

Fishin' Tales

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and 13 Mile Road (1/4 mile east of Mound Road off 13 Mile) across from the GM Tech Center.

Pres.'s Message

Merry Christmas everyone!

What a year this has been for yours truly! Thanksgiving is now behind us and I'll say I have a lot to be thankful for this year. I'm very much looking forward to the next boating season as it'll be the first time in a few years that my health will allow me to make full use of that expensive piece of fiberglass now sitting quietly in storage. I'm already making plans to outfit the 'Steelie Ed' with new equipment that I've wanted for a while. Who knows, if the 'boss' will work with me {are you listening Mouse?} then I'll be at a few more tournaments in 2004 and who knows, maybe I'll make a run at the top ten for once.

He's making a list, he's checking it twice..... Yes that's Santa's line but I'm also borrowing the idea. I have rods and reels to clean, oil and re-spool and lures to sort through and so many other things that it'll take January just to write it all down. And I'd just about bet that knowing me like I do, I'll forget a half dozen or so things that'll get done by maybe July.

....he's gonna find out who's naughty or nice.... It bears mentioning here folks that some members are not happy with the loud chatter going on while our speakers are making their presentations. I'm going to ask our Directors to all play Sergeant-at-arms during upcoming meetings and keep the peace and quiet while our speakers are talking. If you need to

December MEETING ANNUAL DAS CHRISTMAS MEETING DECEMBER 16 at our MEETING PLACE - 13 Mile K of C - Warren.....

Don't forget to mark *December 16* on your calendar! It's the date of the Annual Christmas Party for the Detroit Area Steelheaders. The meeting will take place at St Pius K of C on old Chicago Rd. As always, there are lots of activities planned.

First, there is a very strong rumor that Salmon Claus will make his annual appearance and that he will have goodies for all the little boy and little girl Steelheaders that are present. This is a family meeting.

One of the most important aspects of this meeting is the election of Directors for the coming year. Every member of The Detroit Area Steelheaders will have the opportunity to cast a vote.

Mike Vigus will also announce the final standings and award the trophies for the 2003 Skipper of the Year competition.

Doors open at 7 PM. Our meetings start at 7:30 P.M. at the St. Pius Knights of Columbus Hall in Warren. The hall is located at Chicago Road

carry on a conversation at a meeting please wait until a break, or if it's that important please take it outside the hall. It's been hard enough to find good speakers for our meetings so let's not be rude by interrupting the show and making it hard for others to hear and learn from our guests or members making their presentations.

...Santa Claus is coming to town.... That's right kiddies; the jolly ol' big man in the red fishing vest will indeed be our guest of honor on Tuesday night December 16th. Santa, or Salmon Claus as he likes to be called by his friends from the Detroit Area Steelheaders, has told me he wants to see ALL the good little fisher people that night along with all of his old fishing partners. Let's not disappoint that jolly ol' elf! Let's pack the hall and enjoy the fellowship of all our members for this evening. Bring the camera to take photos of the kids {big and small, old and young} with Salmon Claus. This night will be filled with many extras like the Cooler-of-Cheer drawing and top skipper awards so please join us for a bit of Christmas Season merriment. Oh yeah, let's not forget our annual traditional 'Salmon Run'. Santa LOVES the Salmon Run!

I can't believe that two years has passed so fast. My term as club President is nearly at an end. I want to thank each and every one of you for your support over these two years. This year with my surgery and now my job, I haven't been as effective as I would have liked to be; I'll be the first to admit to that. Thanks to Vice-President Mark Bevans for doing an OUTSTANDING job of covering for me {I would have said covering my a** but there may be kids reading}. And thanks to a great Board-of-Directors and everything they do behind the scenes to keep this club going. Take a bow guys and gals!

I hope to see you all at the Dinner Dance/Winter Party on January 31st,

the 2004 Sportsmen's Game Dinner on March 6th and at most if not all of the meetings and tournaments coming up in 2004.

