

Illinois Spoonpluggers

Newsletter

**Dedicated to the teachings of E.L. "Buck" Perry
The Father of Structure Fishing**

July/August, 2013

This month's Illinois Spoonpluggers meeting was held on Thursday, August 8, 2013 at the Elk Grove Village Public Library with 7 members present. After some brief business discussion about the seminar an engaging and entertaining discussion was held based on recent fishing reports and tips from fellow members.

BUSINESS: Member input has led us to considering an alternate site for the Winter Seminar. The goal would be to do a bit of a refresh, add some time/space flexibility, and give the event added exposure. An email will be sent to everyone in the club to encourage discussion and input. Its important to set the date and make the space reservation soon so please share your thoughts once you receive the information.

FISHING REPORTS: Jim Shell and son Casey followed up a great trip for northern pike on Lake Mendota with a run to Southern Illinois' Lake of Egypt reeling in over 70 bass in 2 days, most 15"-18"! Jim must be in good favor with the weather gods because he had already planned to head south from Wisconsin, and was able to do it just ahead of a massive cold front. Fantastic job fishing guys, and great effort at both ends of the trip. Thanks to Casey for his on-the-spot reporting! Bob Roels discussed details of his trip to Fox Lake (Wisc.) and Lake Wisconsin. Lake mapping/interpretation and lure presentation were keys and some hefty walleyes were boated. (Navionics is good, but its not perfect and none of the little stuff is on there. Do your own mapping)! Bob's years of experience and effort really show in how well he is able to adapt to conditions on the water, so well done!

Since the big July cool off things have been tougher. Not that good fish aren't being caught! Phil Szafranski noted things might be a little tougher, but going just a bit deeper than is typical can help compensate. Bob R. added that for some reason, the thermoclines have been shallower, and more narrow than recent memory. This helps explain why some big fish were being caught at very specific depths and a little shallower at times. He suggested seeking more stable conditions right now, such as in deep drainage lakes (like Geneva) and lakes with current. Back in Wisconsin, Scott Duff found the pike hitting a fast (6mph) lure deep on the troll, even after the big front. He launched and had caught no fish for a couple hours, then hit the gas. They had been there all the time...so be sure to check those speeds. Scott also had some fun at the Fox Chain where fishing held up pretty good after the weather change. In four short movements on one bar, several walleyes 20"-26", 5 pike to 35", and 5 muskies to 38" were caught, along with some bass. All species were caught on the same lure (Spoonplug) at exactly the same depth (but bass a little shallower).

Jim Taylor enjoyed a family fishing trip to Lake of the Ozarks, and Joe Zaremba had members checking for open dates on their calendars after seeing his pictures from a fly-in trip to Canada's Churchill River System. Beautiful walleyes, trout, and big pike.

Brett Christianson decided to tackle Lake Beulah, known for big bass, determined to unlock some of that lake's secrets. He did a fine job, too, doing the general mapping in a few hours, selecting potential spots to map and fish ahead of time, finding what's there, and then putting 18 LM bass in the boat. Beulah is a challenging lake (actually 6 lakes) and weather conditions were unstable, but despite this he still made a nice catch. All but one of Brett's fish was caught on a very slow jump bait, which means his interpretation and fishing had to be right on the money. And they were; this is the advantage of Spoonplugging knowledge. He also shared details of his approach to lure presentation at the meeting. Well done!

TIPS/MISCELLANEOUS:

Jim Taylor had an excellent experience with repair work on his boat trailer at R.A. Adams Enterprises, McHenry, IL. Its always nice to get back on the water quickly and for a nice price.

A couple books discussed at the meeting to recommend: **A Voice In Our Wilderness**, a collection of "best of" articles by the late, great outdoor write **John Husar** (Chicago Tribune, WGN). He was well acquainted with Spoonplugging knowledge and at least two of the stories would be of interest to local members. He was a man of action who had an unstoppable zest for life, and a gift of the pen.

A second book, **Fishing Southern Illinois, by Art Reid** includes a story about a chance encounter with Buck Perry and Don Nichols in June 1966 on Crab Orchard Lake. Jim Shell and Scott D. posted online (a copy of the book was brought to the meeting). Its a great story illustrating the effect these trailblazers had back in the day when they would walk up to a new lake, fish it and leave with onlookers stunned in disbelief. This didn't just happen once or twice, this was how they lived! Also includes interesting commentary about the times and Buck's impact.

