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THE Bucket

VOLUME 21 • ISSUE 1
JANUARY 2024

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

FISHING REPORT

The following January 1 Facebook post by Jeremy Scott tells the whole story:

Fishing remains excellent in Presque Isle Bay. My best advice is to get out and drive around. Fish a spot for five to ten minutes and pay attention to what others are doing. Are they catching fish, are the fish the species you're after, are they of the size you're after? How are they fishing, what are they using and how? If no keepers in ten minutes then either switch tactics or spots because the Fall feeding frenzy is still on! The two main locations have been 3 to 10 foot weed beds targeting fishing honing in on baby

bluegills and the deep water 15 to 30 foot fish. Where you need to fish on the bottom, I have been after the shallow fish using 4 lb mono w/ fluorocarbon leader, rocket bobber to detect the subtle cold water bites and a silver trout magnet head with either White, Chartreuse power worm chunk tipped w/ two maggots or a Bobby Garland Bitty B plastic. Happy New Year!

(Note: Jeremy Scott is an avid outdoorsman who has shared his expertise with our members many times as a speaker at our meetings)

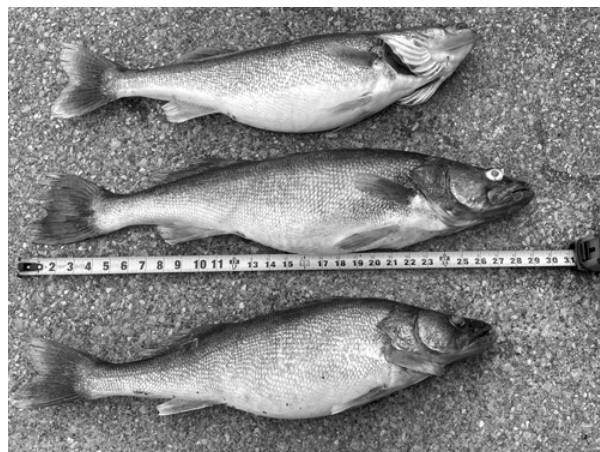


Jeremy Scott



Bucket of Crappies

The mild weather has afforded some great fishing opportunities as evident in recent posts on the Presque Isle Bay Anglers Facebook page.



Brothers Dan & Tom Skrzypczak caught these three walleye while fishing from the Cascade docks on Dec. 16. SONS Director Joe Springer caught 2 walleye off of the Public Dock. Fishing has been good.

The photo on the left was sent to Facebook on December 20 by Jim Perry...

...Mike Stemka posted the center picture on December 30...

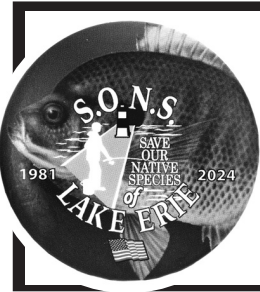
...and finally Justin Madera shows what he did with his catch on December 31.



This plus This equals This



**PLEASE
DON'T LITTER.**



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



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2024

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Phone _____ Date _____

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

SAVE THE DATE

Our annual fundraiser "The Ice Out Party"

will be held at
the Erie Shrine Club,
West 38th and Zuck Rd
on Sunday March 24th
from 1-5.
Public Welcome

ON LINE POST BY FISHWESTPA#

Great day on the wall with good buds. I've been fishing the Erie tribs for 4+ decades now and thought I seen it all but today there was a first. After getting on a good school of fish and hooking up and catching a few. I wanted to try the stupid lure to see if it would work here like it does on Shenango. (Those of you that have fished with me know what I'm referring to, lol.) Anyways. I throw it out and sure enough bam, strike indicator gone! So I'm fighting the buck and I look up and here comes a couple duck hunters in boats. Jerks will just keep going and cut you off and not care, cool guys will stop and wait until you get the fish to net but, and here's the first, only super cool guys stop and pull there net out and offer to net it for you which these guys did. I had my doubts mostly because I've never seen that happen plus the fish wasn't close to their boat... yet. So I said yes if you get the chance get 'em. Just then sure enough the fish made a hard run right towards their boat. I lifted up with some force and the fish came to the top and with one fell swoop, in the net! I couldn't believe it. So cool. Thanks guys, I sure appreciate it! I'm not sure who was happier me or them by the looks of that smile! Lol

#fishwestpa #Steelhead #eriepa
#Walnut Creek



LAMPE MARINA FISH CLEANING STATION IS COMPLETE

A dedication of the Lampe Marina fish cleaning dedication
will take place sometime in the spring

