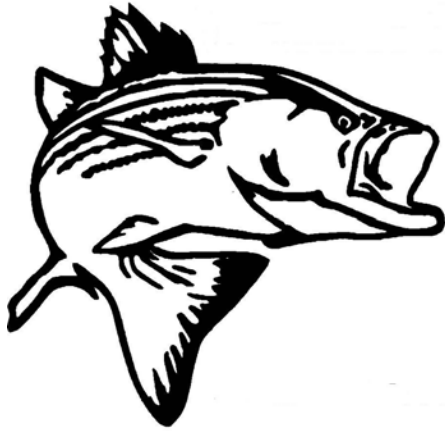


**Catch
the
Striper
Fever!**

T.S.B.A.



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

**September
2012**



Doug Steffe had this 42-inch musky officially recognized through the TWRA TARP program. Doug encourages fellow TSBA members to utilize this program. It is a great way to document memories of those trophy fish, especially the ones that are released. See page 12 to learn more about the TARP.

Letter from the Prez

Hello Folks! As hoped for, our August was mild and tolerable for our fishing trips. Cooler temperatures, along with the reservoir draw downs, helped the water quality in our lakes and rivers. The fishing reports were a typical summer mix of very good or moderately slow. September, with reduced boat traffic and hopefully a continuation of this cooling trend, should allow for some great fishing this month!

Be sure to read the feature article this month regarding the Tennessee Angler Recognition Program (TARP). This wonderful program allows anglers an opportunity to have their trophy fish recognized by TWRA. I highly recommend that you familiarize yourself with this program and keep a few copies of the application form in your boat. I have several of the certificates proudly displayed with a picture of the fish. While they are not as impressive as a mounted trophy, they do trigger a memory, a smile, and a sense of satisfaction - especially when I remember that the fish was released!

We have one more meeting before the TSBA Fish Fry. This meeting will center on how we set up our boats for striper fishing. I invite anyone who attends this meeting to share with our club their favorite equipment riggings either by pictures or verbal descriptions. Our meetings benefit from your input and participation. For those unable to attend, a topic on the forum will be started for your contributions.

Planning for the fish fry has started, and we hope everyone has **Saturday, October 6, 2012** open. The Grainger County Park on Cherokee Lake is a wonderful place for the whole family. Details of the event and contact information for questions or suggestions are also included in this issue.

On a final thought, I remember when I started live bait fishing. I used to dread the mostly tough, frustrating task of getting the bait. I would throw the net till my arm hurt, take the bait home for the morning fishing trip and then have mediocre results. This can be

discouraging! But the more I threw the net, and the more I learned, the better my results. I heard a statement this week that catching bait can be fun and rewarding and now I have to agree. If you are not there yet, keep going and learning. The fish fry will have lots of nets and folks that can teach you how to improve upon this skill. Good bait will make it much easier to get out there and GO Fishing!

— Doug Steffe, President



Club Advisor Ezell Cox caught and released this cool fish on a hot summer day this past August.

TSBA Annual Fish Fry

Where else in town are you going to get a lesson on cast net throwing served with a side of excellent fried fish? There's only one place to get that: the TSBA Fish Fry. This annual event has TSBA members from far and wide coming to celebrate another great year of fishing. Don't miss out on this annual event. Bring a covered dish to share, then sit back and let the TSBA chefs prepare the entrée for you. This is going to be a beautiful time of year for families to enjoy the park. We will have games and contests, and there is a playground for the kids. Mark your calendars now to save the date.

Who: TSBA members and their families
Where: Grainger County Park
When: Reunion starts at 10 a.m.; Lunch at 12 noon
What: Potluck meal - bring a side dish or dessert to share

The TSBA staff can't wave their magic fishing pole to make this event happen all on its own (Ezell won't give the pole back - that business about watching for bait-eating birds is just to throw you off his track). This means we are going to need some volunteers to help with setting up for this event. Please contact Doug Steffe at dougsteffe@centurytel.net if you would like to volunteer.



