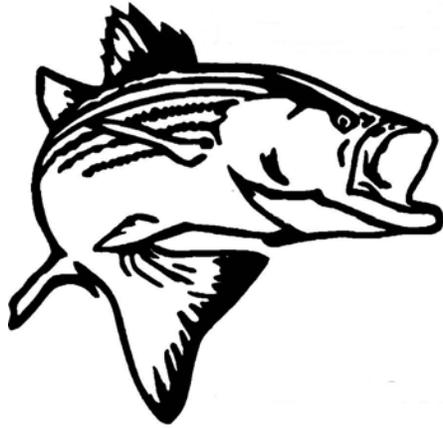


**Catch
the
Striper
Fever!**

T.S.B.A.



**Tennessee
Striped Bass
Association,
Inc.
Newsletter**

**February
2012**



The warm weather has kept TSBA members busy fishing all winter long. This month's edition is packed full of trophy shots like this one, caught by Dennis and Georgia Bryant who worked together to land this 30-pound, 40-inch beauty.

President's Letter

Last month we highlighted the benefits of membership in our association, the TSBA. We illustrated how our association collects annual dues for the purpose of promoting our sport and providing our members with benefits.

This month I would like to point out another organization that we, as Tennessee anglers, join each year: the **Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency (TWRA)**. This agency, our agency, is responsible for managing our fisheries, boating and hunting resources. They provide for the stocking of our stripers through the Eagle Bend and Morristown Fish Hatcheries. They have friendly fisheries technicians who collect creel data and provide weekly fishing reports. Their great law enforcement officers keep our waters safe and do their best to enforce creel and size limits. TWRA also employs biologists who monitor fish populations and improve habitat conditions.

Most of our East Tennessee waters are managed through TWRA's Region 4 offices in Morristown, TN. Their dedicated staff is accessible to the public and proactive on resource issues. TWRA headquarters, located in Nashville, provides oversight and guidance throughout the state and maintains an informative website.

Just like the TSBA, TWRA is advised and governed by a board of commissioners (directors). These folks are appointed volunteers from all districts within Tennessee. They meet monthly and the public is welcome at most meetings. The commissioners receive guidance and recommendations from TWRA personnel as well as public comments on various issues. They determine the annual operating budget and set policies and direction of the agency. I have personally attended several TWRA commission meetings and have seen first hand how the whole process works. I have to say, it is working well!

Our Tennessee fisheries are a valuable resource in the public trust that we must all help to manage. TWRA cannot do it alone. I encourage all non-residents to invest in an annual or daily license. They are easy to purchase at designated gas stations, department stores or at TWRA's

online licensing website. Resident Tennesseans should view license fees as a bargain and a membership card of this organization. I truly believe that the TWRA is another worthwhile organization that promotes our sport and provides members with benefits.

So go fishing. The fish are out there thanks to ALL members of TWRA!

— Doug Steffe



Important Reminder

It is time to renew your TSBA membership. When you renew, please select email as your preferred method of receiving the newsletter. **Over 35% of our club dues go to printing and mailing the newsletter.** Those trophy shots look so much better when viewed online!

Make the switch this year and see what you have been missing.

The membership application can be found on page 19. Returning members can use the express renewal option described at the bottom of the page. When returning members renew, please e-mail Doug Steffe at dougsteffe@centurytel.net and let him know you would prefer to receive the newsletter by e-mail.

Minutes of the January meeting

President Doug Steffe opened the meeting by introducing the new officers elected at the board of directors meeting. New officers are as follows: Doug Steffe, President; Cory Malabey, Vice President; Keith Shannon, Secretary; Bud White, Treasurer and Membership Coordinator; Ann Howe and Allan Franklin, Assistant Treasurers.

There were still a few positions to fill on the board of directors. Members present at the meeting nominated Jeff Jolly, Jim Blazier and Ron Gabler to fill those vacant positions. Vol-



The forty members in attendance at the January meeting elected members to the board of directors and discussed several important issues related to TWRA's management of our fisheries resources.

unteer positions for newsletter coordinator, tackle co-op coordinator and sponsor coordinator were filled by Jim Blazier, Steve Nichols and Gary Reinitz, respectively. Please see the 2012 TSBA Officers, Directors and Staff page in this newsletter for a complete listing of all officers, directors and staff.

