



FLATLANDERS

TAILS

March 2016

MEETINGS: 7:30 P.M. ~ FOURTH THURSDAY ~ LOVES PARK VFW ~ 2018 WINDSOR RD ~ LOVES PARK, ILLINOIS

The mission: Help us grow our chapter

Our president has been busy. He's filled up this newsletter all by himself. Didn't leave much for me to do. Thanks.

Notes from the bow of the boat

By Dick Cholke

Flatlanders president

I am I the only one, but it seemed like the Chapter News article in the Muskie's Inc. magazine was rather short – well in fact, I did not see it at all. Apparently we had an e-mail problem and it was missed. Hopefully all is resolved and you will see one next issue. I have included it, so we all can be well informed.

The banquet is Saturday – we have a full deck of raffle items and awards. Bring your lucky rabbit foot or Rabid Squirrel bait and win some very nice merchandise. Let's celebrate Muskie Inc.'s 50th anniversary.

If you noticed last meeting we started an information board that will be at every meeting. We are trying to give members a reason to attend each meeting. If you have more ideas, get with one of the Executive Committee members and let's get a new idea started. If you have been fishing, please enter your report on the board. Even if you do not catch fish, at least other members can learn the water temperature, the condition of the lake, what color was hot, etc. and who has been out. They can also learn who they should contact for more information on that lake. Along with that, data from the Muskie Inc. data base will be posted for the lakes scheduled for our next outing.

Signup sheets are also posted for the Chapter Challenge and members without a boat who are looking for a ride at the next outing. Please help these members get on the water and grow our chapter. The Chapter Challenge two years ago was a great time – consider this week at Lake of the Woods for another great trip.

The last few weeks have been busy. A few of us have been out fishing and enjoying the nice spring weather – that's what you say when you get skunked. Three of us went up to the Capital City Muskie School and again found it very informative. The notes below are from Adam Oberfoell's presentation on Night Fishing for



Greg Lehman caught this 46-incher in Illinois.

Muskie. Wendell Webb's presentation on fishing Lake of the Woods on Post Front Conditions, Monday night was also very good.

The one thing both Adam Oberfoell and Jeff Hanson stressed at Muskie School was the importance of being on the water when you see an approaching weather change – rain. So get your lawn work done early on those bright sunny days and be on the water when the fish are active.

Get out and get on the board!

The missing Muskies Inc. article

Flatlanders have seen changes in the last few months. The November meeting elections brought in new leadership and a well-desired break for the outgoing officers. Dick Cholke was elected the new president with Lee Bach stepping up to vice president. Jack Pertz will remain the chapter's treasurer and Wally Haas continues as secretary. The chapter has to say thank you to Jeff Blanck and Dave Jack for their many years of dedication, service and leadership to the club. With their commitment to the club, we have a great group of folks that still like to get out and fish together. Right behind Jeff and Dave, we have to thank all the other members on the Executive Committee that have held office for

many years. Their willingness to stay in those positions move the club forward. With a change in leadership, there will be strong respect for the history and traditions that we have built over the years. In the future, changes will be made to make the Flatlanders a stronger chapter.

December ushered in the end of the Members Only Contest, a few nice fish, and a great Christmas party. Steve Ruhmann ended the year with his largest fish from Wisconsin at 48". Greg Lehmann also pulled out a nice 46" fish from Illinois waters to wrap up the year and move into first place in the Flatlanders Men's Division. His fish is in the photo. Per the last issue of Muskie magazine standings, we have five Flatlanders listed in the five divisions. Congratulations go out to: Mary Hoernecke, Becky Oestreich, Ben Wilary, Charles Heidt and Greg Lehmann.

The February meeting was our annual review presentation of the 2015 season. Interesting data from last year is included with photos of some of the Flatlanders 279 fish. March 19 has been set for the annual awards banquet. April brings in our annual manufacturers night, and our first outing.

The 2016 outing schedule is:

April 30: Story and McMaster Lakes

(McMaster is also known as Snake Den Hollow)

May 21, 22: Madison Chain

June 24, 25, 26: Squaw, Squirrel, Booth and Buckhorn

July 16-23: Lake of the Woods – Bay Store Camp

Sept. 16-18: North Twin

Oct. 28-30: Deer, Bone, Apple River and Wapogasset

We welcome new members and hope anyone interested in the Flatlanders Chapter will join us for some of these great events.

