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Official Publication of the S.O.N.S.

# THE Bucket

VOLUME 21 • ISSUE 2  
FEBRUARY 2024

S.O.N.S. PHONE NUMBER 814-453-2270 (ALSO FAX NUMBER)  
sonslakeri@aol.com • www.sonsoflakeerie.org

## FISHING REPORT

A strong arctic blast of nearly zero weather caused enough ice to form across Presque Isle Bay during the last weeks of January. The ice grew to a thickness between 4-6 inches in Misery Bay and the head of the Bay drawing out hundreds of fishermen. On Sunday, January 21st I counted about 40 tents at the head and another 60-70 in Misery Bay. A warming trend and high winds quickly eroded the ice making it unsafe by the first week of February. Soon after the ice vanished, anglers were out on the piers and even in an occasional boat with many of them realizing some nice catches of perch. At the time of this writing the water temperature in the bay is hovering close to 32 degrees making it possible for it to freeze again with another cold spell.



HEAD OF PRESQUE ISLE BAY JANUARY 21, 2024

MISERY BAY JANUARY 21, 2024

## HIGH WINDS RAISE HAVOC ON THE LAKE

Winds in excess of 40 mph were a major factor in the breaking up and eroding of the ice that formed on Lake Erie. On January 23, 2024 winds caused a large ice floe to separate from the shore off of Catawba Island in Lake Erie's Western basin. There were 20 fishermen stranded on the separated ice prompting a call for help. The USCG responded with a

helicopter as well as airboats. Local fire dept. rescue teams also joined in. Seven fishermen were rescued by helicopter, 9 by boat, and 4 made it off by themselves. Thankfully there was no loss of life. Locally, high winds caused flooding and downed trees causing the closing of Presque Isle. Houseboat #24 broke anchor grounding it on the shore in Horseshoe Pond.



Houseboat #24 was pushed ashore on Horseshoe Pond



USCG Helicopter hovering over stranded ice fishermen on Lake Erie



## SONS 2024 MEMBERSHIP BUTTON

is a depiction of a bluegill this year. This is in keeping with featuring a native species fish on the button. You can pick up the 2024 pin at anyone of our events or meetings or you can get one by sending \$3.00 to SONS of Lake Erie, PO Box 3605, Erie, PA 16508

## JOIN A FRIEND TODAY!

MAIL TO: S.O.N.S., PO BOX 3605, ERIE, PA 16508



### RECORD OF MEMBERSHIP

2024

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Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Renew ☐ New ☐ \$5.00 ADULT ☐ \$4.00 SENIOR CITIZEN (over 65) ☐ \$4.00 JUNIOR (under 16)

## THE JANUARY MEETING PROGRAM

was presented by expert Angler John Scherrer. John shared some his well-tested fishing techniques with the over 100 members in attendance. He reiterated his very successful drop shot fishing methods using an assortment of artificial soft plastic bait. He pointed out the convenience and economy of plastic baits.

**John published the following list of gear he uses on Facebook:**



### Drop-Shot and Jigging Equipment List

- 6-ft to 7-ft Ultra Light Spinning Rod, 2-6 lb. rating
- 1000 Class Spinning Reel
- 2-lb to 4-lb Hi-Vis line (Gamma Hi-Vis Gold or Optic Yellow)
- Heavier line for connection to weight (12-lb Maxima Leader)
- VMC Spinshot Drop Shot Hooks (Size 8, 6, 4, 2, 1/0, 2/0) - #6 being perfect for Bobby Garlands, but #4's work as well)
- Round Bullet Weights Drop Shot Sinkers (1/8 oz to 1/2 oz)
- Bobby Garland Baby Shad, "Live Minnow", "Mo'Glow Outlaw Special"
- Bobby Garland "Baby Shad Swim'R" in Blue Ice
- Fishing Complete "Case Lil Fry", Chartreuse/Pearl <https://fishingcompleteinc.com/collections/soft-plastics-1/products/case-lil-fry>
- Trout Magnet
- Pautzke Fire Worm
- Bobby Garland "Itty Bit" (ice fishing)
- VMC Neon Moon Eye Jig, 1/32 oz.
- Trout Beads Bead Box, Small (perfect for organizing weights and hooks)

## FISH USA TO HOLD ANNUAL WALLEYE SEMINAR

Fish USA announce that they will be hosting their annual walleye seminar "The Walleyepalooza" on Saturday March 2nd from 10-2 at their store located at 6960 West Ridge Rd. Fairview, PA. They have a lineup of speakers who will discuss their best fishing techniques. The event is free and open to the public. Free food and beverages will be served.



