

**Catch
The
Striper
fever!**

T.S.B.A.



*The
Tennessee
Striped Bass
Association
Newsletter*

**July
2004**

**Make your plans now
to attend the
T.S.B.A. Annual Fish Fry
& Reunion**

**Saturday,
September 11, 2004**

**Anderson County Park on
Norris Lake**

President's Letter

Norris Lake Update - The TWRA has decided to propose the following modification to the fishing regulations on Norris Reservoir. For three consecutive winters, starting on November 01, 2005, there will be a limit of one striped bass per day with a minimum length of 36" instead of the present size limit of 24". The summer regulations, which run from April through October, will remain at two striped bass per day with a minimum length of 15". The purpose of the temporary regulation change is to allow the striped bass fishery on Norris Reservoir time to recover from the major die-off of the larger stripers in the summer and fall of 2003.

Open Fishing - The next "Open Fishing" day will be on Saturday, July 24, and we will be fishing below either Melton Hill or Fort Loudoun Dam. The time will be announced at the next meeting at Shoney's on the Clinton Highway on July 19. This will be a good opportunity to learn how to safely fish below the dams. Also, I expect that several of our out-of-state members will attend this event.

Cumberland River Trip - We have decided to schedule another trip to the Cumberland River sometime in October. Our spring outing to the Cumberland was very well received, and we expect that this trip will be just as successful. This stretch of the river is noted for its large stripers and many experts expect the next state record to come from these waters. We will release the details of this trip in a later newsletter. If we have enough interest in this trip, we will try to reserve the pavilion near the launch site below the dam and have a social gathering on that Saturday night. It really helps us in planning any event to have a decent estimate of how many people are going to show up, so please let me know if you are interested. I plan to go to the Cumberland at least once before October to learn as much as I can about how to fish this stretch of the river.

President's Letter - Page 2

Chumming - I just have to tell you a story that happened last month near the Cherokee Dam. On June 16, a buddy of mine and I went with Ezell Cox in his boat to fish the rip-rap near the Cherokee Dam. The stripers had been quite thick in this area for some time, and we didn't expect to have any trouble finding them and catching a few. Shortly after we dropped our downlines baited with frisky, fat shad, we started marking massive schools of stripers roaming near the bottom. Unfortunately, we could not entice any of them to hit our shad. We would dangle our baits right in front of their noses and they just got out of the way. This went on for over an hour, it was approaching "Prime Time," and we still couldn't get anything to hit. At around 7:45 PM, bait started dancing on the surface and I told Ezell that I needed some bait for the next day. This was not a problem and his first cast netted 100 active shad which was over twice what I wanted. The shad were still active on the surface and Ezell told us that he was going to do a little "chumming". He trolled over to the another school of dancing shad and with another perfect cast, he had an additional 200 to 300 shad. He left these shad in his net, which he rested on the deck of his boat. Then he proceeded to troll back to an area where we had been seeing lots of disinterested stripers on the fish finder. He left the shad out of the water for approximately three minutes, and then he released them overboard when we reached an area where there were stripers showing up on the fish finder. Some of the shad were dead and floated or drifted to the bottom. However, most of them were stunned and swam in a very erratic pattern. Within 30 seconds, our lines started going down and the stripers were smacking the shad from the surface to the bottom. The once-lethargic stripers were now in a feeding frenzy. Their hits were vicious and they were inhaling the shad. We had no problem getting our limit and going home with another lesson of "How To Catch Striped Bass" by Ezell Cox.

President's Letter - Page 3

Cherokee Camp Out & Kid's Day - The 2004 Cherokee Camp out and Kid's Day is over and I think that everyone called it an overwhelming success. If you did not attend this year's festivities, then please make a mental note to attend this event next year. We have a perfect location on Cherokee with a covered pavilion, two camping spots and our private parking lot. The water was only 40 feet away. There is no doubt in my mind that this event will quickly become our most popular event within two years. It's just a great way to spend some quality time with your kids, grand kids or your fellow fishing buddies. A special thanks to Allan Franklin and Cathy Taylor for their efforts in organizing this weekend. Also, we would again like to thank all of the members who contributed money or prizes to this outing. It really helped to make the weekend a success.

Cherokee No-Fish Zone - Everyone needs to remember that the "No-Fish Zone" is in effect on Cherokee Lake from July 15 to September 15. This includes the area starting at the boat ramp South of Cherokee Dam, across the lake to point 2, from there upstream to point 3 and then back across the lake to the gravel boat ramp North of the dam. This area is closed to all fishing. Please read the 2004 regulations for specific details. This regulation was put in place to help the Cherokee Lake striper fishery, so let's all observe it and fish elsewhere. Besides, you will be arrested if you are caught fishing in the no-fish zone during the period that it's closed.