FISHING NEW WATER: This summer, members of Illinois Spoonpluggers have fished an area from Green Bay, to Carbondale, to Lake St. Claire, plus dozens of lakes in Michigan, Illinois, Indiana, Wisconsin, and even Canada!. The experience in this club, and members' willingness to fish new waters shows in the catches being made! A summer photo album will be coming next month.

Finally, the **Northern Indiana "Buck Sez" Outing** is this week (starts this Wednesday, August 14-17) so we hope to see you there. Keep those reports coming!

NEXT MEETING: Thursday, September 12, 2013 - Club meetings are held on the second Thursday of the month starting at 7:15 PM.

Spoonplugger Websites:

Spoonpluggers of America: nsoa.info

Buck's Baits: buckperry.com

Discussion Board, links, and more: spoonplugger.net

Newsletter Editor: Scott Duff, Phone 847-322-2695



Buck Sez...

Most fishermen live in a very small fishing world. That is, the waters they fish are restricted to a small area, the type of water is limited, and many fish for only one or two species. Some fishermen cannot change this situation. He may wish to travel and fish strange waters, but he never gets the chance to do so. In the majority of cases, the fisherman does have access to several species, as well as a choice of different waters. Yet he continues to fish the same places for the same species season after season.

Why is this so?

Basically, the reluctance is based on the fact the fisherman does not “know” strange water. Through experience, or through friends, he has come to know the fishable areas in certain water; and, through trial and error, has found a way to become successful on occasions. This knowledge may have taken years to come by, so he is reluctant to fish where nothing is known.

At first glance, this reasoning makes sense. But, to a Spoonplugger, there is no such thing as “strange waters.” All are fished in a routine manner. There will be a period when new water may be **unfamiliar** -- but his fishing procedures are the same regardless of the water being fished. A Spoonplugger looks forward to the challenge of new waters. There is an added satisfaction and thrill in putting a particular water “in his hip pocket.” But, more importantly, he knows -- **there is no better teacher than fishing strange water.**

....While all of these waters may appear to be greatly different, basically they are all the same as far as our fishing approach is concerned. If a fisherman becomes familiar with all the different types; the structures that exist, where they are likely to be, and learns the basic presentation of lures -- then he should begin to feel no strange waters exist

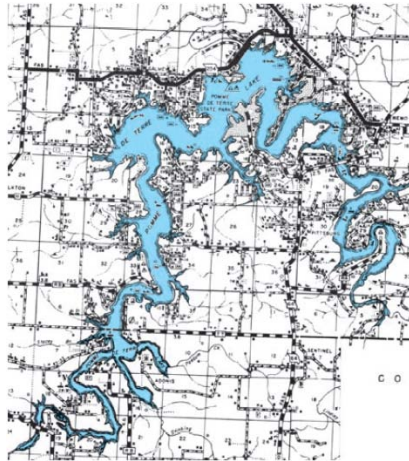


Image of the 7800 acres of Lowland Reservoir fished.

Mental Aspects – Fishing New Water!

by Phil Szafranski

In early June I had the opportunity to fish for a full week with Spoonplugger Bill Roth. Bill worked in the same profession that Terry O'Malley was associated with years ago. Terry made it clear that if Bill was serious about his fishing, he should purchase a green colored book written by a gentleman named, Buck Perry. Bill shared this information with Joe Roth and the rest is history.

Since Bill recently moved to Southwest Missouri, he and I reviewed lake maps of the area in the past year and one particular Lowland Reservoir stood out as consideration for fishing. Information on the Internet indicated improved water color occurs from a seasonal basis for this particular water. All other lakes are Highland Reservoirs and we all know the challenges that these lakes can present. These lakes are extremely popular and draw most of the fishing pressure from the locals.

