“So what do you think, Mark, a popper or a streamer here?” Samuel Clemens’ statue on the park bench in front of the Cinco Ranch Branch of the Fort Bend County Libraries offered no response, but he still contributed to my fishing enjoyment. At near 8:30 p.m. I was working my fly rod along the banks of Katy’s small Lake Gayle, add the light reflecting off the water to reveal turtle heads surfacing and the occasional fish splashing at the end of my line, and I envisioned a setting out of Mark’s Tom Sawyer. Of course the reflected light was from the LaCenterra shopping center rather than oil lanterns, and this wasn’t the Mississippi River ambling by in front of me. But this setting wasn’t a bad substitute for a country boy living in the city.

Close Proximity to Fishing Holes
A job transfer brought my family to Katy in the summer of ’06. My wife and I agreed on the most important Katy selling points of work proximity, schools, and neighborhoods, but from there our interests diverged significantly. She valued proximity to a Super Target and entertainment centers; I cared about distance from Bass Pro Shops and fishing impoundments. So upon move-in I astutely unpacked fishing gear first, swung by Bass Pro for necessary equipment additions (necessary being a relative term), and headed to the closest fishy-looking body of water. I didn’t have to go far, only a mile from our new home. At Lake Pointe I found numerous hungry sunfish and a few voracious Largemouth bass. Some 18 months and
countless unpacked boxes later, I’ve fished many of Katy’s waterways and found them all to be calming short-term getaways. Some are so accessible that one--purely hypothetically, of course--could easily stop off on the way home from work, roll up business slacks and shirtsleeves, and fish a little (at least until their all-knowing wife visualizes that image and embarrassingly drops off more fitting attire).

**Location, Technique, and Bait**
Most all but the newest Katy lakes and ponds have healthy populations of Largemouth bass and sunfish. Crappie and catfish also populate some. My family’s favorite Cinco Ranch fishing locales are Lake Gayle, from the south bank below the spillway, South Park Lake, small northernmost cove, and Lake Pointe Lake, small cove directly adjacent to the parking lot to the south. My preferred bass tactic is fly fishing a floating frog pattern or terrestrial along the shallows in the evening, or stripping white streamers along the steeper banks and rock outcrops most anytime of the day. The more common crankbaits on spinning gear or soft plastics on level-wind equipment seem more apt to attract the larger bass, and this heavier gear certainly improves your odds of landing any fish hooked.

The majority of local Largemouths--fish, not people--are less than 12", but many exceed 17". I’ve seen a four, five, and six-pound bass...
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Planning on Fishing in Cinco Ranch?

All Cinco Ranch fishing holes are for residents only and are catch and release. Additional information on access and regulations may be found on the internet at: CincoRanchpoa.com/Recreational_Facilities.asp

SAM STRODER, his wife, and their 3 children transferred to Katy from small-town west Texas in the summer of 2006. Fishing and writing are both hobbies of his, so this article seems a fitting combination.

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Cinco Ranch Fishing Tips

- Toss a few crackers to the turtles surfacing 20 feet or so out from the south bank downstream of the spillway. Wait a few minutes, they’ll show up.

- Take a leisurely stroll around the lake on the paved sidewalk, but before you’ve fed the ducks, unless you want quacking company.

- Hunt for crawdads around the spillway rocks. But be careful, they pinch.

- Find the huge bullfrogs hanging around the water’s edge. They look almost artificial suspended under the moss accumulations with only their eyes and nostrils above waterline.

- Traverse the spillway, carefully. The moss-covered rocks are slippery.

- As evening approaches stop by and ‘visit’ with Mark Twain on the park bench back of the library. He’s a particularly good listener when crickets and frogs are serenading in the background.

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