



January 2018 newsletter

Meetings at 7 p.m. the third Tuesday of every month at Loves Park VFW.

Plan for a great new year

Check out the outings and clear your schedules to participate



Rest in peace Harvey Gustafson , who died Dec.30, 2017.

By **Dick Cholke**
Flatlanders president

Wow! The season in Wisconsin closed, the water got hard and the Chicago show is over! The 2017 season seemed like it wrapped up real fast. It is time to reflect, plan, and pay our respects. The past season we saw unusual

weather patterns in both spring and fall that made for some difficult fishing. Our numbers of fish entered into the Muskie Inc. database were down from last year but our trip to Lake of the Woods was the best in many years. Our members' only contest saw new names moving

up into the top positions of some divisions. Most importantly, we had fun and added some new members. Unfortunately we also lost two of our top anglers this last season. Jim Lavern passed away this last summer. He held positions on our executive committee many years and was one of the top anglers in the Flatlanders Chapter. After the holidays Harvey Gustafson passed away. His stories, advice, and big fish will be missed on our Canadian trips. The chapter extends our condolences to their families and we are thankful that both of these gentlemen were part of the Flatlanders Chapter.

Looking forward the chapter has a full schedule of events and we have a few deadlines approaching for outings. Here is the list:

Lake of the Woods deposits are due by the end of the month to Steve Ruhmann. This should be another great trip. A few guys may be looking for partners. Those new baits you bought at the show really need Canadian water to work well.

I have been in contact with Bob Bell of the Wormsoakers group. We scheduled to join their group to fish Lake Namakagon Oct. 11-14. He hopes we get a good number of Flatlanders on their annual trip to the Lakewoods resort.
<http://www.lakewoodsresort.com/>

This trip includes lodging Thursday, Friday, and Saturday nights. Thursday evening's cocktail party starts the outing with hot and cold hors d'oeuvres. Draft beer will be provided. Saturday night they have dinner included and prizes for seven categories. In addition, Wormsoakers have a dinner for anyone seriously considering attending their outing on Feb. 8 at the Hoffman House at 6:45 p.m. – cost \$20. Bob requires a deposit for the trip of \$150 by April 1, and balance of the \$275 by Aug. 1. If you have any questions you may contact Bob at: bob@robertbellinsurance.com or 815-962-4400 or 815-988-5653. For deposits his address is: Bob Bell, 318 N. 1st Street, Rockford, IL 61107.

Our Flatlanders General Meeting on Feb. 20 will feature the "Flatlanders Year in Review 2017". This presentation includes graphs on what worked last year and photos of our members and outings. **I need photos of you, your fish and extra shots of the crazy stuff from last year. Send them to: cholke@mchsi.com.** I have not seen photos from many of you. Remember, with photo shop you may be holding a photo of a trophy carp if you are delinquent.

Our annual awards banquet and fund raiser is scheduled on March 24. We will be returning to Thunder Bay for a fun evening to recognize our top anglers and plan for the 2018 season. The buffet dinner includes: sliced roast beef, chicken chardonnay, tossed salad, assorted fruit, mashed potatoes, fresh vegetables medley and all non-alcoholic beverages. The cost will be \$28. Please consider donating items for raffles or the silent auction.

Jim Beaty, President of the Shawnee Muskie Hunters Chapter, forwarded a flier to us for anyone interested in fishing their tournaments on Lake Kinkaid this year. They are April 28-29 and Oct. 20-21. Entry fees are \$110 per person with a 50 percent payout.

Our season kicks off this year with a nice line up of outings on some quality lakes. The schedule for the Flatlanders outings include:

April 28: Lake McMaster near Victoria, Illinois.

May 20: Lake Waubesa with lunch at the Green Lantern.

July 13-21: Lake of the Woods Ontario, Canada

September: We will be firming up this outing at the EC meeting this month

Oct. 11-14: Lake Namekagon with the Wormsoakers. This should be an interesting outing with other Rockford muskie anglers. To really get into the fun we encourage new members and old members to participate in the outings. We welcome new members and we hope to get you out on a Flatlander event. Get on the water and get on the board!

Meeting reminder

There is no general meeting in January. The breakfast before the Chicago Musky Show was our January meeting. The next meeting will be 7 p.m. Feb. 20 at the VFW. As our president noted, it will be the annual data presentation.