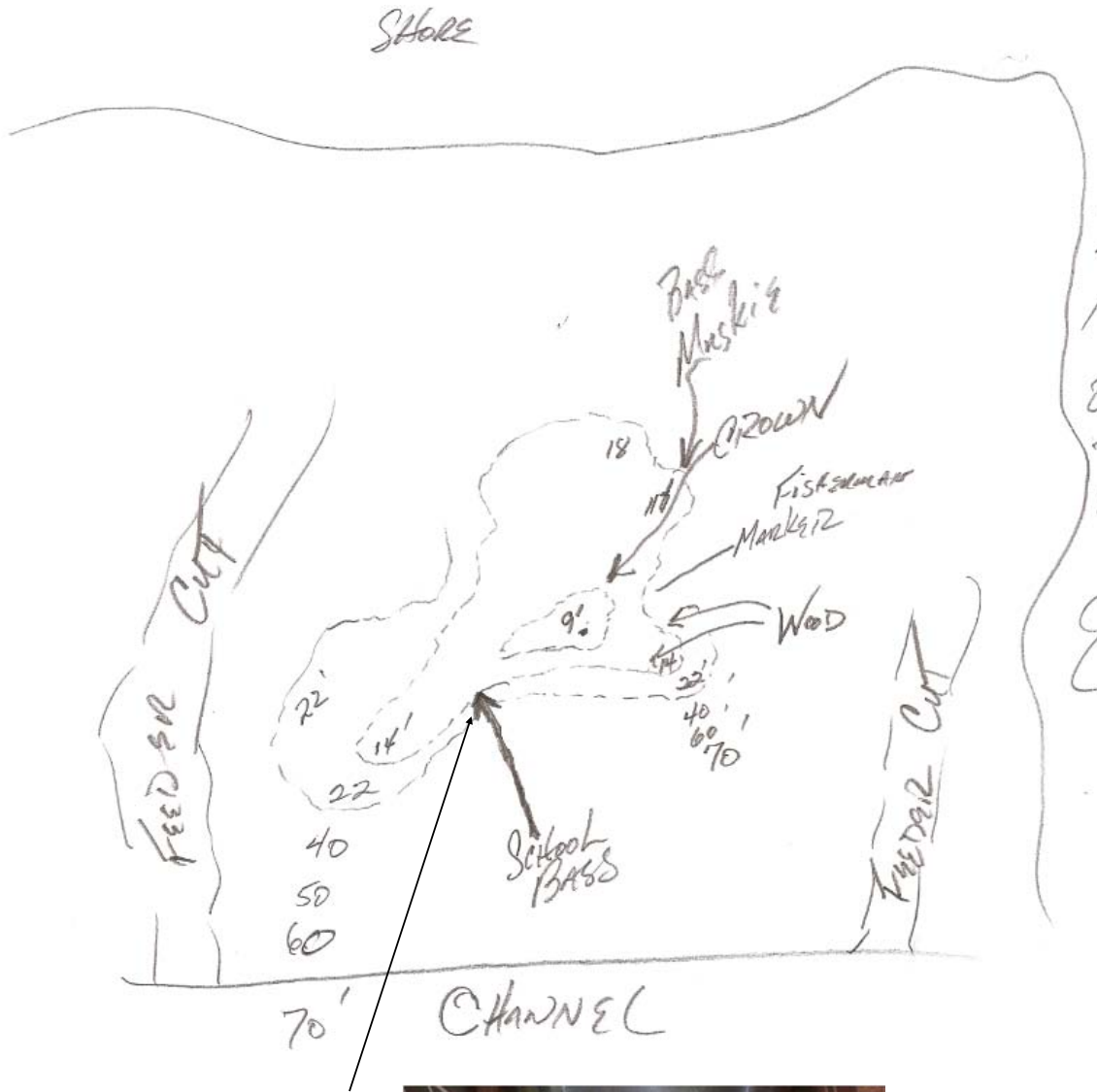
The night prior to my morning departure produced excessive rains to the area I was traveling to. A slow moving front produced three to eight inches of rainfall in 24 hours. Three hours into my nine hour journey, I noticed farmland being underwater and small creeks now forming rushing rivers with chocolate milk appearance. The next five hours of travel remained the same and my enthusiasm for this trip was waning rapidly. I began thinking that we would be fortunate to see a single fish in the boat for the week.

Within an hour of arriving to my destination, a change in the topography became apparent and the land changed from flatter soil to hills and rock content. As I crossed the dam of the reservoir, I was elated to see good water color with no muddying effect. Although the lake area had excessive rains causing the lake to rise five feet overnight,

the rock terrain did not create excessive soil running into the lake. We simply had water color to one foot in depth.