*Larry Newell
landed this
nice catch
while out on a
fishing trip
with Ezell Cox
in early Au-
gust.*

September Meeting

Please join us on September 17, 2012 for the TSBA monthly meeting. President Doug Steffe will be leading a discussion rigging your boat for striper fishing. Our meeting location is:

**Bass Pro Shops (Kodak/Sevierville)
3629 Outdoor Sportsmans Place,
Kodak, TN**

Bass Pro Shops is located at Exit 407 on Interstate 40. We will have dinner at 6 p.m. in the restaurant located inside the store. The meeting begins at 7 p.m. in a conference room on the second floor.

October Expectations

Lake turnover takes place through the month of October in the reservoirs of Tennessee. As the lake is homogenized, stripers will be free to roam the waters top to bottom, bank to bank, and end to end. This sometimes makes stripers difficult to locate because you have to find them on a daily basis. A great way to find the best places to look for fish is from past history. Look at the last few years of information available on fishing websites, articles, and magazines. Many times the best clue is to find the largest baitfish concentrations. October is also the start of some surface feeding. Catch and release also is an option again. The scenery is wonderful on the water this month. The lack of storms, heat and humidity, combined with the lack of boat traffic, makes it a welcome season.

— **Ezell Cox**

Be sure to visit our website
www.TNStripedBass.com

To view the August meeting on YouTube: [Click Here](#)

Minutes of the July meeting

With approximately 45 members in attendance, President Doug Steffe opened the meeting by introducing new members and the evening's speaker, Bud White.

Bud's presentation on river fishing featured a video on finding and catching large striped bass. Bud's video *How to Catch Monster Stripers in the River* [Part 1](#) and [Part 2](#) are available for you to view on YouTube. In a nutshell, Bud begins targeting river stripers in the spring when the water warms to the high 50's. He suggested the best

way to locate stripers is to pull multiple planer boards and move quickly, stopping only when he identifies a spot which holds fish. Bud sets his bait from five to seven feet behind the planer board to keep the bait from swimming into heavy cover. In deeper water, he also fishes down lines. For big fish, he advocated the use of very heavy bait casting tackle equipped with 40 to 50 pound monofilament line and 7/0 to 10/0 hooks. Bud matches his bait to the prevalent forage in the river he fishes and notes that bigger bait is always better.

After a brief break, Doug Steffe informed the crowd that TDEC had not yet replaced the missing, damaged or nonexistent fish consumption advisory signs at several boat ramps and bank fishing locations that are popular with striped bass anglers on Watts Bar Lake.

Doug mentioned club member Bill Ballou's rod building and repair skills and directed members to ask Bill about their rod repair needs.



Featured speaker Bud White made use of the amenities at our new meeting location to educate members on how to find trophy fish.

— Keith Shannon

Spotlight on TSBA sponsor Ken's Taxidermy

The family of TSBA advertisement sponsors includes Ken's Natural Taxidermy. Some may recognize Ken, who has been a guest speaker at former monthly meetings. Ken is also a former TSBA member who joined the club after fishing with Ezell Cox, where he caught his first and biggest trophy fish.



Ken in his shop with a walleye. Ken has won several awards at state taxidermy shows.

Ken, who got into this business after earning a degree in Wildlife Biology from Michigan State University, has been perfecting the art and science of taxidermy for over 20 years. He uses modern, proven methods for tanning all trophies and prides himself on the quality of work he can provide within a typical turn around time of 12 weeks. His business accepts specimens dropped off or mailed to his shop, which is located in LaFollette, TN.

Ken advises his customer to “treat any trophy like a piece of meat you are going to eat. This means keeping the specimen iced down until it is stored in a freezer.” For fish, Ken advises you to wrap the animal in a soaking wet towel. Place that bundle into a plastic bag and then store the whole thing in the freezer.



