


Youth Artists Recognized Prattville Teen Finishes 3rd in National Contest

The Alabama Wildlife Federation teamed up with the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Wheeler National Wildlife Refuge to sponsor the 2004 Ireland Youth Wildlife Art Contest and the Federal Junior Duck Stamp Contest.

The competitions were steep with approximately 700 students from nearly 150 schools across the state participating in the contests. Both contests were open to all public, private and home school students in grades K-12 across Alabama.

Among the winners was Bethany Cannon of Prattville, who won first place in the grades 10-12 category of the Federal Junior Duck Stamp Contest. Bethany attends Prattville High School, and her art teacher is Mrs. Susan Parker. Bethany won Best of Show in the Alabama competition and went on to place third in the National Junior Duck Stamp Contest. Her artwork of a redhead duck will be showcased on the cover of the brochure for the 2005 contest.

For nearly 20 years, the Alabama Wildlife Federation's Ireland Youth Wildlife Art Contest has recognized the outstanding artistic abilities of Alabama's students while increasing students' knowledge and awareness of wildlife and wildlife habitat. The AWF encourages students to research their subject to learn more about the species and its habitat requirements. For more information visit www.alabamawildlife.org.

The Federal Junior Duck Stamp Contest design is a "term paper" in which students use visual rather than verbal articulation to show what they have learned. Participants select a species of North American waterfowl, research this species and its habitat, and then depict the waterfowl in an artistic medium. For more information visit duckstamps.fws.gov. 

Bethany Cannon of Prattville and her Best of Show artwork of a redhead duck.



KIM NIX



2004-2005 Hunting Seasons Approved with Some Changes in Regulations

The Conservation Advisory Board met Saturday, May 22, 2004, to discuss and set hunting and fishing regulations for the 2004-2005 seasons.

Changes from previous hunting seasons were made to enhance hunter opportunities and to open new options that might attract more hunters. Discussion of changes in fishing regulations centered on limiting shrimping in upper Mobile Bay for protection of grass beds.

Dove season in the North Zone is split into three segments: September 11-October 2; October 30-November 20; and December 18-January 2, 2005. Conecuh County was moved into the North Zone. The South Zone's split

season is October 9-November 6; November 24-28; and December 11-January 15, 2005.

Significant changes in gun and archery deer season include approval of crossbows for all persons during the entire deer hunting season. Muzzleloader season was expanded to five days, November 15-19. The Board also voted to allow the use of scopes on muzzleloaders. A statewide youth deer hunt was approved for November 13, the Saturday prior to the opening day of gun deer season.

In a major change for turkey hunters, the Conservation Advisory Board voted to allow non-mechanized, non-electronic turkey decoys to be used.

In addition, a one-day turkey season for disabled hunters is scheduled for the day prior to the scheduled season opener for each county. Dog deer hunting is limited in specific areas of some counties, as defined by the new regulations. An innovative permit system for dog deer hunting in Henry, Covington, and Geneva counties was approved thanks to the cooperative efforts of hunters, landowners, and conservation enforcement officers in those counties.

A complete listing of the 2004-2005 seasons and bag limits is available on the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resource's Web site, www.outdooralabama.com. **GA**

Renovated Monte Sano State Park Lodge Now Open

The official dedication and ribbon cutting ceremony for the newly constructed Monte Sano State Park Lodge took place June 3, 2004.

Officials from the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources were in attendance, along with other state and local dignitaries. Representatives from the Alabama Bureau of Tourism and Travel and local tourism groups were also present.

In 1939 the Civilian Conservation Corps built the Monte Sano Community Center/Restaurant. The building was struck by lightning in 1947 and burned. The only remaining parts of the original building were the rock walls. Now, more than 50 years later, the lodge has been rebuilt incorporating those same walls to make a beautiful lodge facility.