Ezell Cox, the meeting's featured speaker, delivered an eloquent and informative presentation on cold water fishing techniques. He graciously provided a handout entitled "Fishing in the Winter" for reference. The presentation included a winter fishing video featuring Ezell Cox, Doug Steffe, Jay Girardot, Kyle Rutherford, Todd Asher and Roy Hawk. After the presentation, Ezell fielded questions and comments from the audience. Discussion focused on the preferred size, weight, trolling speed, line type and bait depth for

umbrella rigs as well as how to interpret sonar.

Doug Steffe updated the crowd on the status of the proposed six-year commercial paddlefish study on several East Tennessee waters. As of the January 16, 2012 TWR Commission meeting, TWRA's position is to not fund the \$740,000 study with our sportsman's permit dollars. The request for funding is to be sent back to the state legislators sponsoring the bill requiring the study. Eric Coffey made a request for help staffing a booth at the Knoxville Fishing Show for next weekend (January 19-22). TSBA, along with the Tennessee Wildlife Foundation, is sponsoring the booth in an effort to highlight the potentially harmful impact that the commercial paddlefish expansion proposal could have on our fisheries. A dozen or more TSBA members signed up to help.

TSBA has submitted a position paper to TWRA that supports a seasonal no-fishing zone in the canal of Bull Run Steam Plant's warm-water discharge to protect Melton Hill Lake's musky fishery. This statement can be found on page 12.

— **Keith Shannon, Secretary**

February Meeting

Please join us on February 20, 2012 for the TSBA monthly meeting. Our guest speakers this month will be Billy Davis and Todd Asher, who were both recently featured in an episode of the cable television series *The Hunt for Big Fish*. Members will have a chance to view the episode at the meeting. Afterwards, they will share their experiences during the making of the show and reveal some of their favorite tips for fishing the waters below Melton Hill Dam.

TSBA's monthly meeting will be held in a private room at the Flatwater Grill restaurant in Oak Ridge. This room is best entered through the side door near the railroad bridge. The buffet dinner will start at 6:00 p.m., with the meeting to follow at 7:00 p.m. The cost is \$15, which includes a drink and gratuity. (Note that payment is cash or check only).

Mild January weather keeps Norris anglers on the water

By the first of January, most fishermen are usually thinking of things such as New Year resolutions, college football bowl games and winterizing fishing gear. The reason for this is easy to explain: IT IS JUST TOO DANG COLD TO FISH!!!!!!

2012 has been different so far this year. As temperatures stayed in the 40's and 50's, new TSBA member Robb Morris (London, KY) took advantage of the situation. Robb and his family have a beautiful house overlooking Norris Lake near PT 12. Since summer, Robb has been fine-tuning his new SmokerCraft center console

(continued on page 7)



Robb Morris is having a fantastic winter fishing the Davis Creek area on Norris Lake.



boat. He was able to really put it to use in the month of January. Along with his wife Nancy and son Taylor, Robb has had many successful trips out this winter pulling umbrella rigs on the Powell arm of Norris lake near PT 14 and Davis Creek. It appears that the

(continued on page 8)



Fishing is definitely a family affair for the Morris family. Pictured above are Robb's wife Nancy and their son Taylor. Below is Robb's nephew Zachary. The Morris clan caught these fish in the Davis Creek and Point 14 areas on Norris Lake.



continued from page 7

weather is just as enticing on the Clinch side of Norris. Veteran striper fisherman Jay Girardot has been out with several of the usual suspects pulling u-rigs and having a lot of success. Jay has been putting out some very nice fishing reports and videos via Facebook and YouTube which have been very helpful to a lot of people.

— **Nathan Bailey**



Pictured above is Jay Girardot, right, with Doug Steffe with a double. Jay snapped this picture of Kyle Rutherford, below, with a striper he caught using umbrella rigs on the same trip.





Jason Hogg, above, caught this 18 pounder using u-rigs while on a trip out with Nathan Bailey.

How to contribute to the newsletter:

Please send in any pictures or news that you think would interest club members. You can e-mail photos and reports to:

jblazier@comcast.net

Send in your information anytime during the month and we will work it into an upcoming issue.

