

Newsletter of the Illinois Spoonpluggers Club

March, 2007

The next meeting of the Illinois Spoonpluggers will be on Thursday, March 8, 2007, 7:15 PM at the Elk Grove Village Public Library. Club meetings are held the second Thursday of the month, and a reminder, all future meetings will be held at the Elk Grove Village location.

WINTER SPOONPLUGGING SEMINAR

The Illinois Spoonpluggers Winter Seminar is scheduled for Saturday, March 17, 9:00 AM-4:00 PM at the Elk Grove Village Public Library. See below for complete details. Information is also posted on the Website at spoonplugger.net.

CLUB BUSINESS

1. MEETING SUMMARY - The February meeting was called to order at 7:15 PM with 12 members present. Jim Taylor gave the Treasurer's Report and provided copies to the members. We were joined by *Rich Lynch* and *Dave Johnson* of Rockford, IL who we welcome as new members to the club! Rich and Dave are new to Spoonplugging but bring with them considerable fishing experience.

2. WINTER SEMINAR PLANNING - The discussion, led by *Jim Duplex*, covered the agenda (questions submitted, special presentations, situational fishing reports) as well as logistics and plans for the next club meeting.

* *Jerry Hein* will moderate a discussion on CASTING with a special presentation by *John Bales* covering Tools and Technique.

* Members offering Situational Fishing Reports include *Rick Matus*, *Phil Szafranski*, *Craig Hubbard*, and *Jim Duplex*.

* *Joe Renholds* will once again be handling the printing.

* *Wayne Dylo* will have coffee and rolls ready to start the meeting. *Craig Hubbard* is taking care of food and his wife *Jenny Hubbard* has again offered to work the video camera.

* *Jim Taylor's* beautiful display case of Spoonplugging tools and materials will again be featured at the information table.

* *Jerry Hein* and *Jim Duplex* will serve as our capable moderators to keep the day's activities running smoothly.

Please plan to attend the March 8th club meeting. We will be assembling folders and would appreciate everyone's help in getting this done. The upcoming meeting will cover final preparations for the seminar and then we should be ready to go! Thanks to all who have been hard at work with preparations. We sincerely appreciate all the time and effort that they have been putting in.

3. LURE ORDER - Jim Perillo opted to stay in Florida a little while longer to get a back treatment so he will bring the lure order to the seminar for those who placed orders. Jim, we hope you are feeling better.

4. LAKE BARKLEY CLUB OUTING JULY 28 -AUGUST 5!!! Mark your calendars and try come on down for whatever dates you are able! Join in a group discussion about the Lake Barkley/Kentucky Lake Outing at the April club meeting.

5. FISHING REPORTS - We haven't received any new open water fishing reports but were getting close! As a sure sign of spring, the cooling lakes have begun to reopen. Expect water temps on the warm sides to be in the 60's F. Powerton Lake and Braidwood Lake have already opened (Feb. 15 & March 1) and LaSalle Lake opens on March 15. The Heidecke Lake opener is April 1, but remember the power plant is gone so treat it as a natural lake. With the snow melt and prospects for continued rain/snow chances in the coming weeks, expect river levels to stay up for a while.

Dates for upcoming National Outings:

Illinois Spoonpluggers Winter Seminar, March 17, 2007; 'Bama & Ohio Spoonpluggers, April 11-15, 2007; Muskegon Lunker Hunters Outing at Fishermen's Landing, July 18-22, 2007; Northern Indiana "Buck Sez" Outing, August 9-11, 2007; North Carolina Outing, September 6-8, 2007; Chicamauga Reservoir, October 4-6, 2007.

Newsletter Editor: Scott Duff, E-mail swdclar@aol.com, Phone 847-690-1079

(EDITOR'S NOTE-Check the on-line PDF version of this newsletter at spoonplugger.net if you experience format issues. I will be updating the format in a few weeks. My apologies for any inconvenience. SD)

ILLINOIS SPOONPLUGGERS WINTER SEMINAR

March 17, 2007

Elk Grove Village, Illinois

The Illinois Spoonpluggers will host the 5th Annual Winter Spoonplugging Seminar on Saturday, March 17, 2007 at the Elk Grove Village Public Library in Elk Grove Village, Illinois. The seminar will run from 9:00 AM-4:30 PM.

