

Clifton Tyler's Club...

# The oldest goose hunting club in Eagle Lake

Preparing for waterfowl hunting season each year goes far beyond leasing land and hiring guides for Clifton Tyler. "One of the most often asked questions is why hunters can't hunt the natural ponds that form on the prairie," Tyler commented.

The answer may surprise you... "Because there aren't any," he said. They hamper farming operations, so in working land farmers cut drainage slopes so the natural prairie formations will not hold water.

Each year, Tyler and his crew rework those natural pond areas so they will hold water, at least for the season. Once drainage lines are closed, hunting operations depend on rain to fill them. If not, Tyler said he would even go to the expense of having water pumped in. All in all, 20 to 30 ponds are created each year.

Even after the ponds are covered with birds, hunters aren't allowed to stalk their prey at the water's edge. Tyler stated the ponds are for attracting the birds into certain field areas and to hold them there. Without water, the birds would fly on to other areas.

Tyler and his guides know where that water is and put hunters into an area a field or two away. This placement enhances the morning's hunt and explains the reason hunters need to be in the fields well before shooting time.

They want to make sure all is ready when the birds come off the water.

Clifton has a long history of working with visiting hunting groups and has been one of the top duck and goose guides in this area for more than 20 years.

He has put that experience into his own duck and goose hunting club known as the Clifton Tyler Goose Hunting Club. It has thousands of acres of top rice land scattered across the Eagle Lake and Garwood prairies.

The rice prairies of Eagle Lake and Garwood are the winter home for the largest concentration of wild geese in the world.

"Run and Shoot" provides some of the best hunts of the year. All hunters enjoyed the action very much.

"I was surprised by the number of successful decoying hunts. It had always been thought that by Feb. geese are too smart to decoy. This simply is not correct," Tyler said. "With proper conditions, we have enjoyed some outstanding decoying shoots. I believe that the main factor is a lack of hunting pressure during that time of the year. The geese are calm and inclined to maintain their anticipated flight patterns."

The Tyler Hunting Club will again offer the "Run and Shoot" which is for snow geese only. This will take place during late Jan. and Feb. when there's not much pres-

sure in the fields, allowing the hunters and guides greater mobility. It is also meant to be a fun time for everyone involved.

The price is \$75 per man which will allow those thinking about hunting geese, but not sure if that's what they would like to do, to take part in the experience without incurring a large expense.

Tyler's Club can accommodate up to 60 hunters with a four-per-party minimum.

A guide will be provided for each hunt from legal shooting time until noon only. Decoys, white spreads and parkas are furnished. Every guide has his own trained retrievers. Tyler, who has lived in this area all of his life, has experi-

enced guides available for the hunter.

For reservations, you may contact Ida or Clifton Tyler at 979-234-3346 or 979-732-6502 (Columbus); or write to 1139 Fannin, Columbus, Texas 78934. Or you may visit their web site at <http://www.intertex.net/users/ida>.

## Sportsman's Restaurant still offering 'Best Food in Texas'

The sign at Sportsman's Restaurant on Boothe Drive in Eagle Lake reads "The Best Food in Texas". Owners Janie and Doug Schwemm offer some of the finest food available in the area.

The Schwemms and their staff work very hard to live up to their motto — "Dedication to Excellence".

"The Best Food in Texas" is not just a slogan to be taken lightly. Sportsman's has received statewide recognition in such publications as Best Hometown Restaurants in Texas, Best Country Cafes in Texas, the Ronald McDonald Cookbook, Day Tours of Houston and the front page of the Houston Chronicle's Friday Restaurant Review.

The restaurant also has been featured in the Houston Chro-

nicle's Sunday magazine "Texas" as well as on KTRK-Channel 13's "Good Morning Houston," highlighting such dishes as smoked goose, roasted duck, seafood crepes, seafood gumbo and New Orleans Bourbon pecan pie.

The staff are past recipients of the prestigious Epicurean Award in Sealy. Sportsman's topped all the restaurants in a 50-mile radius.

Sportsman's offers a full-service menu for breakfast, lunch and dinner (except on Sunday when they close at 2 p.m.)

Breakfast items range from their Magnum plate to homemade biscuits and gravy. Lunch includes a full menu plus a plate lunch special. Dinner again has a full menu ranging from appetizers to hearty steak meals and lite selections for those watching their waistslines.

There's usually something off-the-menu offered as a nightly special.

Nightly specials vary from Coconut or Louisiana Shrimp to specially prepared steaks and baked or fried Flounder. Be sure to check the "Specials Board" just inside the entrance. You never know what Janie and Doug will be offering for their customers' enjoyment.

### LODGE

New this year is the Sportsman's Hunting Lodge. The only place to be, says Schwemm. Call Doug or Janie for information about accommodations.

For more information about the restaurant, catering or the Lodge, call 979-234-3071 or write 201 Boothe Drive, Eagle Lake, Texas 77434.



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