

SPOONPLUGGING STUDY GROUP MAY 5, 2005

14 attended the meeting. Welcome to Bob Lear who attended for the first time. Bob is a beginning Spoonplugger who is very much interested in how we fish, and he asked some good questions during our discussions. He owns and operates a campground in the UP on Big Manistique Lake in the summer, 65 miles west of the bridge. He asks any of us to stop by and see him if we are in the area. Call 906-586-9551 if you want more information.

Fishing reports indicated that things are picking up. This is good news, especially for the prospects at the Muskegon Network Outing July 21-24 at Fishermans' Landing Campground. Plan on attending! Don Stephens and Mike Dordan went to Spring Lake and got walleye, smallmouth, drum, and catfish. One walleye was over 5 pounds. Bob Strek has been fishing for salmon out of Grand Haven recently and catching numbers of fish in 50 to 150 foot depths, up to 19 fish in one trip. Also caught were a few walleye around the pierheads. Holland, Muskegon, and Grand Haven have produced numbers of big walleye around the pierheads in the evening up to midnight. Jim VanAsselt also has gotten salmon in 95 to 110 feet out of Muskegon. He reported seeing lots of baitfish in the area. Tom Moore has been getting some pike out of Fremont Lake and reported catching a "football" walleye there that was 8 3/8 pounds and only 27 inches. Chase fished Lake Macatawa last weekend and got 10 drum, the largest 12 pounds, and a number over 5 lbs.

We have started a new Spoonplugging Video Library. We have had many of our videos "disappear" in the past because they were not kept track of. Chase has produced 6 tapes containing material from past Spoonplugging Jamborees, Network Outings, and on the water trips over a 15 year time period, 36 hours in all. Also in the library are 3 Don Dixon tapes that remained. Bob Strek will keep track of these videos. Only current subscribers to "The National Spoonplugger" newsletter will be allowed to check out these tapes, and only one at a time. They are not to be passed on to someone else but returned to Bob, who will follow through if they are not returned. Ask Bob about them at a meeting. He has a list of the contents of each tape. Most of our meeting educational videos come from short clips of these videos.

The topic of the program addressed the question: "What is most important in fishing success?" Buck Perry states on page 3 of Volume 7, Part 1 (Mapping and Interpretation) of his Home Study Series that our ability to interpret a fishing situation is the #1 skill that we need. Our degree of success on any given trip "will be determined by how well we understand how fish move and use the features of the bottom, the effects of weather and water conditions, and how well we can evaluate—and tie together—all these things when we get on the water". It is not just the ability to draw maps, although that is a part of it. This information is available in all of Bucks' material, from the small pamphlet, the "Green Book", to the Home Study Series. The use of this knowledge requires practical application of it on the water in each given set of conditions (no two are exactly alike). That is why successful fishing involves a lifetime of learning.

Next we addressed the quote: "MOST of the time MOST of the water contains no fish". Pages 66-69 showed Pictures of a well known Midwest lake. He then outlined 2 much smaller holes that produced most of the lunker fish. Map drawings of the structure showed only 5 or 6 small spots in each hole where adult fish were caught. Those areas, when superimposed on the whole lake, would be just tiny dots. These are the areas where we need to concentrate our fishing! This is true of all lakes. Spoonplugging procedures guide us to learn these best areas much more quickly than other fishing methods. Bob Lear brought up the question about what structure there would be in Big Manistique Lake. Some of our members had fished the lake before and pointed out specific structures and bottom changes that he might want to check out. They also gave him some trolling pointers to more quickly learn its' structure.

The educational video was from the 2001 Tawas Outing where John Bales explained some Spoonplugging concepts and drew some detail maps of many different areas he has fished. The question was asked afterward :”Would drawing similar maps of your favorite spots be that difficult?” Most agreed that it would not be that difficult if you knew the structure well. Terry O’Malley states that “If you cannot draw a structure, you don’t know it”. Members were encouraged to practice drawing some of their favorite spots. At the next Spoonpluggers Study Group meeting (June 16) members will be asked to show their drawings or draw them on a chalkboard.

Chase Klinesteker