

Eastern Echoes

By Gail Roberson



One mother describes her constant squabbles with her eleven-year old child. "It's like being bitten to death by ducks," she said. A father told his small son, "I don't care if our basement wall is cracking, stop telling everybody you come from a broken home." They just can't win. Parenting is hard stuff. Raising children is like playing golf... you keep thinking you'll do better next time.

The mother of three notoriously unruly youngsters was asked whether or not she'd have children if she had it to do all over again. "Sure," she replied, "but not the same ones."

At a symposium on risk taking, the speaker asked the participants to imagine that he had placed a large I-beam about 40 feet long on the floor in front of the podium. He then selected an individual from the audience and asked, "If I gave you \$20, would you walk across that I-beam?" The man enthusiastically assured the speaker that he would. The speaker continued. "Suppose I took the same beam and suspended it between two buildings, 50 stories above the street. Now would you walk across the I-beam for \$20?" This time the fellow promptly answered, "No, I wouldn't." The speaker persisted. "Now, suppose I'm on top of one building, and I'm dangling one of your kids over the edge. You're on the other building, and I say to you, 'If you don't walk across the I-beam and get your kid, I'm going to drop him.' 'Would you then walk across the I-beam?' The fellow in the audience hesitated ever so slightly and then replied, "Which kid have you got?"

Even the college classroom is not spared. A professor returned to class with the graded exam papers and requested that all his students sit down. He then said: "If you stood up, it is conceivable that you might stand in a circle... in which case I could be arrested for maintaining a dope ring."

Children of all ages try our patience. Take, for instance, the exasperated piano teacher who finally told her pupil: "If you don't behave yourself, I'm going to tell your parents you have talent." And they try our sense of protectiveness too, such as the mother who was trying to reassure her little boy, who was afraid of the dark. "Just remember," she told him, "God is always there with you." The kid answered, "Yeah, I know God's here, but I just wish he had skin on." In return, however, nothing tries a child's patience like a father who dawdles with his homework.

Someone has said that there are many children in our world today who are a handful simply because they are too seldom an armful. Maybe we should repeat that sentence out loud along with our coffee each morning. We ought to stop analyzing our children to death, and reading tons of "how-to" and "self-help" books and, instead, revert to some of the tactics all of us learned in the first grade. Most of the things we really need to know about how to live, what to do, and how to be, we learned in that first classroom: Share everything. Play fair. Don't hit people. Put things back. Clean up your own mess. Don't take things that aren't yours. Say you're sorry when you hurt somebody. Wash your hands before you eat. Flush. And warm cookies and cold milk are good for you.

Everything we need to live a balanced life is in there somewhere. Learn some and think some and draw and paint and sing and dance and play and work... everyday some. Our first grade guidance is the golden rule for the rest of our lives. If we had only realized that, our children wouldn't be such a handful, now.

Bassin' with the pros



School may be closed for youngsters this summer, but it's in full swing for largemouth bass on lakes throughout the nation.

Between now and mid-autumn, anglers can take advantage of some of the most spectacular displays of bass activity of the year, the gathering of huge schools of fish ravenously feeding on minnows they've trapped near the surface.

"It's one of the most exciting times to be on the water, because you can often catch a bass on every cast," explains Johnson Outboards Pro Staff member David Wharton, a former professional guide on Lake Sam Rayburn in Texas.

"I have seen the surface of a lake turned into a white froth as the bass splash and chop into swarms of baitfish. Often, you can hear the frenzy before you even see it."

On some lakes well known for schooling bass, anglers add a pair of binoculars to their fishing tackle and continually scan the water for signs of surfacing activity. Often, diving sea gulls provide the signal, for they're feeding on the shad from the air while bass are feeding on them from below.

Schooling bass readily hit lures, says Wharton, because when the fish are gathered like this, they are feeding actively. What's happening is that as the water warms in summer and shad are hatched, they become easy prey for bass. The largemouths continually circle the swarms of shad and gradually force them to the surface where they have even less chance of escape.

After submerging, the bass are not necessarily scattering. Instead, they're simply riding herd on the baitfish, corralling them again and gradually forcing them back to the surface. When they're on top, the bass will begin feeding once more.

"Normally, schooling bass weigh three pounds or less," says

Then, when the bait is effectively trapped this way, the bass start slashing through them.

"At this time, practically any lure that resembles a shad will get a strike," notes Wharton. "I think a small chrome or clear topwater lure, worked very fast over the surface, is one of the most effective choices, but diving lures or the lead bodied tailspinners can also be effective."

"The size of the lure can truly mean the difference between success and failure in school bass fishing," adds Wharton. "Overall, I prefer to use a smaller lure, but I still try to match it to the size of the baitfish."