Notes from Muskie School

The following are the notes from the Capital City Chapter of Muskie Inc. Muskie School. This is a great day to learn about local waters from the local guide and experts.

Muskie Fishing at Night with Adam Aberfoell

Equipment and boat stuff

Keep a clean boat for safety – put the baits away – things get crazy with a big fish – you do not need hooks in the leg.

Be safe – learn the hazards etc. of the lake in the daylight

Have a big spotlight available to let other boaters know of your location.

Only use headlamps when needed – get the brightest ones available

Do not turn on your headlamp when fighting a fish - many fish are lost in that instant that you do not have complete control – have your net man turn on his light

Put floats or straps on your tools – have your tools in a consistent place.

Learn your camera – if you have it set on a delay, when fishing alone – it may focus when you hit the button and focus on the motor. When you are move closer to the camera, you and the fish will be out of focus. Put a light on the middle part of the fish to focus.

Adam puts a sock over the rear light to dim it. Fish with the green side of you running lights to the side you are casting to see the line.

Put the depth finder on low light and Adam turns his dash lights off to maintain good night vision- Red cellophane also helps cut the light down

He uses reflective tape on the trolling motor pedal and covers up the lights to improve his night vision.

Fishing

It helps to fish clear water, heavy pressured lakes after dark – usually the average fish is larger

Slow down both the bait and working a structure. If the weeds are thick make casts closer together – thinner weeds you can move somewhat faster.

Fish launches because of the lights and boaters power loading will stir up the food chain. Street lights also are good spots – they attract bait fish

Adam will fish weed flats typically in the 3-6' range, shallow rocks near deep water, shallow and weed edges. At last light fish move into the shallows or the weed edges. Start fishing the structure and move out as needed.

Baits do not have to be loud in clear water – big rubber works. Vibration helps in dark water lakes. Avoid baits with erratic action or jerk baits. Slow is always better

Adam likes to bend his hooks out 10° for better hooking

Slow, big, straight running baits work best – most hits are by fish following and inhaling – very few fish T Bone a lure at night. Thus, use a longer leader and a steady retrieve.

Change up speed and direction before the figure 8. Make big, slow, level figure 8's – at night, he does not do a 3D figure 8. Adam adds a piece of reflective tape at the top of the leader to know when to start the figure 8 – always do at least 1 ½ or 2 figure 8s – many times you are casting a weed flat and sitting over a break line. The fish may be at the break line and need time to come up and get the bait. Adam will also put a knot before the leader so he gets an indication it is time to figure 8. Keeping the rod tip high at the end of the retrieve will allow the bait to make a surface disturbance indicating that you should figure 8.

Spinner baits are better than bucktails – more weed resistant and the flutter on the drop – he uses 1 or 2 oz. spinner baits. He likes Colorado blades at times in pressured water. He also likes the jointed Depth Raider.

If you have approaching bad weather – get out and fish. Also, fish when the Muskie's are feeding – it may not be convenient for you.

Adam trolls slower at night 2.5-4 mph – he often will use the trolling motor to troll

He believes in the moon phase – New moon is best (dark) Full moon many times kills the bite as it comes up.

The topwater bite is still on during turnover.

Adam will fish at night starting in mid-June and goes through November and to the end of the season. He had photos at night with snow in the boat. September is his best month for night fishing – he looks for shallow water and sand.

He finds 1 a.m.-4 a.m. to be a dead time. It usually starts about 4:30 a.m. in the summer/at the first hint of light and ends about 9 a.m.

Help Minnesota's fishery

From the Minnesota Muskie Alliance Facebook page:

Muskie management in Minnesota is under attack. Without your support our muskie fisheries are in jeopardy.

This threat began with a small group of muskie haters on Pelican Lake (one of MN's premier muskie waters). By promoting false information through their lakeshore owners association, they were able to convince the Ottertail County COLA (Coalition Of Lake Associations) to take action against muskie stocking in Ottertail County. They've gone to great lengths to manipulate local residents into believing muskies are destroying their lakes, and they've gained enough traction to pull the statewide MN Coalition of Lake Associations into the fray as well.

Their claims are nothing new. It's the same old story.... "Muskies are eating all the walleyes." Then, when the science proves that completely false, it's "Muskies are eating all the panfish." And when that is also proven false they turn to "Muskies are a threat to public safety and will attack our children." Obviously that doesn't hold water either.

