoor opportunity. Visual perception often clouds reality causing many otherwise perfectly sane outdoor-minded individuals to turn up their noses at natural enjoyment within city limits. To do so is a mistake. The Missouri River is not to be messed with. You need to respect her enormity and power. However, the Missouri is one of the grandest rivers in the world and to ignore the opportunity to float along her course would be a shame.

The Missouri River makes its way through two major urban areas in our state—Kansas City and St. Louis. Between the two cities, she courses through the countryside, passing by wonderful communities like Boonville, Jefferson City and Washington. Those with some experience in a kayak should not overlook this incredible river. Just be sure to use precautions, like always

wearing a life vest and paddling with a friend whenever possible.

NORTH FORK OF THE WHITE RIVER

The North Fork of the White River is a scenic gem. Tucked away deep in the Missouri Ozarks, this fast flowing river is a perfect destination to get away from it all, as well as an amazing fishery. Combine the two, and the North Fork is ideal for kayaking.

The North Fork flows for 67 miles across Douglas and Ozark counties before emptying into Northfork Reservoir near Tecumseh. It is heavily spring fed and has long stretches of riffles and even some class II whitewater. Smallmouth bass, goggle-eye and sunfish can be caught throughout the river. The lower 12 miles of the North Fork are trophy trout sections.

Since the North Fork is so far south and located a great distance from any large population base, it remains rather less crowded

than some of the more northern float rivers in Missouri. Don't mistake less crowded for not crowded. The North Fork does have its floaters, but it's not as crowded as many rivers closer to large cities.

NIANGUA RIVER

The Niangua flows through a beautiful landscape of looming forest and unique rock features. There are many access points where you can launch a kayak. The Bennett Spring area is a hub for this river, where you can rent a kayak from one of many local liveries.

Bennett Spring is one of the most popular State Parks in Missouri, with visitors coming from all across the Midwest each year to fish, camp, picnic and more. The spring from which the park derives its name is the third largest in the state, producing an average of 100,000,000 gallons of water a day that pour into the Niangua River. Camping

See **Driftwood**, Page 11B

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CONGRATULATIONS 11-YEAR old Maverick Yoakum on breaking the state record by catching a 10-pound, 3-ounce river redhorse on Tavern Creek near St. Elizabeth. He is pictured with his dad (Bennett Yoakum).

PHOTO BY MDC STAFF, COURTESY MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION.

11-Year old angler catches state-record, possibly world-record river redhorse

BY LUCAS BOND
Mo. Dept. of Conservation

DIXON, Mo.—The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) reports that 11-year old Maverick Yoakum of Dixon became the most recent record-breaking angler in Missouri when he hooked a river redhorse on Tavern Creek using a rod and reel.

The new “pole and line” record river redhorse caught by Yoakum on March 4 weighed 10-pounds, 3-ounces. The new record breaks the previous state-record and world record pole-and-line river redhorse of 9-pound, 13-ounces caught at Tavern Creek in 2016. Yoakum was using worms when he caught the fish. MDC staff verified the record-weight fish using a certified scale in Brinktown.

“I fought the fish for about two to three minutes before I got it to the bank,” said Yoakum. “I thought I caught a pretty big fish, but I didn’t know it was a state record until my dad told me to look it up online. I’m super excited to hold a state record!”

River redhorse fish are part of the sucker family. They are a moderately chubby, coarse-scaled fish with a dorsal fin containing 12 or 13 rays. These fish can be found mostly throughout the Ozarks.

Yoakum’s fish also beats the current world

record, pending verification by the International Game Fish Association (IFGA). While the river redhorse does get much larger, IFGA only recognizes fish taken by pole and line.

“Larger river redhorses are usually taken by gigging and do not qualify for the IGFA world record,” MDC Fisheries Programs Specialist Andrew Branson said. “Conservation makes Missouri a great place to fish and this new unique record clearly shows why. This fish could possibly be the largest river redhorse ever taken with a pole and line.”

Yoakum added it’s hard to believe he may be a world-record holder.

“I just can’t believe it! I have never thought about holding a record, and now I may be a world-record holder. I can’t believe it!” he said. “I want to thank my dad for always taking me fishing, because if it wasn’t for him taking me fishing I wouldn’t have caught a fish like I did.”

Missouri state-record fish are recognized in two categories: pole-and-line and alternative methods. Alternative methods include: throwlines, trotlines, limb lines, bank lines, jug lines, spearfishing, snagging, snaring, gigging, grabbing, archery, and atlatl.