Until then, keep those hooks sharp!
Ed 'Steelie Ed' Wilczek
President

**DIRECTOR ELECTIONS COMING
DECEMBER**

The annual election for the DETROIT AREA STEELHEADERS Board of Directors will take place at the Christmas meeting. There are multiple openings for directors this year.

Running for board positions are:

- Ron Niemasz
- Jason Adams
- Chris Miller
- Bill Stanley
- Dwayne Welder
- Ty Voigt
- Chris Nytko
- Scott McFarren

DINNER DANCE

Tickets to the Annual Dinner Dance can be purchased at the next meeting. The theme for 2004 is Sock Hop Benefit featuring music from the 1950's through 2004. The dance will take place on January 31 at the K of C hall.

The tickets, at \$30 per person are a real bargain when you consider they include food, open bar, dancing and a chance at the door prize. Profits from the dance will be donated to a Michigan fish hatchery or net pen project.

Be sure to see Mary Karakas for tickets or call (248) 545-1181
Or e-mail dinnerdance@detroitsteelheaders.org.

This has been a fun filled event. If you haven't decided if you want to go, ask someone who was there in the past. I guarantee they will tell you that it's a great time. We will

have a sit down dinner followed by dancing.

As in the past, there will be raffles for the guys and for the gals. (although many gals win in the guys raffle, too.) We are still in need of donations for prizes. If you can contribute, please see Doug or Mary. These prizes do not have to be fishing oriented. We have had people donate crafts, services and other things that make terrific raffle prizes. (Some wives just don't want to win a fishin' rod.) Don't miss this chance to show your spouse a good time. It could go a long way toward making it easier to go fishing next summer.

COOLER OF CHEER!

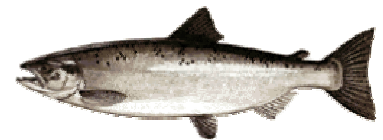
The lucky winning ticket for the Cooler of Cheer will be drawn at the annual Christmas meeting on Dec. 16. (We're all going to his/ her house for New Years!)

The lucky winner will receive a **100-quart cooler full of cheer, a big assortment of party snacks and \$100 in cash**; a prize well worth the one buck investment.

December meeting will be the last opportunity to turn in tickets and or money.

Finally, the overall top ticket seller will win a \$150 gift certificate from Bass Pro. (This is a great boat opportunity, so you may want to talk to your crew and pool your results.) Please feel free to call Chris.

Chris Nytko (586) 786-0288



The Manistee Cup

Every year for the past 5 years I've gone to Manistee on the first weekend in November for the Pier and Surf tournament that the Lake Shore Motel holds. This year was no exception. I took Thursday and Friday off work in hopes of doing some pre-fishing and scouting of the local piers. Over the years a team of guys have fished together. The team consists of myself, Pat Hoey (my brother-in-law), Keith Snary (a friend), Joe Montella (Southwestern Steelheaders President) and Kyle Hall (an Alaskan Fishing Guide). Together we are a group of good fisherman, some say we are fishy.

The plan was to head over to Grand Rapids to Keith's house Wednesday evening and go to the Ludington Pier early Thursday morning and fish the Manistee pier that afternoon, check into the motel and fish Frankfort pier Friday morning. After we arrived at Keith's Wed. we heard rumor of Whitefish being caught on the North Grand Haven pier, so our plans changed. We decided to go for Whitefish Thursday and head up to Manistee (where we had rooms reserved) that evening and fish the piers up there Friday morning.

We went to the North Pier in Grand Haven about 8:00 am and by 3:00 pm we had caught only 16 Whitefish. Just another fisherman's rumor about killing the Whities at Grand Haven. We headed back to Keith's to fillet the fish and then get on the road to Manistee. While filleting the Whitefish we talked about how good it would be if we fried it right then, before you knew it out came the oil and the pan. After hurting ourselves on Whitefish and cleaning up the mess, we set down for a few Blue Gills (that's what we call a can of Bush Light). By this time we were all sleepy eyed and decided we were too tired to drive to Manistee that evening. New Plan! We will head up to Manistee very early Friday morning for some pier pre-fishing.