DUCK HUNTERS PITCH IN

The duck hunters mentioned in the post on the left were Tom Mascharka (at the skiff tiller) and his son, Tom Jr, They were coming off the Lake after duck hunting into the channel at Walnut Creek and as they entered the mouth of the creek the shore fishermen started to reel in their lines as required when the fisherman who identifies as FISHWESTPA# hooked a steelhead which swam under their stopped boat entangling the line. Tom and his son offered to net the fish which they did and released it. This story causes us to reflect on the fact that the origin of our club is deeply rooted in the NW PA Duck Hunters Assoc. In 1981 a group of good friends were attending a graduation party when the conversation went to the poor condition of the Lake Erie fishery. They decided that forming an organization to work to improve fishing and the fishery was in order- The SONS of Lake Erie was born. Almost all of these men were members of the NW PA Duck Hunters Assoc. and a lot of the structure of the duck club which was formed in 1958 were incorporated into the SONS. Many of these men served as our first officers and directors.





THE PROGRAM AT OUR DECEMBER MEETING

was a presentation by WQLN TV producer director Mike Berlin. He brought with him the video of an episode of the WQLN "Chronicle" series which spotlights areas of the history of the Erie Region. The half hour video was entitled "Lake Science". The presentation gave us a look at the historic geology of Lake Erie. The program begins with great description of how the Great Lakes were formed 15,000 years ago by Harvey Webster from the Cleveland Museum of Natural History. It also featured interviews with Dr. Jeanette Schnarrs, director of the Regional Science Consortium, Bob Wellington former Aquatic Biologist from the Erie County Health Dept. They outlined the historic biological changes to the waters of Lake Erie and the watershed. WJET Meteorologist, Tom DiVecchio talked about the relation of Lake Erie to our local climate. Mark Haffley, team leader from the PFBC Lake Erie research unit talked about the Lake Erie fishery. There was also historical photos and video clips highlighting Presque Isle State park. SONS president Jerry Skrypzak talked about the history of Erie's commercial fishing industry. The video was extremely well done. There are follow up episodes in the production and they will be aired on WQLN tv. You can also view the Lake Science episode on line at: <https://www.pbs.org/video/lake-science-uxf33n/>

DECEMBER MEETING TURNED FESTIVE

A little over 70 SONS members attended our December General Meeting. In line with an annual tradition of making the December meeting a Christmas party, they were treated to a great presentation by Mike Berlin and free pizza, refreshments, cupcakes, cookies, snacks and candy canes. All those in attendance also received a Christmas gift. SONS members Barb Jaruszewicz and Ralph Friend had birthdays and were presented with a birthday candle cup cake.



L-R Barb Jaruszewicz, Ralph Friend, Chuck Miller and John Krupinski presents birthday cupcakes while the membership sang "Happy Birthday"

REMINDER:
**THE SONS MEMBERSHIP BENEFIT
RAFFLE WILL BE HELD AT OUR
JANUARY 22 MEETING.**
Get your tickets in.

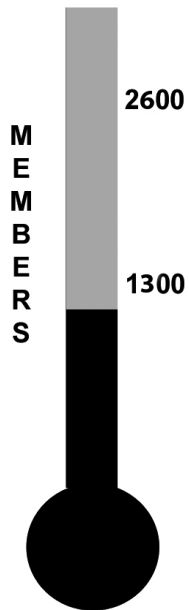
**NOTE: IF YOU HAVE NOT YET REJOINED FOR 2024, THIS WILL BE
THE LAST NEWSLETTER YOU WILL RECEIVE – PLEASE REJOIN.**

Please use this application to renew your membership:

<p>SONS 1981 ~ 2024 Record of Membership Jan/Dec 2024 KEEP THIS CARD IN YOUR WALLET</p> <p>LAKE ERIE www.sonsoflakeerie.org • PO Box 3605 • Erie, PA 16508</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> ADULT • <input type="checkbox"/> SENIOR CITIZEN (over 65) • <input type="checkbox"/> JUNIOR (under 16)</p>		<p>SONS LAKE ERIE</p> <p>1981 ~ 2024</p> <p>Record of Membership 2024 (PLEASE PRINT CLEARLY)</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> \$5 ADULT • <input type="checkbox"/> \$4 SENIOR CITIZEN (over 65) • <input type="checkbox"/> \$4 JUNIOR (under 16)</p> <p>Name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>City _____ State _____ Zip _____</p> <p>Phone _____ Email _____</p> <p><input type="checkbox"/> Re-new <input type="checkbox"/> New <input type="checkbox"/> Veteran</p> <p>NOT FOR PROFIT 501(c)3 ORGANIZATION</p>		<p>News124</p> <p>▲ RETURN THIS FORM TO S.O.N.S.</p>
<p>Name _____</p> <p>Address _____</p> <p>City _____ State _____ Zip _____</p> <p>Authorized S.O.N.S. Signature _____</p> <p>(814) 453-2270 daily bus. hrs. 10-5 email: sonslaker@aol.com</p> <p>News124 NOT FOR PROFIT</p>	<p>KEEP THIS CARD IN YOUR WALLET</p>			

MEMBERSHIP LEVEL IS LAGGING

Our annual membership drive was launched earlier last fall and as of year's end our member level was at 1400, well below last year. We need your help to solicit more members to reach our goal of 2600.



