



On the Water

Volume 8, Issue 2

February 2005

Joe's Sporting Goods – Pure Americana

from Robert Junghans

If Joe's Sporting Goods was a painting, Norman Rockwell would be the artist. If it was music, it would be a John Phillip Sousa march. If it was a car, it would be a Chevy.

Food? Hot dogs and apple pie, for the story of Joe's Sporting Goods is a story of pure Americana, right from the heartland; right from 935 North Dale Street in St. Paul where it all started nearly 75 years ago – as an auto repair business.

Joseph John Rauscher operated his auto repair business, simply known as "Joe's", out of the street level of the family home, at 935 North Dale Street. One of his passions was fishing, and in his spare time he made fishing lures and tackle; first for himself and his family, then for his friends and, as the word spread, eventually for the general public.

In the 1940s the auto repair business faded into the background as more-and-more time and space was taken up with fishing-related matters. In the early 1940s Joe began to fabricate a way to keep minnows alive over the long Minnesota winters. He welded stainless steel tanks to hold the minnows he harvested in the fall, and those tanks allowed Joe's to become the only bait shop that could sell live minnows during the entire winter.

The word spread and by the late 1940s "Joe's" became "Joe's Sporting Goods" – still downstairs at 935 North Dale Street where the stainless steel tanks were permanent fixtures for sixty years.

That all changed in August, 2003, however, when a new, 42,000 square foot, state-of-the-art store opened on the corner of Highway 36 and Rice Street in Little

Joe's continued on page 3

Boat, Motor, Trailer is Raffle Prize

A Lund 1650 SS, Yamaha 40 hp motor, Shoreland'r trailer package will go to the winner of this year's Project and Rearing Fund raffle drawing to be held at our July meeting. Second prize is a MinnKota 55 trolling motor, third prize is a \$300 gift certificate from Thorne Bros, fourth prize is a Hummingbird Matrix 27 depth finder and fifth prize is a \$150 gift certificate from Joe's Sporting Goods.

The Project and Rearing Fund Raffle is our primary source of funding for all the projects we contribute to for the muskie resource. One hundred percent of the proceeds from this event go directly back into the resource. Buying equipment, and/or minnows to feed musky fingerling for the state DNR's muskie program, research, and spawning habitat restoration are a few projects that this raffle has helped fund.

All adult chapter members will be asked to sell 40 raffle tickets. Watch for them in the mail next month. There will be incentives for chapter members who sell the most \$2 tickets.



1950s photo of the original Joe's Sporting Goods building on the street level of the family home.

From Our President SHAWN KELLETT

Here we are, stuck in the dead of winter. Snow storms come. Brutal cold makes us hole-up in our homes. I don't know about any of you, but this is the time of year where I find myself in my "workshop" tinkering with baits and even creating some new ones. This is also the time of year that I love Muskies Inc. Nothing better to do than get together with some friends, talk muskies and have a beverage of choice. Yes indeed, I believe that winter would be a whole lot longer without Muskies Inc.

We just got done with committee placements and the leaders of their respective committees are getting ready to roll for another year. As I look around at our board meetings, it amazes me how these people are at every event, and volunteer for most every committee. I started to wonder what would happen without them. I suspect our club wouldn't be half of what it is today.

Then, I wondered what would happen if we got more people involved. With a membership that fluctuates around 600 members we have the potential to do some incredible things. I thought "what if everyone did just one more thing in the chapter?" Whether that is to make it to another meeting, join a committee, help with the tournament, or come up with a new idea to help the chapter. Just think – 600 people adding to the chapter's strength. I think the results would be amazing.

Here's a list of Committee Chairs/Areas of Interest and descriptions that some people may want to inquire about. Feel free to talk to any of these people and ask what you can do to help. Even helping on one small task or making a phone call or two can be enough to make a difference.

Advertising – obtain ads to support "On the Water" newsletter. Currently this committee is open. If you have any experience, or the time to make calls, let us know or contact Denise Olson 612-866-4730.

DNR & Legislative Liaison – keep the chapter up-to-date on events from the DNR and State Legislature. Frank Schneider 651-489-7341. George Selcke 952-933-2252.

