



# On the Water

Volume 6, Issue 4

April 2004

## Our Muskie Spring

from Juris Ozols

I'm writing this to you rookie muskie fishermen and newcomers to Muskies Inc. I know what April is doing to you. I know you can hardly wait for that first Saturday in June, warm winds and waters, season open, boat fixed up, time to go muskie fishing! That's what you've been dreaming about, after all, throughout our miserable Minnesota winter. And so have all of us.

But there's some other things that I and many of our chapter veterans have been waiting for this spring, perhaps even more. It's not a secret, but if you don't know, I'm going to tell you. I'm talking about the best part of being in our Twin Cities Chapter. I'm talking about the three spring events we have, three weekends in May and June. About the things we do for the old warriors from the Vet's Home, for the kids in Big Brothers and Sisters, and for the wheelchair folks of Capable Partners. What we do for them, but really for ourselves too.

Hear me out, look at the picture collage I put together, and then I want to see you there too – involved and helping out. Smokey Swenson: "If you aren't there, well, you're going to miss out."

A May Saturday... A guy can do lots of things on a glorious Minnesota Saturday in May – go fishing, mow the lawn, go shopping, or even just sit around the house drinking beer and watching TV. Well, yes, but do this on May 1st – join us at the Minnesota Veteran's Home.

For many years now our chapter along with local VFW and American Legion clubs has hosted a morning for the vets there. We set up a trout pond, stock it with 500 trout, and then help in the fishing.

It's something to see – those old guys, almost all of them using canes or walkers or rolled out in wheelchairs, ring the pond and float worm-tipped hooks over the noses of the trout milling in the water. And the excitement shines on their faces, as they "hook and fight" the fish, lifting them squirming up into the air and over the side to the eager helping hands of our volunteers and Vet's Home staff.

There's a determination, almost a spirit of battle if you will, in some of these old warriors as they do their utmost to hook and yank the trout out of the pond. For others, there's just an air of relaxation and peacefulness, fishing pole in hand and no concern about catching. And still others just watch from the sidelines, enjoying the sunshine and the soft breezes of a Minnesota spring day.

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**Barbara DeWars proudly shows off her first muskie ever – a 48-incher she caught last October in Lake Miliona. Her brother, Twin Cities Chapter member Roger Betts was her guide. Congratulations!**

## A Great Loss to Muskies Inc.

Perry Smith, Muskies Inc. international president passed away on March 1, 2004. A service celebrating his life was held in Eau Claire, Wisconsin on March 14.

Muskies Inc. will remember Perry, not only for his interest in muskies, but also his leadership of the organization. He was instrumental in helping set goals and objectives for the International Board and Executive Committees, and always had the long-term interest of the club in mind.

Perry was the first president of Muskies Inc. to make it his business to visit each chapter of the organization. He was truly a great ambassador to Muskies Inc. and for Muskies Inc. and will be missed.

# From Our President

*Congratulations to George Wahl for another fine job on the Minnesota Muskies Expo. I believe this is the 9th year of the Expo and it seems that it keeps getting better all the time. One of the highlights this year was the addition of the shuttle service to and from the parking lot. Now, this may not seem like a highlight to you but when it's raining ice and the wind is blowing to beat the band that walk from the parking lot is a long long way. Shuttle service under those conditions – priceless! Great idea George!*

*I would like to thank George for his efforts in putting on the Expo these past years and to remind everyone that those efforts have netted the Muskies Inc through our chapter over \$49,000. Incidentally George will be the speaker at the April general meeting.*

*We have a few corrections to make regarding the May events. It was initially thought that May 8th was going to be the*

*Minnesota fishing opener. There are a couple events that are keyed off the opener date and since we originally got the opener wrong the rest was wrong.*

*Well, the opener if you didn't know, will actually be May 15th. Last month's newsletter listed May 1 as the Vets Home Opener. That event will be held on May 8. The 15th was listed as the Metro Kids Outing, but this event will actually be the May 22, the weekend after the opener. Sorry for the confusion. I hope no one misses anything because of it. The one thing we did get right was that May 11 will be our annual Swap Meet/Manufactures Night for our general meeting. This is a good time to pick up some bargains and to unload some of the things you might not need or want anymore. Either way it's always a good time.*

*Now for a little embarrassing news. Apparently there was some confusion last fall as to who was responsible for pulling the permit for the fish we purchased to be*