Fish Fry - The T.S.B.A. Annual Fish Fry & Reunion for 2004 is scheduled for Saturday, September 11, at the Anderson County Park. This event will be similar to last year with a few new twists. We expect a large crowd including a lot of our seldom-seen, out-of-town members. We have not finalized our plans for this year's activities and we would like input from you. Please tell us what you liked and did not like about the previous outings so we can make it better.

President's Letter - Page 4

Watts Bar - We are adding another new event to our 2004 calendar and that will be a trip to Watts Bar sometime in August. This trip will be spearheaded by Bill Cate as he is the only local member who regularly fishes Watts Bar. According to Bill, the best time to go is through the week as that is when they are releasing water which is a key to catching stripers in these waters. There are no details of the trip yet, but we are tentatively scheduling this for sometime during the week of August 15. If you are free during the week, then please try to go with us to fish these uncharted (to us) waters. You should know that Watts Bar is noted for its large stripers and a 40 pounder is not out of the question. There are several reasons why Watts Bar has a lot of trophy-size striped bass. First of all, it is heavily stocked by the TWRA. Furthermore, most anglers do not keep any stripers from the waters as the TWRA has issued a warning not to eat striped bass from Watts Bar. Also, remember that the no-fish zone will be in effect on Cherokee in August and we are not scheduling any events on Norris, so Watts Bar will be a welcome change of pace.

Torn Casting Nets - I was talking to Allan Franklin at the last TSBA meeting about fishing below the dams and how much tackle you can lose because you are bouncing your weights off the bottom as you drift downstream. You are going to get snags no matter how skilled you become with this technique. One thing that he does to ease the financial pain of a lot of lost rigs is to salvage the lead weights off his old casting nets when they become torn to the point that they are useless. Just one old net will yield a lot of weights that are perfectly good to use when fishing below the dams. So before you discard your old casting nets, strip off the weights and reuse them for drift fishing or downlining. Also, there are members out there who make their own lead-head jigs. They would really appreciate the weights from your old bait-casting nets if you don't want them.

President's Letter - Page 5

My New Trolling Motor - From the day that I started fishing for striped bass about 3 years ago, I have had difficulty fishing alone on a day with just the slightest wind. I had to be in constant control of my trolling motor to keep the boat going in a straight line. The real problems occur when I am baiting hooks or fighting a fish. Invariably, the trolling motor would decide that it's time to start circling. Another problem that I had was that even on the lowest speed, I was trolling too fast and I couldn't keep my baits at the desired depth. I had to constantly start and stop the motor to try to keep the speed down. Many times, I got so frustrated that, after a few choice words, I simply pulled in my lines and went home. It just wasn't worth it. I realized that the solution was to get a new trolling motor with a feature called "Auto-Pilot," but they were expensive. Finally I broke down and purchased a new Minn-Kota trolling motor with auto-pilot. This was the best fishing decision that I have ever made. The motor cost \$640 plus shipping and it was worth every penny of it. I can actually troll or hold my boat in a fixed position in a fairly stiff wind even when fishing by myself. It has more power on high speed, and it can be throttled down lower than my previous trolling motor. I realize that many of you already have such a motor, but some of you have been fighting the same problems that I had. If you are a serious striped bass fisherman, then you should consider upgrading your trolling motor to one with the ability to hold a straight line even in strong currents or high winds without you constantly tending to it.

July Meeting - Please mark your calendars so that you don't forget the July TSBA meeting which will be on July 19 at Shoney's on the Clinton Highway. Your friends will be there. We will finalize the plans for several upcoming events at this meeting.