For more information on state-record fish, visit the MDC website at <http://bit.ly/2efq1v1>

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PHOTOS BY DAVE MARNER

THE "FIRE-LAY GOURMET" was in rare form this past weekend during the 51st Missouri Whitewater Association Championships held at Millstream Gardens Conservation Area. Nearby at the Silver Mines campground near Fredericktown, Mo., the menu for Saturday evening include a beer-marinated, honey-mustard glazed venison backstrap. The chef chose a hoppy 12-ounce Hoptimistic IPA from the Charleyville Vineyard Microbrewery, Ste. Genevieve, Mo., for the marinade. Steak seasoning (your choice) was sprinkled generously on both sides and lightly rubbed in before a flash searing. Once both sides were seared, the 2.75-pound strap (harvested and graciously given to the chef by his sister-in-law, Cate Radkte), was glazed with the honey-mustard mix and grilled indirect and covered for 12 minutes (top left). The meat (medium-rare) was allowed to rest for five minutes before being sliced (middle, left).



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MDC sets 2018 deer and turkey hunting dates

BY JOE JEREK

Mo. Dept. of Conservation

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. — The Missouri Conservation Commission has approved the season dates for the 2018-19 deer and turkey seasons. The seasons are set up much like years past.

2018 Spring and Fall Turkey Hunting Dates

- Spring Youth Portion: April 7 and 8
- Regular Spring Turkey Season: April 16 through May 6
- Fall Firearms Turkey Season: Oct. 1 - 31

2018 - 2019 Archery Deer and Turkey Hunting Dates

- Archery Season: Sept. 15 through Nov. 9 and Nov. 21 through Jan. 15, 2019.

2018 - 2019 Firearms Deer Hunting Dates

- Firearms Deer Early Youth Portion: Oct. 27 and 28
- Firearms Deer November Portion: Nov. 10 - 20
- Firearms Deer Late Youth Portion:

Nov. 23 - 25

- Firearms Deer Antlerless Portion: Nov. 30 through Dec. 2
- Firearms Deer Alternative Methods Portion: Dec. 22 through Jan. 1, 2019

Details on hunting regulations, harvest limits, allowed methods, required permits,

and other related information will be available in the Department's "2018 Spring Turkey Hunting Regulations and Information" and the "2018 Fall Deer & Turkey Hunting Regulations and Information" booklets. Both will be available where permits are sold prior to the related seasons.

Learn more about deer and turkey hunting

in Missouri at huntfish.mdc.mo.gov/

Buy Missouri hunting (and fishing) permits from numerous vendors around the state, online at mdc.mo.gov/buypermits, or through MDC's free mobile apps, MOHunting and MOFishing, available for download through Google Play for Android devices or the App Store for Apple devices.



MDC's 2018 Spring Turkey Hunting Regulations and Information booklets are available for free at MDC regional offices, nature centers, and other places where permits are sold -- and online at short.mdc.mo.gov/Zqo.



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SHARE THE Harvest works by hunters donating harvested deer meat to participating meat processors who then prepare the donated venison by grinding it into ready-to-use packages that are given to local food banks and food pantries. Missouri deer hunters shared 289,292 pounds of venison last season to help feed hungry Missourians.

PHOTO BY MDC STAFF, COURTESY MISSOURI DEPARTMENT OF CONSERVATION.

MDC and CFM thank deer hunters for sharing the harvest

BY JOE JEREK

Mo. Dept. of Conservation

JEFFERSON CITY, Mo. — The Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) and the Conservation Federation of Missouri (CFM) thank the thousands of Missouri deer hunters who donated 289,292 pounds of venison to the state's Share the Harvest program this past deer season. The donated deer meat will help feed hungry Missourians all around the state.

This season's total of 289,292 pounds of venison included nearly 5,600 whole deer. Hunters donated 198,277 pounds of venison the year before. Since the program was started in 1992, Share the Harvest has provided nearly 4 million pounds of lean, healthy venison to help feed hungry Missourians.

Share the Harvest is coordinated by MDC and CFM. It works by deer hunters donating their extra venison to more than 100 participating meat processors throughout the state who grind the deer meat into ready-to-use packages. The packaged venison is then given to local food banks and food pantries for distribution to Missourians in need of food assistance.

"Hunters started Share the Harvest because they saw a need in their communities," said MDC Director Sara Pauley. "And hunters remain the driving force behind this popular program that helps feed our fellow Missourians who are in need. We sincerely thank the thousands of deer hunters who support Share the Harvest, along with the many participating meat processors and sponsors."

