



# NORTHERN INDIANA SPOONPLUGGER

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#207

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The last meeting was held at the Kendallville Public Library with 15 members present.

Fishing reports were relatively good from those who hadn't put their boats away for the winter.

Surprisingly, the ice has been really late in forming this year. Water temperatures were reported as 38 or 39 degrees, so ice has formed and receded a couple of times but has allowed some to extend the season about a month or more past the usual time.

Dan Luley and John Bales reported as many as 100 bass per day caught on a local lake with over 200 in a three day period. There were also reports of limits of white bass being taken.

John directed everyone's attention to YouTube videos by Jim Duplex titled Fall Fishing for Muskies.

There is also a lot of good information by Jim on the use of camcorders as well as YouTube links on The Spoonplugger Forum. Check it out.

A larger lure knocker was discussed. The larger ones are needed since John's new larger lures (JB1 & JB2) cannot always be retrieved with the standard models. It is hoped that a larger version is available by springtime of 2012. Painted lures will also be available.

Denny demonstrated proper procedures for retrieving a hung lure.

Denny also mentioned that just because the weather is clear and bright should not discourage us from fishing in the fall. He has noticed that unlike summer/springtime conditions, fall/winter appears to be a little different. He has noticed that often times better movements are experienced under bright light conditions than overcast conditions. There are several

theories for this phenomenon: Following fall turn-over, conditions in sanctuary depths are even more stable than during the summer season when convection currents are stronger. The fish tend to be deeper in the fall and thus less affected by weather conditions. The sun is at more of an angle in the fall and winter and due to the angle, light rays become more reflective or less penetrating than the summer sun. Any or all these conditions may account for better success in the fall/winter during cold front light conditions, but the point is, the light conditions in the fall should not be as limiting a factor as it is during the spring/summer season on our decision on whether to go fishing or rake leaves!

On a sad note, Shawn's father, Glenn "Pops" Nicodemus passed away on December 31, 2011 at the age of 84. Pops attended many of the Spoonplugger Outings with Shawn and could often be seen at or near any table containing pies! There was always a smile on his face and he was always a load of fun, and for that he will certainly be missed.

There will be a Celebration of Life for Pops on January 22, 2012 at Serenity Hall, 949 Middlebury Street, Elkhart, IN 46716 from 11:00 A.M. to 1:30 P.M. with a service at 11:30 A.M.

Obituary can be seen at Elkhart Cremation Service web site.

It's a new year and dues are due. One book of stamps, please. Thanks

**NEXT MEETING: January 16, 2012 at the Kendallville Public Library 6:30 P.M.**

**" KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY TO FISHING SUCCESS "**

## Season Wrap-up Checklist

*Here's a reprint from an old newsletter that some may find helpful in preparing for next season:*

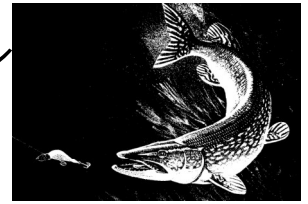
1. Pull the battery (s) from your boat, top off with distilled water (if not sealed), give it a charge and put in a cool dry place for the winter. Test it periodically and don't let it drop below 75% of a full charge or battery will suffer from "sulfication" which renders a portion of the battery unusable.
2. Remove motor cover and spray entire motor-head with WD40, replace spark plugs if they're over a couple year's old. Put a small dab of white lithium grease inside the plug boot cover with a Q-tip and smear around. While you got the grease out, take that Q-tip or artists paint brush and coat with grease or other anti-corrosive agent the connections on your depth finder and other electronic connections to prevent corrosion. Pull your electronics and put them in a dry storage area. Also, pack your trailer light connections. Use an old cut off connections to act as a protective "cap" on both your vehicle trailer connection and the boat connection after anti-corrosive is applied. Check trailer wires for wear. Sometimes wires wear through at the fasteners. Electrical tape or better yet, heat-shrink sheaths will help protect wear areas. Make sure the fasteners are tight to prevent further wear. If you're really anal, you can put a thin coating of grease or anti-corrosive inside the trailer bulb sockets. Depends on how many bloody knuckles you're willing to suffer digging broken, corroded bulb connections out of those rusted sockets when the bulbs need replaced!
3. Change oil and filter in motor (if 4 stroke) and change gear lube in lower unit. Grease all pivot points on motor, pushing all old grease out. Replace or at least clean fuel filter. Also, top off fuel tank with fresh gas and add fuel stabilizer. Don't drain fuel system or gaskets may dry out and deteriorate. Some folks spray "engine tuner" through the carbs with the motor on idle to "fog" the motor for the off season. This is supposed to break down any carbon build-up and makes for better compression. Better read the manual for this procedure.
4. Replace water pump impeller every few years, depending on usage. Sand, etc. gets sucked into the water intake and gradually wears the impeller to the point it no longer adequately cools your motor to the proper temperature.
5. Prop need rebuilt? No? Are you sure you're trolling 400's & 500's?
6. Repack trailer bearings with a good white lithium grease. It holds up best for constant submersions. Got an extra set of replacement bearings to carry with you on all trips? And the tools needed to replace them in an emergency? It's cheap insurance. If you've ever had a set of seized bearings 200 miles from home....on an Interstate....on a Sunday night when NOTHING is open.... in the middle of nowhere.... you'll agree.
7. Give reels a thorough cleaning with hot, soapy water & toothbrush, dry and lubricate, put on fresh line and leave drag backed off. Might want to consider doing this job in the garage. Something about the doing this activity on the kitchen table that makes spousal anger level spike into the red zone.
8. Check rods for loose guides, and wear grooves in guides or tips. Replace if necessary. Rods are best stored by hanging from the tips.
9. Check all cordage such as anchor ropes, lure knocker and marker buoy lines. At least one marker should have a minimum of 50 feet of line to mark deep structure, use as the front rifle sight if other reference points can't be found or to simply to act as a "decoy" to throw invading fishermen off. Label markers "DNR" to prevent dimwits from picking them up (DNR is short for: Do Not Remove in case authorities ask about the initials).
10. Check lures for hooks that need to be sharpened or replaced. Do you have enough Spoonplugs? Of course you don't, silly! Nobody does!
11. When's the last time you read the 9 volume study guide....not just thumbed through them, but REALLY read them? You will learn something new with each reading.

**" KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY TO FISHING SUCCESS "**



# *Good Spoonplugging*

By John Bales, Spoonplugging Instructor



We can never give enough credit to the man who invented Spoonplugging. One thing to keep in mind is that a lot of the information that he found was gotten without the aid of a depth meter. His knowledge of the terrain was enough to give him an idea of what was to be found under the surface of the water. His findings of how fish use structure, breaks, and breaklines and how weather and water conditions control their movements is simply astounding. I can only say that the more that you learn, the more you will appreciate what he has given us.

Look what has changed since then in the way of equipment and aids. Mr. Perry made the first depth meter, by the way, and it was a needle that showed you just the depth of water that you were in. Then came the flasher which he supposedly made with Carl Lowrance and you see whos hands it ended up in. The paper graph came along in the 70's and it was the real deal. And then that went by the way side and the newer age graph came into play and man was it slow going across the screen. Almost impossible to use for contour trolling. Most of us stayed with the flashers for years and even those changed from year to year and from one company to another. The graphs got better and better, and even faster scroll speeds. Similar to what television has turned into, better and clearer images. Now we have the down-scan or down-imaging units which is a new technology all together.

So ..... with all of this new technology, shouldn't we have an easier time figuring out how to catch a fish? You would think so..... a little..... maybe.

If we use them as an aid, and stick to the basics of what we know has worked perfectly fine for years and years, we will continue to learn and the learning will never stop. Do not ever forget the basics of Spoonplugging. A GPS can never replace a perfectly placed marker! But..... that new depth finder will help us place that marker where it should be. A GPS can take you very near a spot that is miles away and that may be out in the middle of the lake and that may have taken you hours or days to find without one. But once you get there, you will use your depth meter to interpret what is there and the size and shape and you will throw markers on the key spots and then you will go through the basic presentation of lures and catch the fish. Each tool or aid has been used to the fullest extent and then the basic guidelines are used the rest of the way. If you do it in this way, you will continue to gain fishing knowledge. Any time you go fishing and do not learn something, you are doing something wrong.

*Good Spoonplugging*  
*John Bales*

**“ KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY TO FISHING SUCCESS ”**



**“The more I learn, the more I see there is to learn.”** *E. L. “Buck” Perry*

### **BUCK SEZ:**

During your fishing **you should not think of WEATHER in terms of temperature.** This does not mean changes in temperature will not affect fish, nor does it mean the fisherman doesn't change his tactics. (Later on you'll find if present your lures and bait properly, you'll automatically take care of temperature). **YOU SHOULD VIEW WEATHER (and TEMPERATURE) IN TERMS OF LIGHT.**

With this in mind, we can now make a Spoonplugger's guideline:

**THE LIGHTER OR BRIGHTER IT IS, THE TOUGHER THE FISHING WILL BE. THE DARKER THE CONDITIONS, THE BETTER IT WILL BE.**

We have no way of knowing how many types of weather conditions might occur during a fishing season. One look at any weather map will show all types of high or low pressure areas, several kinds of “fronts,” storms, hot areas or wet or dry areas. You name it—they show it.

**We have to pick one of these conditions for a starting point.** One that we can use as a **guide** to our fishing. One that will be the **key** for determining our chances for success, and the one that will let us **plan** our tactics. In other words, we have to set us up another guideline. **This guideline is a COLD FRONT.**

It should be noted, the word COLD does not necessarily mean there is a big drop in temperature. The front is actually the dividing line between two masses of air. The difference in temperature of these two masses can vary; at times it will be great, while at others, hardly noticeable. The main difference between the two air masses is that one is warmer, holding a higher moisture content, while the other is a drier mass of cooler air. The former is usually associated with a LOW, while the latter is associated with HIGH. The masses of air which move through the United States are normally from the west to the east. This direction can vary, but for all practical purposes this is the dominant direction.

The front itself is usually associated with very rough weather, such as heavy rain, squall lines (thunder storms), etc. This is especially true when there is a great difference between the two masses of air. If the temperature difference is slight, these fronts are much less discernible.

When observing or viewing a COLD FRONT, here again, **we do not view it in terms of temperature, but instead relate it to LIGHT conditions.** There is a relationship between the light and the temperature, and if there is a great drop in temperature after a front passes, and it lasts for a long period, the light will be affected accordingly.

**“KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY TO FISHING SUCCESS ”**