These thumbnail photos can't do justice to Ken's paint schemes on fish. To fully appreciate his work, be sure to visit www.kensnaturaltaxidermy.com.

Powell River Fall Classic

I would like to extend an invitation to all TSBA members to attend the Powell River Fall Classic to be held this coming November. This is the second tournament that Robb Morris and I have organized in 2012, the first one being the Powell River Striper Championship we held this spring.

The event will blast off from Flat Hollow Marina on Sunday, November 4, 2012. The Powell River guys will be there all weekend and will have a few spots for people who want to pre-fish and spend the night. We had a great time in the spring sharing fishing tips and caught some fish to boot. The entry fee will be \$50.00 per boat/team with a \$10.00 big fish pot. Trophies will be presented to winning team and big fish winner. We look forward to seeing you there!!!

— Nathan Bailey



The winners and the losers of the Powell River Striper Championship. Some of these men caught fish and went home with some cash and a nice trophy. Some, well.....did not!



Zach Reinitz, pictured left, is out having a good day on Norris Lake with his dad Gary. The Reinitz's would like to express their gratitude to all the TSBA members who are so helpful in teaching new anglers how to fish for striped bass.



Roy Hawk, left, and Doug Steffe are no fair-weather friends when it comes to fishing. The two landed a 36-inch and a 42-inch striped bass respectively on a recent fishing trip.



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kensnaturaltaxidermy.com

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Outlook for current fishing spots

CHEROKEE LAKE

The No Fishing Zone at the dam ends September 15, 2012. Late summer brings cooler days and longer nights. The striped bass and alewife that have been restricted to the deeper, cooler water are now free to scatter all over the reservoir. This will allow them to migrate to where the baitfish are concentrated. Looking for the large concentrations of baitfish and bait-eating birds is again a good way to find stripers/hybrids. Fish breaking on the surface is likely, especially early mornings. The baitfish are much more abundant in the headwaters and are often visible on the surface. Game fish are quick to find them, giving you a surface feeding opportunity to cast at. The premium locations have done a complete change from the dam: look in the upper most parts of the reservoir but stay in locations that have lots of bait. The larger stripers that have survived the summer can quickly recover from being stressed, making catch-and-release successful again.

NORRIS LAKE

The thermal trap on Norris is normally gone by early October, allowing once again for fish to move freely throughout the lake. Often baitfish are much more abundant on the shallow incoming water of creeks, coves and rivers so that is where the most game fish will also go to feed. Finding large schools of baitfish or looking for surface-feeding fish in the early morning can be the most effective way to find fish. The bait-eating birds are scarce on Norris, making them of limited use to help find the baitfish. Good catch and release practices will again be successful, even with the larger striper as they recover from the stress of summertime.

WATTS BAR & MELTON HILL

The striped bass bite in the tail race and downstream river will remain good as the water temperature cools from the lowering of the upstream reservoirs to winter levels. Eventually, the cooler, longer nights will equalize the temperature in the coves and river, allowing the bait to utilize the river. The tail race below the dams will stop being a premium location for stripers, so look downstream around the major coves. The release schedule plays a major role in the quality of fishing below the dams and it seems to be much better with flow. Look for the breaking fish and be prepared to cast or pull the planer boards across the action. Be at the right place at the right time by looking up release schedules on the TVA website. Limited handling of the fish can improve the survival of released fish. The fish in Watts Bar & lower Clinch Watts Bar have contamination warnings so should not be harvested.

—— **Ezell Cox**

Tennessee Angler Recognition Program

What are our options when that big fish comes along? Some may have the resources to have a replica or skin mount made, but most of us just take a picture and look at it occasionally for the memory. TWRA provides a recognition program for trophy length fish that presents an artistic certificate worthy of framing, with your name, date and details of the catch. This program is designed to acknowledge anglers for outstanding sport fishing accomplishments, encourage catch-and-release of trophy fish, and provides the TWRA with information on fish caught throughout the state.