REGISTRATION & FEE: \$17.00, PAYABLE TO "JAMES TAYLOR." Mail to Phil Szafranski, 1028 Glenlake, Park Ridge, IL 60068. Contact Phil by phone at 847-384-6819, and e-mail at szafranski1@sbcglobal.net. The fee includes coffee, rolls, lunch, handout materials, and participation in the day's activities.

LATE REGISTRATION AT THE DOOR WILL BE \$20

**CONTACT: You may direct inquiries regarding the seminar to
Jim Duplex, Seminar Coordinator
E-mail: jjd82@juno.com
Phone: 630-579-9815**

ABOUT THE EVENT: The seminar will feature a variety of topics and presentations designed to increase your success on the water. Our primary goal is to address specific topics that may be of concern to you. The specifics under discussion will be:

- * Mapping and Interpretation**
- * Weather and Water**
- * Basic Movement of Fish**
- * Structure, Breaks, and Breaklines**
- * Lake Types**
- * Presentation of Lures**
- * Tools and Controls**
- * Mental Aspects**

THE BEST PRACTICES PRESENTATIONS WILL INCLUDE:

CASTING - Do you know when to cast, where to cast, what to cast, why you cast, and how to cast? *Jerry Hein* will lead the discussion and *John Bales* will give a presentation covering tools and technique.

MAPPING -Last year's seminar featured a discussion of the various techniques and procedures you might use in making your Spoonplugger map. Did you make a map you'd like to share with group? How did your mapping go this year: do you need help; do you still have questions? Submit a map that you'd like to discuss at the seminar.

FISHING REPORTS - Nothing energizes a group of Spoonpluggers more than a detailed fishing report. Any good report should feature a Spoonplugger map in addition to the where, when, what, why, and how the catch was made or, in some cases, not made. Do you have a fishing situation you'd like to share with the group? Submit a report you'd like to discuss at the seminar.

Directions to the Elk Grove Village Public Library

1001 Wellington Ave. Elk Grove Village, IL

847-439-0447

Attention: *The library will not open until 9:00AM.* Plan your arrival accordingly. There are restaurants in the area where you can get coffee and breakfast if you come early.

From Indiana/Michigan

Take I-294 (Tri-State Toll Road) north to I-290 West. Take the I-290 west and Exit Biesterfield Road. Turn right on Biesterfield and continue east about 1 mile to Wellington. Turn right and the library is on the left: 1001 Wellington.

From the East and South

Take the I-290 West and Exit Biesterfield Road. Turn right on Biesterfield and continue east about 1 mile to Wellington. Turn right and the library is on the left: 1001 Wellington.

From Wisconsin

Take I-90 (Northwest Tollway) southeast to I-290 and go south and Exit Biesterfield Road. Go east on Biesterfield about 1 mile to Wellington. Turn right and the library is on the left: 1001 Wellington.

From Northern Illinois

Take I-294 south to I-90 (Northwest Tollway). Take I-90 west and Exit Arlington Heights Road. Go south to Biesterfield Rd. Turn right on Biesterfield about 3 blocks to Wellington and turn left. The library is at 1001 Wellington.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

“All Spoonpluggers are encouraged to share on-the-water experiences relevant to any of the questions.....Remember, group interaction perpetuates healthy dialogue, which provides additional insight into each topic of discussion.” ---Walt Kulikowski

Presentation of Lures

- 1. A fish, such as a Muskie, sometimes seems to prefer a lure bumping the bottom versus free-running. Other times it may be just the opposite. Other than varying between the two, is there some kind of clue depending on weather, time of year, that might help on determine which strategy to use right from the “get go”?**

- 2. In a lake such as Mendota in the Madison Chain, since one productive breakline is the 26 -28 foot depth, yet those breaklines are not straight. I’m confused about straight line passes in deep water. Please elaborate on when and why to do straight line passes in deep water versus contour trolling in deep water.**

- 3. Buck says if you’re doing everything right and still not catching fish, you’re not fishing deep enough. How do I know if I’m doing “everything right” and how deep is “deep enough”?**

- 4. When I anchor and cast to deep water I use the following technique:**
 - 1. First I throw a Spoonplug 10 times - fast retrieve;**
 - 2. Then I throw a silver buddy 10 times - fast retrieve;**
 - 3. Then I throw a pig/jig 10 times - bump slow to medium;**
 - 4. Then I throw a plastic worm 10 times - bump slow.**

Question-What lures and type of retrieve do some of you use on the cast to deep water?

