

OFF THE DOCK

WITH D. A. MANN

~ Chumming for Christmas ~

12/8/25

You'll never see a fisherman decorating his flats boat for the holidays. He'll never participate in the "Lighting of the Fleet", the boat parade, or the "Best at the Marina" Christmas display. If anyone puts a blow-up Santa, a waving Grinch, or a picture of Will Farrell on the deck of his boat, they'll be shot on sight. You want lights? Then go to someone else's dock. You want Santa? Wait for Christmas. You want an Elf? See a psychiatrist. Fishermen don't do that shit. Fishermen fish. You still want me to decorate? Ok, watch closely and I'll turn on my red and green navigation lights. Ho, Ho, I'm jolly.

What lights-up my world is a festive Flounder, a sparkling Snook, or a Spanish Mackerel singing "Feliz Navidad" as he pulls my drag. My favorite, though, is a Hanukah Pompano. It's the preferred Kosher Katch; or, as it is known on the water, *The Healthier Alternative*. Once hooked, they revel in the holiday spirit. They dance, run, circle, break the surface, zig-zag, and then, do it all over again for the enjoyment of the fisherman directing the action with his rod. Exhausted, they beg to be netted and placed on ice to cool off. The holiday season can be stressful trying to find the right gifts for the right person. Fishermen have it easy for everyone on their list gets fish. No stress there. Shopping is fun on the water. No crowds, no traffic jams, and no pushing to get to the sale items.

So, a note to all you power boaters who are zip-tying those lights to your bow rail and listening to the hum of the blower shooting sweet

nothings up Santa's ass as he jukes in the breeze on your cabin roof waving to an empty dock - take a moment to think about post-Christmas. All that crap has to come down for it will look ridiculous after the New Year arrives. Then you have to repack it in the containers and lug it back to your storage unit in town. So my advice is to drink that eggnog that you hate, act like the Mimosa is wonderful, and add more vodka to your Bloody Mary. Oh, and it's only December 8th.

If you look down the dock and see that my lift is empty,
I'm out celebrating the Holidays.