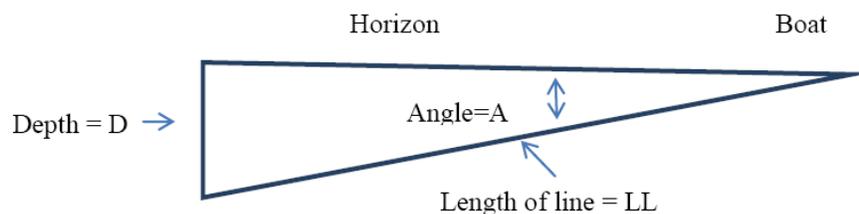
Stay Connected

Anglers are making the habit of using a more modern “net” to help them catch fish: the internet. Jay Girardot, Bud White, and Nathan Bailey are examples of TSBA members who regularly utilize social media websites, such as YouTube, as a means of sharing information. Videos posted on this website are available for anyone to see.

Another popular option for posting fishing information is Facebook. If you are a member of Facebook, “friending” Nathan or Jay will get you started on your way to finding great resources on that website. “There is a lot of good fishing talk on these websites if you know where to find it. On YouTube, just search for our screen names and you will find the videos,” explains Nathan Bailey.

How to measure line depth from the angle of the line

Remember back in high school when you wondered why you had to learn trigonometry? Well, it turns out your tackle box needs to be equipped with a few math formulas in order to perfect your technique when trolling with umbrella rigs or any other type of lure without using downriggers to control lure depth. Being able to place your lure at the correct depth will help you catch more fish and avoid snagging expensive gear on the lake bottom. But no worries - just in case your trig is a bit rusty in math, Gary Reinitz has taken the time to work out the math for you. He has faith in us all to calculate the correct depth to drop that lure right in the strike zone. All you need is a protractor (about \$1 in the school supplies section at Wal-Mart) and a cheap calculator with trigonometric functions (about \$10).



The first step is to measure the length of the line (LL) let out from the boat. Next, measure the angle (A) with the protractor and find the sine of the angle on the calculator. For example, if you measured an angle of 12 degrees, enter $\text{sine}=12$ on the calculator to get the value of 0.2079. Multiply the length of line let out (LL) by the value of the sin of the angle A (in this example 0.2079) to find the depth of the lure (D).

Let's say we have an LL value of 100 feet. So, in this example:
 $100 \text{ ft. (LL)} \times 0.2079 \text{ (sin of A)} = 20.79 \text{ ft. (D)}$.

Here are a couple of qualifiers: First, subtract the distance from the tip of the pole in the rod holder to the water from D, as the formula as written above would be for if the rod tip was on the surface of the water. Second, while the thickness of the line alone is irrelevant, as it will not directly impact the angle of the line, the thickness and type of line will likely result in impacts due to some bowing of the line

continued on page 11

(i.e., thinner braided line, less bowing than thicker monofilament). continued from page 10

This may sound a little confusing, but it is really very simple to use. You know the length of line you let out, you simply eyeball the angle of the line going into the water by turning the protractor upside down so the base is level with the horizon to get the angle of the line, and then use the calculator to get the sine of the angle and multiply that value by the length of line let out (subtracting the distance of the pole tip from the water from D). Trolling speed doesn't matter as long as you don't change it after you measure the angle of the line.

I've used this and find it much easier and more accurate than any chart, as I have found the charts to not be very useful if you are not using exact weight, trolling speed and line thickness specified by the chart.

Give it a try. All you have to lose is a \$11 investment in the tools you need. Good Luck!

— Gary Reinitz & Friends



Besides being a partner in landing the fish pictured on the cover, Georgia Bryant was at it again this past month, and she didn't need any help at all hauling in this hefty 22 pounder!

Congratulations, Georgia!

Georgia also gets bonus points for wearing the cutest hat to ever appear in the TSBA Trophy Shot Files! Now don't you think Ezell would look great in a hat just like that?

TSBA weighs in on proposed restricted fishing area

For many years the winter warm-water discharge of the Bull Run Steam Plant on Melton Hill Reservoir has been a haven for baitfish and trophy striped bass. Several state striper records have been taken in the past (80'-90's) from this canal and cove area. Recently this area has produced fewer large stripers, but has been yielding large musky. Through the press, as well as pictures and word of mouth of responsible fisherman, it has been publicized that a large number of the musky have been caught, illegally harvested or unintentionally killed by anglers in this area.

