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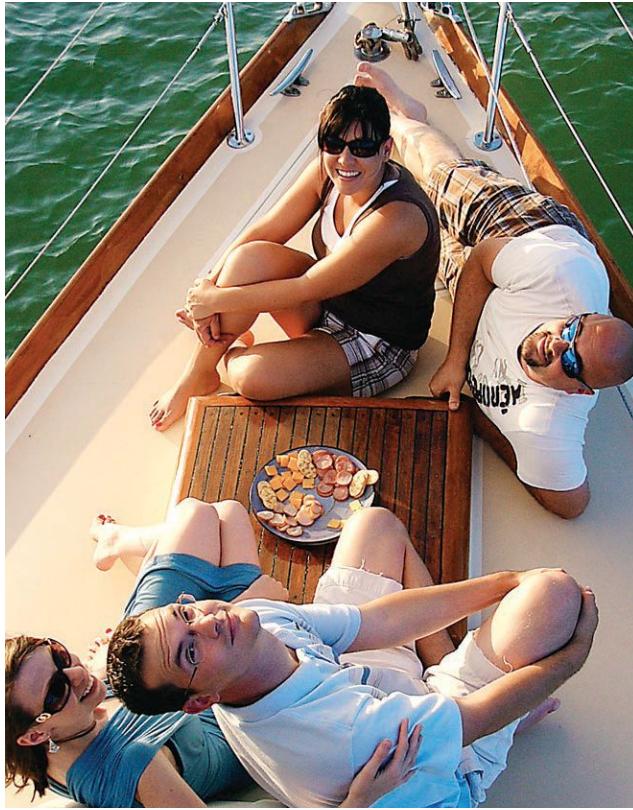
DAY AT THE LAKE

Area lakes offer variety of fun on
and around the water



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Couples enjoy a cruise on *Black Watch*, a chartered sailing boat on Lake Grapevine. Photo by Alex Eller.

On the water

Area lakes offer visitors, residents variety of fun.

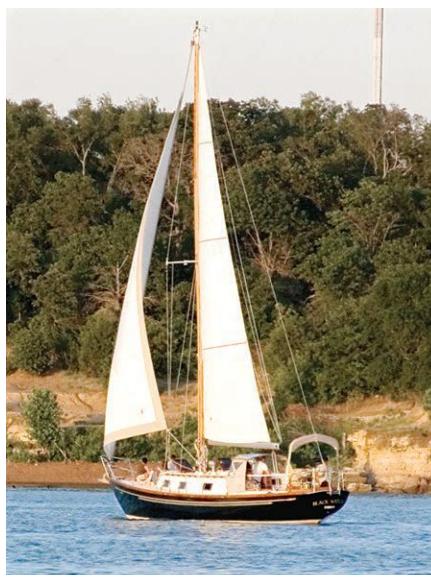
By Patsy Miller

North Texas may be home to cowboys and prairie, but a lot of us like to exchange our boots for topsiders or waders, drop a fishing line or float along with the lake breeze.

Whether you are a landlubber who ventures to a lake only occasionally or a salty dog whose boat is the lake house – or somewhere in between – you can find plenty of waterfront entertainment within a short driving distance. That easy access makes local lakes appealing, say those who live to sail and those who make their living selling lakeside property.

"Just 25 minutes from your Fort Worth home, you can be in a different universe," said Michael Lattimore, commodore of the Fort Worth Boat Club on Eagle Mountain Lake. "Boaters cross all economic lines. We don't discuss what we earn, but the lake level."

Lakes are social places, said Steve Stinson, who is on Lake Grapevine most of the year.



Black Watch, a 38-foot sailing sloop, offers a variety of chartered cruises. Photo by Alex Eller.

But you don't have to own a boat. As board chairman of the Grapevine Convention and Visitors Bureau, he noted that there are many lake activities – boat rentals, camp grounds, restaurants, weekly fireworks displays and deck parties – to entice those who might visit only occasionally.

Whether you just want to dip your toes into lakeside living or jump in all the way, here is a small sampling of life on the water.