Grant Procurement – assist in locating and writing applications for grants that will improve fishing and habitat. Greg Ide.

Mini-Challenge – work with North Metro Chapter to arrange for a 1-day tournament on an area lake. Eric Schultz 651-917-8272.

Muskie Article – write the monthly chapter news article or an update for the web page for Muskie Magazine.

Programs – arrange for the monthly programs. Paul Hartman 763-786-6031. Shawn Kellett 952-380-1218.

Membership – work on adding new members and retaining current membership. Shawn Kellett 952-380-1218.

Newsletter – write an article for "On the Water." Denise Olson 612-866-4730.

Show Booth – organize for the information to be included in the booth, set up the booth at various sports shows and arrange for volunteers to work the booth. Brad Coyne 952-884-2268.

Tournament – organize and run our annual 3-day tournament. Stu McIntosh 651-699-9817. Dianne Dahl 612-239-9511.

Welcome Table/Greeting – organize the prizes and drawings at the meetings, greet attendees, display information from resorts and other pertinent items. Tony Vold 952-938-7261. Jim Krupa 952-474-5967.

Youth – identify and organize youth projects. Steve Jones 612-799-2034.

International Banquet – in 2006 the TC chapter will be hosting the International Banquet. Greg and Elaine Randolph 651-452-1209.

"You get out of life what you put in." -Unknown

Annual Winter Picnic/Awards Banquet

The Winter Picnic on February 19 will have a variety of "muskie version" games of chance and raffle packages for everyone to try. Games start at 6:00 pm and dinner will be served at 7:00 pm.

The Awards Banquet will honor winners of the Members Only Contest and Kids Contest. The recipient of the chapter's the Muskie Award for this year will also be announced. Tickets are \$12.00 per person and **MUST BE PURCHASED BY FEBRUARY 8.**

Summer Trips

So far, two summer muskie fishing trips for chapter members are planned. If you can, join either of these two trips for a great time.

Winnipeg River • July 9-15

Lodging will be at Paradise Cove Resort again this year. This is a once-in-a-lifetime chance to go after the big ones. Every year at least one fish in the 50-inch range is caught. Reserve your space with a \$50 deposit, the entire trip will be \$180 per person (US funds). Contact Paul Hartman, 763-786-6031.

Red Wing Lodge August 20-27

A joint trip with the North Metro chapter is planned for Red Wing Lodge, Sabaskong Bay, Lake of the Woods. A \$50 non-refundable deposit required for reservations. The cost is \$200 per person (US funds) for housekeeping cabins. Free dockage and a free daily bag of ice are included, as well as a dinner one night hosted by the Bartlett family. There will be a drawing for one free trip, and door prizes. For more information and to make your reservations, call Mark Chatelle at 952-544-6466.

Joe's *continued from page 1*

Canada and Joe's Sporting Goods instantly changed from neighborhood fixture to a major regional player in the outdoor sports marketing world.

The architects of the transition are brothers Joe and Jim Rauscher, the third generation of family ownership.

"It was time to move," said Joe in a recent interview. "We needed more space to better serve our customers, and we decided to do something different in terms of location. We took a risk by leaving the neighborhood, but this location gives us much greater exposure and it's has more than met our expectations."

The new store is divided into three primary product divisions: fishing, hunting and skiing. Joe, who holds the title of Vice President, oversees the skiing division, while brother Jim, who became President of the company in 1997 when he won a coin flip, runs the hunting department. Long-time friend Travis Tuma, who joined the company in 1998 and is now the store manager, has primary responsibility for the fishing department.

