Newspapers by ancestry
https://www.newspapers.com/image/98182163/

Detroit Free Press (Detroit, Michigan) · Sun, Jul 21, 1974 · Page 72
Downloaded on Oct 30, 2026

Huge New Campground To Have 2,500 Sites

BY TOM OPRE
Free Press Outdoor Writer

FENTON—What proposes to eventually be the biggest country club campground in Michigan — perhaps in the nation—is being built off US-23 expressway just south of this small community.

Less than 50 miles from Detroit (20 from Ann Arbor, 20 from Flint, 40 from Lansing) Outdoor Resorts of America Inc., a Nashville (Tenn.) outfit, is building a 2,500-site campground spread over more than 600 rolling acres, called Tyrone Hills.

A carpet of huge oak and shagbark hickory covers the land as it drops down to the south shore of Hoisington Lake in northern Livingston County. Outdoor Resorts of America (ORA) already has state dredging permits to "restore" the lake's shoreline, rebuilding small canals and lagoons that will serve as canoe and sailboat launching areas alongside a big clubhouse.

"We're preserving large marsh areas both east and west of the marina, beach and clubhouse area, though," explained manager Ed Bowen, "and we're creating an entire system of nature trails, including boardwalks out onto the marsh." Nature trails will eventually total five miles.

Attached to all these will be a complete nature center, staffed by a full-time naturalist.

SOME OF THE OTHER FEATURES of this ORA project: Eight (count 'em) swimming pools, one indoors for winter use; 13 tennis courts, two indoors; two volleyball courts, three handball courts, a health club, two saunas, a baseball diamond, miniature golf, executive par-3 golf, a full-sized 18-hole golf course (which they already own and operate), riding stables, 20 modern bathhouses (heated and air conditioned), and two sand beaches.

Add to that a complete shopping center area, six snack bars and a restaurant and cocktail lounge.

On top of it all, visitors will be only campers — making it merit the country club title.

"Our approach," explained Bowen, "is to let the camper Buy his own lot, one he holds free title to." Rentals will be available, sure, during most of the development, and lot owners can rent out their lot, if unused, afterwards on a 50-50 fee split basis with ORA.

"We envision, for instance, some of our Florida lot owners getting together to switch with Michigan owners for their vacations," Bowen added.

Each lot has a paved RV pad with full hookups (everything except electricity is included in the $300 annual dues) and all the roads will be paved. Two separate sewage treatment plants will be installed "to give us the best treatment known to man," Bowen said. "You'll be able to drink that effluent, if you want to."

THE ENTIRE OPERATION will be completed in three sections, each carefully designed in the "cluster" approach by Johnson, Johnson and Roy, well-known Ann Arbor land development consultants.

"The thick vegetational shield now present will be maintained between campsites," Bowen said, "and occupation rules will be strict to forego anything undesirable." Township laws demand that camping units be removed from lots for certain periods of each year, ending the chance of anyone moving in a mobile home.

ORA has vowed that the entire outdoor recreation program will be geared toward quiet sports with the main emphasis in boating, for instance, on canoes and sailboats. A special canoe launch will be built on Ore Creek at the edge of the campground, allowing five full miles of canoeing back to the clubhouse area.

They're reportedly pressing the state for a speed limit on boats in Hoisington Lake, too, a 150-acre lake shared mostly by ORA and two other owners (one being the Flint YWCA).

"I'd like to see people be able to use slow pontoon boats for cruises," Bowen said, "but water skiers won't do."

Wintertime camping and recreation will get a real boost, too, if plans to develop a new ski hill are completed. Bowen says ORA is looking for a developer to operate a site next door where an additional 80 feet added to the hill would give it southeast Michigan's largest vertical drop for ski runs.

"Of course, we'd have all the other sports like ice fishing, skating, cross-country skiing and sledding," he said. No accomodations have been devised for snowmobiles, although Bowen is not against them.

"They must be carefully controlled so as not to disturb other recreationists," he explained.

SO HOW CAN you be sure all these grand plans will come to pass?

ORA is new to Michigan, to be sure, but its four Florida operations have become showplaces of the camping world. This scribe has visited two — Pierce, and Long Key, halfway down the Florida Keys — and both are among the most luxurious, well-planned and properly managed campgrounds we've seen.

The ORA folks, Bowen included, often say their Gatlinburg (Tenn.) campground is their personal favorite.

They have another new one in the Orlando area, too, about five miles from Walt Disney World, Here they offer a $99 monthly "get acquainted" rental. And ORA maintains a campers' information service for northerners heading to Florida (call toll free 800-251-8490).

They even have a money-back guarantee for overnight campers. If you're not satisfied with the ORA campground you stayed in, your money will be refunded.

