



FLATLANDERS

February 2017

TAILS

MEETINGS: 7 P.M. ~ THIRD TUESDAY ~ LOVES PARK VFW ~ 2018 WINDSOR RD ~ LOVES PARK, ILLINOIS

Join us on a new day, at a new time

This month's meeting is at **7 p.m. Tuesday, Feb. 21**. We voted on the new day and time at the December meeting and this will be the first meeting with the new schedule. We hope that means more of you will be able to attend.

Notes from the bow of the boat

By Dick Cholke

Flatlanders president

We are not fishing yet but we are busy. Some of us are getting the bug to get out and we are even doing some walleye fishing to pass the time until ice out. There may even be a trip to the Milwaukee Harbor in the works for brown trout to pass the time. If you ever wanted to try the Milwaukee Harbor in your own boat, contact me and maybe we can line up a trip. This is a trip that you need the deeper boat, it is big cold water.

Anyways back to muskie items! Banner Marsh has open water! As of Monday, Lake Storey has some open water but not enough for boats. We are going to have warm weather this weekend and it may offer the first chance to get out. Remember Banner Marsh and North Spring have a 25 HP limit and you cannot run a larger motor at the "no wake" speed.

Here is a list for this spring:

The next general meeting is Feb. 21: The third Tuesday of the month and the time moved to 7 p.m. Did you remember the vote in December to move the meeting? We will still be at the VFW Post in Loves Park.

Data, data and more data: The February meeting will include the power point presentation of the Flatlanders 2016 year in review. There are a lot of good fish photos along with some great data showing what worked last year and what lakes were producing fish. The data showed our old favorite lakes are not the same as the good old days. Again, I included a special section on what worked at the Lake of the Woods – one real surprise.

Special guest: We will also have a guest speaker. Wally has been in contact with Stacy McCaskill, founder of Fishwithme.net. She will be at our monthly meeting to show off the site, discuss some changes being made to



The Flatlanders were honored by the Illini Muskie Alliance (illinimuskiealliance.org) in January during a meeting honoring the IMA's first Hall of Fame inductees.

make it more useful to everyday anglers and to ask for our help.

McCaskill, who is a Rock Valley College business professor, is asking club members to join the site and essentially be Beta testers on the improvements. The goal of Fishwithme.net is to become a national platform get more people fishing by making it easy to meet and connect with anglers anywhere in the United States. Check out the site. You have to register, but you don't have to pay. Use TRYFWM where it asks for a promo code and it will wipe out the membership fee.

Banquet and more: March 18 has been reserved for a full day. The Flatlanders annual banquet/fundraiser will be at 6 p.m. at Thunder Bay Grill in Rockford. (East State and Bell School) Contact Jack Pertz to get in on the early bird raffle. We would like to get an idea of how many to expect at this annual event. The evening will include our annual awards, many chances to win some nice items and opportunity to start making plans for the 2017 season. The banquet will be different this year with the meal of your choice ordered off the menu. We hope you can make it for a nice evening out.

(More on next page)

For those of you that need more muskie information on March 18 remember the guys up in Madison, the Capital City Chapter, have their annual muskie school. This includes a welcoming presentation, three classes of your choice from a list of 36 classes, a nice catered lunch and a large raffle at the end of the day. Go to the Capital City website for more information. <http://www.capitalcitymuskiesinc.org/>

Speakers scheduled: At the last Executive Committee the board approved speakers for the April and the May general meetings. For the April meeting, we are booking Duane Landmeier to speak on Illinois lakes. This should help us get a few of those early season fish. In April, Jeremy Venhuizen will also speak on Lake Storey, our first outing of the year on April 29 and we are working on the speaker for the May meeting. Again in this new season, some of us will be fishing midweek. Grab a partner for the early season tour of the lakes in Northern Illinois that hold muskies. The same as last season, weekly trips are scheduled based on weather conditions, moon phase and the honey do list. In addition, plan on having supper with us at Busters before the meetings. Join us and make plans to get out fishing. Get on the water and get on the board.

Goodbye Gander Mountain?

Gander Mountain may file bankruptcy as soon as the end of this month, according to multiple reports. If that happens, Gander Mountain will close all 162 stores -- Rockford, Janesville, Madison, etc. Gander Mountain responded to the bankruptcy reports with a noncommittal statement that everything is being reviewed. The statement said the company is subject to "economic cycles, changes in our industry and shifts in consumer demand that require us to adapt our business accordingly." What does it mean? There may be a huge going out of business sale coming soon.

No fish reported yet

*By Steve Ruhmann
Release chairman*

There have been no fish reported for 2017 but this warm weather has several of us itching to get out. The local lakes are thawing and the lakes in central Illinois are open. Rumor has it that the POTFCOMI is going to get out and chase the beast. I hope him and his capable partner score. Stick a PIGGIE gentlemen.

If you do catch something send your release forms to:

Steve Ruhmann
14728 Whispering Wind Way
South Beloit, Illinois
61080

Paperwork reminder

If you're going to Canada on our annual Lake of the Woods outing, you need to make sure your Outdoors Card hasn't expired besides getting a license. Don't forget your Remote Access Border Crossing permit. Also, make sure your boat registration is up to date. The Illinois Department of Natural Resources stopped sending out renewal notices in 2013. Registration of watercraft in Illinois is good for three years and expires June 30. Go to the DNR's website, dnr.illinois.gov, click on boating and go to the link "Please use Online Renewal if your boat is currently registered in your name." Follow the instructions from there.

Outing schedule

April 29: Storey Lake, Illinois
May 13: Lake Waubesa and Lake Monona
July 15-22: Lake of the Woods – Bay Store Camp
Sept. 22-23: St. Croix River
Oct. 20-22: Deer, Bone, Apple River and Wapogasset
Nov. 11-13: Big Sissabagama Area

Purposes of Muskies, Inc.

- To promote a high quality Muskellunge sport fishery
- To support selected conservation practices based on scientific merit and carried out by authorized federal and state agencies
- To promote Muskellunge research
- To establish hatcheries and rearing ponds and introduce the species into suitable waters
- To support the abatement of water pollution
- To maintain records of habits, growth and range of species
- To disseminate Muskellunge information
- To promote good fellowship and sportsmanship among men, women and children

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Vice President	Lee Bach	815-494-7258
Treasurer	Jack Pertz	815-629-2562
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www.flatlanderschapter.com

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A photograph of a man wearing a cap and sunglasses, holding a large fish (likely a muskie) in a body of water. The background shows a forested shoreline.

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ARCTIC CAT
SMALL BOAT PASSION

ACEBAITS
www.ACETANDEM.com
612-210-6312

An advertisement for Acebaits featuring illustrations of various fishing lures (jugs and spoons) and a large fish (likely a muskie) on the right side.

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A photograph of a large, white floating lodge with a deck and railing, situated on a calm lake. The background shows a forested shoreline.

Michael Starratt
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