

'Outdoors Woman' offers bow program Sept. 22-24

The Becoming an Outdoors-Woman Program is designed to provide women a chance to learn about the outdoors and outdoor recreation in a friendly, non-threatening environment. During the three-day workshop at Rock Springs 4-H Center, volunteer instructors teach participants a variety of skills including fishing, shotgunning, orienteering, rifle marksmanship, botany, dog handling, archery, and more.

Kansas held its first BOW program in 1994, and this September 22-24 will mark the 13th annual BOW workshop. More information on BOW, as well as the brochure and registration form for the 2006 workshop, are available at www.kdwp.state.ks.us, or calling the department's Pratt office at 620-672-5911.

More than 80 women enrolled in the program last year to learn basic outdoor skills in a comfortable, fun, and challenging atmosphere. Once again the Department was grateful to have the best corps of outdoor skills educators in the state as partners in the program. Many of our volunteer instructors have been with us since the beginning.

Studies have shown that many women do not participate in outdoor recreation because they have not had an opportunity to learn the outdoor skills that make outdoor activities enjoyable.

The BOW program has shown that when that opportunity is offered, many women take advantage of it with enthusiasm. Women who participate in this program learn the outdoor skills that allow them to fully enjoy the outdoor environment, while building self-confidence.

What is a BOW Workshop Like?

The workshops span a weekend, beginning at noon on Friday. The weekend is divided into four blocks of instruction, about three hours each.

During each instructional period, there will be 6-10 courses offered. The participant registers for one choice in each time period. In each session, there will be choices that focus on each of three areas: shooting and hunting, fishing, and non-harvest activities. These might include canoeing, camping, or orienteering. The teaching is focused on the needs of adult learners, with the classes being taught in a very "hands-on" way.

The Becoming an Outdoors-Woman workshops is held at the Rock Springs 4-H Camp near Junction City. The atmosphere is "outdoorsy" but comfortable. Participants stay in primitive cabins with several bunks to a room. A large bathroom and shower facility is located adjacent to the cabins. Meals are provided and cooked by the Rock Springs staff. The focus of the weekend is learning in a comfortable atmosphere.

The instructors and staff are patient and supportive. The participants share in the success of each group member. This is a non-competitive situation where each individual can learn at her own pace.

The evening activities are filled with fun and camaraderie. There are mini-workshops, star gazing and a campfire. The emphasis is on the enjoyment that goes with the social side of outdoor activities.

Program gets youth involved

Fishing clinics are hosted by department employees at state fishing lakes, parks, and city lakes and ponds. Most are geared toward younger children and others who may not have much experience with fishing techniques and tactics. They are held throughout the spring and summer months and occasionally in the fall.

Content covered in a clinic varies by presenters, but all have fishing as a central theme. Fish identification, management, casting demonstrations, equipment, water safety, and even fish cooking are a few areas covered. Plenty of time is devoted to baiting hooks and catching fish, too. The primary species caught during fishing

clinics include bluegill, green sunfish, channel catfish, and large-mouth bass.

Participants don't even need their own equipment. Rods, reels, and other necessary fishing equipment will be provided for use at the fishing clinics.

Fishing clinics serve to educate and entertain thousands of Kansas youngsters each year. Information and experience gained during these clinics remain with children forever. Those involved learn to appreciate the joys fishing can offer and the rewards of a fine day on the water.


For more information on fishing clinics in your area, contact the nearest office of the KDWP or the Pratt Operations Office at (620) 672-5911.



Using sassy shad as bait, Shae Lynn Gibson, Norton, caught her 6 ounce crappie on May 21.



Norton's Russell Gibson used sassy shad to reel in his 3 pound, 6 ounce, 18 inch largemouth bass on May 21.



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