


# Perspective

By JAMIE BUCKINGHAM

## Back To Basics



The electric power went off before dawn this morning. We had just crawled out of our sleeping bags at 5 a.m. in the little everglades cabin when the lights blinked out, leaving us in murky darkness.

There are eight of us on this hunting trip. My two sons, both of voting age, are my reason for being here. We had driven down the west side of Lake Okeechobee with Peter Lord, Baptist pastor from Titusville, and his 8-year-old boy. In LaBelle we rendezvoused with my old buddy, Mickey Evans from Indiantown, his 20-year-old son, and Guy Strayhorn, the attorney from Ft. Myers who owns the cabin.

From there it was another long, long drive down towards the Big Cypress area. We unloaded our gear at Guy's small cabin, boarded his swamp buggy and headed out to the deer stands at dusk.

It's been good to close out the year with men — especially my men-

sons. Every father needs, on regular occasion, to leave the crush of civilization and do primitive things with his sons.

But Guy's cabin, even though it is filled with spiders and has a tin roof, is still modern. At least, if you consider indoor plumbing and electricity as the dividing line between primitive and modern.

That's why I was glad when the transformer blew out before dawn this morning. Suddenly we were back to basics. No water for the toilet, no stove to cook breakfast, no hot water for coffee.

So bacon and pancakes were cooked over an open fire in the hammock. Water was hand-pumped from the well. Washing and shaving were accomplished outside in the foggy, pre-dawn darkness. Then we were up on the swamp buggy, sloshing through the swamp to deer stands in the hammocks.

But I don't want to shoot this

morning. There is plenty of fresh meat already to carry home today. So I left my rifle in the cabin, preferring to sit in my oak tree with camera and notepad, listening to the world come alive in one of the few remaining primordial paradises in America.

Every new day in the Everglades is like the dawn of creation. The sun is now up, burning away the early morning fog. The trees behind and above are alive with sound. Birds chirp. Squirrels chatter. A raccoon ambles under my roost. Three magnificent wild turkeys strut across the glade. In the hammock across the slough, a wild boar grunts and snorts. A bull 'gator thunders and a huge flock of mallards rise in unison from the marsh to my right.

I wait, almost expecting Adam to stand, stretch, and motion for Eve.

A new day has begun. God is still alive. And still in control.

Happy New Year!!!