- 5. I have trouble casting to deep water (25’ +) how can I get depth and speed at the same time?**

- 6. I read a book called Lunkers Love Nightcrawlers. It was written by the editors of Fishing Facts magazine. The technique uses a 7 to 9 foot rod with 4 or 6 pound test line and a #4 to #10 hook. A small bb weight is placed about 16 inches from the hook and a nightcrawler is hooked through the nose. I have had excellent results using this technique. I usually drift in 17 to 30 foot of water. In the book they give credit to Buck Perry. Is anyone else familiar with this technique? Have you had any luck?**

7. After completing contour trolling with small Spoonplugs and we know the basic shape of the structure, the next step is to make straight line passes. Why is straight line so important? I do it because Buck Sez but am not clear as to why?

8. While anchored and fan casting a structure (such as a bar or hump), explain how I can reposition the boat by utilizing the wind and attaching my anchor rope to the different cleats on the gunwales.

9. Getting Your Marker on Target - You are trolling and your Spoonplug is ripping bottom and sending the message that it's a silt mud type of bottom, suddenly it a hard bottom, Since we are trolling at a good speed and have 40 feet of line out, when is the marker thrown?

COMMENT: Casting positions – I think this is the hardest thing new Spoonpluggers have the most problem with. They have much success on the troll and are reluctant to cast.

Basic Movements

10. Do smallmouth bass have the same habits as largemouth bass in that they live and die in a relatively small area or do they migrate?

11. When a fish is caught on the troll (other than a schooling type i.e. LM Bass) do you immediately anchor and go to the cast?

12. What happens to the northern pike early and late in the season? I catch them in the summer but they seem to be few and far between in late spring and late fall.

Mapping and Interpretation

COMMENT: Shallows – don't pass them up...The shallows teach us and show us where to fish. Too often Spoonpluggers rush to the deep stuff before checking the shallows.

13. How important is it to draw a structure map? I don't draw very well and I find it easier to just mark a contour map and use the GPS to note the contact point. Isn't this good enough?

Lake Types

14. In spring, I fish a lowland reservoir that has many coves and feeder arms? Some have incoming water streams entering into them, per the map, while others have no distinctive or identifiable channel running in them. What is the quickest way to eliminate the unproductive arms or better interpret the productive arms using map study?

15. How many Spoonpluggers present today fish natural lakes exclusively? Reservoirs exclusively? Both?

Weather and Water

16. In your opinion, do sunny or overcast days produce better results? Also colors?

Tools and Controls

17. I have noticed that some Spoonpluggers pictures have shown fish being held by devices which hold the fish by the lips, many manufactures now have these. How do they work and how well? Also, is there a big difference in brands, price and size?

18. Can you give us novices your best tip for preventing snags and retrieving snagged Spoonplugs?

General Questions

19. How does Spoonplugging relate to in shore salt water fishing?

20. Why do many Spoonpluggers have to prove to themselves Buck's Guidelines?

21. Please provide your experience fishing Walleye on Lake Mendota. The lake is known to have large numbers of large Walleye. Please include time of year, depth and speed, along with general location.

22. A number of boats were fishing Lake Waubesa for Muskie last year. They all appeared to be doing the same thing but results varied greatly. What was the difference?

23. How important is "Back to Basics"?

24. Have any clubs put together a guide for novice Spoonpluggers tailored to fishing their local lakes and rivers? The normal question, "Where do I start?" comes to mind. What would you include (i.e. lakes with good water color, example structure situations) to help them get started in the right direction?

25. What are individuals or different clubs doing to encourage on-the-water Spoonplugging experiences for interested individuals (including kids)? What has worked for you?

Looking forward to seeing you at the seminar!