The new lodge contains a large meeting room, small meeting room, break room, lobby or pre-function area, restrooms and a terrace. Available for rent, the lodge can be reserved for various types of events including weddings, family reunions, and business, corporate, or educational meetings. **GA**



JANICE PARKER



The furnishings in the renovated Monte Sano Lodge complement the original stonework. The lodge is available for meetings, receptions and other group gatherings. Call 256-534-3757 for more information.



Alabama's Online Point-of-Sale Licensing System Wins National Award

Alabama's innovative Web-based point-of-sale hunting and fishing licensing system is now an award winner. Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources was named one of 15 Pioneer Award recipients by the E-Gov Institute's Government Solutions Center.

In May 2003, Alabama replaced its paper-based hunting and fishing licensing process by launching the nation's first Web-based system to allow approved licensing retailers to sell outdoor licenses electronically. Since then, more than 190,000 hunting and fishing licenses have been processed through the service, which is essentially a hardware-neutral interface

that is accessible through a basic Internet connection.

"We are very pleased with the recognition of our point-of-sale service by the E-Gov Institute," said M. Barnett Lawley, Commissioner of the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources. "The program has contributed to significant cost savings in the agency and for our retailer partners. We've been able to realign some of our staff from the tedious paper processing to better serve our constituents."

The E-Gov Institute serves as an educational resource to those providing electronic government services. More than 160 electronic government projects were reviewed, and Alabama was one of two states to receive a Pioneer Award.

The system was developed at no cost to the state and is the result of a unique public-private partnership between the Alabama Department

of Conservation, the Information Services Division, Wal-Mart Stores, and Alabama Interactive. The user-friendly system has generated more than \$200,000 in direct cost savings for the state and eliminated thousands of labor hours for Wal-Mart and other retail licensing agents in the state.

"We congratulate our partners in the Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources on winning a Pioneer Award," said Winn McInnis, general manager of Alabama Interactive. "They used technology to find a better way to sell outdoor licenses, and Alabama's outdoorspeople and retail licensing agents are the beneficiaries of this great system."

More information about this and other Alabama eGovernment initiatives is available at www.alabama.gov. Or, visit www.outdooralabama.com for more information about enjoying Alabama's outdoor and wildlife activities. **DA**

Avoiding the Circle of Death

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 24 >>>



BILLY POPE

The ignition safety switch works by attaching a lanyard between the operator and the switch. If the lanyard is removed from the switch, then the engine will shut off.

to go in circles. Approximately 90 percent of all people who fall out of a moving boat while not wearing a kill switch are struck by that boat. The majority of the time, the part of the boat that strikes them is the propeller, cutting them over and over. So prevalent is this occurrence that the area where the person falls is called the circle of death.

Avoiding Injury

An easy way to avoid becoming a statistic is to wear your emergency shut-off switch. Alabama law requires that all vessels less than 24 feet **and** over 50 horsepower with an open cockpit design must have an emergency shut-off switch. All personal watercraft (Sea Doo, Wave Runner, etc.) not equipped with the self-circling feature must also have an emergency shut-off switch. The cut-off switch must be a lanyard type and be attached to the operator of the vessel in such a way that if the operator is removed or thrown from the operating station, it will not slip off him or her, but instead will pull away from the shut-off switch and "kill" the motor.

If you are thrown from a moving boat and are wearing your cut-off switch, your

chances of survival are good. The boat will glide to a stop, allowing you the opportunity to swim to it. If you are also wearing a life jacket, your chances of survival dramatically increase.

If you are not wearing the kill switch and fall out of a moving boat, do not swim towards the boat. Get away from it to avoid injury. The young man in the story decided that since he could not get out of the boat's circle without being hit, he would try to get close enough to the boat so he could jump in it (from the water) and turn it off. After considering the physical impossibility of jumping from water 50 feet deep into a moving boat, he later admitted that he had panicked and had not thought things through.

Summary

Safety laws are in place to do just that . . . keep people safe. Having a fire extinguisher, wearing a life jacket, wearing the emergency cut-off switch – these are designed to help the boater deal with the unexpected. Wearing the cut-off switch could save your life and the lives of other boaters around you. **DA**