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PROUDLY SERVING CANYON LAKE, SMITHSON VALLEY, STARTZVILLE, SATTLER, HANCOCK, SPRING BRANCH, BULVERDE AND SURROUNDING COMMUNITIES

75¢

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CANYON LAKE, TEXAS

EVENTS CALENDAR

• June 2 - The Pilot Club of Canyon Lake is sponsoring the Tye Preston Memorial Library's summer reading program. The program's theme this year is "Color My World" and has two sessions every Wednesday. The early session, for ages 3 through first grade, is from 10-11:30 a.m., and the later session is from second to fifth graders.

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SPORTS

Fly fisherman will never know if Guadalupe catch was a record

Jeff Schmitt of Austin fly-fishes the Guadalupe River most every weekend from January through mid-May. He keeps his trailer at Rio Raft at the fourth crossing and planned to make the weekend before Memorial Day his last weekend of fishing on the Guadalupe River for the season.

Saturday, May 22, seemed to Jeff to be a good fishing day. He didn't realize just how good. "I could tell right away this was going to be a good fish," said Jeff. "I could feel power in the head shakes, although the fish really wasn't moving anywhere. Then, it realized that it was hooked and my flyline began to head downstream. My big fish instincts told me that what I needed to do was follow that fish as fast as I could and keep as much line on the reel as possible."

Landing the fish turned out to be a several hour ordeal that found him more than a half mile from where he started. The striped bass was so large that a crowd of tubers gathered to cheer Jeff and take a picture of the fish. However, being unprepared for such a large catch, he embarked on a several hour odyssey to retrieve his kayak and return to Rio Raft, all the while trying to keep the fish alive. That proved to be a diffi-

cult task with a host of onlookers wanting to see it.

"At this point, I still did not fully appreciate what I had caught. I knew it was a fish of a lifetime for me. However, we all know there are some big striper in the Guadalupe after it floods and I knew that the current state records were substantially bigger than my estimate of this fish. By now, we had measured it at 40 inches long, 25" inches in girth and had estimated it from charts and formulas at around 30 pounds (31.25 pounds by the standard formula)."

He could not locate a scale capable of handling his fish and finally, unable to keep it alive any longer, made a decision to filet it for freezing. Jeff realized it was a "once in a lifetime fish" and was content with his day's accomplishment. The next day, Sunday, he vowed not to fish, rest up and enjoy the area. But a fisherman friend, Scott Graham, happened by and Jeff told him about the previous day.

"By now I begin to have a sinking feeling and second thoughts about what I have done," Jeff related. "I tell Scott I landed what I estimate to be a 30 pound striper on my flyrod and he tells me that the state record for striper on a fly rod is



COURTESY PHOTO

Jeff Schmitt of Austin with striper caught May 22.

only 22 pounds. I didn't even realize the State of Texas kept flyrod records, and now Scott is telling me I probably shattered the record."

"On Monday I called Texas Parks and Wildlife and talked with Steve Magnolia, who confirmed that a certified weight would be necessary to secure an official state record for the catch. My sense of having

missed a once in a lifetime opportunity was only compounded when I was later told that the International Game Fishing Association record for striper on 4X tippet is only about 32 pounds."

"While I'm doing my best to revel in the 'thrill of victory', there's a part of me that will always know the 'agony of defeat.'"