

Fishing frenzy

For my nickel, the only worthwhile component of setting clocks back one hour early this morning is a reminder to change smoke detector batteries.

The "choo-choo" is no longer our major mode of transportation. We have electric lights. Daylight Savings Time is superfluous. If Congress could just—never mind.

Timing is and always will be more critical in the natural world where many southern Wisconsin folks prefer to spend their leisure time. The next seven days have significance on many outdoor fronts.

The "little flight" of ducks showed up Wednesday, just like they do during the first week of November every year. Bucks are actively chasing does as the deer rut crashed to a passionate peak. Toothy predators like pike, muskies and walleyes are on a feeding rip in area lakes and rivers.

Relatively few outdoor types take full advantage of the fishing

with water temperatures hovering in the upper 40s for more than a week. Rain that pushed through the area on Wednesday did more than drop ducks. It dropped water temperatures too, while changing the hydrologic qualities of the water column.

This is the piscatory equivalent of somebody frying bacon or baking a cake. The need to feed becomes urgent. The walleye bite will be aggressive between now and the time water temperatures fall to about 41 degrees, probably about this time next week.

Decreasing temperatures and a slightly rising river are goading walleyes to move upstream in the Rock and other rivers. Tailwaters of every dam have scour holes or deep holes within a mile of these barriers that attract and hold fish.

One of the most productive autumn stretches of the Rock is a long run of water 9- to 11-feet deep below the dam at Jefferson. Blade baits and jigs are effective ways to target this water where fish often hold tight to the considerable woody structure.

Sonars and Big Dude blades fished on FireLine over at least 10 feet of water will produce plenty of fish over the next week or so for

intense vibration generated by ripping these lures 18-20 inches off of the bottom and allowing them to flutter down.

Last Thursday, a 29-inch walleye smacked my shad-pattern Sonar so hard and deep that I had to cut the line and let this fish take the lure back to her watery lair.

A minnow-tipped jig has been the standard November walleye weapon for years. Jigs come in a number of different profiles. When pitching shoreline structure with a jig and plastic fliptail, it's pretty hard to beat the B-Fish-N Tackle precision jighead.

If a vertical jigging presentation is called for, the anvil shaped "flat-foot" jig coupled with a 3- to 4-inch minnow is very effective. Gold and orange are both hot colors.

Three-eighths is enough weight to effectively vertical jig anywhere in Rock River. An eighth-ounce is just about perfect when pitching and swimming plastics.

The area around bridge pilings is a great place to try either technique. Key on slack water eddies created by the concrete or wood supports.

Wood? "Choo Choos" is not our primary mode of transportation anymore, but there are a couple of



TED PECK

the seven-day period around April 1 and a similar window that is wide open right now.

railroad bridges in Rock County that are holding a limit of nice walleyes right now.

mouth, triggered by both flash and

Some fish are invariably hooked when working blades.

These fish must be immediately released. Most fish are hooked in the

situation, perhaps because they are already chasing ducks or deer.

The best two weeks for finding success on Rock River walleyes are

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a certified Merchant
tain, is an outdoors
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the few anglers who believe in and have mastered the blade-bait technique.

Some Rock has been fishing now,