Fish come in three sizes: small, medium, and the one that got away!

WALNUT CREEK WEB CAM NOW ON LINE

The photos shown above are screen grabs captured from the web camera at Walnut Creek. They will give a rough idea of what the camera captures- #1 is the boat launch ramp, #2 is the parking lot, #3 is the basin area, #4 is the creek retaining wall, #5 is the mouth of Walnut Cr. and #6 is a view of Lake Erie. We hope to afford viewers a view of the fishing activity, weather and lake conditions. The scenes will be adjusted to fit the seasonal activities. We are pleased with the image quality and are grateful to have FishUSA as a partner and the grant we received from the PFBC. You may view the camera 24/7 at FishUSA at <https://www.fishusa.com/walnut-webcam/> or another link on the SONS web page at <https://sonsoflakeerie.org/web%20cam%20page.htm> – or the QR code on the right should also take you to the site from your camera if your phone can read them.



REMINDER

Yellow Perch caught in Presque Isle Bay or the inland waters of Presque Isle must be at least 7 inches long. The regulation is in effect from December 1 to April 30.

PFBC GATHER STEELHEAD FOR SPAWNING

On December 12, 2023 a team of PFBC Hatchery staff and biologists, youths from the Governor's Youth Council as well as a host of onlookers gathered in and around the mouth of Trout Run

while helpers in waders netted hundreds of steelhead which were sorted by sex and then taken into the small building on the beach (we showed it last month) where eggs and spawn were harvested.

The fish were loaded into PFBC trucks where they were taken to be released elsewhere. This scenario is repeated frequently and is really cool to watch.



SONS DIRECTOR NAMED LIFE MEMBER

A section of our by-laws dictates that any member who has served as an officer or director for more than 15 years becomes a life member. Jack Klapthor has achieved that status and is now designated as a life member. There are a total of 13 members who were named life members. They are Ed Heubel (Deceased) , Bob Zawadzki, Bernie Kisiel (Deceased) , Ralph Corvaglia, Frank Koch (Deceased) , Ed Kissell, Jerry Skrypzak, George Koenig (Deceased), Ron Lubak (Deceased), Kevin Lubak, Dick Kelly, Ken Plonski (Deceased) and Jack Klapthor.



Life members Bob Zawadzki, Jack Klapthor, Kevin Lubak, Jerry Skrypzak, and Ed Kissell were present at our December meeting and pose with Jack.



GREAT LAKES BRIEFS:

The water level of most of the Great Lakes has been falling. According to NOAA lower water level reduces the threat of beach erosion and coast flooding during windy winter storms.

The level of Lake Erie is down 2" in the last month, but it's up 4" in the last year. It stands 9" above the December average, but is 26" below the highest December level that occurred in 1986.

The Great Lakes had the smallest amount of ice cover this New Year's Day in at least the past 50 years. The Lakes are on track to see less ice cover than the seasonal average this winter, according to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's Great Lakes Environmental Research Laboratory.

FYI According to the North East Township Community Calendar, a public hearing will be held on Wednesday, January 24, at 6:00 PM at the North East High School auditorium regarding the North East Marina.

THE ANNUAL FRUIT BASKET DISTRIBUTION

was completed on Saturday December 9th by members of the PA Steelhead Association, S.O.N.S. of Lake Erie, 3.C.U. Trout Association, TU, and Gem City Outdoorsman's club and many others who volunteered their time delivering fruit baskets to landowners that allow public fishing access along their stretches of Steel-head streams. 92 baskets were distributed. The fruit basket program has been in place since the 1990s. Landowner relations are essential to maintain fishing access along the Erie Steelhead streams — there are miles of property that are available for fishing thanks to land-owner permission. Please treat all property with respect but be especially gracious when fishing private property open to the public; stick to clear paths, read and follow all signage.



SONS Secretary Don Tombaugh and Director Jack Klapthor pitched in too.

Shown below is our Basket Delivery Team. Thanks!



PRESQUE ISLE MARINA UPDATE

The old docks at the Presque Isle Marina have been removed except for two that are the same type as the new ones. The marina is being dredged where the docks were removed and the new docks are being installed



SOME THOUGHTS ABOUT ICE FISHING

Weather forecasts are predicting some very cold weather which could possibly generate enough ice for fishing. One thing that you should always remember that ice should never be considered safe and early season ice conditions vary from waterbody to waterbody.

