

## Schweiger Named Abele Award Winner

The Fish and Boat Commission has announced the selection of Larry J. Schweiger, President of the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, as the 1999 winner of its highest honor, the Ralph W. Abele Conservation Heritage Award. The announcement came at the Commission fall quarterly meeting, last September in Bedford.

Schweiger is President and Chief Executive Officer of the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy, a land conservation organization that has protected more than 200,000 acres in the Commonwealth. During his time with the Conservancy, he was instrumental in structuring the Commonwealth's largest private land conservation reserve, the

11,000-acre H.J. Crawford Reserve in Venango County. Under his direction, 3,500 acres of riverbank along the Clarion River have been protected as well as 4,448 acres of Tamarack Swamp in Clinton County.



Photo: Western Pennsylvania Conservancy

Before coming to the Conservancy, Schweiger served with the Chesapeake Bay Foundation, where he was responsible for the foundation's resource protection and land trust activities. Before that, he worked for the National Wildlife Federation as publisher of its award-winning magazines and as Senior Vice President for Constituent Development. He has devoted his professional life to projects that protect, conserve and enhance the natural resources of Pennsylvania.

Schweiger was also a close friend and associate of Ralph Abele during the years when Abele served as Executive Director of the Fish Commission and as a director of the National Wildlife Federation. He has put the "Resource First" in his efforts to conserve Pennsylvania's precious resources.

In announcing the award, Commission Executive Director Peter A. Colangelo said, "I'm delighted to announce the selection of Larry J. Schweiger as the 1999 winner of the Ralph W. Abele Conservation Heritage Award. Larry's dedication to Ralph's conservation ideals is clearly exemplified by his many years of service on the front lines of conservation. In recognizing Larry's tremendous accomplishments and commitment, we honor Ralph's memory and rededicate ourselves to his ideals."

The Ralph W. Abele Conservation Heritage Award is the highest honor the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission can confer in recognition of dedicated service to conservation of Pennsylvania's natural resources. The Abele Award commemorates Ralph W. Abele, the late executive director of the Pennsylvania Fish Commission, whose commitment to conservation and education made him a hero to all Pennsylvania conservationists.

### Fishin' from the Kitchen

## Baked Stuffed Walleyes *by Wayne Phillips*

### Ingredients for four servings:

- One 2- to 3-pound walleye or 4 smaller fish
- 2 cups diced fresh bread
- 1 cup diced cooking onion
- 1 cup diced mushrooms
- 1 cup diced celery
- 1 Tbsp. olive oil
- Zest of a lemon
- 3 Tbsp. fresh tarragon or 1 1/2 Tbsp. dried tarragon
- Salt and pepper to taste



Who can resist a moist, flavorful walleye crammed with an aromatic stuffing?

Scale the walleye and remove the dorsal fin. Remove the entrails and head. Make a few slashes on the sides to prevent the fish from curling during cooking.

For the stuffing, saute the onion, mushrooms and celery in the oil until nearly soft. Add the bread crumbs and cook for a minute or two. Place in a bowl, season with tarragon, lemon zest, salt and pepper, and allow to cool.

Salt and pepper the fish inside. Place in a baking dish and spoon the stuffing inside the fish. Squeeze fresh lemon juice over the fish and bake in a 350-degree oven until cooked through, about 10 minutes per inch of thickness.

Serving each person a whole fish is wonderful. Surround the walleye with

a mixture of stir-fried red and yellow peppers. Creamy mashed potatoes also complement the sweet, mild-flavored walleye. Serve extra stuffing on the side.

If you have a favorite stuffing recipe for chicken or turkey, you can use it. Take care to use milder herbs like dill, tarragon or basil because walleye has a delicate flavor. Save the more aggressive seasonings for stronger-flavored fish.

### Baking Hints

Baking a fish with stuffing may seem unusual, but relax because the results are wonderful. Using fresh bread cubes instead of dry ones helps keep the fish moist and prevents it from drying out. The use of lemon zest adds flavor not only to the stuffing, but to the fish as well. You can also use lime or orange zest or a combination of all three. Remember, the moister the stuffing, the moister the fish.

photo-Wayne Phillips