

Lights, Camera, Mokena!

Grill hosts taping of local outdoors TV show.

By Karen Hanson • LW Correspondent

Ardent anglers gathered at the Stoney Point Grill in Mokena last week to cheer on a live taping of their favorite cable outdoor sports show.

With the restaurant's rugged stone fireplace as a backdrop, hosts Don Dziejzina and Rich Komar taped two episodes of *The All Outdoors Television Show*, a program devoted to fishing and hunting. Now in its 10th year on the air, the *All Outdoors* show has done remote broadcasts three times at the Stoney Point Grill.

For the show that bills itself as "The only *All Outdoors* show that is taped totally indoors," the restaurant was a change from the usual studio environment in Bolingbrook. Welcoming the audience, Dziejzina joked that this time the show was "almost outdoors." "We had to go outdoors to get here," said Dziejzina.

Dressed in jeans and denim shirts, Dziejzina and Komar sat on tall bistro chairs before three digital cameras set on tripods. As the show was taped, live video from the lead camera was fed through the televisions mounted on the restaurant and bar walls so all diners could watch.

Stoney Point Grill owners Jim Burke and Brad Banaszak, who are fans of *All Outdoors*, said the show is a good fit for the sports-themed restaurant and bar.

"Jim and I both love to fish," Banaszak said. "It just fits with what we're putting together as a restaurant."

The walls are decorated with fish trophies and wildlife prints, and in the back game room, there's a Wall of Fame with photos of anglers showing off their impressive catches. Banaszak said the live tapings have drawn big crowds of fans into the Stoney Point Grill, located at 19031 Old LaGrange Road. "It's nice to get a bunch of fishermen out there together to watch the show," he said.

About 20 members of the Fishing Tales Fishing Club enjoyed dinner before watching the show from their front-row tables. The club, based in Bremen Township, has about 170 members throughout the southwest suburbs.

"I love to fish," said Jackie Vogen of New Lenox. "It's my passion. Don (Dziejzina) is the one who inspired me to start fishing."

Vogen said she and her husband Kenny are faithful followers of the *All Outdoors* show. "I learn a lot from the show. It's very informative," she said.

The Fishing Tales club donated a membership to be given away at each show. Bass Pro Shop of Bolingbrook, a show sponsor, donated fishing items and gifts for a free raffle after each taping. Gold Eagle, which makes fuel additives for autos, boats and sport vehicles, was also a partner.

Each half-hour show was taped in segments. First, Dziedzina and Komar discussed a new fishing product. Then, Ron Miltzow, a charter captain with the WakeNSea Charters on Lake Michigan, gave the fishing or hunting tip of the week. After that, the hosts interviewed the guests. The guest for the first show was Todd Gessner, who owns a guide service and also guides for Rend Lake Resort in southern Illinois. In the second show, the guest was Kevin McLean, a professional bass tournament angler who is on the staff of Bass Pro Shop in Bolingbrook. Each show ends by showing photos submitted by viewers.

The remote taping process is a big difference from the way it's done in the studio, Dziedzina said. "Actually, there's more work in doing a remote than in a studio," he said.

In the studio, the producer sits inside a control room and edits the program as it proceeds on to a finished tape. At a remote taping, the three digital cameras must be synched in time, then loaded into a computer and edited later.

The studio crew, including lead cameraman and editor Josh Poellot, cameraman and floor director Mark Wigboldy and cameraman Ron Svoboda, worked on the live taping. Wigboldy cued the restaurant crowd for applause and cheers at the beginning and end of each segment.

The show has a live feel wherever it's taped. There are no re-takes if someone makes a mistake. "You don't goof up," Dziedzina said, simply. "What you do is what gets recorded. There are no go-backs."

But Dziedzina rarely goof up since he has a lot of broadcast experience. In addition to hosting the All Outdoors show, Dziedzina has hosted and produced the Illinois Outdoors show for 13 years. He also co-hosts, along with Ray Ludkevich and Jim DaRosa, the Fishing Line and Outdoor Radio Show, which is simulcast on five radio stations. Dziedzina is also the outdoors writer and columnist for the Lincoln-Way Sun.

Komar, manager of the Tinley Park Fishing and Outdoor Show held at Tinley Park High School, has been Dziedzina's broadcast co-host for several years.

Dziedzina said the audience for the All Outdoors show has grown considerably over the last 10 years. These days people recognize him when he's eating out in restaurants or shopping in the grocery store. "People come up and ask questions," he said. Fans also e-mail from the show's Web site, www.illinoisoutdoors.com. "With everybody on the Internet, it makes it easy to ask questions," he said.

The shows taped at the Stoney Point Grill will air on Dec. 27 and Jan. 3. The All Outdoors Television Show airs on Comcast Cable at 12 p.m. Saturdays at the Total Living Network, channels 67 and 138. Illinois Outdoors follows at 12:30 p.m.

Fishing Line Radio Show show airs from 6:30 to 7:30 p.m. every Wednesday on WCSJ AM 1550, WCSJ FM 103.1, WSPY FM 107.1, WSPY AM 1480, and WSQR AM 1180.