

LUNKER HUNTER SPOONPLUGGERS MEETING FEBRUARY 7, 2008

FISHING REPORTS

Pretty sparse! The warmer spell around January 8 opened up Murray Lake for a couple of weeks, which was enough for Charlie Myers and Roger Bouwkamp to make several trips there. Charlie fished it 6 times and caught 5 muskies and one pike. The last time he got out, the lake was 2/3 frozen over! Roger fished it 3 or 4 times and caught some fish also. Don Stephens tried for steelhead on the Grand River, but reported no catches. If we had an award for endurance, bravery, toughness, (and maybe a little touch in the head), these guys would get it!!

MEETING

10 attended the meeting. Welcome to Art Burke who attended for the first time. Art was introduced to Spoonplugging a number of years ago and has renewed interest now. We hope he will continue to join us. The possibility of a dinner with spouses was brought up. Only 5 were interested in attending a dinner, which is not enough to secure a facility. The Illinois Winter Seminar on Saturday March 15 was mentioned and there are 4 that are planning to go (Chase, Don, Brent, and Tom). There is room for one or two more. Contact Chase if you are interested. Lunker Hunter dues are due, so pay Roger the \$15. by the March 6 meeting. We voted to give Leisure Village a \$100. donation for allowing us to use their facility to meet in. We are lucky to have such a nice meeting place with A/V, etc. Don reminded us to search the Spoonplugging Forum (spoonplugger.net/v-web/bulliten/bb) website for some top fishing information. He says there are some great entries if you do a search of "John Bales". Also, Terry Velting said there are some good (TV show) "specials" on Bucks' website, buckperry.com. Check it out.

John Bales' father passed away recently and we all should keep John and Deb in our thoughts and prayers. John has been a great leader for us, especially in Spoonplugging education. He has done much to advance the knowledge and success of many Lunker Hunters, as well as many Spoonpluggers across the nation. Our club sent a plant to the funeral home and 5 members went down to support John there. John felt good that his father, who was a fisherman, got to see a copy of him on the Mark Zona TV show before he passed away.

PROGRAM #1

We showed a copy of the "Worlds' Greatest Fishing Show" TV program with Mark Zona that featured John Bales and Spoonplugging. John did a great job representing Spoonplugging and the show was well put together. It was a one-day trip on Lake Erie last November for smallmouth, although the weather did not cooperate. It was rough, with temperatures of both the air and water in the 30s'. But John has done his homework on Lake Erie, and right away he began producing nice smallmouth trolling Spoonplugs. When Mark mentioned "cult" in reference to Spoonplugging, John simply said "we believe in what we do". Mark was impressed when he caught his first smallmouth on Spoonplugging equipment, and remarked that the strike "jolted the bones". Although John doesn't have to prove he loves fish and fishing, he kissed a few fish before releasing them! The "Green Book" was pictured and Buck Perry was given much credit for contributing to modern day concepts in fishing. John mentioned that reading alone will not make one a Spoonplugger, but that you must experience it. Mark emphasized what he called "walking the dog" when ticking the bottom while trolling, and there was a good

animation of a walking Spoonplug. It was mentioned that trolling locates fish, and once located, anchoring and casting is best. Forget about convincing John to sing a song in the boat. Even Mark gave up trying to persuade him! When Mark asked if he was now part of the “Spoonplug Nation”, John hesitated, but then acknowledged it. Marks “tip” for the program was that fish can be caught trolling fairly fast even when temperatures are in the 30’s. This was an entertaining and quite accurate program that depicted Spoonplugging in a very positive light. Congratulations to John Bales for such a professional performance, and to Mark Zona for presenting the material so well.

PROGRAM #2

Charlie Myers did the second program on “Interpreting Deeper Water Structures”. Don handed out some copies of the Murray Lake contour map, and the map was projected on the wall so everyone could follow as Charlie reviewed some deepwater structures that John Bales had pointed out to him in a letter. Charlie had fished Murray last fall and caught a number of fish around 20 feet at the weedline. Murray is a deep clear lake that has a 20 foot weedline and spots over 80 feet deep. He had inquired of John about locating deeper structures, and John sent a reply showing 14 places deeper than 20 feet that needed to be checked. This opened many eyes to the concept that “If you aren’t catching fish and are presenting lures properly, you aren’t fishing deep enough”. Structures such as deep flat bars, necked down areas, deep slots, small isolated holes, and deep humps were shown and discussed on the map. Both trolling and casting were discussed. It was mentioned that presenting lures on deep structures is not for beginning Spoonpluggers. Trolling and casting skills must first be developed working the shallows. Much patience and experience on the water is necessary to acquire these skills. Don called attention to Johns’ article on page 11 in the latest “National Spoonplugger” newsletter on reading maps. It emphasized not to look at just the contour lines, but study the total shapes of the features. Ask yourself why does this feature occur and is there a creek or past water flow that may have formed it? So much can be learned by studying your maps before you get on the water. Many thanks to Charlie, Don, and John (in absentia) for a very informative program!

Chase Klinesteker