Catching a striper over 40" or a Hybrid over 28", regardless of weight, qualifies for this award. While out there fishing for our strip-er, a lot of times we also catch other species that can earn a certi-ficate, such as small mouth (20"), large mouth (24"), walleye (28"), blue catfish (38") and even Musky (40").

The TARP features five levels of an-gler recogni-tion. Anglers catching a fish that meets or ex-ceeds the minimum length re-quirements will receive a Trophy Fish Certificate.



The TARP certificates feature Joseph R. Tomelleri artwork representing the species caught by the applicant and are suitable for framing.

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The other four levels include: Master Angler I (five trophy fish, any combination); Master Angler II (five different trophy size species); Master Angler III (ten different trophy size species); and Master Angler IV (Fifteen different trophy size species). Certificates, patches, gift tackle packages, and trophies are awarded as you earn a new Master Angler level.

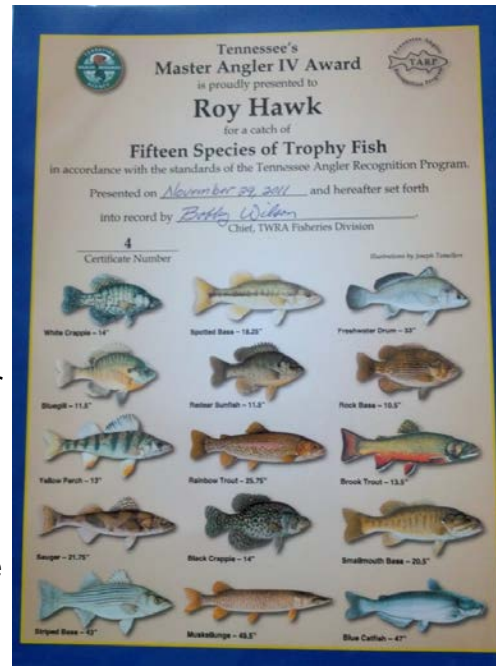
Having an application, obtained from the link below, along with you on your fishing trip can make the submission process easy to complete. We hope you will participate in this worthwhile and rewarding program.

TARP Home page

<http://www.tn.gov/twra/fish/tarp/tarp.html>

TARP application link

http://www.tn.gov/twra/fish/tarp/tarp_brochure_color%204-2010.pdf



TSBA member Roy Hawk is an avid collector of TARPS and has reached level IV, one of only 4 people in the state to have earned this honor. This certificate showcases artwork for the 15 different trophy size species he has caught.

— Doug Steffe, President



**October 6, 2012
TSBA Annual Fish Fry
Grainger County Park
Reunion at 10:00 a.m. ; lunch at 12:00**

Forecasting the Perfect Striper Fishing Trip

Back in 2004, as Hurricane Ivan made it's way north towards Tennessee, I happened to be fishing below Melton Hill dam. The heavy rains had the river really moving and the sidewalk below the dam was submerged. Once the rains let up, the low pressure system moved through and this drove the fish crazy and we caught all the stripers we wanted over the following two days. Fish were constantly breaking topwater in front of the dam. I kept this memory stored away in my mind and I always thought the next time a tropical low pressure system came through, the place to be was below the dam.

Fast forward to September 2011: while fishing with Larry Dahlberg to tape an episode for *The Hunt for Big Fish*, Todd Asher called and asked if I had seen the forecast. He mentioned a tropical storm approaching, and I immediately thought of Ivan in 2004. I told Larry we'd have a really good chance at landing some stripers if we time it right, so we decided to go striper fishing the last day he was in town, and the rest is history.



Notice Hurricane Ivan's path through Tennessee back in 2004.

