

# Keizer couple hooked on fishing



Typically, bring up the subject of fishing, and a guy's eyes light up and an uncontrollable facial twitch takes over. Not so with most spouses. You can get anything from, looks that could slice bread to, "We really need to get home dear."

It's little different at my house. "Going fishing? Good. Maybe I can get the house clean with you out of here." Jo adds, "Be sure you get all that mud off before, you come in this time."

Different story with Louie and Billi Priest of Keizer. They have been an inseparable fishing combo for 30 years.

Billi grew up in the Santiam Canyon and has fished all her life. Louie always enjoyed fishing, but, when he met Billi it was a fishing team formed for life.

When asked if this was one of those guy/lady things where the guy baits the lady's hook?

"Are you kidding? She does a better job, and has better luck," Louie chuckles. "Back when she was smoking, she would hook up the herring and hook more fish. I even resorted to crushing her cigarette butts in my hands for the scent."

"I'm sure the tobacco masked the human odor on our hand," Billi adds, "I quit smoking years ago. Now we use something else to mask the odor."

Salmon fishing is by far their favorite species. Their 18-foot Willie Predator boat could be spotted anywhere from the Columbia River to the Rogue when salmon are moving into estuaries.

They fish for spring salmon (affectionately called springers) in the Willamette and Columbia. "Not very much on the Columbia," Louie adds. "Too many boats ripping back and forth. It gets as rough as

the ocean."

When asked who is the best salmon angler, they instantly point at each other. "She has caught three 40 pounders," Louie explains, with obvious pride. "I haven't been able to break that barrier. Caught a 39, but no 40s."

Louie actually hooked his first salmon on a crabbing trip at Waldport. "I was just playing around casting some kind of lure. I hooked something. I thought it was the bottom," he adds. "It took off. I lost it, but it motivated me to begin the learning process."

The Priests are more than salmon anglers. They like to fish for kokanee, which are smaller land-locked sockeye salmon. They are excellent table fare. The Priests fish for them in the high mountain lakes like Odell and Wickiup. They also fish Green Peter on the North Fork of the South Santiam.

"We like to jig for kokanee," Louie explains. "It's just your line, the lure and the fish. None of that heavy trolling gear."

"We hit it perfect on Wickiup a couple of years ago," Billi explains. "The kokanee were 16-17 inches long and four inches thick. They were absolutely beautiful."

Billi has a favorite recipe for smoking kokanee. An old gentleman gave it to her "many years ago" and she has used it since.

Louie has a couple of trips planned coming up. "We will fish a few days on the Rogue River," Louie explains. "It's our kick-back, plunking trip. Sit back in an easy chair and wait for an aggressive steelhead to swim by."

Louie and Billi belong to Mid-Valley Anglers Fishing Club, a very active club of anglers of all skill levels. They occasionally attend Northwest



Submitted Billi and Louie Priest with recent catches in Waldport.

Steelheaders meetings at the Keizer Community Center.

The Priests shared a couple of the funniest things they have witnessed while fishing. One was two anglers trying to net a salmon with a plastic laundry basket. Another, when a boat had a salmon hooked and two pit bulls on board went ballistic. One dog jumped in after the fish and had to be rescued before landing the fish.

This husband and wife are

truly a fishing team. They respect each other and relish the experiences they share on the water.

Billi's favorite salmon recipe:

Preheat oven to 400 degrees. Place salmon fillet skin-side down in baking pan. Salt & pepper to taste. Spread honey mustard salad dressing over the fillet. Combine Panko bread crumbs, small amount oil, and dill weed. Spread on the fillet. Bake 15-20 minutes.

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shot again and took me down, got a leg ride and turned me in the first minute."

Roberts went on to win the division by beating the third-ranked wrestler in the nation at 195 pounds.

After a win in consolation brackets, Venegas won third place in a 5-2 decision over Roseburg's Will Reddekopp. It was the second time Venegas faced Reddekopp in two weeks.

Senior Michael Phelps took sixth at the tournament after getting ousted from championship competition. Michael gutted his way back to the fifth place match with four wins in the consolation brackets. His largest margin of

victory was two points.

"Over winter break, I lost two matches by one point and ever since then I told myself I wasn't losing by one point again," Michael said.

Michael lost to Century High School's Brennan Bacca in the technical fall in the fifth place match.

Venegas said he'd hoped for better turnout from the team on the second day of the event, something which had been strong in past years but faltered this time around.

"Two years ago, we were at Reser and we had people who fell out the first day show up the second day. I got beat up the first day and I still came the next day because we were a family," Venegas said. "Without pushing each other, we can't be the team we want to be or anything like state

## bowling scores

**Mixed Nuts Men's** high games: Rodney Dunn, 267. Men's high series: Rodney Dunn, 609. Women's high game: Krystal Hall, 199. Women's high series: Krystal Hall, 509.

**Ladies' Doubles** Women's high game: Nancy Sharp, 189. Women's high series: Nancy Sharp, 522.

**Queen Pins** Women's high game: Joyce Rustad, 214. Women's high series: Karen Putnam, 547.

**Tuesday Seniors** Men's high game: Bill Griffith, 258. Men's high series: Bill Griffith, 696. Women's high game: Marsha Clark, 191. Women's high series: Marsha Clark, 519.

**Men's Continental** Men's high game: Josh Garcia, 267. Men's high series: Steven Sullivan, 654.

**Twilighters** Men's high game: Michael Mott, 266. Men's high series: Jon Curiel, 661. Women's high game: Catrina Simons, 213. Women's high series: Lids LaMar, 561.

**Statehouse** Men's high game: Alex Vanover, 279. Men's high series: Alex Vanover, 721. Women high

game: Nancy Sharp, 220. Women's high series: Nancy Sharp, 613.

**Seniors in Action** Men's high game: Doug Clark, 268. Men's high series: Doug Clark, 686. Women's high game: Virginia Wasson, 220. Women's high series: Virginia Wasson, 589.

**Thursday Seniors** Men's high game: Al Lightner, 245. Men's high series: Al Lightner, 681. Women's high game: Ruth Tisler, 197. Women's high series: Marsha Clark, 501.

**Sportsbar Challenge** Men's high game: Steve LeWright, 235. Men's high series: Steve LeWright, 659. Women's high game: Loretta Davis, 181. Women's high series: JoAnne Heilinger, 484.

**Jr. Majors** Boy's high game: Nick Blythe, 247. Boys high series: Nick Blythe, 716. Girl's high game: Hanna Russell, 224. Girl's high series: Hanna Russell, 605.

**Bantam Preps** Boy's high game: Auron Davidson, 124. Boy's high series: Auron Davidson, 296. Girl's high game: Rinoa Davidson, 124. Girl's high series: Rinoa Davidson, 362.

champions."

If the Celts win their next two dual meets and pull out a victory over Sprague High School February 12, the mat men will be co-Greater Valley Conference champs with McMinnville and Sprague. Ebbs said that training in the coming weeks will look a bit different than it has to this

point in the season.

"It's not just wrestling anymore, it's strategy and game plans. If we get them to be good, each match is brains instead of brawn," Ebbs said.

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