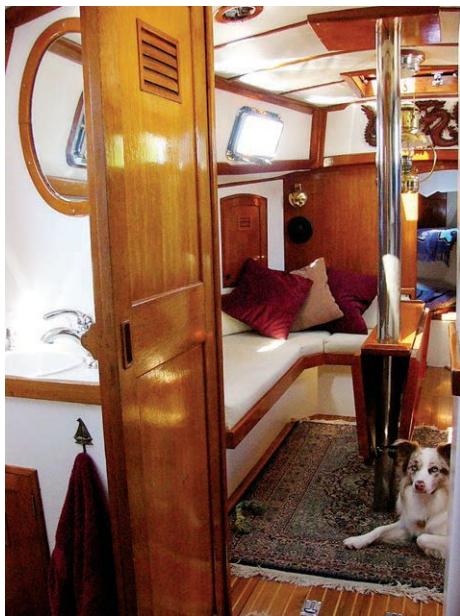
For water babies only

■ **Where to get a boat.** For the occasional boater, you can test the water by renting. Just for Fun at Silver Lake Marina at Lake Grapevine offers pontoons, ski boats, jet skis and party boat rentals.

Tranquil Sails and Black Watch offer sunset dinner cruises and charter parties where you sit back and enjoy the lake and leave the

Darwin German, left, Tari Newton and Kyle Newton enjoy the German's entertainment area on Eagle Mountain Lake. On dock, Brooke Newton with German family dog Buddy and Blake Newton on watercraft. Photo by Steve Edmonds.





Crew dog Hatch in *Black Watch* cabin. Photo by Alex Eller.

sailing to them.

The Vineyards Campgrounds and Cabins at Lake Grapevine has kayaks and paddle boats for rent.

Marine Quest operates three marinas at Eagle Mountain Lake (Harbor One, Lake Country and Eagle Mountain) with rental offerings including standup paddle boats, pontoons and speed boats.

Dale Ledbetter, general manager of the three Marine Quest Marinas, has seen an increase in boat purchases, even by occasional visitors.

"Boats are becoming more affordable and it is good family fun. Rather than storing the boat in the driveway and towing it from lake to lake, families are choosing to rent a boat slip. We have valet service, so they call us when they are coming and we will gas up the boat, provide a cooler of ice and have the boat ready for them. We have both wet and dry storage."

Meanwhile, Possum Kingdom Lake has become the meeting spot for families and

friends coming from Fort Worth-Dallas and West Texas. Its popularity has resulted in new boat rentals and outfitters for camping, biking and fishing, said Pam Wheat with the Possum Kingdom Lake Chamber of Commerce.

■ **Where to get experience.** If you want to get some sea legs before plunging into boating, the Arlington Yacht Club and the Fort Worth Boat Club, among other venues, offer both youth and adult boating classes.

Kevin Williams, commodore of the Arlington Yacht Club at Lake Arlington, encourages those fresh from boat classes to crew for awhile. It gives experience and a chance to try out a variety of boats.

■ **Where to stay.** For an additional outdoor living experience, several area lakes have campgrounds, RV sites and cabins such as the Vineyards Campgrounds and Cabins at Lake Grapevine previously mentioned. Meadowmere and Murrell Parks, also at Lake Grapevine, offer camping facilities as do West



Photos above and below courtesy of Tranquil Sails.



Tranquility can accommodate romantic cruises to small intimate weddings on Lake Grapevine.



The Vineyards Campgrounds on Lake Grapevine features furnished cabins along with kayak and paddle boat rental. Photos courtesy of the Vineyards.



Hide-Away Cabins By the Lake offers cabins with views of Possum Kingdom Lake.

Bay Marina, Creek Harbor Camp and Twin Points Marina at Eagle Mountain Lake.

At Possum Kingdom Lake, there are a variety of housing options for the occasional visitor. The lake is surrounded by cliffs; lake views abound, although not all housing options are lake front. There are hotels, bed and breakfasts, cabins and houseboats to rent, campgrounds such as Possum Kingdom State Park and The Inn at The Cliffs and The Harbor's Inn Hotel for a luxurious retreat.

