

Back in the early sixties, there was no city ordinance against people raising chickens in their backyard. My mom and dad were country folks by birth so raising the yard birds was something that just came naturally.

We had a chicken coop/lean-to standing proudly down on the lower part of our back yard, right behind our garden. Now, just so you understand, we did not raise our feathered fowls to enjoy the eggs they would lay. We raised them to enjoy them for our suppers occasionally. Yes, we raised them for consumption.

We would buy the birds before we were able to make the distinction if they were male or female. Of course my mama wanted hens to prepare for our meals. Why, I don't know. I do remember one time one

of the hens "grew into a rooster" and he was the meanest male bird I had ever come across. Every time we walked out the back door, he would flare his wings and attack. Needless to say, I never went out the back door.

My job was to feed the chickens every day late in the afternoon. As I said, I would not go out the door, so I began to open the screen just enough to get my hand through and throw the dried corn as far as I could as I was hindered by the door.

My mother was the "executioner". She would let her flock grow until it numbered fifteen or twenty and each one grew to a weight of two or three pounds and then it was time to fill our freezer with this tasty meal.

She would pull on her rubber boots, yellow latex gloves and with hatchet in hand head down to the chicken coop for the slaying.

First she would try to rid them of their heads just like my grandmother used to do – by wringing off their little heads. She tried that a few times and as soon as she flung the poor twisted neck chicken on the ground, it would cackle a few times and run off.

So, she recruited help in the fashion of my older cousin. Now, this really gets productive. They would lay the fated chicken on a big flat board. One held the head and one held the two feet. The one hanging onto the head was the head cut-off person. I am sure that was so that the feet holder would not miss the neck of the chicken and take a finger or two off the head holder. One chop of that little hatchet and the chicken would be thrown into the yard. Have you ever heard the saying "running around like a chicken with its head cut off", well, I have seen the scenario. I tell you, it's not a pretty sight. The chicken would finally run out of speed and fall onto the ground.

The executed chickens would be put into a big wash tub, feathers plucked, innards removed, and washed clean and ready to prepare. The wind would blow feathers for several days all over our yard as well as our neighbor's yards. Sometimes it looked like a light snowfall.

Every time I pass a loaded chicken truck headed to a chicken plant, I want to slip in and unlock the gates holding them captive and scream "run like a chicken with its head cut off."

Chicken Cordon Bleu Casserole
2 pounds of chicken tenders with 1 cup of flour mixed with ½ cup seasoned bread crumbs
¼ cup of oil
1 small bottle of Italian dressing
1 pound of sliced smoked ham, thinly sliced
1 pound of Swiss cheese, sliced
2 cans mushroom and

Outdoor Truths

By Gary Miller

I just took another fishing trip with my favorite striper guide and friend, Mike Allen. There were four of us who met at the dock early that morning. It was an overcast and windy day with periods of light rain. Regardless of the not-so-favorable conditions, we started off with three quick catches – one a nineteen pounder. This was going to be a good day. We'll, yes and no. Despite our early fortune, our upward success immediately turned south.

For the next couple of hours, we would sporadically catch a stray but we never landed on a spot that we would call very productive. Mike would locate the stripers but they were just not interested in eating at that particular time.

Our only hope was to wait or to change plans. Waiting meant we would, well, wait; wait until they decide to bite. Changing plans meant we would try for another species of fish. Mike knew where some big catfish hid and he thought we might be able to entice them to some fresh bait. He was right.

So, for the rest of our time we caught some nice, big catfish and had a great time doing it. We didn't get all that we came for but we got plenty that we didn't. Both fish fit nicely in a freezer. If we had chosen to continue striper fishing there is a good chance we would have left that morning without ever having the success we had planned for. There is a nearly a one hundred percent chance we would have left without having caught any catfish. We simply

chicken soup
Marinate chicken tenders in Italian dressing for several hours or overnight. Pour off dressing and discard. Dredge chicken in flour and bread crumbs and brown in oil.

Remove chicken from oil and place in a 13 x 9 sprayed casserole dish. Lay cut up ham and cheese on top of chicken and pour soup over the top. Bake in a 350* oven for about 40 minutes until bubbly.

* Peggy Sims is a life-long resident of Attala County and columnist.

took what was given us.

I find that principle to be true in many areas of my life. My expectations are one thing; reality, another. My hopes of a certain prize are replaced with another prize I never saw coming. The ones I had hoped to reach, I didn't, but I reached those I never imagined. Most of the time, these unexpected successes are a result of me conceding to my present conditions instead of stubbornly fighting them. I think it's God way of putting me where he wants me at that moment.

Are you getting discouraged

by the lack of success you are having in your present pursuit? Are you stubbornly hanging on to a plan just because it was your good and original one? Have you discovered another pool of potential but have been unwilling to move because it's not what or who you came for?

You can do two things. You can wait and perhaps success will eventually come, or you can move to an area where success comes easy. Sometimes that move may only be temporary but for that moment it will be the difference between going home empty-handed or going home with an unexpected blessing that may not only be for you, but for others as well..

gary@outdoortruths.org

Calendar of Events

DEADLINE:
4 P.M., FRIDAY

ANNIVERSARY SET AT NEW BEGINNING

New Beginning Church in Durant will celebrate its 5th Year Anniversary on Sunday, April 2 at 3 p.m. All performance groups are welcome. Refreshments will be served.

3-23,30

YOUTH REVIVAL SET AT GALILEE TREADWELL

Galilee Treadwell U.M. Church will hold youth revival services on Thursday, April 13 and Friday, April 14 at 7 p.m.

3-30;4-6

WOMEN'S DAY SET AT SWEET HOME M.B.C.

The women of Sweet Home M.B. Church will celebrate their annual Women's Day Service on Sunday, April 2 at 11 a.m.

3-30

YOUTH CONFERENCE SET AT LIBERTY HILL

Liberty Hill AMEZ Church will host its Annual Youth Conference on Friday, March 31 through Sunday, April 2 at 7 p.m. Friday, 9 a.m. Saturday and 11 a.m. Sunday.

3-30

REVIVAL SET AT TRINITY M.B. CHURCH IN APRIL

On April 12 -14, revival will be held at Trinity M.B. Church in Lexington beginning at 7:00 nightly.

3-30;4-6

ANNIVERSARY SET AT BETHLEHEM M.B.C.

Bethlehem M.B. Church in Tchula will hold its 147th church anniversary on Sunday, April 1 at 1 p.m. Dinner will be served after service.

3-30

PASTOR ANNIVERSARY SET AT SHILOH M.B.C.

Shiloh M.B. Church in Lexington will have its pastor's 11th year anniversary on Sunday, April 2 at 11:15 a.m.

3-30

MEMBER



MISSISSIPPI PRESS ASSOCIATION

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Attending Candidates should bring several copies of their resume!
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