
BEMIDJI /CASS LAKE CHAPTER OF MUSKIES INC.

CHAPTER NEWSLETTER

WWW.BEMIDJICASSMUSKIES.ORG



Holy Moly – It's time for a Newsletter!

Dear Chapter members, let's start this newsletter out with a heartfelt apology for the very large gap between newsletters. I'm not going to make excuses, but am going to try and get back on track with getting you all the latest info and updates on chapter activities, events and other muskie fishing news.

I'm sure we all have had enough of winter this go round, but while we'd like it to be over, it's not letting go quite yet. I hope you've all found some way to get through it all with a smile at least once in a while.

I'd like to relay a story and some important reminders before moving on to other things. Last summer a few days before our chapter tournament in June after a successful morning of pre-fishing I made a poor decision based on time etc to leave all my muskie equipment I'd used in the morning in my boat while I left to register contestants for the tournament. I live in a rural area, my closest neighbor knew I was leaving for a few hours and my boat was 5 feet from the front door of my house (with a very large and open front yard). When I returned home and backed up to hitch the boat back up, I did a double take and saw that all my stuff was gone. All told about \$12000 in equipment including electronics, nets, rods, reels and tackle boxes containing hundreds of muskie lures, tools, hooks etc was taken. This was during broad

daylight in the middle of a Thursday afternoon and very early evening.

Enough with the background. The point here is to learn that no matter what, our expensive gear and equipment is attractive to criminals. Protect yours properly and don't EVER leave it anywhere it can be easily accessed. In my case, no one could have possibly seen the stuff was in the boat, but they did see the Lowrance hanging off the side of it. They got lucky, this stuff had never been left in the boat ever for a single minute when I was not home. Make sure you have appropriate insurance coverage for your items. The values add up a lot quicker than you might think and more than likely most of you do not have enough coverage. This applies to damage of your items as well, not just theft. Keep a detailed list of all your equipment down to the lures and tools and even better photograph it all as well. If you have a wife or significant other, I'd suggest not letting her see this list! Keep receipts of the items you purchase. All of these things will help when dealing with your insurance company should this happen to you. I was fortunate and in my case the criminals were caught and convicted and many of my items have been returned, along with about 10 other peoples. But it's February and I'm still dealing with insurance companies on this. Don't let this nightmare happen to you or someone you know.

Community Involvement – Public Landing Cleanups

We'll be deciding on dates for these at one of the upcoming chapter meetings. We'd really like to see increased participation this year, last year was pretty poor. Just a reminder that attendance at one of these is a requirement in order to qualify for the chapter's annual replica contest. It's a good thing to show a little support and do something good for our community and the great public launches we all use so much.

Chapter Outings – 2014 and a 2013 recap

Dates/locations for these have not yet been set for 2014. We'll also be making these decisions at an upcoming chapter meeting and get those sent out soon. We DID have great participation at these last year and would love to increase that even further in 2014. The 2013 Muskie Hunter of the Year Award went to Kurt Olson. Kurt is a newer and younger member of our chapter who did a great job of bringing non-members to outings last year and then hit us all when we weren't looking. Kurt caught 2 muskies fishing with Bondy Baits on Bemidji's North End during our last chapter outing for the year in miserable cold conditions in November. This got him enough points to squeak past the season long leader Adam Manz by .5pts. Manzie – you're not going to let him do it to you this year are you?? The day before the outing, Kurt was checking the area out with an Aqua Vu camera and just as we passed by him trolling, he'd dropped it and immediately spotted a muskie. Great job to Kurt and his innovative approach and passion to learn about the sport. With the super cold water and slow responses of the fish, he really showed many of us old timers how it's really done by using a tactic many of us have heard of but not implemented into our own routines!

MN 2014 High School Muskie Tournament

As of now, we don't have a lot of information on this but will be working on getting it. Chapter 46 has been represented well in previous years, we'd

really like to see some young people from our area participate again, catch some muskies and win this thing!

Gil Hamm 2014 and a 2013 recap

The chapter had great participation and fielded a full team of 6 for the 2013 Gil Hamm on Lake Vermilion. The bite was very tough and during pre-fishing only a few fish were encountered. During the actual event, virtually no fish were contacted by Chapter 46 members. We couldn't even buy a follow or rip if we'd had billions of dollars. This experience was pretty common, weather was bad and the fish mostly just locked down and didn't budge. The Star of the North chapter won the event by casting small bucktails very fast on the East End of the lake on large boulder fields.

