

Letter: Need help finding stolen fishing equipment

To the community,

Horseshoe Bar Fish and Game Preserve, which is near Forestville, is devastated to announce that thieves broke into our storage area where we house our equipment for the Wounded Warrior Event that is held the first week in October every year. Finding out that someone felt they needed to steal from these veterans is heart breaking. It is like stealing from a church or organization that helps those less fortunate of our community.

This break-in will set us back many years as the amount of equipment they stole exceeds \$25,000 and was not insured. Much of the equipment has the initials HBP written on it. Only the veterans that attended our events or members of Horseshoe Bar Preserve would have equipment with the "HBP" letters printed on it. Some of the rods were made by Bill Carnazzo and had his name printed on the rods. Many of the waders had the size printed in black felt pen. If you see this equipment being sold, do not say anything or accuse anyone. Please contact us immediately at 916.205.6073 or the sheriff's department and let them know you believe it may have been equipment stolen from Horseshoe Bar Preserve in Placer County Sheriff's Office report No. 15-11343.

It has taken years to gather up all the equipment we need for the event. Volunteers have put in hundreds of hours raising funds and helping to acquire the equipment that is needed to hold the event. We also provide the veterans with the same equipment when the event is over. Each veteran is given a complete fly fishing outfit with all the flies and equipment needed to continue fly fishing including boots, waders, fly rod and reel, plus the vest/chest packs that have all the

supplies needed to fly fish. The fly boxes have over 100 flies in them to allow the veteran to fish anywhere in the country.

Over the eight years that this event has been held we have helped rehabilitate seriously wounded veterans by teaching them how to fly fish while staying in our campground along the river for four to five days. Literally all of the veterans who have attended our event have said that learning how to fly fish has changed their lives and their families' lives in so many ways. As one of the vet's wives said to me this year, "My husband looks forward to being able to go fly fishing every week, and when he returns he is a different person. You can see it in how he seems content and truly excited to tell me how he did and how he was able to forget about his injuries. Your program has changes our entire families' lives for the better."

Participating and volunteering in our event is incredibly humbling as you are involved in helping these veterans deal with a wide variety of physical and mental injuries. It is one thing to hear about their injuries and another to actually live with the vets for five days. You get a firsthand view of seeing what they go through on a daily basis. You also are humbled by their attitude and desire to be treated as if they had not been injured. Many of these vets refuse to use handicap placards in their cars because they do not view themselves as being handicapped, even though they are missing limbs and suffering serious nerve and brain injuries.

If you would like to help us replenish the equipment that was stolen, please contact us at hbp@surewest.net , 916.205.6073 or go to our **website** where you can make a donation. The 501-3C number is 27-4671121.

Thomas G.M. Bartos, president and founder Horseshoe Bar Fish and Game Preserve