In fact, this is nothing more than a re-hashed version of previous efforts by the group "No More Muskies", but they've found a new face and a new voice. There are decades worth of science supporting muskie stocking and proving it has had no negative effects anywhere in Minnesota, but actual facts are not something these people concern themselves with. They use scare tactics and emotional pleas to further their cause.

Make no mistake, this threat is serious.

In fact, they have allies in the Minnesota Legislature. Senator Bill Ingebrigtsen has long been opposed to muskies, and in the past has made several attempts to hamper positive muskie management. Senator Ingebrigtsen has aligned himself with this current group and is working to help them stop muskie stocking in Ottertail County. Representative Bud Nornes has joined in as well. Many Legislators see this as a "social" issue and not a biological one, meaning they don't care about the science. If there is enough public outcry against muskie stocking, they can and will write legislation to stop it regardless of the actual facts.

The groups' current goal is to stop muskie stocking on West Battle, Pelican, and Big Detroit Lakes. These are three of Minnesota's premier trophy muskie waters, in addition to being thriving fisheries for walleyes and panfish. They also intend to stop any possibility of stocking any additional waters in Ottertail County in the future.

What must be understood is that this is just the start. This threat goes far beyond Ottertail County. Any traction they gain will be used to promote this same type of action across the state. If this isn't stopped dead in it's tracks it will have serious implications for every muskie water in Minnesota.

The only way to stop this is with your support. This is not the time to be complacent. We need EVERYONE who cares about muskies anywhere in Minnesota to take action.

There is a meeting being held on Thursday, October 29th in Fergus Falls at the Otter Tail Power Community Room.

215 South Cascade Street. The meeting is from 6:00-8:00 pm. It is extremely important that we have a very strong presence of muskie supporters at this meeting. The Pelican Lakes association is aggressively promoting attendance by anyone opposed to muskies. We need to show them, the DNR, and the Legislators that we support muskies. Please pass this information on, and ask everyone who can to attend the meeting.

Lastly, please call and/or email the two involved Legislators, as well as the DNR Commissioner, letting them know you support muskie stocking, and proactive muskie management statewide.

As always, be polite and courteous. We win these battles because we take the high road and stick to science, facts, and common sense.

Tom Landwehr (DNR Commissioner)

651-259-5555

E-mail

tom.landwehr@state.mn.us

Senator Bill Ingebrigtsen

651-297-8063

E-mail

sen.bill.ingebrigtsen@senate.mn

Representative Bud Nornes

651-296-4946

E-mail

rep.bud.nornes@house.mn

Please make those phone calls, send the e-mails, and try to attend the meeting!

Note: Flatlanders President Dick Cholke has sent an email. I intend to send one later today. Let's not let a few dimwits destroy a great fishery.

Reminder

Please make sure your membership is up to date. Our lives are hectic and it's easy to miss an expiration date. Renewing is easy online. Just go to the Muskies Inc. website and follow the directions.

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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Lee Bach 815-494-7258

Treasurer

Jack Pertz 815-629-2562

Secretary

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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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DAVE JACK
(815) 636-7636
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9902 N. SECOND ST. MACHESNEY PARK, IL 61115

A large, stylized logo for Loves Park Motorsports, featuring the letters 'LP' in a dark, metallic font. To the right of the logo are logos for Can-Am, Sea-Doo, Ski-Doo, and Arctic Cat.

can-am
SEA-DOO
ski-doo
ARCTIC CAT
SMALL BOAT PASSION

ACEBAITS
www.ACETANDEM.com
612-210-6312

An advertisement for Acebaits. It features a fishing lure with a spinner and a yellow lure, a fishing hook, and a large fish (likely a muskie) swimming in the water. The background is a light blue and white gradient.

YAMAHA
EXPECT A LOT.™
SALES ~ SERVICE ~ PARTS
CRESTLINER ~ CROWNLINE
SYLVAN
EVEN KEEL MARINE INC.
Even Better Than You Think
6621 W. State
Rockford, IL

A black and white illustration of a Yamaha outboard motor.

Tuffy
Wisconsin's Best

963-1105

LAC SEUL FLOATING LODGES
HUDSON ONTARIO
PROVIDING OUR GUESTS WITH AN ENJOYABLE
HOUSE-BOATING EXPERIENCE FOR OVER 25 YEARS

A photograph of a white floating lodge on a lake. The lodge has a blue roof and is surrounded by trees and water. There are several small boats docked nearby.

Michael Starratt
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