

Welcoming **Dave Graybill** To The **Nickel Ads** *Classifieds* The Fishin' Magician

I had a great time last week, traveling to the Washington Sportsmen's Show in Puyallup and then on to the Seattle Boat Show. I sure could have used more time at the show in Puyallup. I had a lot of people I wanted to see, and it seems I always bump into people there and want to chat with them, too. Last year I spent a day and a half at this show and still didn't see everyone I wanted to, so one day just wasn't enough.

The first person I ran into when I entered the gate was Gary Loomis. Loomis is a big name in fishing rods and after selling his company dedicated his time to establishing chapters of the Coastal Conservation Association in Washington and Oregon. As many of you know there is a plan in place to remove gillnets from the lower Columbia River. The Coastal Conservation Association was instrumental in making this happen.

Our region was well represented at the show. I saw guide services and tourism groups encouraging people to visit from Lake Roosevelt to Lake Chelan and the lakes and rivers in between. If you haven't ever been to this show, put in on your calendar for 2014.

The Seattle Boat Show is bigger and better than ever. It is already the biggest show of its kind on the West Coast, and vendors and dealers were eager to get space in this year's show. On the main floor of the show there are a tremendous number of cruising and recreational boats, but the number of aluminum fishing boat dealers continues to grow. Kingfisher Boats can be found in two places at the show. My 2025 Discovery is on display at the Bob Feil Boats and



Motors booth, and the big off shore models can be seen at Island Marine Center. Bob Feil, now in his 90s, has been at the Seattle Boat Show since 1956, and he came over on Saturday to see his old friends.

I learned some interesting facts while at this show. According to the Recreational Boating and Fishing Foundation, and The Outdoor Foundation, fishing participants has grown by 800,000. This brings the number of American anglers to 46 million or 16.2 percent of the population. The biggest jump is in the number of women and children ages 6 to 12. Fishing from a boat is the most popular activity among males older than 16, with 64 percent participation. Multispecies boats surpassed bass boats as the most popular boat type, at 26 percent followed by bass boats at 16.3 percent.

I will be heading back over to the Seattle Boat Show for the weekend, but I am first making a stop in Olympia to meet with our local legislators; Senator Linda Parlette, and Representatives Cary Condotta and Brad Hawkins. I am on the Columbia River Recreational Salmon and Steelhead Advisory Board that funds selective fisheries on the Columbia and its tributaries. I am meeting with them to provide an update on the progress of this pilot program and the economic benefits it has brought to our region.

In between my road trips I did some checking on a variety of fishing opportunities. Ice fishing continues to gain popularity and anglers are busy on several lakes throughout the region. Up north anglers are finding good fishing on Patterson and Davis lakes, in the Methow Valley. A lake that is open to winter fishing for the first time is Leader Lake, which is on the highway from Okanogan to Twisp. This lake offers a wide variety of species, including large bluegill, crappie, yellow perch, bass and rainbow trout. Leader Lake has been a very popular fishery in the spring and summer and it is hoped to keep it open year-round after this season. Rat Lake, which is near Brewster, has also been good. Ice anglers are getting rainbow and a few brown trout to 15 inches.

When I checked on the ice conditions at the Coulee City Marina and Moses Lake I got some disappointing news. There is evidence that anglers are fishing through the ice on the outside of the marina at

Coulee City but perch have not entered the boat basin.

At Moses Lake the ice thickness has shrunk to just three inches. Anglers were catching perch and walleye here, but recent warm weather has the ice too thin to risk fishing.

Anglers are having a ball at both Roses Lake, near Manson at Lake Chelan, and at Fish Lake near Lake Wenatchee. Roses Lake anglers are catching lots of trout of 11 inches, and Fish Lake is providing good action for 11-inch trout and perch. Many of the perch being caught at Fish Lake this year are a fat 9 to 10 inches, larger than usual. Recent warm winds have put a layer of water on top of the ice, though, so check ahead if you plan to fish this weekend.

If you are interested in catching a limit of trout that can run over 20 inches, head for Lake Roosevelt. Trout fishing here is excellent right now. Shore anglers are catching fish from the boat launch at Crescent Lake all the way up to Keller Ferry. Fishing from the bank at the Spring Creek Park is very good. Dough baits with glitter or marshmallow and worms are working from the shore. Trollers are also getting limits of trout, too. Trolling a small dodger and a K-Fly is working very well, and a variety of Rapalas and small Little Cleo spoons are accounting for fish, too.

As you can see there is still a lot of both outdoor and indoor fun ahead of us this winter. Hope you, like me, will get out and take part in it!

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