

SPOONPLUGGING STUDY GROUP DECEMBER 15, 2005

FISHING REPORTS

12 attended the meeting. Welcome to Chet Babcock who is new to Spoonplugging and attended for the first time. Recent fishing reports have been slim due to the snow covered ramps and early ice. Bob Streck reported hearing about nice daytime catches of walleye on Muskegon Lake in the last few weeks. They were caught on slow crankbaits run on bottom from Strawberry Island and West of the paper plant. These are some of the sharpest breaks to the deepest water in the lake and good cold season structures. Russ Headworth reported hooking a large salmon in the Grand River on a #250 Spoonplug earlier this fall but that this fall has been quite slow for salmon and steelhead for him. Chet reported on a trip to Florida recently where he and a guide caught 48 fish over 20 inches of various species. It was definitely ideal fishing weather as there were storms to the north and south but not in that area. They were caught on a large shallow flat bay that is affected by tides. Chet noted that most fish were caught on structure related to slightly deeper areas. The bay averaged 2-3 feet and the deeper areas were 5 or 6 feet (deepest water in the area).

MEETING

Don Stephens passed out copies of a John Bales article pertaining to the importance of using markers. Thanks, Don. We need to be reminded often of basic things we should do and tools we should use. The Illinois Spoonpluggers winter Seminar will be Saturday March 11 in the Chicago area and is one you shouldn't miss. Contact Jim Duplex for more information at: jjd82@juno.com. 2 new network outing dates were given in the latest "National Spoonplugger" newsletter. The Leoni Spoonpluggers outing (Jackson, MI) will be held June 20-24, 2006 and the Land of Lincoln (southern Illinois) Spoonpluggers outing will be June 29- July 2, 2006. The network outings are a great learning experience and we highly recommend attending them. And don't forget our Muskegon outing which will be held at Fishermans' Landing July 19-23, 2006 and the Northern Indiana Spoonpluggers outing August 10-12, 2006. A full listing of all network outings can be seen in the latest issue of "National Spoonplugger". Those regularly attending our meetings (Spoonplugging Study Group—third Thursday) are required to subscribe to "National Spoonplugger". Contact Chase or call Bucks Baits at: 828-322-2157 for info. Jack Clark has already started on the poster boards for big fish pictures and brought the first one to the meeting. Contact Jack at 874-5632 if you have pictures to add. Charlie Meyers brought 2 pies and some donuts for our snacks. Thanks, Charlie. Talk about spoiling us!

PROGRAM

The program began with projecting the Muskegon Lake contour map (east end) on the wall. This lake is too large to be thoroughly learned or fished at one time. Criteria were gone over of how to approach and gain fishing information from the map, and Don Stephens passed out a handout on finding a lakes' structure quickly. Then Charlie Meyers got up and went over structures he has fished. He is highly qualified on this lake as he has fished it for many years and caught many fish there. Yet he feels that '05 was his best year ever and he learned more about Muskegon Lake structures than the rest of the years put together. He attributes that success to learning more about deep structure and fishing it over 50 times this year. Charlie feels that Muskegon Lake is one of the best big fish lakes in the area, although it is tougher fishing due to the clear water. His determination, persistence, and skills have paid off with catches of big pike, catfish (to 37 pounds), drum, walleye, smallmouth, salmon, and steelhead. He talked about working with current at the river mouth and discovering eddies that held fish. He intends to do more work in this area in the future and the deep structures of the Bear Lake Channel area. He uses Bucks' monel wire line a lot to get deep. Charlie argues that our 2 most important fishing tools are our eyes and brain!

Next the article by John Zaborny on Muskegon Lake structure history in the latest issue of "National Spoonplugger" was reviewed. John put a lot of thought into why and how the structure in the lake formed. Knowledge about bottom structure like this can only help us in our fishing it. To finish the program we saw a 6 minute video of Terry O'Malley evaluating the structure on a Muskegon Lake contour map. Those fortunate enough to have been in a boat with Terry know what a tremendous mapper and interpreter of structure he is. Next months program (January 19) will target Mona Lake with Roger Bouwkamp giving us some pointers on it. Plan on being there!

Chase Klinesteker