

Hunters, anglers: Record facts for posterity



BILL PARKER

With empty eyes and a gaping mouth, an old, lacquered muskie head is perched like a gargoye on the bookshelf in my office. When the sunlight hits it just right, the dull, dried, bronze-skinned creature turns almost copper in color, which is appropriate since the regal trophy was taken from Schlatter Lake, at the tip of the Upper Peninsula's Keweenaw Peninsula - Copper County.

Dead longer than I've been alive, the toothy predator still conjures up questions of its existence when new acquaintances first lay eyes on it: "How big was it?" "What did he catch it on?" "Where's the rest of it?" "Why is it so ugly?"

Heard them all before.

All that's left is the head, from the gill-plate forward. It was never mounted; folks didn't do much of that back then. Instead, dead dipped it in a pall of lacquer and hung out to dry in the summer sun.

It was dried with the mouth wide open, which makes it look even more menacing than I suppose it was when it was alive and feeding on anything else in the lake. From top to bottom, the mouth measures a whopping six inches, and another five from side to side. There is a full three inches between the eyes. This truly was a huge fish.

As family legend goes, my late father caught the monster one summer day while fishing from

shore. He and his native American pal "Noukie," would venture out often on fishing excursions from the little mining town of Mohawk where dad's family owned a cabin. Schlatter Lake, Lac La Belle, Lake Fanny Hoee, and Bruneau Creek were household words while I was growing up.

Back when the fish was caught there were no roads leading into Schlatter Lake. The only way to access it was through the woods, which equaled to about a four-mile hike, if legend has it correct.

With trophies like this one lurking in the crystal waters, who could blame them for wearing into a pair of sneakers a year on the long, rugged treks. That also helps explain why there is only the head of this fish remaining today to foster the tale:

who'd want to carry a 25- to 35-pound muskie four miles through the woods?

The legend has become fuzzy over the years, so the exact date of the catch, the lure used, and the highlight of the fight remain a mystery. My best guess is that it was taken around 1949-51, well before my mom and dad were even married. It was possibly caught with a red/white Darderville, a popular spoon at the time. I've got dad's old tackle box, and there are a couple BIG Dardervilles and a huge Red Eye in there. I've often wondered if one of them is the lucky lure.

The questions remain and all I can do now is speculate as to the answers.

I've vowed to not make the same mistake with my trophies. On a suggestion from a friend and colleague, I've started mak-

ing little fact cards that I attach to the back of my trophies.

There's one for my biggest buck, a wide-racked, nine-point taken on Nov. 10, 1989, with a bow and arrow in Lapeer County. Due to circumstances, I've explained further on the card, I had to wait until the following morning to recover the deer.

It was the longest night of my life, but the wait was well worth it when my buddy, Danny Poole, and I recovered the massive buck at daybreak along the edge of an overgrown cornfield.

Then there's one about my first turkey, a tom with an eight-inch beard, taken in Montmorency County in 1990. He crossed two pastures in the early morning light only to hang-up 70 yards away. After I'd thrown at him every call I knew without much success, a live hen began

cutting right behind me and the ol' boy couldn't pass up the seductive melody. He ran right in to my decoy.

Ironically, I shot that bird within 10 yards of where my older brother, John, shot his first buck back in 1967, as duty recorded.

Dates, hunting/fishing partners, and highlights of the chase all get recorded; then I glue or tape the three-by-five file card to the back of my trophy. They help remind me of days gone by, and they'll also answer those never-ending questions after it's time for me to move on.

(Bill Parker writes a weekly outdoor column for the Observer & Eccentric Newspapers. Questions and comments are also encouraged. Send information to: Bill Parker, c/o Outdoors, 805 E. Maple, Birmingham, MI 48009.)

ACTIVITIES

OKLAND COUNTY SPORTFISHING ASSOCIATION

The Oakland County Sportfishing Association meets at 7:30 p.m. the third Wednesday of every month at Santa Hall, 1985 Cass Lake Road, Keego Harbor. Call (248) 693-4389 or visit the club's web site at <http://go.toxas.com> for more information.

DOWNRIVER BASS ASSOCIATION

The Downriver Bass Association, a non-tournament bass club, meets at 6:30 p.m. the fourth Tuesday of every month at the Gander Mountain (14100 Pardee Road) in Taylor. For more information, call Ron Fodor at (734) 676-2863 or send an e-mail to riverrat122@home.com.

DETROIT AREA STEELHEADERS

Detroit Area Steelheaders, Inc. membership meetings are held the last Tuesday of each month at Knights of Columbus, St. Pius X, 6177 Chicago Road, in War-

ren. The public is welcome. More information can be obtained by calling Ed Wilczek at (810) 757-7365 or club President Ray Banbury at (810) 598-0310.

METRO-WEST STEELHEADERS

Metro-West Steelheaders meets at 7:30 p.m. on the first Tuesday of each month in the cafeteria at Garden City High School. Call Dominic Liparoti at (248) 476-6027 for more information.

MICHIGAN FLY FISHING

The Michigan Fly Fishing Club meets at 7:30 p.m. the first and third Wednesdays of each month at Livonia Clarenceville Middle School, located on Middlebelt Road between Seven and Eight Mile roads. Call (248) 478-1494 for more information.

FOUR SEASONS

The Four Seasons Fishing Club meets 7:30-9:30 p.m. the first Wednesday of each month at the Civic Park Senior Center, 16218 Farmington Road, in Livonia. Call Jim Kudaj at (734) 691-0843 for information.

HURON VALLEY STEELHEADERS

The Huron Valley Steelheaders meets the third Thursday of each month at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 27600 Hall Road, Flat

Rock. Call Carroll White at (734) 285-0843 for more information.