Schooling bass are notoriously famous for spooking easily and submerging, so Wharton tries to do his fishing from a distance. What's required, he explains, is a long, limber rod with light line that allows him to make extra-long casts. Slowly and carefully, under trolling motor power, he then eases his way closer.

When the bass do submerge, Wharton changes from a topwater plug to a small 1/4-ounce white maribou jig and an ultra-light action rod. The lure is fished in the same area where the bass were schooling on the surface, and is allowed to sink. With the jig near the bottom, Wharton uses a swimming, hopping retrieve to draw strikes.

Certainly one of the interesting aspects of bass schooling activity, says the well-known tournament pro, is the fact schooling frequently takes place between mid-morning and mid-afternoon; and it occurs in the same area year after year.

Normally the bass and shad relate to some type of bottom feature, such as a channel, submerged roadbed, or underwater

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"Normally, schooling bass weigh three pounds or less," says the Johnson Outboards Pro Staff member, "but occasionally larger bass can be caught by fishing below the feeding spree on the surface."

"For this, I like to use a deep diving crankbait, casting it a far as I can across the school. I just use a straight, fast retrieve and bring the lure back under the surface fish. Big bass seem to be lazy and let the smaller fish do all the work. They stay below and feed on injured shad falling to the bottom."

Another lure Wharton recommends for catching larger bass under a surfacing school is the plastic worm. He rigs it Texas-style with a slip sinker and lets it drop to the bottom where he begins hopping it back to the boat.

"When bass are actually down on the bottom," he says, "you can really catch them with a worm. Much of the time, however, the bass are suspended and are a little harder to catch. When you do get a strike, you have to know the depth so you can get your lure down there again."

Weather-wise, Wharton suggests looking for schooling activity to be most noticeable on calm, windless days when the surface is glassy slick. He has seen times when the fish also school just as frantically on cloudy, windy and rainy days. It all depends, he believes, on the mood of the bass and the location of the shad.

At times, however, the fish also school over deep flats, and even in flooded timber.

"When bass school in flooded timber, you may as well plan on losing your share of fish and lures," laughs Wharton, who has lost his share of both as a guide. "The bass will simply wrap your line around a tree or stump and break free."

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Some Sports Myths Are Still Around And Hard To Shake

By FREDERICK D. AUSTIN III, M.D.

The world of sports has many myths. Football players once considered steak and eggs the ideal pre-game breakfast. Then they warmed up with a set of deep knee bends. In the off-season, they shunned lifting weights since it would only make them stiff and muscle-bound for competition. While the above myths may have been eradicated from the world of football, many myths still cling to America's gyms, fitness clubs and playing fields.

MYTH 1: A good way to lose weight is to sweat off fat in a sweat-suit.



The Medicine Chest

In at least one instance (not in Washington), a young player died of heat exhaustion from wearing a rubber sweat-suit under his football uniform. The coach explained that they were trying to "melt" some of the fat off.

You cannot melt fat off of an individual. The body eliminates heat excess by evaporation of sweat from the skin. You need as much skin exposed to the air as possible to allow the heat to escape. It is now recognized that shorts and cut-off T-shirts are ideal for vigorous physical exercise.

MYTH 2: You should avoid drinking cold water during exercise because it will give you cramps.

An individual should drink large quantities of water when he

exercises to avoid heat stress and dehydration. The body loses water rapidly when exercising and this water should be replaced promptly. Adequate water intake can improve performance. The water should be cold because the colder the solution, the more rapidly it will be emptied from the stomach and delivered to the body.

MYTH 3: Kicking exercises, bouncing toe-touches, and other fast-

action stretching exercises are a good way to loosen up muscles before a game.

The purpose of stretching exercises is to make muscles more pliable so they will not tear. The trouble with bouncing and other fast exercises is that the sudden strain of a muscle will likely trigger a reflex action that causes the muscle to contract. In the end, you will have muscles that are tighter, not looser. Stretching exercises should be done slowly.

Obituary

William E. Gaskins Jr.

William Earl "Billy" Gaskins Jr., 48, died in Craven Regional Medical Center on Sunday.

The funeral service was held at 3:30 p.m. Tuesday in the Wilkerson Funeral Chapel in Vanceboro by the Revs. Robert Worthington and Verne Womack.

Burial was in the Epworth United Methodist Church Cemetery.

Gaskins, a native of Craven County, was a lifelong resident of the Epworth community. He was a 20-year employee of the Weyerhaeuser Co.'s New Bern plant.

Surviving are three sons, William Earl Gaskins III, Roger Glen Gaskins and Johnny Ray

Gaskins, of the home; his parents, Earl and Murrel Gaskins of the Epworth community; two sisters, Mrs. Linda Gaskins Jackson of New Bern and Mrs. Ruth Gaskins Croom of Kinston; and a fiancée, Barbara Swindell Jordan, of Rt. 3, Vanceboro. The family received friends at the funeral home from 7 to 9 p.m. Monday.

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