

Wives and kids participate

# Conservation club caters more to family scene

By LEM MESESE  
Outdoors writer

"This is the only club in the state dedicated to family fishing. We promote things the whole family can do together," said Chuck Dittmar, spokesman for the Four Seasons Fishing Club in western Wayne County.

"The Steelheaders—that's a man's club. They have only one thing a year for the wives. I know, I'm a member," Dittmar went on.

The setting was the Livonia Senior Citizens Center at Five Mile and Farmington roads. There, on the Wednesday of each month, members of the 86 families attend meetings of this unusual new chapter of the Michigan United Conservation Clubs (MUCC).

"OUR PANFISH tournament is basically a kids' competition. In the bass tournament, there's a special kids' division," said Dittmar, a Westland resident and seventh grade teacher.

"When we had an ice fishing tourna-

ment, we gave ice fishing poles as prizes—11 or 12 rods. No man went home with one. We gave all the prizes to kids."

MUCC is largely a man's world. A conservation group with wide environmental interests organizationally, it tends to become a hunting and fishing club at the local level. The Four Seasons Club, however, illustrates a new kind of organization growing up.

Another example is the Wolverine Four-Wheelers, a family camping MUCC affiliate in the western suburbs.

Four Seasons president is Chuck's brother, Art Dittmar, a Farmington Hills resident who teaches biology at Garden City West High School. Vice-president is Edward Degg of Livonia.

The other two officers are women—secretary Estelle Maurer of Dearborn Heights and treasurer Joyce Gray of northwest Detroit.

Other members come from Redford Township, Garden City, Westland, Plymouth, Canton, Novi and scattered points around the metropolitan area.

Membership has built up entirely by word of mouth communication since the first meeting early in 1977.

RAOUL CONE of Livonia was chairman of last Saturday's bass tournament at Loon Lake northwest of Pontiac. Besides picking a site that had both a livener for renters and a public launch for those who own their own boats, Cone told the group:

"We have lake maps for you. It'll show you the stump area at the east end of the lake. At the west end are your deep holes and gravel bottomed areas."

Chairman of the June 23 panfishing tournament at Wampplers Lake in the Irish Hills is Charlie Greve of Garden City. His scouting report noted there were camping facilities for those who wanted to go out the night before.

"We'll have games for the kids—egg toss and potato sack race," Greve said. "If we get enough fish, we'll have a fish dinner—and we should 'cause we're a fishing club. Bring

Coleman stoves.

"The lake is stocked with muskies—heavily stocked—and you can also catch crappies right off the bank."

WALLEY TOURNAMENT chairman Ed Degg had scouted Decker's Landing on Lake St. Clair for the July 9 contest. Ralph Brusseau of Dearborn Heights was taking a list of available large boats for the Aug. 12-13 "deep water" contest at Manistee for those Lake Michigan treasures—lake trout, chinook salmon, coho, brown trout and steelhead.

President Art Dittmar, who knows Lake Michigan well, had notes of caution on the big lake: "We're going to be fishing four or five miles from shore. If a storm blows up—we'll have no idea how fast it can blow up. A 70 horsepower motor is the minimum you need for power to get in."

A frequent feature is a movie. That evening's offering was on chinook salmon, produced by a tackle company.

"FISHING REPORT"—a time for bragging and complaining—is on each agenda. Random samples:

• Mullet Lake in the northern lower peninsula produced "200 just sub-jug walleyes" the prior weekend for one angler.

• Kent Lake yielded three largemouth bass on a crawler harness.

• The Detroit River off Bob-Lo Island is great for walleye, "but not until the third week of June." Reason:

The river is currently full of smelt on which the walleyes are feeding, and they rarely take an angler's bait.

• "There are an awful lot of fish (in the Detroit River) right in front of Cobo Hall at night. There's a reef—a sandbar—in front of Cobo Hall. You troll the edge of that sandbar."

• Chinook, lake trout, steelhead and browns are hitting off Manistee, about 25-30 feet down in 60-80 feet of water. But they're scattered rather than schooling. Best lures: green and yellow spoons.

