

Welcoming Dave Graybill To The Nickel Ads Classifieds

The Fishin' Magician

I suppose many of you have had to listen to stories about "the good old days", when the fishing was really good. Well, I don't think we're hearing as many of those stories as we used to. Fishing for salmon and steelhead in our region is not only good it is great and getting better. There are huge numbers of fall-run salmon headed our way right now, and I am hearing that the steelhead season will open the earliest in my memory. This is a time when those who have tried fishing for salmon and steelhead should get out and do it, and those who gave up on these fisheries should get back at it.

The best summer-run salmon fishing of the season is going on right now on the upper Columbia. Summer fish didn't really settle in to many of the favorite holding areas on the river until late this season, and still-bright kings are being taken now at areas like the Brewster Pool, Pelican and below Wells Dam. These fish are still taking herring in some of these spots.

If you look at the dam counts, check out what happened at Bonneville Dam. The numbers jumped from two or three thousand a day to over 14,000 a day, and most of these fish are headed our way. I have heard of some very big and bright kings being taken in the Hanford Reach and below Wanapum Dam already.

To help everyone get in the groove, Town Ford in Wenatchee is holding another in their series of seminars. This one will be on fall salmon and steelhead fishing techniques. The seminar will take place at the Town Ford dealership on Wednesday, September 22nd, beginning at 6 p.m. A featured speaker will be Shane Magnuson of Upper Columbia Guide Services. He will touch on fall salmon fishing on the Hanford Reach and Vernita. He is actively fishing this area of the river, and has been for years. He will also be talking about fishing on the upper Columbia River and share the details of his bobber and jig fishing methods.

The other speaker at the seminar will be Brian Nielson, of BJ's Guide Service. Nielson and I have a couple of fishing trips planned for this fall, and I talked him into coming to the seminar. Here's why, he has been fishing the Klickitat and Grande Ronde rivers for steelhead since 1983, and has been featured on Columbia Country, the popular fishing television show. He is an expert on fishing rivers, primarily from a drift boat. Nielson has fine-tuned techniques that take fish in all conditions pulling plugs. He will show in detail how he

fishes plugs and baited plugs. What anglers learn from Nielson can be applied to the main stem Columbia and the tributaries for steelhead this season. You can learn more about Nielson by logging onto his web site at www.bjguide.com.

There is another event coming up later this month that is one of my favorites. It is the annual Wenatchee River Salmon Festival, which is held at the National Fish Hatchery in Leavenworth. The festival is celebrating its 20th anniversary this year, and they have a number of very special things planned for the weekend of September 18th and 19th.

Salmon Fest is the original nature festival, and there are now 250 events going on throughout the country, all based on its themes. Most people are familiar with what happens on the weekend, when families attend. Many don't realize that more than 2,500 school children spend either Thursday or Friday at the hatchery. They are introduced to a wide range of nature and outdoor recreation activities. The curriculum is carefully designed to meet the requirements of Washington's educators, and the children not only learn a great deal about nature, the environment, the life cycles of salmon, they have a lot of fun during their day spent at the hatchery.

Last year, over 10,000 people came to the National Fish Hatchery in Leavenworth to take in Salmon Fest. Families can participate in the same activities that are offered to the schools on Thursday and Friday, and there are even more available on the

weekend. The hatchery grounds are filled with hands-on, educational, fun things for the kids to do-- all for FREE!

One element of Salmon Fest that has been expanded this year is the Outdoor Recreation Area. Sponsored by High Mountain Hunting and Fishing Supply there are more things for the kids to do in this area than ever before. Joining forces with Salmon Fest are the folks from the Go Play Outside Alliance of Washington (GoPAW), and they are bringing some samples what will be part of Salmon Fest beginning next year.

In the Outdoor Recreation Area kids will be able to learn to cast a fly, tie a fly, target shoot with a pellet gun, shoot a bow and arrow, paddle a kayak, peddle a go cart, try their hand at snowshoeing and more. There will be a stage in this area with presentations on these and other outdoor activities throughout the weekend.

The National Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Forest Service are the lead agencies that put on the Wenatchee River Festival, but there are many other important partners involved. To learn more about it, log onto www.salmonfest.org.

I have been hooked on Salmon Fest for years, and will be there with my boat and tackle again, and will make an appearance on the stage. I hope to see you there!

Reach Dave at:
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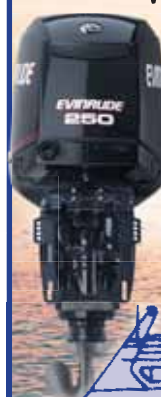
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