## UPCOMING EVENTS:

**Friday - Sunday, March 1 - 3,**  
Erie Boat and Fishing Expo.  
Setup on Feb. 29th, Volunteer  
signup sheets will be available  
at our Feb. 26 meeting

**Saturday March 2nd**  
10-2 Fish USA 6960 West  
Ridge Rd. Fairview, PA  
Walleye-Palooza seminar.

**Sunday March 24th**  
1-5 Ice Out Party

**Saturday April 6th**  
8-12 AM Waterworks Pond  
PISP First Day of Trout Kids  
Fishing Volunteers needed.

**Saturday April 27th**  
9-12 PISP Rotary Pavilion  
Presque Isle Clean-up  
Volunteers needed.

## TROUT UNLIMITED TO HOLD FUND RAISER

The annual International Fly Fishing Film Festival fundraiser for Trout Unlimited is back! This fundraiser helps support TU's mission of cold water conservation in the region, with cold water fisheries being a prime indicator of system health. Presque Isle Partnership is a proud supporter and sponsor of the NWPA Trout Unlimited showing the film at the Tom Ridge Environmental Center at Presque Isle State Park on Saturday, March 2 at 5 PM. There will be raffles, prizes, and more! The price is \$20 at the door or Pre-Sale Online at <https://www.flyfilmfest.com/erie-pa/>



# HERE'S YOUR CHANCE TO WIN THIS YEAR'S FIN & FUR DRAWING

## ICE OUT PARTY ~and~ FIN & FUR DRAWING

**Sunday, March 24, 1 - 5 p.m.**

**Erie Shrine Club**

For over 30 years we have held our annual fund raiser "The Fantastic Fin & Fur" benefit at our annual "Ice Out Party", which will take place on Sunday, March 24th, 2024 from 1-5 PM at the Erie Shrine Club. This family friendly event is open to the public. There will be free food, beverages, door prizes, kids games, raffles, and fun.

**Admission to the party is \$10 for adults, \$5 for kids 15 and under. Toddlers are free.**

**Fun, Fin & Fur, join us on March 24, 2024!**

We are again holding our annual fund raiser "The Fantastic Fin & Fur" benefit which helps support all of our activities like operating our introducing children to the fun and skills of fishing, taking veterans fishing, operating our fish hatchery, building fish habitat, promoting public access and much more. All of these activities are supported by donors and supporters like you. You should have received 6 of the benefit tickets for the drawing. The suggested donation for the tickets is \$5.00 each or three for \$10.00. Each ticket will give you a chance to win one of 13 great prizes. No donation is necessary to participate in the drawing but all donations are greatly appreciated. You need not to be present to win. If you would like more tickets are if you have any questions call 814-453-2270 or email us at [sonslakeri@aol.com](mailto:sonslakeri@aol.com).

**The drawing will be held on March 24th, 2024 at our "Ice Out Party" The list of prizes is below:**

**1st Prize: \$5,000 Cash, 2nd Prize: \$1500 Cash, 3rd Prize: 8 hour Lake Erie Fish Charter on "Heartbeat", courtesy of Capt. Bob Ferraro, 4th Prize: half-day walleye charter on the "Waterbok" with Capt. Steve Skrypzak, 5th Prize: \$300 Gift Certificate sponsored by FishUSA.com and FishErie.com, 6th Prize: \$250 Gift Certificate to Edinboro Sports Sponsored by Winschel Bros. Landscaping, 7th Prize: \$250 Gift Certificate to Poor Richards Bait and Tackle sponsored by Poor Richards, 8th Prize: \$250 Gift Certificate to "Poor Richard's Bait & Tackle", sponsored by Mickey McMahon, 9th Prize: to be determined, 10th Prize: \$200 Gift Certificate to Alex Motor Sports, 11th Prize: \$200 in admission tickets on the (Perch Pirate), 12th Prize: \$150 gift certificate to FishUSA sponsored by Janitors Supply Co., 13th Prize: One year membership to Lake Shore Towing sponsored by Capt. Eric Guerrein (814) 453-6387**



**WINNER!!!!  
THIS COULD BE YOU!!**



*In the photo on the right Justine Kuno of Clymer, NY proudly holds up a huge walleye and on the left photo she and family members are aboard the Charter Boat, "Waterbok" holding up the rest of the catch on August 20, 2023. Justine was the proud winner of the 4th prize in our 2023 Fin & Fur Raffle which was held on Sunday March 26th, 2023. The 4th prize charter was donated by Captains. Steve Skrypzak and Tom Mascharka who have donated a fishing charter every year since the beginning of the Fin & Fur raffle. Our 2024 Fin & Fur drawing will be held this year on March 24th.*

**PLEASE NOTE THE CHANGE IN THE 9TH PRIZE LISTED ON THE BACK OF THE BENEFIT TICKET. The prize donor has gone out of business so we are substituting another of equal value to be determined later.**

## BOATING COURSES OFFERED

Safe boating courses are mandatory for anyone born after 1/1/1982 who operates a vessel with 25 hp or more or for anyone operating a personnel watercraft.