Bob Leach

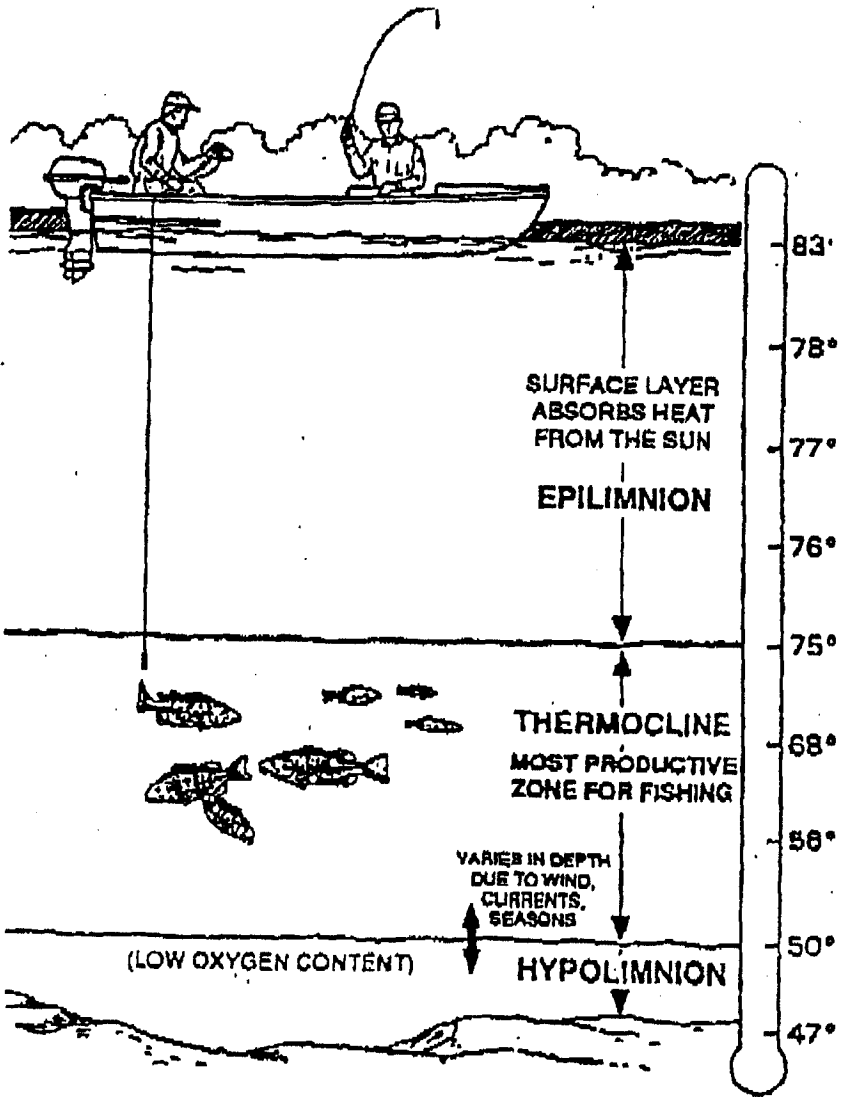
B&B Straight Creek Boat Dock

This month we are highlighting another one of our fine TSBA sponsors - the B&B Straight Creek Boat Dock located on beautiful Norris Reservoir near New Tazewell. This full-service facility includes a snack bar and a convenience store that offers a complete line of fishing and camping necessities including propane, bait, gas, ice, etc. They have covered slips for all sizes of boats from Jon boats up to houseboats. They also rent fishing boats and they have a fleet of some of the finest pontoon boats on Norris for rent by the hour, day or for extended periods of time. These come complete with the following amenities: 50 HP four-stroke motors, AM/FM CD Player with 4 speakers, 9' Bimini top, Depth Finder and Fish Locator, Light Pods with Docking Lights & Dual Horn, Aerated Live Well, 29 Gallon Built-in Fuel Tank with Gauge, Sleeper Bench Seats, Vinyl Floor, Built-in Swim Ladder, Table and Changing Room. The rates are quite reasonable: 24 hours - \$150, 3-Days - \$350 and a 5-Day rental is only \$550. These prices do not include gas and oil.

To get to the B&B Straight Creek Boat Dock, proceed South out of New Tazewell on Highway 33. Turn left on Lone Mountain Road and after 2.4 miles turn right onto Straight Creek Dock Road and proceed to the dock. For further information, Call either Maynard or Delbert Brooks at **423-626-5826** or go to their website at **www.straightcreekdock.com**. Their address is

**B&B Straight Creek Boat Dock
775 Straight Creek Dock Road
New Tazewell, TN 37825**

Please support these fine folks. They have an excellent full-service facility strategically located on Norris lake. They know this part of Norris and they can help put you onto some striped bass.



THERMOCLINES

The temperature of water in the lake is seldom constant from top to bottom. Layers of different temperatures form, and the junction of a warm and cool layer of water is called a thermocline. The depth and thickness of the thermocline can vary with the season or time of day. In deep lakes there may be two or more at different depths. Thermoclines are important to fishermen because they are areas where fish are active. Many times bait fish will be above the thermocline while larger game fish will suspend in or just below it.

Question of the Month

What brand of fish locator do you use?