Processing fees are covered entirely or in part by numerous local supporting organizations and statewide sponsors, which include: MDC, CFM, Shelter Insurance, Bass Pro Shops, Missouri Chapter Safari Club International, Missouri Chapter National Wild Turkey Federation, Midway USA Inc., Missouri Food Banks Association, and United Bowhunters of Missouri.

"Share the Harvest is a partnership of citizens, agencies, organizations and corporations working together to provide healthy, protein-rich meat to those who may otherwise go without," said CFM Executive Director Brandon Butler. "Hunters across Missouri should be proud of this outstanding program."

For more information on Share the Harvest, visit short.mdc.mo.gov/Zoz.



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OUTDOORS IN THE OZARKS

You have a right to know

I am looking forward to our outdoorsman's swap meet this coming Saturday, and hope to meet and talk with many of the readers of this column. If you want to get more information about it, call my office number at the end of this column.

It is disappointing to write a column about what is going on today with the Missouri Department of Conservation and know that there are newspapers who refuse to print it because they do not allow any criticism of that agency. What I wrote a couple of weeks ago is true and beyond dispute, about what amounts to questionable activity on the part of department agents, but in some newspapers today, it cannot be printed, usually because only one person disapproves of it.

If you wish to see those columns which may be omitted, read them on my website, larrydablemontoutdoors.blogspot.com or in

my magazine. On April 13 I will spend most of a day with the Director of the Conservation Department, and it is likely that what I write about that day will not be published by some of the 45 or 50 newspapers who receive this column weekly. But what we talk about and agree to will be in our summer Lightning Ridge outdoor magazine.

The public has a right to know what an agent can and

cannot do when it comes to entering a home and taking your possessions. And fishermen need to know what they need to do to escape citations and fines for technical violations. For example, a lady from Long Lane, MO called me last spring to tell me that she and her husband were coming back from a crap-

pie fishing trip to Pomme De Terre Lake, when a pair of game wardens pulled them over. One took her to the front of the pickup and began to interrogate her, as if she might be Bonnie Parker herself.

The other one hauled her husband back to the boat and demanded that he open the live well so the crappie therein could be counted. There were seven. Obviously neither had caught their limit. But the agents smelled the possibility of a technicality citation, so they demanded that both fishermen tell them exactly how many that had each caught. The wife, who was mad as a hornet, said she didn't know how many were in the live well and didn't care, because she hadn't caught any. The game warden started giving them both the third degree because two crappie fishermen have to always keep their fish separate until they get them home.

So that is something to remember, Missouri's conservation agents, maybe the same in Arkansas and Kansas and Oklahoma, in an attempt to find away to fine fishermen who have done nothing wrong, travel in pairs and will often do just what they did to that lady and her husband. They will give you a ticket in a minute if you cannot identify the fish you personally have caught. If you have only six or eight crappie in your live well, you can be forced to pay a fine IF YOU CAN'T IDENTIFY WHAT YOU HAVE CAUGHT. It is the same with white bass, black bass, walleye, etc.

Since few fishermen keep their fish separated, and since all fish are often kept in one live well, the answer is a pair of small scissors or clippers you can use to clip the top or the bottom of the tail fin to mark you fish, sort of like the old time hill people did to separate mark the ears on free-ranging hogs. Then you crappies are easy to tell, because they are marked. Fishing partner Joe can clip the bottom of the tail fin on his

crappie, and Bob can leave his unmarked.

Then when the game wardens pull you over and dig into your cooler or live well, they can't fine you because there is no question what each of you caught. Just be sure that no fish fall beneath the length limit. If any game wardens insist your fish is too short, lay that fish beside a ruler and take a picture before he takes it. If he refuses to let you do that, he is violating your rights.

Have a witness! In southern Missouri, I have seen crappie fishermen pay fines because the conservation agent insisted that a ten-inch crappie is only nine and 3/4 of an inch. In courts, you cannot prove he is lying unless you have a photo. And they do lie on occasion. The MDC paid a million dollars out in a lawsuit only a few years ago because several of their agents were proven to have lied. A retired agent has also told me that he objected to being told by a supervisor to lie in order to convict someone. So do everything you can to be unquestionably legal, and to do that you have to know what the fishing regulations are, totally and completely.

There is so much to know. Don't be caught with a walleye after a certain time in many of the streams in the evening in the spring, even if you caught it at noon. Know all length limits too! For instance if you are fishing in the river above Stockton or Truman or Bull Shoals, the nine-inch crappie you catch is legal. But if you run down into the lake to load your boat, those shorter fishing are perhaps illegal. It isn't so much where you catch them, but where you take them. And remember that length limits in different waters are not the same.