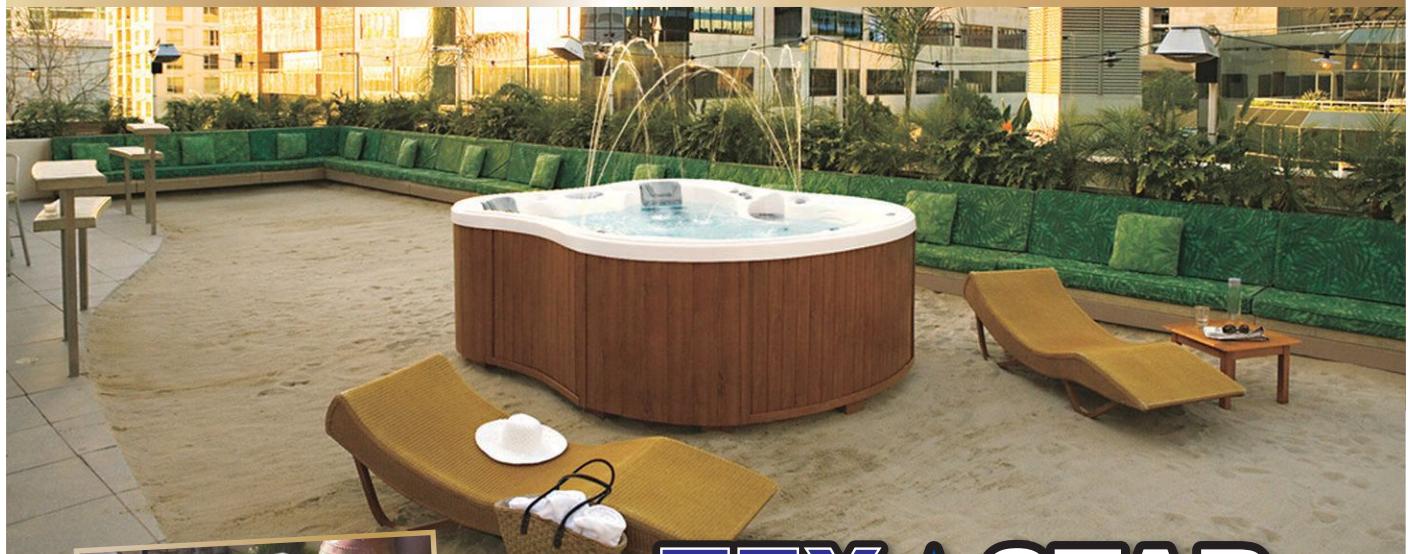
■ **Where to eat.** If your favorite lake experience is enjoying a waterfront view while you eat, area lakes offer several dining and entertainment options. Watch the sunset over Lake Grapevine at The Glass Cactus at the Gaylord Texan Resort. For more casual dining, try Big Daddy's at Scott's Landing Marina and Little Pete's at Twin Coves at Lake Grapevine. Both have bands on the weekend.

There is a variety of dining on Eagle Mountain Lake including The Spot at Harbor One Marina



The Glass Cactus on Lake Grapevine offers dining, dancing and entertainment. Courtesy of the Gaylord Texan.

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Arlington Yacht Club member Jack Hattendorf sails his MC Scow on Lake Arlington with his daughters Aubin, 9, and Ava, 7. Photo by Steve Edmonds.

and Scamp's at Lake Country Marina, also with weekend entertainment.

There are many eateries close to Possum Kingdom Lake such as The Wildcatter Ranch and Resort and The Stuffed Olive, but most are not near the water. The restaurants at The Cliffs and The Harbor, both private developments, are open to the public.

Weekenders

For some Metroplex residents, their weekend home is on the lake. Jack Hattendorf, an Arlington Yacht Club member, is a third-generation sailor with three boats. His 9-year-old and 7-year-old daughters are following in his footsteps. He lives a mile from Lake Arlington, so it isn't necessary to live on the lake.

For Steve Stinson, the Grapevine CVB board chairman, any length of time off finds him and his wife living on their 42-footer on Lake Grapevine. A sign reads "Welcome to our lake house."

"Often several families will drop anchor in a cove and people will go from boat to boat socializing. There are no pretensions, just regular Joes in cutoffs and flip flops," he added.

Ledbetter with Marine Quest notes that many boaters – even the occasional ones – rent boat slips larger than their boat and build 10-foot decks.

"They add patio furniture, microwaves and refrigerators. It's an extension of their boat. Showers

their boats in the races," said Commodore Michael Lattimore.

Eagle Mountain has hosted a number of national championship races and champion sailors. The Fort Worth Boat Club includes a full-service restaurant, pool, tennis courts and boat slips.

Next to surfing, Jim Edenfield, a Fort Worth Boat Club member, finds sailing one of his three boats – and a couple of kayaks – nirvana. It is a passion he shares with his wife, Lynette.

"It's indescribable, the free movement, the energy of the wave and what you are going to do with that energy."

■ The Eagle Mountain Lake Classic Boat Club. The club was formed in 1989 to promote the

restoration and enjoyment of classic and wooden boats. But you don't have to own a boat to join, says Nick Maggio, vice president. The group has adopted Pelican Island and hosts other events. It also participates in a classic car and boat show.

■ The Arlington Yacht Club.

Founded in 1966, the AYC promotes both camaraderie and competition, according to its website. While Lake Arlington doesn't have amenities such as boat rentals and restaurants, the Arlington Yacht Club offers plenty of social opportunities.

"We eat more than we sail," jokes Commodore Kevin Williams.