**Course #1** – A Basic Boating Course by the PA Fish and Boat Commission will be held at the Presque Isle State Park, Tom Ridge Center, 301 Peninsula Dr. Erie, PA 16505 on March 23, 2024, from 8-4. For more info go to: <https://register-ed.com/events/view/208873> , Sponsored by the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission. Pre-Registration is required for this event. Please email WCO Matt Visosky at [mvisosky@pa.gov](mailto:mvisosky@pa.gov) to register.

**Course #2** – The ABC3 Boating Course will be conducted by the Erie Power Squadron, a unit of the United States Power Squadrons. The Classes begin Monday, March 4th, 2024 at the Bayfront Maritime Center, 40 Holland Street, Erie, PA 16507 Registration: Monday, March 4, 2024 at 6:30PM The course is 8 weeks long on Monday evenings – 7:00PM - 9:00PM. The course is free however there is a nominal fee of \$50.00 for books, material, shipping and handling. For more info go to <https://www.usps.org/localusps/erie/>

**On Line Course:** You can also take a PFBC Safe Boating course and get certified on line at: <https://www.boat-ed.com/pennsylvania/>

## NEWS BRIEFS:

**Northeast Marina Update** – A public hearing was held at Northeast high school on January 24th regarding the future of PFBC's Northeast marina. At the meeting township officials who addressed the crowd of well over 175 stakeholders and interested parties announced that a plan was being formulated to form a authority to raise funds in order to purchase the property from the PFBC and to update the facility and manage and operate the marina. The boat launch ramp and fish cleaning station will be open this upcoming season. Hopefully the authority will be in place soon so the facility can return to normal operation.

**WCO's Bag Poachers and Law Breakers** – According to a recent story in Erie Times News, PFBC'S and with confirmation from Waterways Conservation Officers there were 272 citations issued by law enforcement officers between September 15 and December 15. Most of the arrests were made on around Lake Erie tributary streams. There were three arrests made resulting in the issue of 92 citations for a total fines totaling nearly \$100,000. Snagging and over limits were the most offenses. Eighteen WCO's participated in the investigations.

### High Court Upholds Boating Arrest

According to a story by Ed Palattella in Erie Times-News on Feb.7, 2024 In a 7-0 decision issued Tuesday, the state Commonwealth Court ruled that a state waterways conservation officer did not violate the constitutional rights of an Erie boater when the officer stopped the boater's 22-foot Sea Ray cabin cruiser near Gull Point, off Presque Isle State Park, in May 2016. The officer stopped the boat for a random check of fishing licenses and to perform a safety inspection, according to court records. He charged the boater with the summary offense of failing to have enough personal flotation devices.

A Commonwealth Court decision on Tuesday affirmed the constitutionality of random safety checks of boats on Lake Erie.

Five people were on the boat, but only four flotation devices were on board, according to the charge, the boater ended up getting fined \$75. He appealed, representing himself in a case that was the first of its kind in Pennsylvania.

### 2024 PA Trout Stocking Schedules

are available on line at: <https://fbweb.pa.gov/TroutStocking>.

### 750k lbs. of invasive silver carp were harvested

from Illinois River OGLESBY, Ill – The Illinois DNR says a record amount of invasive silver carp have been pulled from an Illinois River impoundment using seine nets. Between November 27 and December 6, commercial fishers and biologists pulled 750,000 pounds of invasive carp from the Starved Rock Pool, an impoundment near Oglesby, Ill. The IDNR says it was the single largest fish removal undertaken by the agency and "is believed to be a record for freshwater harvest within the United States.

Last year, Illinois launched a program to rebrand the fish as "copi" in a bid to make the fish more palatable to consumers. Hope it works.

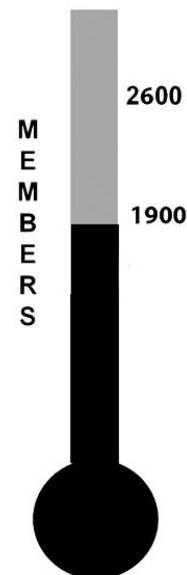
## 2024 MEMBERSHIP RAFFLE WINNERS

The following are the lucky winners of our 2024 membership drive raffle whose names were drawn at our January 22, 2024 membership meeting. Each winner won \$100.