*stocked in White Bear Lake. The Chapter thought the muskie farm was going to do it and the muskie farm thought we were going to. Then there was another theory that a co-op permit held by one of our members was going to cover the stocking. As a result of that confusion, there wasn't any legitimate permit pulled – at least that's how the DNR viewed it. So, the Chapter and the muskie farm both received a ticket from the DNR for stocking fish without a proper permit. The end result was a \$240 bill for fines and court fees for what was determined to be a petty misdemeanor. This is a lot better that it could have been; originally it was classified as a misdemeanor which carries a \$1000 fine and/or 90 days in the county facility. All is well that ends well they say and considering the all possibilities about this issue, I believe it ended well.*

***Come to meetings; share your stories and ideas.***

***Joe DeMars***

## Join Us at the Minnesota Vet's Home Opener

Saturday, May 8 marks the "Fishing Opener" at the Minnesota Veterans Home. Twin Cities chapter members will again be treating residents of the home to their own fishing opener – complete with fishpond stocked with trout and a tasty "shore lunch" of freshly caught fish.

Once the pond has been set up and stocked, volunteers from the chapter will help residents catch their fish, clean them, and cook and serve a lunch of fish with all the fixin's.

The Veterans Home Opener is one of the more memorable traditions of our chapter. Residents who join in to catch fish and enjoy the tasty lunch, as well as the MI volunteers, have a great day!

Many volunteers are needed to make this event happen. We will need people in the morning to set up, to help the residents with fishing, to clean the fish caught, to help fry the fish or cook potatoes, to serve the meal and, of course, clean up. If you haven't ever been to a Vet's Home Opener before, now is the time. Please call Terry Hagstrom, 763-561-9399 to volunteer.

## Kids Fishing Outing

Again this year the Twin Cities chapter has planned an outing for kids – sponsored by the Big Brothers, Big Sisters organization who may not otherwise get a chance to spend time fishing. The outing is scheduled for Saturday, May 22th at Lake Nokomis.

The day will begin with a mini-workshop showing the kids how to rig up their equipment with a little discussion about safety, strategy, and technique. The rest of the time will be spent attempting to catch that "big one," and a lunch will be served.

Last year the kids fishing outnumbered the MI volunteers who came to help. This is a great, fun day. Please call Curt Ellis, 952-830-1498 to volunteer.



## Muskie Spring

*continued from page 1*

And then of course we filet the catch, fry it up, and serve “shore lunch” with all the fixings to the Vets and their families. A beautiful, heart-warming experience – hearken to what Smokey said.

That’s our thing for the old timers. And then, three weeks later, we’re going to take a dozen kids in the Minneapolis “Big Brothers and Big Sisters” program out for a morning on Lake Nokomis. This will be our third year. We put together a tackle box and spincast rod outfit for each of them and provide a bit of tutoring in spooling line, tying knots, and threading worms on a hook. And then we do some gentle coaching as the youngsters try their luck from the shore of Nokomis.

Do they catch fish? Well, two years ago the fishing was very slow. But then last year the catching got hot, as the kids hauled in multiple fish of five different species. More important – do they have fun? You bet! For many of the kids, it’s their first exposure to fishing. And it’s intriguing to see how hooked they already are after only a couple of hours at it. For others, it’s a nice morning.

But for us Muskie Inc.’ers who help out it’s another super experience. We get to see the youth of today in a very positive situation and with great attitudes. It’s a lot of fun for us too. I’ve been there both years now, and I’m going back this year again.

And then finally, our third spring event, on a Sunday in June when we actually get to do some fishing ourselves, and for muskies yet! This time we get together with the physically challenged folks of “Capable Partners.” We take a dozen or so of our boats out, each with a CP member, and spend the morning chasing the mighty muskies of Lake Independence.

Can a guy in a wheelchair, or a fellow with bad eyesight, or somebody with heart problems catch a muskie? Can they ever! Even if they don’t, the



fun and excitement I’ve talked about with the vets’ trout and the kids’ sunnies comes through here even more – after all, this is now muskies. Follows, strikes, seen fish and lost fish, and always the stories. Look at that picture of the fellow, top left, with his arms spread wide – he captures it perfectly. And that grand day on Independence finishes off with a shore lunch too.