The 2014 event will be held on Lake of the Woods August 20-22nd, headquartered out of Red Wing Lodge. We'd like to fill at least one team again this year. Please consider making it to this event! The website for the event is listed below.

http://gilhamm.com/Gil_Hamm/Home.html

Chapter Meetings/Winter Calendar

We've already had the first official winter meeting, this was held on January 16th at Cattails. We ordinarily meet upstairs in the Muskie Room but due to a fall fire at the restaurant, Cattails owner Gretchen had us downstairs in the main dining room. 2 representatives of the Bemidji DNR Fisheries office gave a great presentation on the results of this past summers muskie tagging and population estimate. We hope to get that presentation and be able to email that out to chapter members in the future. Needless to say, there are BIG muskies in Lake Bemidji but we also learned that they are quite old. Over ¾ of the female muskies captured during the study were over 50 inches long. What they didn't find was many smaller fish, something they said they'll continue to look in to. They also had some interesting data from the creel survey held this year. To say the least, the muskies of Lake Bemidji are getting pressured and a high percentage of angling effort

overall on the lake was by muskie fisherman and women. More on that in a future newsletter.

February 18th (Tuesday) – Monthly meeting, 6:30pm start upstairs in the Muskie Room at Cattails. We'll send out a separate reminder about this soon as well as let folks know what the agenda will be.

March 18th – 6:30 upstairs in the Muskie Room at Cattails. Agenda to be sent out soon.

April 15th – 6:30 upstairs in the Muskie Room at Cattails. Agenda to be sent out soon.

April 26th – Annual Lure Auction! Put this date on your calendar, you are not going to want to miss this! Last year we had over 40 people attend and we're looking into new locations to have the event this year because we ran out of space last year. In addition, we raised over two times as much money as any other auction! It's possible that we may be in the downstairs of the Keg and Cork, but as soon as we confirm we'll send that out. We're going to have a new comedy routine of Johnson/Thury running this year's auction, that alone should be worth the price of admission (good thing there is no admission charge, so you'll get your money's worth anyways)! Sorry to start in with the bad jokes already!

May 20th - 6:30 upstairs in the Muskie Room at Cattails. Agenda to be sent out soon.

June 6th – Annual Night Before the Opener Get Together at Kevin Cochran's. Always a fun time, times to be announced in future newsletters. There's always some good food and fun stories and just general excitement about going out and resuming our favorite hobby – muskie fishing!

Chapter Officers

The officer's lineup will remain the same for 2014 as they were for 2013. Reminder that last year Ethan Rogers was named Tournament Co-Chair and Fundraising Specialist. Ethan did a ton of work last year for the club and has a bunch of really great ideas for this year also. Brent Rud has taken up the release contest duties. We also elected a Tournament Committee this fall. It will consist of

Chris Thury, Ethan Rogers, Kevin Cochran and Mike Strickland. They'll be tasked with rules reviews and other tournament business. One new exciting change is that Big Mantrap has been added to the list of eligible tournament waters! Denise Strickland accepted a role as Merchandising Specialist. She will be helping develop a sales and marketing strategy as well as shopping around for the chapter to be able to make additional shirts, caps and other promotional materials to be for sale to chapter members and other supporters.

Spring Banquets and the MN Muskie Expo

The Lake Superior Chapter and North Metro Chapters Banquets have already been held this year. There was some representation by the chapter at the North Metro Banquet and once again gold was struck as guide trips, nets, baits and clothing were all won!

Up next are the Brainerd Chapter Banquet on March 1st and the Twin Cities Chapter Banquet on March 8th. It would be great if we had some participation at these great events also. Please see their websites for additional info about these great events.

<http://www.brainerdmuskies.com/>

<http://www.twincitiesmuskiesinc.org/>

Chapter Email/Outreach

We're still asking any and all chapter members who receive the newsletter via snail mail to contact us and provide an email address. The executive leadership of Muskies Inc has also asked us to have everyone we can update their email via the organization website also. Every email we can send vs snail mail helps the chapter and you get more frequent updates and the most current chapter information via email also. Please email thrax@paulbunyan.net or call 218-760-5867 to get us an email address.

Chapter Tournament

This years Tournament will be held on June 21st. As mentioned earlier, we've added Big Mantrap as a tournament water this year! We know many people like to fish that water early in the year and it will almost certainly draw some contestants! More details about the tournament as well as posters etc will be coming soon. We'll be offering an online registration option again this year, this was great last year and in this new age of technology and electronic devices everywhere we're happy to be moving in the same direction!

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You can also get chapter info on outings, the tournament and contacts on our website at
www.BemidjiCassMuskie.org

Brian Johnson, Chapter 46 Secretary