



## Fishing Therapy

By Nicholas Drabant

Captain Mark Nowicki is a man who lives, breathes, and, as of the 2023 summer fishing season, works fishing. The water is his home. From the time that he could hold a rod, his father and grandfather took him angling on the near boundless, crystalline waters of Lake St. Clair and the Detroit River, catching unsalted treasures that our heart-shaped lake has to offer.

"My mom says it the best. She says 'I was born to be on the water; born to fish,'" said captain Mark Nowicki. "My wife says it all the time. 'That's Mark and Kurt's therapy.' That's where I feel the most comfortable - on the water."

With the birth of his sons, Nowicki strived to pass along the same love for the open water as his parents and grandparents passed onto him. And just like the fish, the family angled together and Mark's son Kurt was hooked.

"I've been fishing this lake my whole life, pretty much as soon as I could walk I had a fishing pole in my hands. Every weekend, we'd just go fishing on the lake," said captain Kurt Nowicki.

When it came time for the elder Nowicki to retire, he once more felt that draw to what he described as his "therapy place." While most would consider taking things easy after accepting that final paycheck, easing into a life of relaxation and retirement, Mark Nowicki decided to follow his dream. And, like all good fathers, he included his family on that dream as well.

"I needed something to keep myself busy and get me out fishing more in the summer. We talked about it for years. A couple years ago we said 'Why don't we start this family business?' said Captain Mark. 'It's not like working; it's just part of our life. Even though I'm retired, I'm not really retired.'"



From April to December, weather permitting, the Nowickis (Reel Therapy Sportfishing) offer unforgettable, multi-hour fishing trips on both Michigan and Ontario's shores of Lake St. Clair. From walleye to muskie to smallmouth bass, the Nowickis teach how to angle all of Lake St. Clair's natural abundance.

While the two love being out on the water, what really makes it all worth it is the fact that they get to continue passing on that love for lake fishing to the next generation. As captain Mark said, in a sentiment echoed by Kurt, "The biggest thing is having kids aboard. The smiles on everyone's faces when the kids catch these fish - it's priceless."

As for their tips and secrets for a successful fishing expedition? Well, you'll just have to book a charter with them and let this veteran-owned, St Clair Shores company teach you what they know. By the end of the charter, you may end up tying their records of 52-54 inch muskies.

To book a charter or contact Reel Therapy Sportfishing, visit their website at [reeltherapysportfishingllc.com](http://reeltherapysportfishingllc.com).