In a nutshell, there was a reported 5-6 inches of rain that fell on Monday September 5, 2011 (Labor Day). This amount of rain flooded the downstream creeks and pushed a lot of the bait out of these creeks. We noticed large amounts of bait right up against the dam to begin the day. It was still raining when we got there and immediately caught a few fish, but was somewhat slow. We go down-river and see nothing, then come back up. The skies cleared as the

continued on page 15

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Tropical Storm Lee's forecasted path in 2011.

low pressure system had moved over Tennessee and the fish went wild. In about 2 hours, we caught over 30 fish all in the 20 to 30-pound class. Several doubles and triples were caught all on artificial lures. Oh, by the way, we were the only boat on the water that day. We could have caught fish on live bait, but when the action is this good, there is no need be-

cause we would have ran out of bait very quickly. It pays to pay close attention to the weather forecast and the next time one of these systems comes through Tennessee, it will be a wise decision to get out the raingear and fish the low pressure system.



Paying attention to weather patterns rewarded Billy Davis with an incredible day of fishing. The Hunt for Big Fish can be seen on Thursdays at 2 and 7:30 on the NBCSports network.



— Billy Davis, Melton Hill Bill Guide Service

YOUR 2012 TSBA OFFICERS, DIRECTORS, AND STAFF

President:

Doug Steffe 865-643-8662
dougsteffe@centurytel.net

Vice President:

Cory Malabey 865-659-3947
clmalabey@gmail.com

Treasurer:

Bud White
423-754-0541

Secretary:

Keith Shannon
keith.shannon@gmail.com

Assistant Treasurers:

Allan Franklin and Ann Howe

TSBA DIRECTORS

Todd Asher, Bill Ballou, Jim Blazier, Billy Davis, Erik Engebretsen, Ron Gabler, Jeff Jolly, Eric Rauch, Doug Steffe, and Bud White

TSBA STAFF

Newsletter Printing

& Distribution: Jim Blazier (jblazier@comcast.net) & Bill Ballou

Newsletter Editor:

Sherry Wehner (swehner9@gmail.com)

Membership:

Bud White 423-754-0541
(tn1fishinfool@yahoo.com)

Web Site

Keith Shannon (keith.shannon@gmail.com)

Add Sponsor Coord.

Gary Reinitz 856-278-1046

Public Relations

Allan Franklin 865-805-3120
Ezell Cox 423-626-9547

Tournament Coord.

Todd Asher 865-789-1991
Allan Franklin 865-805-3120

Co-op Supplies and

Raffle Prizes:

Steve Nichols 865-254-7855
kidchevy@comcast.net

Advisor:

Ezell Cox 423-626-9547

2012 TSBA Calendar

Please join us at TSBA meetings and events. Monthly meetings are held the ***Bass Pro Shops (Kodak/Sevierville), 3629 Outdoor Sportsmans Place, Kodak, TN.***

- Sep 17 Monthly Meeting: dinner 6:00 p.m., meeting 7:00 p.m.
Bass Pro Shops in Kodak, Tennessee
Topic: Rigging your boat for striper fishing - Doug Steffe
- Oct 6 Annual fish fry - no monthly meeting
- Nov 19 Monthly Meeting: dinner 6:00 p.m., meeting 7:00 p.m.
Bass Pro Shops in Kodak, Tennessee
Topic: Striper tackle
- Dec There is no monthly meeting in December.



Jay Girardot, standing, and Roy Hawk are keeping TSBA current with the times as they have tackled the job of recording TSBA meetings and posting them on YouTube.


This is a wonderful compliment to the many ways TSBA members have to stay connected. Be sure to check out their handiwork on YouTube .

[Click Here to view the August meeting](#)

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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

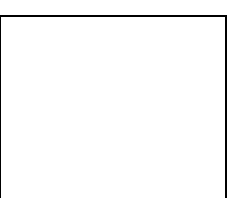
Sharps Chapel, TN. 37866

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**



**September 17, 2012: Monthly Meeting
Bass Pro Shops
3629 Outdoor Sportsmans Place
Kodak, TN
Dinner at 6:00 p.m.; meeting at 7:00 p.m.**