

**JIM CHEADLE**  
SCALES AND TAILS



## Rule change for ATVs, UTVs begins July 1

For some reason this past year or so, there has been an increase in off-road deaths associated with all-terrain vehicles. These are great vehicles, which have become an invaluable tool not only for outdoor folks but in agriculture use also.

On July 1, new rules will take effect for ATVs and utility terrain vehicles being used on public lands and trails. I'm sorry to say once again, because of a few folks who don't play nice, we all have to adapt. Personally, I feel it's a good change for a multitude of reasons.

Here are the new regulations:

- License plate requirements will go into effect July 1 (you will make your own.) All UTVs and ATVs required to register for public use shall have a plate attached to the rear of the vehicle. The plate must be made or purchased by the owner, and will not be provided by the Department of Natural Resources.

- The plate shall be a minimum of 4 inches in height and a minimum of 7.5 inches in width. The plate shall be white and shall display, in black letters/numbers, the four-number and two-letter registration ID number for the all-terrain vehicle or utility terrain vehicle issued by the department.

**Get this information for your file as it also covers the rules for hunting pertaining to bows and firearms you may have on board your ATV or UTV.**

The registration ID numbers shall be a minimum of 1.5 inches in height and a minimum of a 3/16 inch stroke (width). The person

required to register the ATV or UTV shall maintain the plate in legible condition.

- In addition to the plate, public use registration decals must be affixed to each side of the vehicle in a place that is forward of the operator and clearly visible. The minimum 4-inch by 7.5-inch license plate area must be white and must only contain the required registration ID characters. Plates may be larger than the minimum size listed, and the area outside the minimum area may contain other graphics or colors. The registration ID numbers are located on the registration decals.

Get this information for your file as it also covers the rules for hunting pertaining to bows and firearms you may have on board your ATV or UTV. For ATV/UTV safety information visit <http://dnr.wi.gov> and search "ATV" or "UTV." Information also is available at the DNR call center, (888) 936-7463.

With the recent warm spell, catfish and small-mouth are cooperating well on all area rivers. Water temps are in the range where dip baits are hot.

On Waubesa, Delavan and Whitewater lakes, bluegill are on their beds and bass are moving in. For the bass, I like tube jigs casted beyond the bed then dragged by, in crawfish colors.

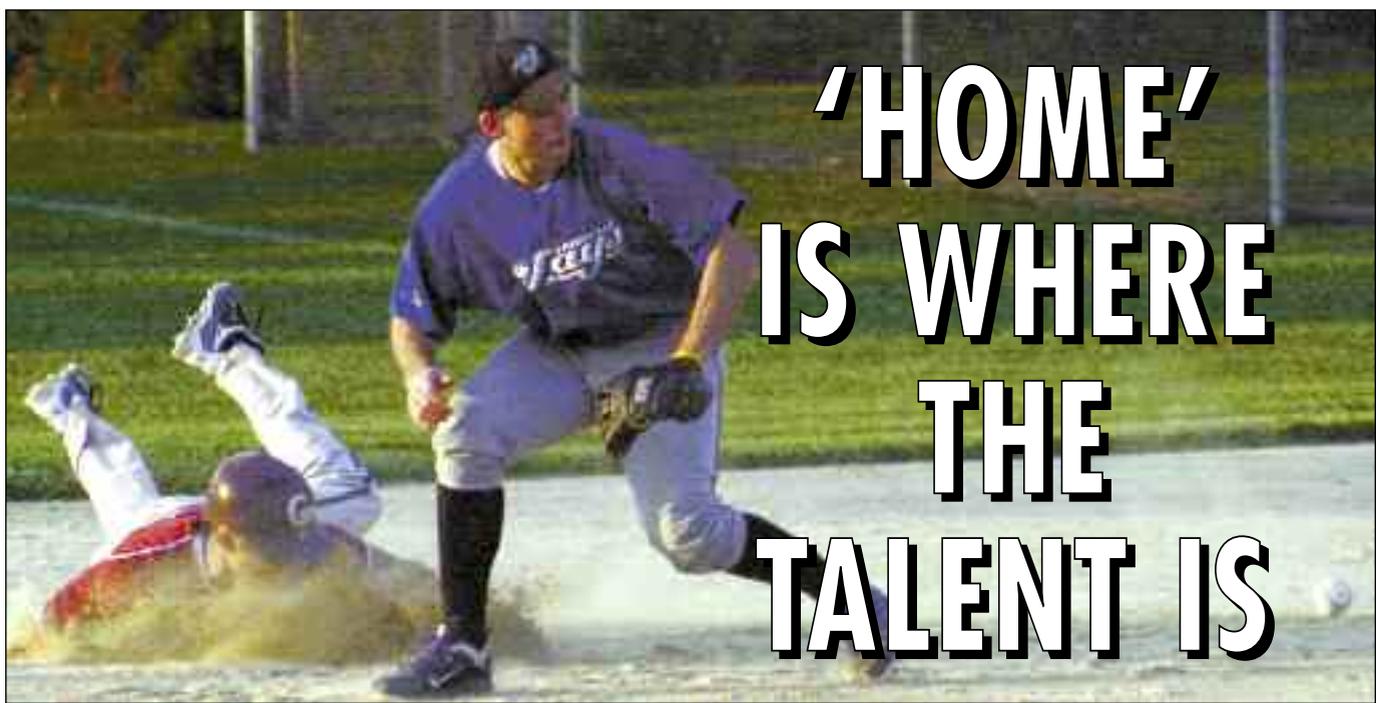
This is some fun fishing, but have some restraint on bag limits.