There is no agency that monitor ice conditions, making it the individuals' responsibility to learn those conditions. The ice conditions on any lake can vary from location to location. Remember, even though it may look thick on the surface, moving water from streams, rivers and springs can cause ice to form unevenly. Remember use care and check ice conditions yourself do not rely on hearsay..

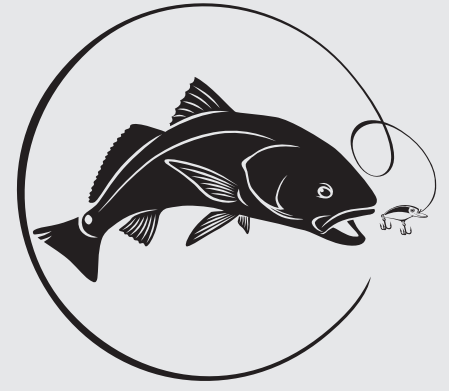
People who do venture out on the ice should:

- Dress warmly in layers and consider wearing a life jacket or vest.
- Do Not go alone. Head out with friends or family. Take a cell phone and make sure someone knows where you are and when you are expected to return.
- Know before you go. Don't travel in areas you are not familiar and don't travel at night or during reduced visibility.
- Avoid inlets, outlets or narrows that may have current that can thin the ice.
- Look for clear ice, which is generally stronger than ice with snow on it or bubbles in it.
- Carry some basic safety gear: ice claws or picks, a cellphone in a waterproof bag or case, a life jacket and length of rope, and a spud bar to check ice while walking to new areas.
- Wear creepers attached to boots to prevent slipping on ice and take extra mittens or gloves so you always have a dry pair.



If you go through the ice:

- Carry a set of ice picks in your pocket to help you climb out of the ice hole.
- Once out of the water, do not stand up. Rather, walk on your forearms until the majority of your body is on solid surface.
- Try to remain calm, call for help and take steps to get out of the water as soon as possible.



THINGS TO DO:

Are you bored? Looking for something to do? Here are some ideas. There are some gun raffles scheduled, they are all at the Rainbow Gardens facility at Waldameer Park. We have been invited to participate in these events by the sponsors and are being allowed to sell memberships and raffle tickets. They are scheduled as follows:

Lake Erie Fan Fare

Feb 3rd, 5-9

Elks Lodge

Feb. 24th, 1-6

Swanson Memorial

March 2nd, 1-6

Ducks Unlimited

March 9th, 12-5

Waterford Lions Club

March 23rd, 6-11

Come in and join the fun and help support those who support us.

There are also some shows scheduled at the Erie Events Center that are being sponsored by Erie Promotions and Expos. We also participate in these events too- They are scheduled as follows:

Erie Auto Show

February 1st-4th, 2024

RV and Outdoor Adventure Show

February 16-18, 2024

Erie Boat Show

(Boat and Fishing Expo)

March 1-3, 2024



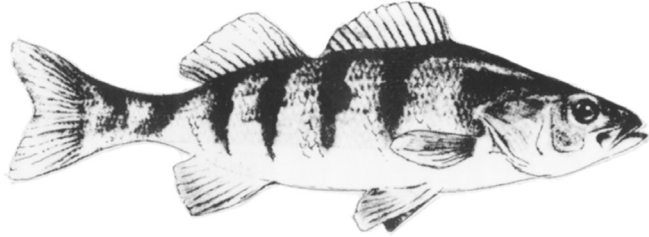
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**"The Bucket" published monthly
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**VOLUME 21 • ISSUE 1
JANUARY 2024**



"A REPLENISHING SPECIES"

GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING

MONDAY, JAN. 22 7:00 PM

POLISH FALCONS CLUB

431 E. 3rd Street, Erie

PROGRAM: Expert Angler John Scherrer will give us a refresher course on tactics that he uses to catch a lot of fish from the docks and piers of Presque Isle Bay

IMPROVEMENTS TO LIBERTY PIER NEAR COMPLETION

The dock wall repairs at the Liberty Pier are being wrapped up. The 150' of dock wall will add more fishing space.



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

If so, send us an email to sonslakeri@aol.com list your name, address and note that you would like to change to the electronic version. So far we have about 280 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 at any time.

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PISP STAFF BUILD ACCESS POINTS FOR ICE FISHERMEN

Presque Isle State Park staff made access points for ice fisherman on Presque Isle Bay by pouring loads of gravel onto the riprap bordering Presque Isle Bay at Vista points 1, 3, 4 & 5. The gravel fills in the gaps of the rocks and should make it easier for ice fishermen to access the ice.



REMINDER

A person shall wear a Coast Guard approved personal flotation device (PFD or life jacket) during the cold weather months from November 1st through April 30th while underway or at anchor on boats less than 16 feet in length or any canoe or kayak.