But there is plenty of sailing



Jim Edenfield and Lynette Edenfield prepare *Wildfire* for a sail on Eagle Mountain Lake from the Fort Worth Boat Club marina. Photo by Steve Edmonds.

and restrooms are close by and we have 24-hour security."

Boat Clubs

For many, a boat club helps them connect with others who love the water.

■ The Fort Worth Boat Club at Eagle Mountain Lake. Established in 1929, the FWBC is one of the oldest yacht clubs in Texas. Its members include novices to those with generations of boating.

"We have members who use our boats to cruise the lake by themselves and others who sail



The Harbor marina on Possum Kingdom Lake. Courtesy of the Harbor.



The Harbor features condominiums, villas and homes on Possum Kingdom Lake. Photos courtesy of the Harbor.

with races most weekends. It draws people from all over the Metroplex.

"We have a mix of experienced and new. What I enjoy about sailing is that it is very cerebral as well as physical. You have to contend with weather and water. It takes years to become proficient," Williams explained.

Lakeside living

It's a fine line between the weekender and full-time lake living. Most of the former try to stretch out their time on a lake as long as possible.

The Harbor gated community at Possum Kingdom Lake, mostly sells its homes, villas and con-

dos to Dallas-Fort Worth residents as second-home getaways. But Larry Anton, manager of sales and marketing, is noticing more buyers are taking early retirement or starting a second career that can be based anywhere.

Anton estimates that 60 percent are boat owners. The Harbor has its own marina, open to

the public, and a concierge service that will obtain rental watercraft for residents.

Stack Bowers, vice president of hospitality for Double Diamond Companies, owner of The Cliffs Resort at Possum Kingdom Lake, sees that development as a second home for those with plans to retire. The golf and boating

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Courtesy of the Harbor.

community offers home lots, condos and villas. Its marina offers a variety of boat rentals.

LuAnn Chapman-Gatts, a Grapevine CVB board member, has lived on Lake Grapevine since 1992. While husband Jason and two sons may get out on the lake more often in the family boat, she loves sitting out on their

large deck and watching the Friday Summer Blast fireworks show held Memorial Day through Labor Day. She notes that Lake Grapevine has become an additional destination for city visitors.

"Lake living is great. You couldn't pry me away."

Lake Worth has been Bob Crow's home since 1950. The

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unique adj \yu'-nēk\: distinctively characteristic

If ever there were a place defined by the word "unique," it is **West 7th**. This vibrant streetscape in the heart of Fort Worth's Cultural District is where you'll discover shops, restaurants and entertainment destinations unlike those at your typical shopping center. Featuring amazing accessories and flirty fashions as individual as you, plus extraordinary cuisine and exotic drinks, West 7th is far from the norm, but just a stone's throw away.



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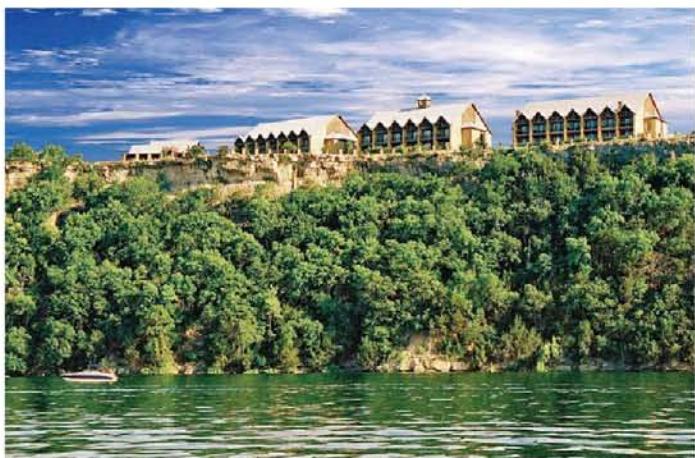
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The Cliffs hotel offers a weekend getaway on Possum Kingdom Lake.



Right, overlooking Possum Kingdom Lake. Photo by Russell Madden.

former Lake Worth Sailing Club commodore has seen this once-vibrant lake community take a back seat to newer area lakes, but more improvements are planned by the city of Fort Worth. During the week there are fishing tournaments and the sailing club hosts races almost every Sunday.

Crow owns 15 boats of all types.

"Boating is just a fun thing to do. It has given my wife and I the

opportunity to visit at least 10 other lakes on the racing circuit that I probably wouldn't have. You are continually trying to improve your skills."

Patsy Miller is an Arlington-based freelance writer with more than 30 years experience in newspapers, magazines and corporate communications.

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