I was the first to wake at the crack of 7:33, the others soon followed

and all was up by 9:00. Around noon we finally were on the road to Manistee. I was riding with Kyle and Pat and Keith were riding together. Joe was going to meet us in Manistee Friday evening. We decided to stop at the Ludington piers to see if anyone was fishing. Pat and Keith went to the north pier and Kyle and I to the south pier. Kyle and I walked out the pier and found 4 fishermen there. After talking to them we found out they had been there all day and had caught 4 Steelheads. We caught up with Keith and Pat in town. They found no one on the North pier. We then hurried to Manistee to check into the motel. By the time we arrived, checked in, apologized for not showing up on time, we had about 2 hours of light left. So we grabbed our rods and pier carts and headed for the pier. We did catch 2 small Steelhead before dark.

After fishing we went out to get a good dinner, knowing we would be fishing all day the next day and surviving on cupcakes and coffee. At dinner we discussed our game plan for the next day. It should be easy with all the pre-fishing we did (NOT). We talked about going to Ludington, Manistee or the Frankfort piers or the Manistee River. The wind had been blowing out of the NW at 15 to 20 all day, the forecast was for it to blow 10 to 15 NW over night and turn N 5 to 10 late on Saturday. After much chewing and arguing with our mouths full we decided to go to the South pier in Ludington. With the wind forecast we thought this would be our best bet.

We returned to Motel to get our bait and gear ready. We rig our rods in the room knowing we will be on the pier in the middle of the night and rigging is hard to do by lantern light. We tied our egg sacks. We mixed fresh Brown Trout spawn, 4 day old King spawn, and two week old King spawn, and tied about 150 bags. All the time debating if Ludington was the right call. Pat and I were saying yes to Ludington, Keith was leaning toward Manistee south pier, Kyle was saying the mouth of the

Manistee River, and Joe just set there quiet. When you have 5 good fishermen together it's like having 5 Captains on one boat, everyone has an opinion. But by bedtime we all agreed to go to Ludington.

Now understand there are 92 entries in this tournament and to get good real estate on a pier you need to be at the pier early. We set our clocks for 1:00 am.

When I woke at 1:00am I looked out my window to see lanterns on the south pier at Manistee. A lot of people like fishing that pier for the tournament and will get there at 11:00 or midnight to hold their spot for the next morning. We made our coffee and loaded our gear in the truck and were on the road to Ludington around 2:00 am.

We pulled into the parking lot at Ludington's south pier to see we were the first to arrive. The wind was still blowing NNW at about 10 mph. It looked like our call had paid off. We loaded our pier carts and started the long walk through the sand to the pier. The day before when I stopped to check out the fishing reports I located the second trough (the surf piles up the sand like sand dunes under the water, this creates high and low spots as you come off the beach, each low spot is called a trough), as I walked off the pier I counted the large cracks in the concrete so I could find this spot in the dark. I counted the cracks as I walked out that morning and stopped to set up in the second trough. I set up my rod holders, put my 13 ft. Rain Shadow custom rods together baited them and cast them out. It was about 3:30 am by now. Knowing that the Steelhead normally don't bite until light I was thinking I had a 3 ½ hour wait till fishing began.

Not long after we were all set up, the wind stop blowing. The great looking surf we had, laid right down and now it looked like frog pond in front of us. We were all wondering if the Steelhead would leave this area for better surf.

By 4:00 am more people started showing up on the pier. There was a

group of guys who set up inside us and a group outside us. About this time one of Kyle's rods started dancing. We had a fish on. Not soon after he landed that fish then Keith's rod went off. Two fish caught in the dark? This is very unusual. By first light we had landed about ten fish.

As we got closer to first light more and more people started showing up. By light there was a fisherman every ten feet down the pier. I didn't do a head count but if I had to guess I'd say there was at least 50 fisherman on the pier.