SOLAR

The School for Outdoor Leadership, Adventure and Recreation (SOLAR), a non-profit organization interested in promoting the appreciation of outdoor activities, meets at 7:30 p.m. on the first Tuesday of each month at the Colony Hall in Southfield. Call (248) 988-6658 for more information.

CLINTON RIVER BASS 'N RATS

The recently organized Clinton River Bass 'n Rats meets the first Monday of every month at 7:30 p.m. at the Gander Mountain Lodge. Call (810) 247-9900 for direction and additional information. The club is an affiliate chapter of the B.A.S.S. National Federation.

METROPARKS

METROPARK REQUIREMENTS

Most Metropark programs are free while some require a nominal fee. Advanced registration and a motor vehicle permit are required for all programs. Call the respective parks toll free at the following numbers: Stony Creek, 1-800-477-7756; Indian Springs, 1-800-477-3132; Kensington, 1-800-477-3173; Hudson Mills, 1-800-477-3191.

GET A GRIP

"Get a Grip," the Metroparks' new 25-foot rock climbing tower, will be on display at Stony Creek Metropark in Shelby Township from July 2-15. There is a \$2 fee to climb. For more information, call Stony Creek Metropark at 1-800-477-7756 or (810) 781-4242.

OKLAND COUNTY PARKS

COUNTY PARK REQUIREMENTS

Advanced registration and a motor vehicle permit are required for all nature programs at Oakland County Parks. Call (248) 625-6473 to register or for more information.

PERMITS

The 2001 Oakland County parks motor vehicle permits are on sale at all county park offices and many parks and recreation and township offices. The permit cost is \$25. All senior citizens (ages 62 and older) can purchase the permit for \$15 at all times. Call (248) 858-0906 or TTY (248) 858-1684.

FISHING CONTESTS

Addison Oaks and Independence Oaks county parks will be the site of fishing contests on the following days: Memorial Day weekend-June 30; July 1-31; and

Aug. 1-Labor Day weekend. A valid Michigan fishing license is required. Call (248) 693-2432 or (248) 625-0877 for information.

STATE PARKS

STATE PARK REQUIREMENTS

Maybury State Park, Proud Lake Recreation Area, Bald Mountain Recreation Area, Highland Recreation Area, and Island Lake Recreation Area offer nature interpretive programs throughout the year. A state park motor vehicle permit is required for entry into all state parks and state recreation areas. For registration and additional information on the programs at Maybury call (248) 349-8390. For programs at Bald Mountain call (248) 693-8767. For programs at Proud Lake and Highland call (248) 686-2187. For programs at Island Lake call (248) 229-7057.

WAYNE COUNTY PARKS

COUNTY PARK REQUIREMENTS

Wayne County Parks offers nature interpretive programs throughout the year. Advanced registration is requested. Call (734) 261-1990 to register.

SWIMMING

NORTHWEST SUBURBAN LEAGUE

DECEMBER SWIMMING 2001

FRANKFORT OLYMPIC SWIMMING

Double winners: Katie Stief (13-14), 100 IM, 1:18.0; 50 Y, 34.41; Linda McEwan (15-16), 50 back, 22:18; 100 free, 1:03.14.

Single winners: Elizabeth Garlow (15-16), 50 breast, 37.78; Marissa Decker (16-17), 50 Y, 25.76; Keesa Olson (18), 25 Y, 25.48; Ede Gubis (19-20), 50 back, 46.26; Ramon Jones (11-12), 50 Y, 38.08; Lisa McFarland (18-19), 25 breast, 30.51.

Double winners: David Stief (13-14), 50 back, 40.42; 50 free, 33.14; Douglas Irey (13-14), 100 IM, 1:22.92; 50 breast, 43.75; Daniel Marvick (18-19), 25 back, 29.46; 25 Y, 28.24; Kyle Chamberlain (15-16), 50 back, 33.66; 100 IM, 1:18.6; Mike Richardson (15-16), 100 free, 1:00.42; 50 Y, 33.57; David Marvick (13-14), 50 back, 44.24; 50 free, 34.93.

Single winners: Craig Peters (10-11), 50 breast, 59.47; Luke Miller (9-10), 50 back, 48.59; Eric Garlow (11-12), 50 Y, 40.02; Bryan Walker (9-10), 50 free, 44.82.

Raley winners: 40-year 200 mixed medley (Eric Garlow, Lisa Blazczak, Eric Garlow, Bryan Walker), 2:56.08; 52-year girls 200 medley (Katie Stief, Elizabeth Garlow, Rennie Jones, Klystrowski), 2:27.02; 52-year boys 200 medley (David Marvick, Douglas Irey, Zach Allen, Andrew Clark), 2:11.07; 55-year boys 200 freestyle (Mike Richardson, David Stief, Kyle Chamberlain, Dan Price), 1:57.56.

"Ever have an itch so bad you can't sleep?"

That's what happened to me. I developed a reaction to some medicine I had to take following surgery. The doctors said there was nothing they could give me for the itching. I tried that itch cream you see all over TV. It didn't help. Nothing stopped the itching.

During a return trip to the emergency room following surgery, I told the emergency room doctor I itched so bad I was about to go nuts. He told me to go right to the drug store and get a tube of ITCH-X.

I used it one time and the itch was gone. I got the first night's sleep I'd had in over two weeks.

I had to make my medicine for another month and I don't think I could have made it that long without ITCH-X.

I think that ITCH-X saved my life!

-Acklin Hoofman
North Muskegon, Michigan

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Michigan state law requires all children entering the school system for the first time to receive a wellness exam and immunizations. Make sure your child starts the year right. Call the U-M Health Center nearest you today to schedule an appointment. To find a University of Michigan physician, simply call 1-800-211-8181. We accept a variety of health care plans, including **MCARE**.

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