The Tennessee Wildlife Resource Agency has been stocking Melton Hill Reservoir with musky for several years. By most accounts the program has been highly successful. TWRA has been monitoring this area and has determined through a radio-tagging study that a majority of the lake's musky population will enter this canal and cove area in their search for food during the winter months. As a result, we understand that TWRA will soon be asking for public comment on several proposed winter restrictions for this area.

The following letter was sent by the TSBA Board of Directors to TWRA regarding the proposal:

TSBA strongly believes that all trophy sport fish should be protected. We recognize that the Bull Run Steam Plant canal and cove provide a warm-water attraction for the lake's large fish during the winter months. While the proposed special regulation would restrict our members' ability to fish this area, we agree that a special restriction would be worthwhile for protecting Melton Hill's trophy fish. The area within the cove, as defined by the map supplied to us, is acceptable and would still allow fishing in the adjacent river channel.

In review and discussion of the specific details of allowable artificial, live and fish-part baits, TSBA offers the follow comments:

TSBA strongly believes that the most effective way to protect the big fish would be to implement a seasonal “No Fishing Zone”, similar to the very effective Lake Cherokee restricted fishing zone enforced during the summer. This approach would be relatively easy to enforce and would be equitable to all fisherman. Having a detailed regulation as to which baits and hooks that can and can’t be used has been confusing to fisherman in other locations. As for the dates of implementation, it was noted that the refuge forms differently from year to year. It forms based on weather and on the generating schedule of Bull Run Steam Plant. Liberal start and stop dates as defined by TWRA biologists would provide the best protection.

In conclusion, **TSBA will support a special regulation for the Bull Run Steam Plant canal and cove.** We believe that TWRA has the right goals and we trust the judgment of TWRA’s biologists in determining the most appropriate details and dates for such a regulation.

— **Doug Steffe, President**



This aerial photograph was provided by Bart Carter and Jim Negus of Region 4 TWRA. It shows the proposed restricted fishing area at the effluent discharge of Bull Run Steam Plant.



TSBA would like to wish a very Happy Valentine's day to Andy Harrison and the new love of his life: striper fishing. "Andy is a friend of mine who had never been striper fishing. I asked him to go, and he fell in love with the sport. We went to Norris and pulled umbrella rigs, catching 5 stripers that morning. Andy is now hooked on striper fishing," says Allan Franklin. Alan, pictured below right, had him out on the water this past January.



Outlook for current fishing spots

Cherokee Lake

The baitfish seek out the warmer water, so look for the sun-warmed banks and into deeper water after a cold night. The gulls will help to show where the best bait locations are to be found. Top water breaks can be common this time of year, so go prepared to cast into them. Large schools can often be found on the fish finders, making jigging something that also works well. Looking for the large concentrations of baitfish and bait-eating birds is a good way to find stripers and hybrids as well as looking for breaking fish on the surface. The premium locations are normally upstream of the German Creek area and into the extreme headwaters.

Norris Lake

Looking for the active gulls or surface feeding fish may be the key to success in catching fish as the water starts to warm in the shallow, sun-warmed areas. Remember the creel and size limits on striped bass are 36-inch minimum with a one fish creel until April 1st. The largest concentrations of striper will be on the upper half of the reservoir, often in the shallow, sun-warmed stained water.

Watts Bar and Melton Hill

The winter time striper bite was influenced much less by the warm water discharge at the steam plants than in some past years because of the mild winter with lots of hydroelectric power. The baitfish will start to show up in the shallow, sun-warmed flats with the gulls and herons helping to find the feeding stripers. Watts Bar creel and size limits remain 36-inch minimum size and one fish creel until April 1st.

March Expectations

Expect to find the temperature into the high 50's. The baitfish will seek out the warmest water they can find and the striper will follow them. Sun-warmed, stained, shallow water with the gulls and herons around can be a great help in locating the baitfish. A brown algae bloom is a great attractant for the shad if you spot it on the surface. The striper will be where the bait is most abundant. Artificial baits can be very productive this time of year. You may want to try JIGGING, CASTING, OR TROLLING. Umbrella rigs have become a favorite method the last several years. Be aware of the new hazards floating on top of the water to avoid as the lakes begin to rise. Large live bait is working well again and normally easy to catch this time of year. Put the out-riggers (planer boards) back in the boat to get the bait over in the shallow water without spooking them with the boat.