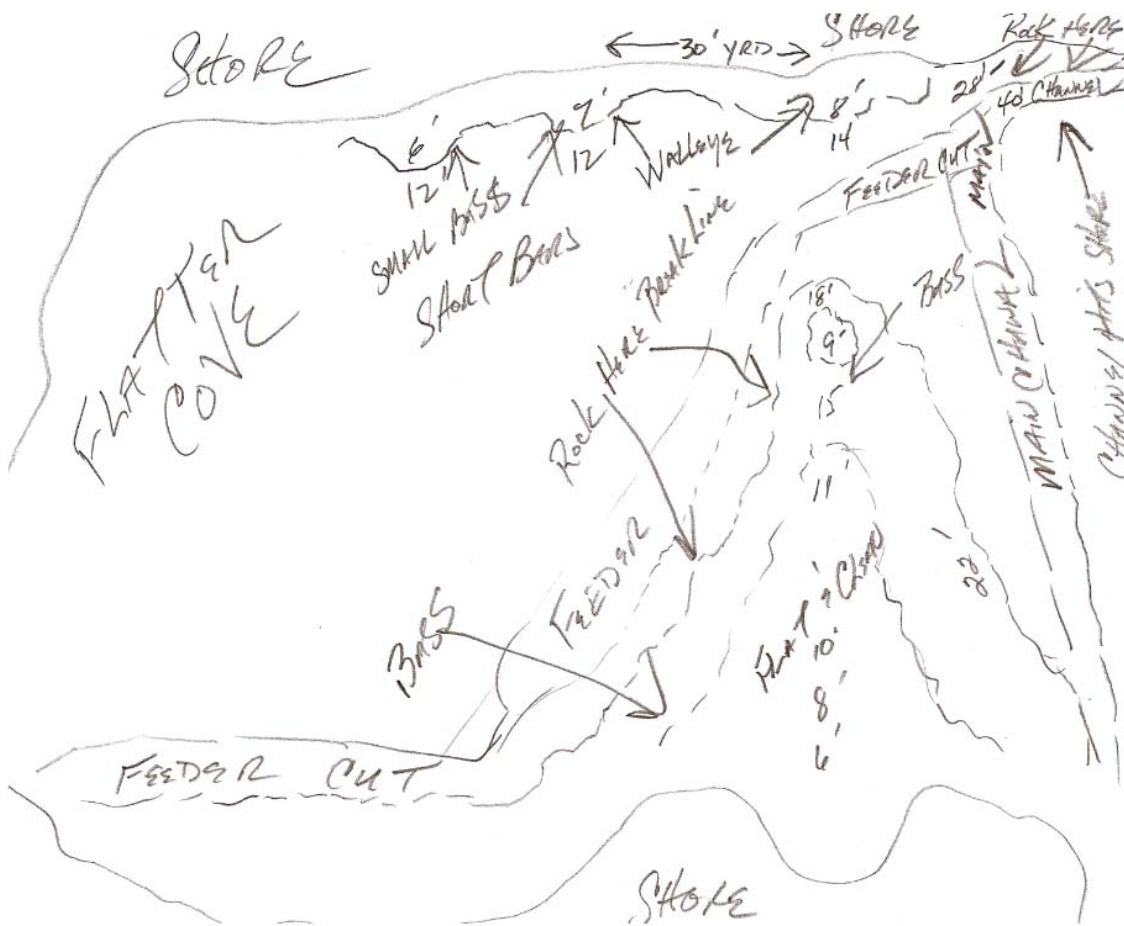
Immediately upon launching we headed toward the dam area based on map study prior to arrival. This area offered three summertime structures suited for the seasonal time of year. Our first choice was a large feature associated with the main channel and two feeder cuts. What appeared as a large bar on the map was in fact, a hump. We noted a boat in the area as we approached and made the assumption that this person was in the area we were searching for. A fisherman was casting a spinner-bait near a hazard marker. Using this boat as a point of reference, we initially made a couple of straight passes in the area without lures to aid in determining the breaklines present.