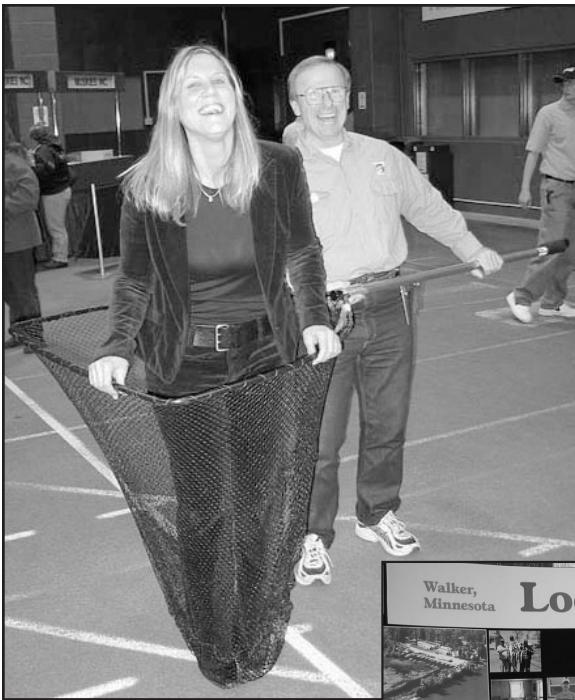
I’ve written newsletter stories about all of these events for the last several years and I’ve always reported how it makes me proud to be a member of Muskies Inc. That we can do Vets Home and Big Brothers and Capable

Partners says a lot about us. Seeing us bringing joy to others is deeply meaningful and rewarding to me.

But now I’m back to you. Muskies Inc. isn’t a church, you know. The functional equivalent of participating only by sitting passively in the last pew in back doesn’t cut it. Taking part only by reading the magazine and attending an occasional meeting when a big name speaks means you miss a lot of wonderful things, the best part of Muskies Inc.

Forget the lawn and shopping and the couch and the TV set on that Saturday morning – get involved!





**...As Seen  
at the  
Minnesota  
Muskie  
Expo**



**— this 'n that —**

**OHEC Hosting Scott Cty. Youth Fishing Event**

Outdoor Heritage Education Center (OHEC) is launching a big Youth Fishing Event on Saturday, June 12. The event, sponsored by OHEC, Shakopee Lions, DNR's FIN and Shakopee Parks & Recreation Dept., will be held at Shakopee Lions Park Pond, Scott County, from 10 am - noon. The OHEC is extending an invitation and request for any Muskies Inc. member or other fishing club friends who want to have fun helping a diverse

group of new anglers, age 15 and younger. Special outreach is being made to the Spanish, Russian and other communities that may want to discover the fun of fishing. There will be plenty of panfish for everyone to catch, and They will also have a fish fry lunch on-site.

The group needs prizes, cash donations or cane poles, but most of all volunteers – share your fishing knowledge. If you have any questions or to volunteer please contact Mark LaBarbera, president of OHEC at [mark@ohec.org](mailto:mark@ohec.org).

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*Classified ads may be submitted by members of the Twin Cities Chapter. Charges are \$5.00 per month per ad. Send ad information and check made out to Muskies, Inc. by the second Friday of each month for insertion into the following month's publication to: Graphic Works, 7125 17th Avenue South, Richfield, MN 55423.*

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# calendar of events

*Muskies Inc. Twin Cities Chapter General Meetings are held the second Tuesday of every month at the Knights of Columbus Hall, 1114 West 79th Street, Bloomington, MN (just off I-494 & Lyndale Ave.) at 7:00 pm.*

**APRIL 13**

General Meeting. Speaker: George Wahl

**MAY 8**

Fishing Home Opener at Minnesota Veterans Home.

**MAY 11**

Annual Swap Meet/Manufacturers Night.

**MAY 22**

Metro Kid's Outing at Lake Nokomis.

**JUNE 5**

Minnesota Muskie Fishing Opens

**JUNE 8**

General Meeting.

**JUNE 13**

Capable Partners Outing at Lake Independence.

**JULY 10-17**

Chapter trip to Winnipeg River, Ontario

**JULY 13**

"On the Water" General Meeting, Lake Minnetonka

**AUGUST 10**

Annual Picnic, Minnehaha Falls.

**AUGUST 14-18**

Chapter trip to Red Wing Lodge, Lake of the Woods

**SEPTEMBER 10-11-12**

37th Annual Frank Schneider, Jr. International Fishing Tournament

**SEPTEMBER 14**

General Meeting.

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## next meeting

**APRIL 13**  
**GEORGE WAHL**

*George Wahl, creator of Eagle Tail Tackle, will share fish stories and interesting experiences.*