## Staff works hard for PAL tourney

The sixth annual J.P. McCarthy-Wabeek PAL Invitational, Tuesday, June 20, is a special day for the kids of Detroit.

It's also a significant calendar date for the staff at the Wabeek Country Club, where the tournament brings in some of the top golfing pros.

The staff at Wabeek, including the chief cook, groundskeeper, caddy-master and club pro, work many hours leading the scenes to make the event successful. The PAL tourney is on the minds of these persons many weeks in advance.

For Kevin Dushane, the head groundskeeper, it means grooming up the 6,500-yard course to best of his crew's ability.

"About two weeks before the tourney, we begin weeding and sharp edging around the sand traps, greens and bunkers," said Dushane, who has been at Wabeek for 2½ years.

"In an event like this, you get things done around a golf course you don't usually get around to doing," Dushane said.

For instance, Dushane said his crew fertilizes the course much earlier than usual.

"THERE IS ALWAYS room for improvement," he said. "Some of the cold spring weather has slowed us down," said Dushane.

A big concern for Dushane is keeping the greens in the best shape possible so the pros do not come across any unnecessary hazards.

"We usually double cut the greens and fairways so they'll be up to the standards of the other courses where tournaments are played," the groundskeeper said.

Dushane said his crew has also resodded parts of the course—designed by Jack Nicklaus and Peter Dye—where drainage is poor.

Another task performed by Dushane involves setting the pins and placing them so that they are challenging and up to legal standards. The groundskeepers also move the blue tee markers back in order to please the PGA players.

The person in charge of determining pin placement, lining and striping the course is Steve Horvat, the club head professional.

"Two days before the tourney, I, Don Sofer and Warren Orlick—who make up the rules committee, cover

the course to define water hazards and out-of-bounds spots," said Horvat.

"We recommend pin placement and tee settings," said the second-year pro.

Orlick is a member of the National PGA rules committee and has worked the Masters and U.S. Open. Last year, the rules committee had to make one ruling.

Horvat is also in charge of setting up and organizing 300 caddies from 11 clubs. He works closely with Wabeek caddy-master Roy Gotzowski.

"EACH FIVESOME of four amateurs and one PGA player is assigned a total of six caddies," Horvat said.

"One of those caddies will be a sign

board carrier," he said. The sign board indicates the score of each player.

Horvat said the best caddies are selected from the 11 clubs and are expected to be at the course at 6:30 am the day of the tourney.

All caddies will be distinguished by wearing a jersey and visor. The clubs sending caddies to this year's tourney are Pine Lake, Forest Lake, Red Run, Orchard Lake, Oakland Hills, Birmingham, Great Oaks, Dearborn, Franklin Hills, Knollwood and Wabeek.

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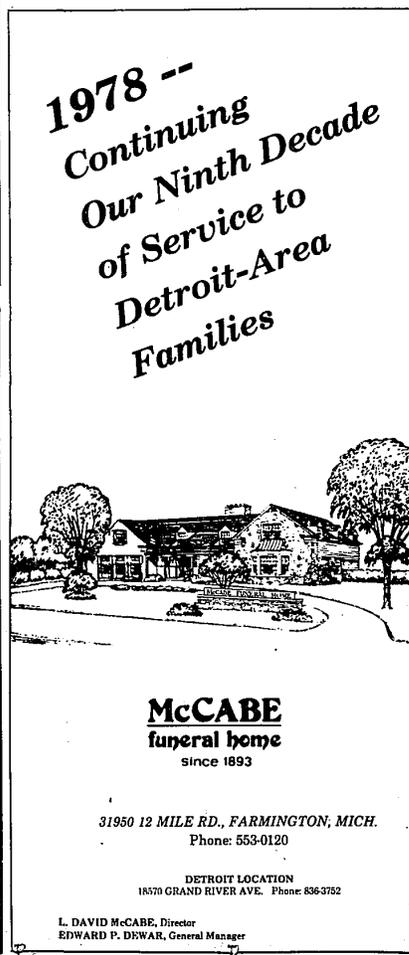
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