Within 15 minutes of putting on the lures we made contact with our first bass. This was the first of ten caught from a school in 12-14 feet of water in approximately 30 minutes of time. This school was within 35 yards of the spinner-bait caster and the hazard marker. The area being fished by this individual was the crown of the hump, but the lack of understanding structure and fish movement kept this person out of position for contacting the school. As we worked the area throughout the week, a limited number of fishermen did come to the hump and their presentation of lures focused on the crown only. Feature drawn below:



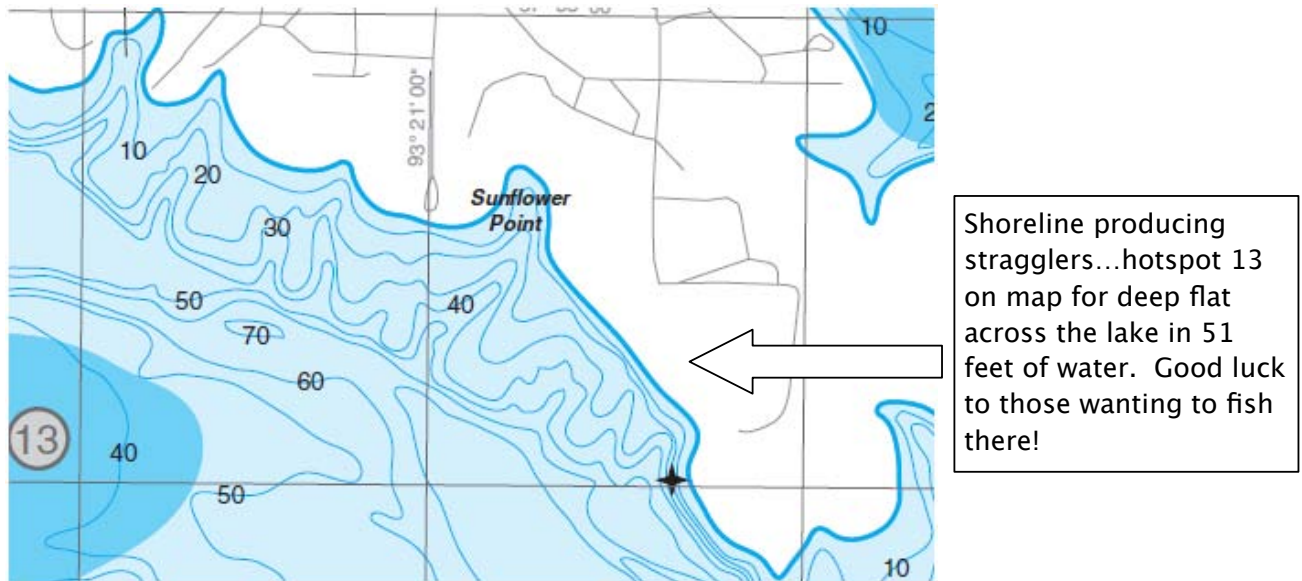
FIRST THREE BASS FROM THE SCHOOL FOR THE FISH FRY!

As indicated earlier map study prior to picking the lake occurred. The initial interpretation of this 7800 acre reservoir identified seven features to focus on during our limited time available to us. This second area required us to trailer the boat to another launch site to limit on the water travel time. This area really drove home a lesson to me regarding fish movement. The large feature fished in this area produced bass but the walleye's were associated with a nearby shoreline having many short bars and main channel being redirected to the opposite shoreline. Drawing below...would have loved to put more time here but too much water and so little time!