One of the advertisers in my magazine told me that this past winter he went to fish for trout on Lake Taneycomo and was checked at a boat dock by two Missouri Conservation Agents who said they had come down from Stockton Lake area. "When they got

See **Dablemont**, Page 11B



by **LARRY DABLEMONT**

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2018 Event Schedule

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Sunday, Oct. 28

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Dabelmont from page 10B

ready to leave the dock,” he said, “one commented to the other... ‘Lets get out there and find us some victims,’!

The young man became very angry and he said he told them as much saying, “Those victims you are after are the people who support your agency and pay your salary.”

More of us need to speak up against this type of attitude. Many of the state’s ‘game wardens’ operate this way, looking for any little technicality they can use to write a citation to fishermen who have no intention of breaking any law.

Remember that and don’t allow yourself to be another of their “victims”.

Contact me at P.O. Box 22, Bolivar, Mo. or email me at lightninridge47@gmail.com. The office phone number is 417 777 5227.

Driftwood from page 4B

in the park or staying in one of the cabins is a great experience. This is a great place to camp for the weekend and spend a couple of days kayaking different sections of the river.

ROCKY FORK CONSERVATION AREA

Whether you call them strip pits, lakes or ponds, the waters of the Rocky Fork Conservation Area are worth a visit. Located just six miles north of Columbia on Highway 63, Rocky Fork is an easily accessible, outstanding place to paddle a kayak.

Rocky Fork CA consists of 2,200 acres. About 1,200 of those acres were strip-mined before the Missouri Department of Conservation acquired the property in 1979. Today, the reclaimed land consists of roughly 60 strip pits. Most of the strip pits are small, as in less than a few acres. For the most part, the pits are secluded, with heavily forested shorelines. The water often drops off deep from the bank. You can bring a camera on this kayak trip and likely find some nice nature scenes to photograph.

See you down the trail...

Owensville resident sells trailers at Bourbon RV

OWENSVILLE, Mo. – Stephen Heckelmann has been in sales for the last 20 years, since the close of the Chrysler plant in Fenton.

Stephen grew up in Washington, Mo. In 1985 he joined the Navy. After his service in the Navy Steve worked at Chrysler in Fenton from 1993 to 2009.

After Chrysler closed it’s plant in Fenton he went to work at Bourbon RV.

In 2009 Steve and his wife, Loretta purchased a home at Peaceful Valley. With a military discount from Pioneer Home Center they rehabbed the house.

The lake front home was meant to be a weekend, getaway in the beginning. But after a while Steve and Loretta decided to sell the main house and move permanently to Owensville. “We decided that this was a good caring community, one that we wanted to raise our two children in,” said Steve.

Bourbon RV sells new trailers by Jayco, Denali, Gulf Stream, Elkridge, Riverside, Aero Lite and Shasta. They handle fifth wheels trailers, travel trailers and toy haulers.

Popular with many of their customers



are the retro trailers by Riverside.

“I love working at Bourbon RV,” said Steve. “There are no hidden fees, we treat our customers like our neighbors.”

In addition, Bourbon RV helps RV owners maintain their trailers with industry-leading service, RV parts and tech support. They even have a full body shop on site to care for any major repairs to the RV’s exterior. To find out more about Bourbon RV visit www.BourbonRV.com.

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MDC holds beginner's birding class March 24 at Rockwoods Reservation

BY DAN ZARLENGA
Mo. Dept. of Conservation

WILDWOOD, Mo. — Birdwatching is one of the fastest growing outdoor activities in America. It's a fun activity that can help people of all ages discover nature. Due to high demand, the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) is offering another Beginner's Birding class to help kick start birdwatching skills for new birdwatchers at Rockwoods Reservation on Saturday, March 24 from 10 a.m.-noon.



THE NORTHERN cardinal is one of the 142 bird species reported at Rockwoods Reservation by eBird.org.

Participants will learn about the basics of birding and the birds that can be found at Rockwoods Reservation this spring. Then join MDC naturalists for a hike to find some feathered friends.

Rockwoods Reservation has great habitat to support many different bird species, especially those that will be migrating through this spring. The site is listed on eBird.org as a birding hotspot, with 142 species reported, which mean excellent prospects for getting a good start on a birding list.

The Beginner's Birding class is free and open to those ages 8 and up. All equipment needed, including bird guides and binoculars will be provided. Participants should dress for the weather and be prepared with footwear suitable for hiking. Online reservations are required by going to <https://goo.gl/8GTQbt>. For more information, call 636-458-2236.

Rockwoods Reservation is located in Wildwood at 2751 Glencoe Road, off Highway 109 between I-44 and Highway 100.

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