Our rods were very active. At least one of us had a fish on at all times and several times we had two or three going at the same time. The other fishermen started crowding in on us, thinking we were in a hot spot. One time after Pat fought and landed a fish, he cast back out and found someone else's rod in his rod holder. I had about 12 feet between my two rods and I had two deferent people cast out between my rods. It didn't seem to matter. We were still landing fish while the others were not. After watching the other fishermen I think I know what they were doing wrong. In rough surf a Steelhead will inhale an egg sack and swim off with it. But the calm surf we were in, they pick it up, drop it, and pick it up. When I would get a bite I would pick up my rod, leave the bait runner on and wait until the Steelhead was swimming away stripping line off the reel before I would set the hook. These other guys would get a bite and pick up the rod and set the hook right away. They were only hooking every five or ten bites. Anyway the five of us put on a clinic that day. Between the five of us we landed 58 Steelhead.

We decided to stop fishing at 3:00 pm. That would give us an hour to get to Manistee for weigh-in. We pulled lines and headed off the pier at 3:00. By the time we made it to the trucks, loaded our fish and gear it was 3:35. It is a 45-minute drive from Ludington's south pier to Lakeshore in Manistee.

I was riding with Kyle, Pat and Keith was behind us and Joe was behind them. Kyle was leading us down the back roads to Manistee. He grew up in that area and knew all the roads. About half way there I couldn't take it anymore. After passing cars on hills, tires squealing around corners and meeting a State Police Officer head on doing 25 mph over the speed limit, I told Kyle I was going to call Lakeshore and tell them we would be about 15 minutes late for weigh-in. I rather be disqualified as be dead. When we called Lakeshore we found out the deadline for weigh-in was 4:30 not 4:00. Whew! We could slow down and I could loosen my seatbelt and open my eyes.

At weigh-in we had seen some very nice Steelhead being weighed. After talking to the other fishermen we learned most caught Steelhead but not in the numbers we did. Kyle, Joe and Keith each weighed one fish apiece. Pat had two that were close in size so he weighed both to see which was bigger. I had brought 3 fish because I couldn't tell which was the biggest. When I hung my 3 fish, all three of them weighed 10 lb 3 oz. What are the chances of that? I'm not sure of their exact weights but Kyle's fish weighed close to 12 lbs. Keith's was close to 11 lbs. Pat's was 10 1/2 lbs. And Joe's was around 10 lbs.

After weigh-in we headed to the rooms to shower and get ready for the awards dinner at 6:00.

At the awards dinner they served chili-dogs, hamburgers, chips, baked beans, pasta salads, and a variety of other goodies. They have a prize table with things like rod and reels, line, tackle, fishing chairs. These are all donated items and usually very nice items. The way they work it is, how you finished in the tournament is how you pick from the table. If you finish first, you get first pick, second place gets second pick, and so on. As they went done the list we found that Kyle finished in 6th place. Keith was in 10th place, Pat finished in 11th place, I was in 12th place, and Joe finished in 13th place. Not bad for 92

entries all five of us finishing in the top 15.

I look forward to this tournament every year. After trolling season it is a nice change of pace. Between the fishing and the camaraderie of the other fishermen this is a great time. The reason I call this article The Manistee Cup, is the winner of this tournament gets his name place on a cup and gets to keep it until the next year's tournament. For five years now I've worked hard to have my name placed on that cup. Maybe next year!

Mark Bevans
DAS Vice President

Check Your Label

Did you know that your mailing label includes the date your membership expires? If its marked yellow, you are expired (no; just your membership!) Don't be disqualified from a tournament or the River Crab because you forgot to re-up. See Tom Moores at the regular meeting or send your check to the club post office box 1255 listed below. Regular memberships are still \$25, Senior \$10 and Lifetime \$150.



From left to right
Joe Montella
Mark Bevans

Kieth Snary
Kyle Hall
Pat Hoey

Detroit Area Steelheaders, Inc.
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