YOUR 2012 TSBA OFFICERS, DIRECTORS, AND STAFF

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Ezell Cox 423-626-9547

2012 TSBA Calendar

Please join us at TSBA meetings and events. Monthly meetings are held at the Flatwater Grill at 100 Melton Lake Peninsula in Oak Ridge, Tennessee (<http://theflatwatergrill.com>).

- Feb 20 Monthly Meeting: dinner 6:00 p.m., meeting 7:00 p.m.
The Flatwater Grill in Oak Ridge
Speakers: Billy Davis/Todd Asher - The hunt for big fish
- Mar 19 Monthly Meeting: dinner 6:00 p.m., meeting 7:00 p.m.
The Flatwater Grill in Oak Ridge
Speaker: Clay Cunningham - artificial lures
- Apr 16 Monthly Meeting: dinner 6:00 p.m., meeting 7:00 p.m.
The Flatwater Grill in Oak Ridge
Speaker: Bill Carson - Fishing methods
- May 21 Monthly Meeting: dinner 6:00 p.m., meeting 7:00 p.m.
The Flatwater Grill in Oak Ridge
Speaker: Mike Smith, Eagle Bend Fish Hatchery
- Jun 18 Monthly Meeting: dinner 6:00 p.m., meeting 7:00 p.m.
The Flatwater Grill in Oak Ridge
- Jul 16 Monthly Meeting: dinner 6:00 p.m., meeting 7:00 p.m.
The Flatwater Grill in Oak Ridge
- Aug 20 Monthly Meeting: dinner 6:00 p.m., meeting 7:00 p.m.
The Flatwater Grill in Oak Ridge
- Sep 17 Monthly Meeting: dinner 6:00 p.m., meeting 7:00 p.m.
The Flatwater Grill in Oak Ridge
- Oct 6 Annual fish fry - No monthly meeting
- Nov 19 Monthly Meeting: dinner 6:00 p.m., meeting 7:00 p.m.
The Flatwater Grill in Oak Ridge

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TSBA 2012 MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION

As a member:

- *You'll receive a monthly newsletter.
- * You'll help support Striped Bass Fisheries & Wildlife Agencies.
- * You'll be informed of new regulations & information that affect striper fishing.
- * You'll develop a network of "striper friends."
- * You'll learn new methods to improve your striped bass fishing effectiveness.
- * You'll be able to call officers for fishing reports.
- * You'll be able to attend monthly meetings with informative programs.
- * You'll have access to all areas of the TSBA web page.

Your Name _____

Spouse's Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone(_____) _____ # of minor children in family _____

Referred By: _____

Please provide an e-mail address to receive the monthly newsletter:

E-Mail address _____

I have read and agree to abide by and be bound by the Tennessee Striped Bass Association, Inc. (TSBA) Bylaws. A copy of the Bylaws can be found on the TSBA website at www.TNStripedBass.com or at the offices of the corporation.

(Signature)

(Date)

Enclose a check for \$20.00
Mail to: Tennessee Striped Bass Association, Inc
P.O. Box 163
Sharps Chapel, TN. 37866

Simplified Renewal Note: Returning members with no changes to their contact information are not required to fill out the application. Just send a \$20 check to the address above. Be sure to include the member's name on the check. When you send in your check, please provide TSBA with an email address where we can send your monthly newsletter. Yearly dues are due in January each year. New members that sign up in Oct., Nov., or Dec. will get credit for the remainder of that year and the following year.



The TSBA is a non-profit corporation that supports TWRA & its Striped Bass & Cherokee Bass programs. We come together to provide a unified voice for the Striped Bass & the Cherokee Bass programs in the State of Tennessee. We educate the public & share our knowledge with fellow Striped Bass anglers.

**Tennessee Striped Bass Association, Inc.
P.O. Box 163
Sharps Chapel, TN 37866**



**February 20, 2012: Monthly Meeting
Flatwater Grill
100 Melton Lake Drive, Oak Ridge
Dinner at 6:00 p.m.; meeting at 7:00 p.m.**