Release contest update

Well the 2017 Muskellunge hunt has come to a close but we still have some late season fish to report. To close the season with a bang the father and son team of Andrew and Alex Larson were up below Lake Mead again where Andrew released Tiger Muskellunge of 40 and 41 inches. Mark Carlson was also out doing his late season pursuit and scored on Esox of 54, 52, 44, 43, 42, 46, 48, 38, and 45 inches. Great way to end the season Mark!

With those last fish our reported fish total for 2017 is 220. Not bad for a tough year. 2018 will bring us new opportunities and more fish in the net!

Get ready for Lake of the Woods

This is just a reminder that your \$100 LOTW deposits are due in by the end of the month 1/31/18. We are currently at 15 people. As of this writing, I am still looking for a partner but like the pursuit of the mighty muskellunge, I have a line in the water looking for a taker.

Steve Ruhmann
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IMA inducts

2018 Hall of Fame class

The Illini Muskies Alliance inducted its 2018 Hall of Fame class at the Pheasant Run Resort in St. Charles on Jan. 6. A large audience (over 100) was present to observe this popular IMA program.

The Hall of Fame is the IMA way of recognizing and thanking those individuals who have made a difference with muskie fishing in Illinois. This 30-year-old organization literally has hundreds of potential nominees to choose from. IMA is made up of 11 muskie clubs



located throughout the state. (including the Flatlanders).

This years' class was introduced by HOF Chairman Pat Glavin, Midwest Musky Club, with each inductee receiving congratulations and appropriate HOF awards from IMA Chairman, Ray Thompson, Southside Musky Hawks chapter of Muskies, Inc.

This years' Hall Of Fame, "difference makers" included the following individuals:

Steve Statland, Chicagoland Muskie Hunters chapter of Muskies, Inc., certainly a muskie enthusiastic for many years and one of the past owners and promoters of the Chicago Muskie Show.

Duane Serck, past president of Central Illinois Muskie Hunters chapter of Muskies, Inc., for several years a difference maker and certainly a promoter of muskie fishing in Illinois.

Jim Beatty, president of the Shawnee Muskie Hunters chapter of Muskies, Inc. Initiated the Youth Fishing Day program for Shawnee and founder of the High School Muskie fishing tournament.

Al Nutty, long time guide and Muskie promoter from Kinkaid Lake, One of the founders of the Shawnee Muskie Hunters Club chapter of Muskies, Inc.

Duane Landmeier, Quad County Hawg Hunters chapter of Muskies, Inc., Muskie guide, seminar speaker and author of one of the first Muskie fishing books regarding Illinois muskie

fishing.

Shawn Hirst, a muskie friendly fisheries biologist located in southern Illinois. Very involved with the muskie fishery of Kinkaid Lake for many years. Dan Stephenson, IDNR Fisheries Director, accepted the awards for Shawn.

Howard Chambliss, president of the Illinois Muskie Tournament Trail, member Lake Shelbyville Muskie Club. Strong supporter of muskie fishing in Illinois for many years.

June Thompson, Southside Musky Hawks chapter of Muskies, Inc., along with husband Warren Thompson make up the first husband and wife members of the Hall of Fame. Again, June has been an active difference maker for muskie fishing in Illinois through a variety of activities, including assistant treasurer of the IMA for many years.

New Media inductees for 2018 included **Scott Richardson**, former Outdoor columnist for the Pantograph, and **Dale Bowman**, outdoor columnist for the Sun-Times. The IMA has long realized the importance of support and promotion from the news media for the Illinois muskie fishery to prosper.

Jim Hartley, Midwest Musky Club, continues to be a strong supporter of the IMA and the muskie fishery in Illinois.

Frank Walter, South of the Border chapter of Muskies, Inc., for many years a strong supporter

and participant with the Illinois muskie fishery program. Over the years for sure a difference maker.

Pete Barber, Fox River Valley chapter of Muskies, Inc., an active and sought out voice of not only the Fox River Valley group but the Illini Muskie Alliance as well.

For contact information concerning any of the Clubs that make up the Illini Muskies Alliance readers may contact, Ron Skala, Midwest Musky Club, at MuskyRon1@att.net

Mark your calendars

Here are some upcoming fishing shows that you might want to attend.

Jan. 25-28: Chicagoland Fishing, Travel & Outdoor Expo, Schaumburg Convention Center. Friday is Musky Madness day with Jim Saric, Joe Bucher and others.

Jan. 26-28: Southern Wisconsin Musky Expo, Waukesha Expo Center

Feb. 9-11: Milwaukee Musky Expo, Washington County Fair Park.

Feb. 16-18: Rockford Boat, Vacation & Fishing show.



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