Lowrance - 16

Eagle - 6

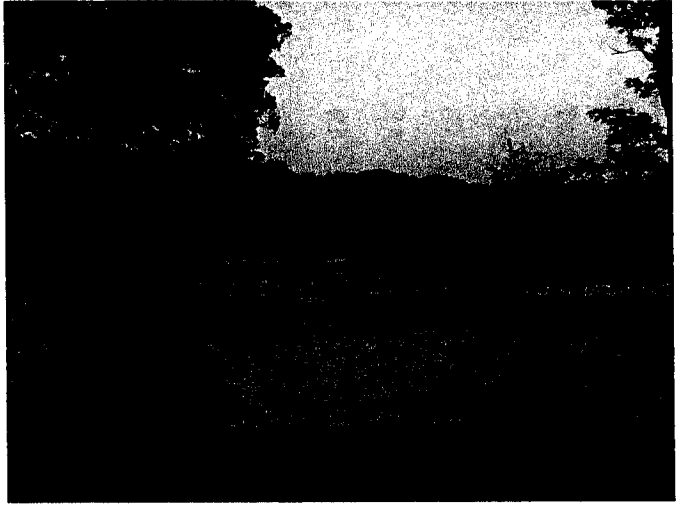
Marine Tech - 1

Interphase - 1

Garmin - 1

Hummingbird - 1

**Pictures from the T.S.B.A.
Annual Fish Fry & Reunion from 2003**



Letter from the Vice President

Summer Alternatives

The time of year has come when lake temperatures are 80 degrees plus. No Fishing Zones are in effect and fishing/boating traffic is high. What's a catch and release fisherman supposed to do? Stripper Tubes are no help in 80 degree waters. If you fish warm water, limit your trip to the first two you catch and kill. You cannot put them back and expect them to survive.

If you want to continue to practice catch and release fishing in the Southeast in July and August, the best solution is to target cool water areas below area dams. Stripers are attracted to the cool, oxygenated waters. I will not give specific locations, but if Stripers are found in the river above or below the dam anytime during the year, then they will be in these waters during the hottest months. They can usually be caught in these areas much shallower as well using planers and live bait.

One word of caution: Areas below dams can be dangerous. Water levels can change quickly and dramatically. Never ever anchor immediately below a dam, if a sudden water release occurs, the boat will be pulled under before you can get it loose. Always wear flotation gear in these areas. The law requires it and it can save your life. Avoid areas where water is coming over spillways. If your engine stalls, the boat can be sucked into the overflow and sunk. Deaths have occurred on several occasions because boats got under spillways and were sunk.

Another option is to target other fish species. Walleye, catfish, and panfish are abundant and easy to catch in warm weather. Whatever you do have a great Summer.

Felix Taylor

August Expectations

The larger stripers will be seeking the coolest refuge that is available. Stripers in the larger reservoirs will still have some of last winter's cold water stored at depth and hopefully enough dissolved oxygen to survive. The stripers will move out of the shallow warm coves to the main channel or deep coves near the dam. A good topographical map and fish finder are great fishing tools. Look for unusual humps, bends, and drop-offs on the old river channel below the thermocline. The fishing can be good at night to avoid an unpleasant day trip that has storms, pleasure boaters, and heat. August is a catch and kill month except at some tailraces with a temperature of less than 70 degrees F. It also has some of the best tailrace fishing of the entire year. Wear a good life jacket while fishing tailraces.

The TSBA web site offers up-to-date fishin' reports to all TSBA members.
Visit the web at: www.TNStripedBass.com
The current password is:
Username: "tsba"
Password: "club"

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Letter from the Secretary

"Luck is what happens, when the preparation meets the opportunity."

Catch the opportunity; become an active member. Attend meetings, make suggestions, help us prepare for the TSBA Annual Fish Fry & Reunion at Anderson County Park on Norris Lake. Do you believe it's July already? September will be here soon. Let us know if you're coming to the Fish Fry. Bring a fishing friend and your family and meet fellow members. Just let us know please if you're coming and how many. Camping is available. Get ready for the cast net throwing and casting contests. There will be more about Fish Fry activities in the next newsletter.

Also, another trip to Cordell Hull is being planned, but we have to hear from you. Send an e-mail to or call Bob Leach.

July, the dog days of summer! Oh Yeah! I'll have mine with cheese, chili, and slaw.

Dave Johnson

P.S. Only Robinson Crusoe had everything done by Friday!



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Norris Dam Marina

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2004 TSBA Calendar

*Please attend TSBA events
and join us at the meetings.*

Monthly meetings will be held at Shoney's
Restaurant, 5420 Clinton Highway. Get off I-75
at Exit 108, head west for about one mile. Turn
right onto Clinton Hwy. Shoney's will be on the right.