Buying your own campsite in these spots isn't cheap, though, 'cause country club living doesn't come on a shoestring. Tyrone Hills lots are selling for $8,000 to $10,000 presently.

Bowen figures they'll increase. "One former Detroit area radio personality recently sold his Nettles Island lot and trailer for $25,000," he said.

But ORA, judging by past performance, does its developments the right way. There's no reason to think Tyrone Hills will be any different.

And when done, Michigan will own the system's largest, most ambitious camper layout.



Tom Opre

Chasing (Futilely) The Atlantic Salmon

BOYNE CITY

To a great many fishermen around the world, seeking the lordly Atlantic salmon is something akin to the quest for the Holy Grail.

You only need catch one to become initiated. No true angler can be indifferent after that. And the more you're lucky enough to try for them, the more your respect grows for Atlantics as the pinnacle of freshwater environment fishing.

I knew. And knowing, I wanted others to know and understand.

Warren Shapeton is the kind of guy I knew would appreciate Atlantics. As the DNR's bureau chief for field operations, **he's a** tenacious fighter, uncompromising in defense of "his" people and demanding of perfection, traits he carries over into his sport.

Shap, as he's known, is a truly expert fly fisherman. Even if he wasn't, that battered felt fedora, implanted with countless flies and streamers around the sheepskin hatband and stained a mottled gray from years of sweat and river water, marks him as an angler to be reckoned with. I've never seen one quite like it.

He was prepared to respect those fish. An old, expensive bamboo fly rod was his choice as we assembled our tackle streamside.

"Think this is good enough for 'em?" he smiled with that tight line of mouth that turns down or up only slightly to indicate a frown or a grin. I only wished my tackle were half as worthy.

Atlantics a Common Language

As we waded toward opposite sides of the long pool amid the Boyne's tumbling current, I recalled my initiation into the world of Atlantic salmon. A gilly named Buchanan patiently steered his errant young American client through a maze of mistakes to finally hook and land a 10-pounder, freshly silvered from the sea. Not a big Atlantic, but respectable.

The memory of that rare golden autumn afternoon along Scotland's River Ann will never dim with time.

Somehow you want to make a newcomer understand that common feeling, that identical thread, if you will, that runs from angler to angler, no matter on what continent he fishes or what famous river he wades, be it the Vosa, George or Spey; be he an American, Canadian, Scot, Finn, Norwegian, or from England or Iceland, the language of Atlantic salmon fishermen is understandable anywhere.

But only to them. One gains admittance to that select fraternity by only one method — catching an Atlantic. No one can explain, but suddenly the angler understands — he no longer questions.

Shap's casting was deft and graceful, the line sweeping out upstream in tight curls to let the streamer sink into the brest of the current. You could see the salmon lying there. They would fin quietly, then roll out into the fast water and back again, as if on a string.

Countless times our small streamers slid by their very noses. They did not react. Frequent changes of streamers worked wonders on other species, though.

Splake, Then a Bullhead

Shap's first catch was a 16-inch splake, believe it or not, a lake trout-brook trout hybrid that has no business being up a stream in mid-summer. Steve Swan, the Gaylord district DNR fisheries biologist, tagged a nice 2½-pound brown trout just below us shortly after that.

Still the salmon ignored us. An hour passed; then another.

I managed to hook and release several small browns. Swan took a sunfish. Then came the final humiliation. A bullhead latched onto my offering, a brown bullhead with barbels wig-

Campers Rally at Jellystone

GRAYLING — The newly-formed Michigan Active Campers (MAC) are completing their second rally here at the Yogi Bear Jellystone Campgrounds and have upcoming rallies scheduled for the remainder of the summer and fall.

The non-profit group welcomes family memberships ($10 annually) and sends out a newsletter quarterly, provides discount coupons for RV dealers and campgrounds and conducts seminars on RV service and repair and outdoor cooking, hiking and recreation.

Future rallies will be Aug. 23-25 at Muskegon River Campground, Evart; Sept. 20-22 at Wandering Wheels, Munising, and Oct. 18-20 at Stockbridge KOA, Stockbridge.

Interested campers are invited to contact MAC at 19045 Farmington Rd., Livonia, Mich. 48152.

Town Forum Session Set At Ironwood

IRONWOOD — Michigan's Natural Resources Commission will hold its third "town forum" session here Thursday, beginning at 8 p.m. in the Gogebic Community College auditorium.

"We have no prepared agenda," said NRC chairman Hilary Snell, "but rather we sit to listen to public opinion, complaint or suggestions." All local residents are invited.

Additional forums will be held in the Bay City and Detroit areas later this summer.

ABC Sports Special
U.S. WOMEN'S OPEN GOLF

Sunday
abc 4:30PM

Copyright © 2026 Newspapers.com. All Rights Reserved.