Angler’s Notebook
by Jerry Bush

In Pennsylvania, steelhead, trout and Walleye fishing is available during the winter without dropping lures through ice. Lake Erie’s tributaries may be ice-free or have limited ice. The Allegheny River, below Kinzua Dam, has Walleyes and trout all year long. Many creeks hold trout year-long including Spring Creek, Centre County. Little Sandy Creek, Venango County, is fishable during most of winter. Check regulations assigned to each fishery in advance.

If you want to ice fish but don’t own an ice fishing shelter, fish on days with mild winds. Dress warm by layering garments. A good-quality, oversized raincoat can block winds. Poles and a sheet of plastic can be used to create an effective, economical windbreak.

I saw an angler create a clever gadget for ice fishing that began as a 5-gallon bucket that held baitfish. Realizing the importance of comfort while fishing, the angler purchased a spinning seat manufactured specifically for 5-gallon buckets. The angler cut five pieces of thinwall PVC pipe that were 8- to 10-inches long and attached the pipe to the outside of the bucket with screws, being careful to attach the tubes with screws above the water line necessary to keep baitfish alive. Other holes were drilled near the upper portion of the bucket for oxygen to reach the baitfish. The PVC diameter was large enough to accommodate the handles of four ice fishing rods. The angler inserted the handle of a small bait net into the fifth PVC tube. A popular manufacturer of ice fishing equipment offers a similar unit, but the angler saved money and found satisfaction in creating his own seat.

Shopping malls and convention centers will be hosting “boat shows” for those interested in purchasing boats for this year’s boating season. Determine whether you want to purchase a fishing boat, a cruiser, a sports model or some version of two styles. Get family members involved and carefully consider their opinions. If loved ones dislike your choice, you may find your boat dry more often than wet. Are you going to boat on inland lakes with horsepower restrictions? If the boat is for Lake Erie, is the boat equipped with added safety items such as a communication radio, flares or signal packages?

Anglers are sometimes injured by falling on rigid, slippery surfaces. Several manufacturers offer inexpensive slip-on, cleat-equipped footwear designed to slide easily and quickly over bulky boots to provide traction.

Fishin’ from the Kitchen

Walleye with Noodles and Asian Vegetables

by Wayne Phillips

When it comes to comfort food, what can beat a steaming bowl of noodles, vegetables and big pieces of Walleye?

Ingredients for four servings:

- 12- to 16-ounces of Walleye, in large pieces
- 2 cups chicken or fish stock (or water)
- 1 large onion, sliced in narrow strips
- 2 cloves garlic, finely minced
- 8 large mushrooms, in thick slices
- 2 carrots, cut into coins
- 1 package sugar snap peas
- 2 cups sliced bok choy
- 2 packages udon noodles (or other Asian noodles)
- 1 Tbsp. fresh ginger, finely grated
- 2 Tbsp. sweet chili sauce
- Soya sauce to taste
- 2 green onions, finely sliced
- ½ cup almonds, toasted

Procedure

In a wok or large skillet sauté onion, garlic, mushrooms and carrots until nearly soft. Add stock, sugar snap peas and bok choy. Simmer 5 minutes. Add noodles, fresh ginger, sweet chili sauce and Walleye. Simmer about 3 minutes or until Walleye is no longer transparent. Season to taste with soya sauce. Garnish with green onions and almonds.

Serve

Serve in a large bowl.

Tips

Thicken stir fries with a corn starch slurry made by dissolving 2 Tbsp. corn starch in 2 Tbsp cold water. Slowly add to the simmering liquid until desired thickness is achieved. Other suitable Asian vegetables include bean sprouts, Shiitake mushrooms or sliced Savoy cabbage. Slicing carrots and green onions on the diagonal looks nice and allows the stock to add more flavor to the vegetables. Rather than salt, season with soya sauce.
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