*Mark
Your
Calendar*

July 19: Monthly Meeting

Dinner: 6 PM Meeting 7 PM

July 24: Open Fishing

Below either Melton Hill Dam or Fort Loudoun Dam

August: Watts Bar Lake Trip

August 16: Monthly Meeting - Speaker: Jim Negus, TWRA

(Send your questions for Jim to Bob Leach)

Dinner: 6 PM Meeting 7 PM

September 11: T.S.B.A. Fish Fry and Reunion

Anderson County Park on Norris Lake

October: Cumberland River Trip

October 18: Monthly Meeting

Dinner: 6 PM Meeting 7 PM

November 15: Monthly Meeting

Dinner: 6 PM Meeting 7 PM

December: No Monthly Meeting

Space available!

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Fishing Hot Spots



CHEROKEE LAKE: Hit and Miss Daily

The best fishing will be near the NO FISHING ZONE at the dam. Hybrids can often be caught in shallow water and successfully released in water that exceeds 80 degrees F. Look around all the little islands near the dam that hold baitfish.

NORRIS LAKE: Good

Most of the stripers will be near the dam. Point #9 downstream and in Big Creek and Cove Creek.

According to the T.W.R.A., dissolved oxygen levels and temperatures near the dam appear to be within acceptable levels so far this year. To review the data, go to www.TNStripedBass.com, Fishing Reports. Click on the link: Norris Water Quality Looks Good (so far)!

BELOW FORT LOUDOUN & MELTON HILL DAMS: Good

August is normally the best month of the year to fish the tailrace. Remember, if the bottom doesn't grab your bait occasionally, you are not fishing deep enough.

ANY COLD WATER: Good where stripers have access

Investigate some of these and other rivers. Cumberland - Caney Fork - Clinch - Little Tennessee

Space available!

Place your ad here!



**B&B
STRAIGHT CREEK
BOAT DOCK**

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Maynard & Delbert Brooks

TSBA Merchandise



Hats are gray w/ a Striper on the front & the letters TSBA in green. Adult T-shirts are gray or tan depending on availability in sizes w/ a Striper and Tennessee Striped Bass Association embroidered in green. Kids shirts are gray. Sweatshirts are hunter green with TSBA in gray on front & Catch the Fever on the back with a Striper & fishing rod.

Name _____

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City _____ State _____

Zip _____

Phone (_____) _____

Hats Number of **Winter** T.S.B.A. Hats _____ X \$10.00 = \$ _____

 Number of **Summer** T.S.B.A. Hats _____ X \$10.00 = \$ _____

Kids Shirts

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Number of Shirts (*adult size xtra-large*) _____ X \$12.00 = \$ _____

Number of Shirts (*adult size 2X*) _____ X \$14.00 = \$ _____

Number of Shirts (*adult size 3X*) _____ X \$16.00 = \$ _____

Adult Sweatshirts

Number of *adult size medium* _____ X \$22.00 = \$ _____

Number of *adult size large* _____ X \$22.00 = \$ _____

Number of *adult size xtra-large* _____ X \$22.00 = \$ _____

Number of *adult size 2X* _____ X \$24.00 = \$ _____

\$5.00 to ship 1 to 2 items or \$8.00 3 or more items Shipping\$ _____

Order Total \$ _____

Make checks payable to the "TSBA". Do not send cash!

Mail to: **TSBA Merchandise**

2048 Eckles Drive, Maryville, TN 37804

YOUR 2004 TSBA OFFICERS AND STAFF

President:

Robert Leach 865-471-1365
Robert@TNStripedBass.com

Vice President:

Felix Taylor 865-981-2827
Felix@TNStripedBass.com

Treasurer:

Janine Johnson

Secretary:

Dave Johnson

TSBA STAFF

Newsletter:

Janine Johnson Janine@TNStripedBass.com

Public Relations:

Allan Franklin 865-694-8888
Ezell Cox 423-626-9547

Merchandising:

Cathy Taylor 865-981-2827

Advertising:

Amy Stevens 865-426-8509

Web Site:

Toney Stevens 865-426-8509

T.S.B.A. 2004 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.

Is this a renewal or a New Membership

Your Name _____

Spouse's Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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

E-Mail address _____

Referred By: _____

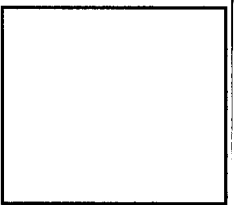
Enclose a check for \$20.00

**Mail to: T.S.B.A. PO Box 962
Norris Tennessee 37828**



The TSBA is a non-profit organization, 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.

**The Tennessee Striped Bass Association
PO Box 962
Norris, Tennessee 37828**



**July 24, 2004
Open Fishing
Below either Melton Hill Dam
or Fort Loudoun Dam**