It's time to try the big lake, where many presentations are taking Coho and Chinooks.

It's also a great time to get some photos at your feeders. I have one with a Baltimore oriole and a rose-breasted grosbeak sharing some apricot jelly.

**The wild goose says: Another reminder — keep alert on the roads for fawns, which aren't yet road wise, and turtles, which are crossing due to egg laying.**

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PHOTOS BY RICK WEST/STAFF

Evansville Jays second baseman John Duerst waits for the ball on a throw that arrives too late from catcher Danny Crans to stop a Cross Plains base runner from stealing second base during a recent game at Leota Park in Evansville. The Jays are one of 44 amateur baseball teams in the Home Talent League of southern Wisconsin.

## Evansville's Jays part of state's largest adult amateur league

BY RICK WEST  
STAFF WRITER

EVANSVILLE — Games during the early days of baseball, after the Civil War, often pitted proud community teams against those from nearby communities. Those games still happen more than 150 years later, thanks to baseball leagues like south-central Wisconsin's Home Talent League, the state's largest adult amateur baseball league.



CARRIVEAU

"What makes (the Home Talent League) unique among other amateur baseball leagues is how locally oriented it is," said Brian Carriveau, author

of "It's Just a Game," a newly released book about the league. "There's actual rules in the league constitution that you have to live within six miles of home plate."

The Home Talent League began in 1929 and has grown to 44 teams.

During the 1960s and 1970s, Evansville was home to one of these community-based teams. Twenty-five years after the team disbanded in 1980, it was resurrected in 2005 and the Evansville Jays now compete in the West Division of the HTL's Southeast Section.

The Jays roster is almost exclusively made up of former Evansville High School stars, but there are a few on the 25-player roster from the nearby communities of Footville and Albany.

"We do our best to reach out to the (Evansville) high school seniors in particular, there's typically one or two high school seniors that are very good players," said Jays General Manager Jon Frey. "I do not actively recruit outside of Evansville because we are a community-supported team. The players we have from outside of Evansville are players that have approached me."

While league rules require players to have completed their high school careers, there is no upper age limit to play in the league.

According to Carriveau, 66-year-old Vern Geishert, baseball coach at Richland Center High School, who pitched in 11 games for the California Angels in 1969, still plays for the HTL team in Richland Center.



FREY

"He doesn't play on a regular basis, but every once in a while he'll pinch hit," Carriveau said. "It's really unique, to see this former Major Leaguer still playing in his 60s."

At the other end of the spectrum are players who just graduated a couple weeks ago.



RASMUSSEN

"It adds to the dynamics of the

team chemistry," Frey said. "But we're all competing on the same team, so it boils down to who's performing on the field and not necessarily age."

One of the Jays veterans is Jeremy Rasmussen, age 27, who has been with the Jays since 2005.

After a year off last summer for Air Force training, Rasmussen was able to win back his position this summer as the Jays' starting center fielder and leadoff hitter.

Rasmussen said the blend of young and experienced players works well in Evansville.

"There's a level of respect (for the older players), from the kids fresh out of high school," Rasmussen said. "They know we know what we're doing and still can compete."

Craig Paton, 22, has been with the Jays for six seasons. Paton also played high school baseball at Evansville and two years at Carthage College. It was just after high school that he joined the Jays.

"At that point it was to get as many reps as I could going into (college) and to get ready for the next step," Paton said. "Now I play because I love the game, it's fun to play and I enjoy it."

"This is a way to get my competitive edge out."

In addition to playing, Paton is one of three players who serve as the team's field coaches, working together to determine the batting lineup and pitching rotation.

"We usually have the same idea and bounce a few things off each other," Paton said. "There haven't been too many big fights, yet, but it's still early (in the season)."

Paton said with players' work schedules, vacations and other commitments, it's tough at times putting the best lineup on the field.

"Some days you're missing your best catcher and other days you're missing your best shortstop or pitcher, so you have to make do with what you've got," Paton said. "Like Jon (Frey) likes



## Next at the 'nest'

Upcoming home games for the Evansville Jays

June 24	Stoughton	1 p.m.
July 1	Lake Mills	7 p.m.
July 4	Utica	5:30 p.m.
July 19	Monroe	7:30 p.m.
	(Youth Baseball Night)	
July 26	Ridgeway	7:30 p.m.
	(Dog Night)	
July 29	McFarland	1 p.m.
	(Swimming and Baseball Day)	
Aug. 5	Orfordville	1 p.m.
	(Appreciation Day)	

Jays home games played at The Jays Nest, upper baseball diamond at Lake Leota Park, Evansville.

[www.evansville.hometalent.org](http://www.evansville.hometalent.org)

to say, you've got to dance with the girls that are at the party."

The Jays play a 30- to 35-game schedule each summer, with their home games on the upper diamond at Evansville's Lake Leota Park, which they have dubbed The Jays Nest (see related graphic).

So, if you want to see young, and not-so-young, baseball players who love to play the game, come to The Jays Nest and see what the Home Talent League is all about.

"These are work-a-day guys who love playing baseball, keeping the dream alive," Carriveau said. "And still being able to play the game at a competitive level."

And it's players not quite ready to make the move to softball.

"It's nothing like slow-pitch softball. It's real baseball with real baseball strategy," Rasmussen said of the HTL. "I'm going to play this as long as I can. I can play slow-pitch when I'm 70 or 80 years old."

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PATON

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— Jeremy Rasmussen, Evansville Jays