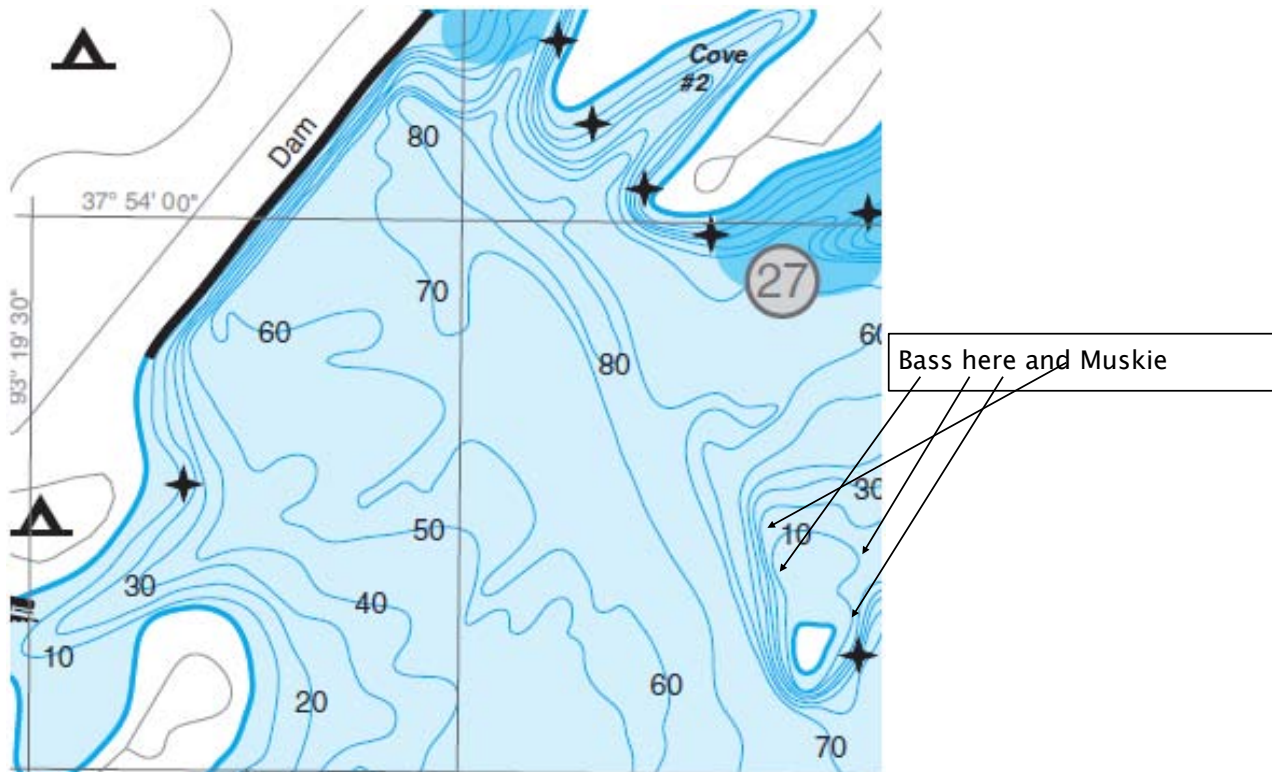


Another important consideration when fishing a larger reservoir is where you base your stay. We chose an area close to three main lake structures and our resort had the main channel running parallel to a half mile stretch of shoreline before turning toward the

main lake dam. This area was not identified as a lake “hotspot” on the map Bill purchased. Each day Bill and I would start our presentation of lures in the shallows and run this half mile stretch before motoring off at higher speeds to access distant structures. Upon returning from these structures, we would run the shallow lures back to the resort. Each run would produce 4 to 12 fish on each occasion. Image below:



We also fished a main lake island that is not shown as a “hotspot”. We only witnessed this island being fished by the locals twice, and with limited time spent. Both occasions resulted in fishermen throwing jigs into the flooded bushes without success. This location produced bass and muskie for us. This is the spot that you and I will spend our time to catch the largest muskie in this entire reservoir! Image below:



Trip Notes:

As the week progresses timing of movements became unpredictable and straggler fishing became more important.

Near end of trip stragglers are taken deeper...fishing moving down.

No weeds in lake and because of this DNR dropping fish cribs impacting the presentation of lures in some areas.

Wish I would have been here under a more stable condition.

NETWORK EVENTS

Illinois Spoonpluggers Winter Seminar

Elk Grove Village, IL

March 16, 2013

Contact: Jim Taylor

815-477-1761

jt10823876@sbcglobal.net

Leoni Outing

Jackson, MI

June 20-24, 2013

Contact: John Zaborny

517-414-3596

jzaborny@sbcglobal.net

Muskegon Lake, MI

Fisherman's Landing

July 10-14, 2013

Lunker Hunters

Contact: Chase Klinesteker

616-949-8665

Ckspoonpl1@aol.com

Northern Indiana Spoonpluggers "Buck Sez" Outing

Tippecanoe, Webster, Wawasee Lakes

Forest Ridge Campground

219-327-3551

August 14-17, 2013 (Note-starts Wednesday this year)

Contacts:

John Bales 219-854-3921

johnspoon@embarqmail.com

Denny Coulardot: 260-691-3118

Buck Perry Memorial Outing

Taylorsville, NC

Sept. 14, 2013

Contacts:

Terry O'Malley 828-855-0746

Jeri Perry 828-632-8058

buckperry90@gmail.com