



NORTHERN INDIANA SPOONPLUGGER

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The last meeting was held September 15, 2014 at the Kendallville Public Library with 21 members present.

Denny reported that the **2015 "Buck Sez" Network Outing** has been confirmed by Forest Ridge Campground for **August 12, 13, 14 & 15, 2015!**

Dave Gould reported some friends of his had fished Lake St. Clair recently and had caught 52 muskies in 2 days up to 52 inches. Sounds as if the muskie population is beginning to rebound in the St. Clair/Detroit River complex.

Shawn Nicodemus received an award for the "Most Improved" Spoonplugger and recognition for his assistance at meetings in providing computer images of lakes and rivers making it much easier for John and Denny to explain fishing spots, where they are located and why they are productive.

Shawn recently spent 17 days fishing in Minnesota, staying with his 102 year old grandmother! He reported lots of released walleyes due to slot limits and a gain of 10 lbs from grandma's cookies.

According to nearly all fishing reports, fishing has been slow during the last month.

Denny reported that it won't be long before the bass will leave the weeds and begin to go downstairs, which kicked off John's presentation:

John: "The time of change is here. Algae blooms are gone. The fish metabolisms are dropping as the water

temperatures drop from the mid 60's and into the 50's...and soon into the 40's and 30's."

Weather and water conditions are changing faster this time of year than in the summer. The changes are not as hard on the fish as during the spring when the fish are determined to come to the shallows, but cold front conditions still have a negative effect on the fish. Good water color which somewhat offsets the negatives of cold fronts is hard to find here in the Midwest with the absence of algae blooms. Thermoclines at this time were at 16ft and will soon begin to sink. The first couple of frosts and it will drop rapidly. MOST fish seem to be feet ABOVE the thermocline. Most activity in the summertime is between the weedline and the thermocline. As the thermocline goes down, the fish go down with it. Once it reaches 40-45 in our area, stabilization takes place and the thermocline disappears. This fall turnover takes place after those first few frosts and you can often smell it as some of the decaying material comes to the surface.

This is when the best fishing of the year begins to take place...usually in November. It will be tough fishing until that turnover is complete.

As a rule of thumb, if the weeds only go to 10 feet, only small bass will be in the weeds. If the weeds go deeper then the larger bass will also be in the weeds until the thermocline disappears. If you see a thermocline at, say 26 feet, you should troll at 24-25 feet all day long. When the fish become active you WILL catch fish!

NEXT MEETING: October 20, 2014 at the Kendallville Public Library 6:30 P.M.

" KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY TO FISHING SUCCESS "

"WHEN WORKING DEEPER ON STRUCTURE, ALL TROLLING PASSES ARE IN A STRAIGHT LINE, only in this way can a structure be fished, mapped or interpreted. Don't ever forget this."

It's right there in black and white, on page 136 of the Green Book. Mr. Perry began this sentence in **bold print** so we would not overlook it. It's an important statement because as he further explains: **"A lure out of position will catch no fish"**.

When trolling a deep weedline or breakline, Spoonpluggers are doing so using their depth meter as their guide. What many are doing is keeping the **boat** in position rather than the **lure**. If the breakline being followed is straight, no problem. However few Spoonpluggers have the good fortune to have nice straight weedlines or breaklines.

The importance of straight line passes is obvious even to beginning Spoonpluggers. Once the shape and preliminary nature of a structure determined, straight line passes will tell us if the structure goes "all the way" to the deepest water in the area as well as how the deep water relates to the structure, i.e. is it the same on all sides? At what depth do any breaklines occur and do they differ in depth on at any area of the structure.

Straight line passes are the only effective way to accurately map a structure situation and is vital in determining any "contact points". If a fish is caught in the mapping process, we will know exactly where he was, whether close to the structure as you were approaching or after you were past the structure. This will give us the opportunity to more accurately determine an anchoring position.

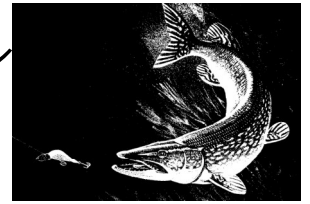
In contour trolling a deep weedline or breakline, we must keep the mapping system of straight line passes in mind in order to keep our lures in the productive zone as long as possible. Many of the weedlines in our area lakes are anything but straight and by keeping the boat in position, the lure will be out of position much of the time. A few passes in an area you have mapped and are working over should familiarize you with the points, fingers and inside turns. This will allow you to anticipate what is ahead of you while trolling and allow more gradual moves in and out so that your lure stays in position for a longer period of time...even if it is only for a few seconds. That few seconds or few feet of that lure in productive water can make all the difference.

"KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY TO FISHING SUCCESS "



Good Spoonplugging

By John Bales, Spoonplugging Instructor



If you were to ask Mr. Perry where he thought the fish might be on any particular fishing day, his answer would be "Where ever conditions are most stable". During this time of the year, the weather and water conditions are not very stable. The surface water begins to cool and sink which forces the warmer water to the surface and this process continues until the surface temperature gets to 39 degrees. At this point, the sinking process stops. For most of our summers, our waters develop a thermocline and this sinking of the cooler water forces the thermocline to become deeper until it no longer exists. This change could also be looked at as an unstable water condition. It is only when the thermocline is gone which is somewhere around water temperatures of 50 degrees or less that the water conditions can be considered more stable.

If you pay attention to mother nature, as the weather starts to cool, the trees begin to change colors. About the same time as the water conditions begin to become stable, the leaves are nearly gone from the trees. It is amazing how the timing of each of these are closely knit.

While these changes are taking place, the movements of the fish can be pretty spotty. One thing that we can do to offset the changing conditions is to pick a lake with good water color and stick with the troll. Remember to cover a lot of depths and speeds because if we are going to make a decent catch, we will have to spend a full day on the water. During this time of the year and in these conditions, we may find that the fish may move some time during the middle of the day so don't give up if the morning does not show much activity.

This change takes place every fall and the bitching from the fisherman follows shortly after. The Spoonplugger understands what is happening and the spotty movements are understood.

Wouldn't it be a shame if we did not know what makes a fish tic and what we need to do to catch him? We should not forget who we owe for sharing his knowledge with us. Thank you Mr. Perry.

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:

You Might Say

‘Several times during our study, you mention the word ‘satisfaction.’ To me the only way I will be satisfied is to fill the boat every time I go fishing.’

Well, I suppose you are just like a lot of other fishermen in the world. They, as well as you, should give up fishing because neither of you will ever get satisfaction from it. It just doesn’t work that way. Just about the time you think you have all the answers, old “fishing situations” lets you know how things are—and you get “skunked.”

To me, satisfaction in fishing comes from many directions. I am not saying that satisfaction does not come with lunker catches—that’s the name of the game. But can satisfaction come with guides showing you where to fish? Does satisfaction come with rushing down to the store to buy a hot lure? What satisfaction is there in doing what everyone else is doing? (Do you think you’ll discover some little magic “twitch” the other guys aren’t using?) Do you get satisfaction if you beat all the other guys all the time? I’ll bet you are one of those guys who switches lures when another fisherman approaches. I’ll wager you tell someone you made a catch in a lake or a spot, and then take off in another direction.

How many times have you told the other guy “exactly” **where** and **when** you caught the fish? How many times have you taken the family fishing? How many times have you “taught?” Have you ever experienced the feeling that comes with “working a lake out” all by yourself? Have you ever experienced the time when there was no anxiety about a fishing trip, or a new lake? Have you ever really felt the fellowship that can be had on a fishing trip? Do you know how it feels to not have to make excuses for failure? Do you know the satisfaction that comes with knowledge? Satisfaction can be had ALL the time, not just when you “luck” up on a few fish, beat the other guy, or build up your ego.

* * * * *

“You say the fishing stops when a cold front goes through. I’ve had a front go through and the temperature dropped way down, but I still caught some fish. It would appear to me your cold front ideas are way off.”

When the cold front was discussed, it was not stated the fishing “stopped.” We said the fish dropped deep and/or became very inactive. It was stated this condition could “skunk” the best of us, but it did not say fishing “stopped.” It meant that a passing cold front could separate the men from the boys. It meant that fishing “goes bad.”—deteriorates.

It was pointed out that AFTER the front goes through, the clouds normally disappear, and you have a completely “washed out” sky. It was **this** condition that curtailed the fish activity, not the drop in temperature. A temperature “change” in the shallow water may cause the fish to drop deeper, but when we think about it, it’s probably the “light” condition that gets you and me into trouble.

As far as the cold front effect being an “idea,” instead of a fact, you can take it either way you choose. I suggest though, before you make up your mind, you should get a little more fishing experience.

“KNOWLEDGE IS THE KEY TO FISHING SUCCESS ”