1. **Matthew Myers**,  
Erie, Pa. 16509
2. **James Leonard**,  
Edinboro Pa.
3. **Joe Stanley**,  
McKees Rocks, Pa.
4. **Tom Campbell**,  
Oakdale, Pa.
5. **John Skrzypczak**,  
Erie, Pa.
6. **Doug Kramer**,  
McKees Rocks, Pa.
7. **Henry Kopnitsky**,  
Erie, Pa.
8. **Bob Zalewski**,  
Baden, Pa.
9. **Jeff and Kathy Greene**  
Erie, Pa.
10. **Anonymous**  
(Donated Back, Thanks)

## MEMBERSHIP LEVEL IS STILL LAGGING

Our annual membership drive was launched earlier last fall and as of the end of February the level was at 1900, well below last year. We need your help to solicit more members to reach our goal of 2600.







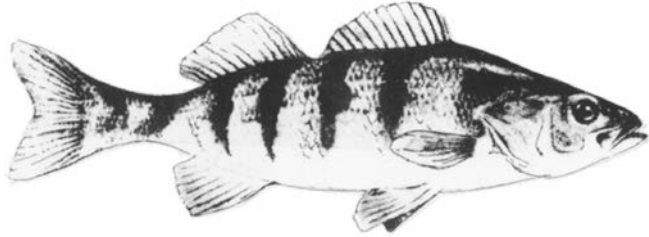
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**"The Bucket" published monthly  
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**VOLUME 21 • ISSUE 2  
FEBRUARY 2024**



**"A REPLENISHING SPECIES"**

## **GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING**

**MONDAY, FEB. 26 7:00 PM**

**POLISH FALCONS CLUB  
431 E. 3rd Street, Erie**

**PROGRAM:** "The History of Presque Isle" will be the subject of the presentation by one of the environmental education staff from Presque Isle.

## **WOULD YOU LIKE TO GET YOUR SONS NEWS LETTER BY EMAIL?**

If so, send us an email to [sonslakeri@aol.com](mailto:sonslakeri@aol.com) list your name, address and note that you would like to change to the electronic version. So far we have about 310 members who have requested the change so far. You can always read the current and past issues of the *Bucket* at our web site, [sonsoflakeerie.org](http://sonsoflakeerie.org) at any time.

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PERMIT NO. 480

## **ANGLER LOGS IN NEARLY FOUR YEARS OF FISHING EVERY DAY**

SONS Director Jack Klapthor told me about a friend of his who has gone fishing every day for nearly four consecutive years, from April 13, 2020 until now. His longtime friend is Tony Sobina, age 69, a retired machinist is a resident of Oil City, PA

Coincidentally, former PA Fish Commissioner and Outdoor Writer Marilyn Black, submitted an article to the PA Angler magazine (*January-February issue*) that highlighted Tony's retirement life, pointing out that Tony

Sobina has fished every day since his retirement in 2020. He is an avid fly fisherman who targets wild trout. He admits that he doesn't catch a fish every time out. He fishes alone most of the time saying that "My typical fishing partners are eagles, mergansers, herons and otters" You can read the full article at: [https://www.fishandboat.com/About-Us/Angler-and-Boater/Angler-and-Boater-2024/Documents/JanuaryFebruary2024\\_fishingdaily.pdf](https://www.fishandboat.com/About-Us/Angler-and-Boater/Angler-and-Boater-2024/Documents/JanuaryFebruary2024_fishingdaily.pdf) Or see video interview at [https://youtu.be/G\\_pJuRo9ttQ](https://youtu.be/G_pJuRo9ttQ)



*In this photo submitted by Tony Sobina holding up a 27-inch brown trout he caught and released in Potter County*



*SONS Director Jack Klapthor (L) & Tony Sobina*

Outdoor writer Brian Whipkey wrote another story which was published in the Friday, February 9th issue of the Erie-Times News.

Jack arranged a meeting with his friend and together we travelled to the Arcade Diner in Titusville, where we met Tony and two of his buddies for breakfast. There were a lot of fishing and hunting stories swapped amongst these

good friends. I found Tony to be a really personable guy who really loves to talk about his experiences in the outdoors. I invited Tony to be our key speaker at our March 18th General Membership meeting where he will share his stories with you. As we left he was trying to decide where to go that day.

## **Good Fishing!**