



On the Water

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June 2004

Twin Cities Chapter at Vet's Home 2004

from Juris Ozols

Well, this year Wayne Smead didn't catch twenty-four trout, like he did the year before. In fact, the last time I talked to him, he had gotten only two. So Wayne left all those fish for the other Vets to catch. And catch them they did! By the time we finished, several hundred Vets had fished and caught, and we had served over five hundred "shore lunches." A wonderful day!

Terry Hagstrom thinks this might have been our fifteenth year of hosting the Vet's Home Opener, although there's a bit of uncertainty as to exactly what year we started. But for me, it was my fourth year photographing the event. And it's gotten better every time – a chance to see some old familiar faces, and also to meet new folks. I talked to a lot of them, and here's just a few of the stories:

I got to meet Gladys from the Recreation Department of the Vets Home, as she passed out our Muskie's Inc. hats to each of the Vets as they were brought out to the fish pond. You can't fish without a hat, of course. And I've heard stories that some of the Vets have a collection of those hats going back many years.

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From Our President

I want to thank all of the volunteers that helped make last months Vets Home Opener and Kids Outing on Nokomis so successful. Special thanks to Terry Hagstrom and Curt Ellis for coordinating these two great events. Both are very rewarding to be a part of and those that participate have some of the best times possible.

The next chapter event will be our Capable Partners Outing June 13th on Lake Independence. We usually gets started between 6am and 7am at Baker Park. Come on out and lend a hand helping the folks from Capable Partners do some muskie fishing. After fishing lunch will be served for everyone. It's a good time followed by good food and fun.

Earlier this year I announced that the July meeting would be an on the water event at Lake Minnetonka. Those plans have changed and we will be having our regular meeting at the Knights of Columbus Hall. So don't look for us at the lake on July 13th – we won't be there.

Our June meeting will be featuring Dick Pearson. As you might know Dick is one of the old timers in our sport and he has a lot to offer to both experienced and novice muskie hunters. I'm not 100% sure what his topic will be, but I would bet that at least some of it would be on wind and currents. If you get a chance, check out the article in the summer issue of Essex Angler on wind by Dick Pearson and Pete Maina and have questions ready at the meeting.

Finally as you know muskie season opens this month and it's a time we have long waited for. I want to take this time to wish you all a safe and successful season. Catch a few let 'em all go and have a great time doing it.

Come to meetings; share your stories and ideas.

Joe DeMars

Vet's Home Opener *continued from page 1*

Omar Anderson, retired from the Army Air Corps and living at the Vets Home for some thirty years now: Omar also had a slow day until he got the "big one." There is always one special fish among all the hundreds of other regular trout, a real lunger. Omar got that fish, to a round of applause and got this year's prize trophy. That made for a great picture too.

I talked to Ed Goard, a former Navy man, who came to the Vet's Home just last January, and fished for the first time this year. Well, Ed didn't catch any, so he might have to take lessons from Wayne, and he'll be back next year. But he did have stories. This one time, you see, Ed was doing guard duty on a beach in the Phillipines in 1945, and challenged a suspicious looking character wandering around. It seems that Ed didn't quite recognize one General Douglas MacArthur, and... Lots of stories.

And ladies too. JoAnn Shade, a resident for five years, whose husband was in the Navy. She got the trophy last year, but only one fish this year, even though she fished hard for an hour. She obviously knows about fishing. I got a picture of her with that fish, and she held it out way in front of her. "It looks bigger that way," she said with a beautiful smile.

Then there was that little girl, a really cute little thing, who popped up last year for the first time. I never have gotten her name, but she just loves to take the fish from the pond to the filleting table. I've probably gotten more pictures of her scurrying around, holding fish, than of anybody else. She likes to talk to them too (a habit that many of us fishermen have).

That's just a few of the people of the Vet's Home. But we had our own regulars there too. I got pictures of Tom Lund and Patti Slack and Terrie DuBe cooking, and Tony Vold (is there ever an event that Tony isn't there?). Larry Proskin cutting up onions. And Joe DeMars, Greg Piritano, and Carol Heath, plus several others at the filet table, doing a magnificent job with all those trout.

And George Wahl, a member of our chapter since forever, who filled me in on how the Vets Home event came about. One stormy February night in 1989 when the featured speaker couldn't make it, the monthly meeting turned into a bull session of the twenty or so people who were present. George himself first came up with the idea of holding a fishing event for a nursing home. And Mike Tesch immediately suggested doing it for the Veterans.

Well, George relates that the "Light bulb went off right away. We knew we had a winner." Within two days the arrangements were made, and the first event held that May. But it wasn't just us at Muskies Inc. We put on the event by ourselves for the first couple of years, and then Rick Hartz suggested that we talk to various VFW and American Legion clubs.

Representatives of our chapter got together with Jim Connolly from Vasatka-Goers Post 6690, located in Mendota just across the bridge from the Vet's Home. Well they – and many other Veteran's organizations – responded with enthusiasm. We've been in a partnership with them ever since. They contribute very generously to the cost of putting on the fishing event, in the amount of several thousand dollars each year. Harry Ostendorf and Chuck Conroy from 6690 are always there every year, and it's a pleasure to work with these great people.

Okay, enough for this year – but I'm already looking forward to next spring. And how about you? Don't you want to see if Wayne can do better (I'm sure he will), and if Omar or JoAnn can repeat as trophy winners, and if that little girl will be doing her thing with the fish? How about listening to some more of Ed's stories about the General, and getting to meet more wonderful people.

I think it's time for you to join us next year and see why our "Muskie regulars" keep going back for a wonderful morning.

You're serious about fishing, so are we.....

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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.

JUNE 5

Minnesota Muskie Fishing Opens

JUNE 8

General Meeting. Speaker: Dick Pearson

JUNE 13

Capable Partners Outing at Lake Independence.

JULY 10-17

Chapter trip to Winnipeg River, Ontario

JULY 13

General Meeting. Speaker: Matt Thompson

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. Speaker: Steve Worrell

Capable Partners

Don't forget our chapter's fishing day with members of Capable Partners on Sunday, June 13 at Baker Park, Lake Independence. It's your chance to get in some muskie fishing and to meet some amazing individuals from Capable Partners. If you don't have your own boat, come out to volunteer and we'll pair you up with someone.

MinnAqua Volunteer Opportunities

The DNR's MinnAqua reaches thousands of Minnesotans with recreational angling and aquatic education programs. This summer a number of events are planned. It is because of a large volunteer corp that these events continue to happen year after year. If you can volunteer please contact Roland Sigurdson at roland.sigurdson@dnr.s or 612-625-1291.

- Family Fishing Event, Powers Lake, Woodbury Saturday, June 19, 10am to 3 pm.
- Festival of Fish, Ft. Snelling State Park, Saturday, August 7, 11 am to 4 pm.

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next meeting

**JUNE 8
DICK PEARSON**

Muskie fishing legend Dick Pearson will be sharing fishing experiences and hopefully some tips on our favorite fish. Dick's theories have revolutionized how we have come to think about fishing today.