

## **LUNKER HUNTER SPOONPLUGGERS MEETING APRIL 5, 2007**

### **FISHING REPORTS**

Riley Rogers reported catching 2 steelhead in 2 trips to the Grand River in March. Roger Bouwkamp said that a friend was catching good numbers of steelhead on flies on the Rogue River. Charlie Myers reported launching in the Muskegon River on March 12 and attempting to get out to open water on Muskegon Lake. Shallow water and a stuck boat managed to stifle things, and he reported that wading in 35 degree water and pushing a boat off a sand bar is not much fun! He also reported that it is possible to bury the wheels of a 4-wheel drive vehicle in mud! Thanks, Charlie. Our learning experience also includes what NOT to do! Bob Streck reported that a steelhead tournament on the Grand River the 24<sup>th</sup> of March had limited results with only 2 steelhead caught. He said that there were 3 close calls of possible accidents relating to the coffer dams, and warned others to be extra careful on the river during winter.

### **MEETING**

14 members attended. Ron Vance, a long time Lunker Hunter member who handles our lake map library recently had back surgery and is home now recuperating. I'm sure he would appreciate a call, card, or E-Mail to break up some long, boring days! President Charlie purchased a Gander Mountain certificate for Mike and Nyann Dordan to thank them for the great job they did on our club brochure. It was unanimous that the club cover the cost. Bob Streck reported that the DNR increase in license fees will not be as much as originally proposed and that the VHS virus problem in Michigan is very serious and must not invade our hatcheries. It was responsible for the recent fish kills in lakes Huron and Saint Clair. If you catch more than 1 fish from an area having a bruised appearance or internal bleeding, report it to the DNR. Preparations for the John Bales Seminar on April 21 are going along well. We need to inform our friends by calling and asking them to come. Tickets can be sold or reserved and picked up at the door (call 616-887-0851 or 616-949-8665). Some tickets will be available at the door. This is a unique opportunity to gain Spoonplugging knowledge from one of its' top practitioners! A pancake breakfast is being served in the adjacent room from 8 to 9 AM.

Don Stephens reported on his research to find a motel for our Spring Outing Fri, Sat, and Sunday, June 8, 9, and 10. We chose Alpine Motor Lodge which is 10 miles north of Manistee on M-31. They have plenty of parking for boat trailers, and room cost is \$54. to \$64. per night. This will give us the option of fishing Manistee, Bear, and Portage Lakes. Rooms are very nice, a continental breakfast is available, and there is a pool. Each member must make their own reservations (call 1-800-BUD-HOST or online at [alpinemotorlodge.com](http://alpinemotorlodge.com)). Next Friday April 13 we will have a Lunker Hunter Board meeting 9:00 AM at Cheers Restaurant on Plainfield.

### **1<sup>st</sup> PROGRAM**

Roger Bouwkamp gave a program on "Our Plan of Attack" when we get on the water. We all have struggled with this at times. We are familiar with Spoonplugging concepts and Guidelines, but when we get on the water, we draw a blank or go back to old habits.

Any professional worker (painter, plumber, etc.) has a certain order in his work to make him most efficient and productive. This is developed from time on the job, using the best tools, and guidance from others who were very successful doing it. Our fishing is similar to that. Our guidance and tool selection comes from Buck Perry, one of the best fishermen who ever lived, through his “Green Book” and study material. We often have limited time to fish, so procedure guidelines are very important. Roger recommended to practice using Spoonplugging Guidelines when fishing a new lake because we will not be tempted as much to revert to old habits. Some of his best catches last year came from fishing a new lake (Big Pine Island) when he strictly followed procedure directions as in the “Green Book”. What are those directions? Roger selected a large bar to concentrate on and learn its’ structure thoroughly. Then he proceeded to contour troll it with the 3 smallest lures. Next he did straight line passes on the deeper features with the larger lures. Dropping markers is helpful in this process to visualize what is there. Once he became familiar with the bar in detail, it was easier to figure out (interpret) where the fish would be when active. This is where he concentrates his fishing. These procedures are not complex, but they do require discipline and persistence. The rewards are great. Roger recommended that we learn to run the 3 small lures in the shallows with the depth sounder off on a dark water color lake. He said he remembers that Terry O’Malley and Rocky Bridges made passes with each size lure going in each direction to gain more knowledge about a structure. Also helpful is to always have a shore linesight while trolling so you can return to a spot when needed. Many thanks to Roger for presenting this excellent program. Rogers’ success at fishing speaks for itself.

## 2<sup>nd</sup> PROGRAM

Don Stephens, Jack Clark, and Brent Robbins were present and reported on what they learned at the Illinois Spoonpluggers Winter Seminar March 17. They felt it was very worthwhile and they returned with many concepts and ideas to use this coming season. Jack mentioned that trolling is our “teacher”, but that once fish are located, anchoring and casting is more efficient and puts most of our fish in the boat. He also mentioned that we shouldn’t wait for warm weather to start Spoonplugging. Casting is important at this time also. John Bales had an excellent talk on casting that really opened many eyes (John will give most of that info and more at the seminar in Grand Rapids on April 21). From ice-out until the spawn he recommended we seek out isolated deep holes, first checking the shallows, and then fan-casting the deep water. In warmer weather when you are catching some fish trolling, it is difficult to discipline yourself to stop and cast, especially if you don’t catch fish doing it. Yet it may be because you are not persistent enough. Joe Cinadr related the story of when he and Terry O’Malley were trolling and caught a nice bass. They knew other fish were present in the area, but it took 4 different anchoring positions to finally locate the school of fish and “load the boat”! John recommended that we have the anchor and casting equipment ready to use at all times. He also talked about a “bare bones” tacklebox containing only different sized Spoonplugs and jump lures to help you to discipline your Spoonplugging procedures. Thanks to Don, Jack, and Brent for relating this very helpful information. This Winter Seminar annual event is one you don’t want to miss next year!

Chase Klinesteker