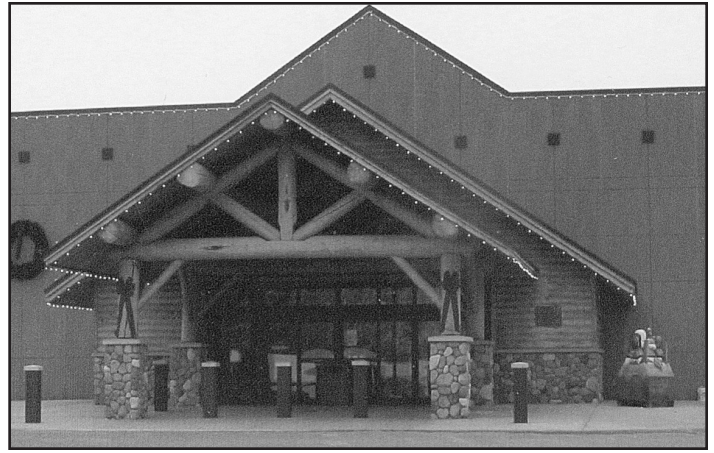
When you enter the new "Joe's Sporting Goods" you instantly feel like you've been transported to a massive north woods hunting lodge, complete with three-foot thick logs supporting the entryway and interior wood beams which give the place a warm and comfortable feeling notwithstanding its size.

You can still buy live minnows year-round at Joe's, although the old stainless steel tanks have finally been retired in favor of more modern technology. You can also choose from an array of fishing products that rivals any in the Midwest, but, although the store is bigger and more modern than the Dale Street store, the philosophy hasn't changed.

"It's still helping customers," said Joe. "That's our big thing. That's what Joe's has always been known for. We believe our employees are the friendliest and most knowledgeable you'll find anywhere. They make Joe's the best place to buy your sporting equipment. It's been that way for years and we don't plan to change."

That service-related work ethic has been handed down through the generations at Joe's. "My Dad (also named Joe) was a firm believer in everyone working in the family business," continued the "third Joe" in the history of Joe's Sporting Goods. "My brother and I and my sister all worked at the store after school and on Saturdays from the time we were 7 or 8 years old. I can remember standing on a step stool with a minnow scoop, getting minnows for customers out of those stainless steel tanks my grandpa welded."

The "family business" was difficult to avoid if you grew up at 935 North Dale Street. To reach the residential part of the house you had to walk through the sporting goods store. The home phone was the store phone. During the decade of the 1960s the store was open 24 hours a day, which meant that a ringing front door bell at 3 a.m. meant that someone named Rauscher would have to get out of bed and scoop



Entrance to the new Joe's Sporting Goods, opened in August, 2003 at Highway 36 and Rice Street.



Jim and Joe Rauscher, the third generation of family ownership at Joe's Sporting Goods.

minnows or sell a license to an early morning fisherman.

"We ate, slept and breathed 'Joe's' all the time," continued Joe. "My mother did put an end to the 24-hour-a-day business, but even after that, when we were in high school, the store would open at 4 a.m. and we'd deliver orders before we went to school."

Things have changed a great deal since those early days. Now there are about 100 employees who serve the needs of the thousands of customers who have visited the 21st century Joe's. There are professional sportsmen on staff to give expert advice and direction. Seminars are taught on a regular basis.

While services and selection have expanded, and trends have changed over the years, the basics have stayed the same.

"If you listen to the customers and keep giving them what they want, they keep coming back," said Joe. "That's what Joe's has been able to do for over seventy years."

Editor's Note: This is the second in a series of articles profiling the retail sponsors who have continuously given their support to the Twin Cities chapter of Muskies Inc. throughout the years.

Members Only Contest

And the winners are...

You will have to attend the Winter Picnic to find out. I promise you this will be an eventful evening. All ten junior members who released muskies this past year will receive an award and there will also be an extra surprise for one of them.

New entries –

YES! I have an entry for a 44-inch muskie that was released on January 1, 2005 by Patti Slack. Her fishing partner, Jerry Judson, offers this account: *We were in Ontario for the Lake Trout opener. We started fishing Saturday morning and before long we had 3 trout on the ice. Immediately after we moved to another spot, our guide, Paul Trinkner, caught another nice 22-incher. Then I had a fish slam my jig and tear off line before the hook pulled out. Right after that, Patti hooked into a good fish. The fish made*



two big runs before Patti pulled it to the bottom of the ice. The fish didn't want to get its head into the hole, so Paul looked down and was surprised to see a large muskie cross-ways in the hole. As he reached for it, the fish took off again. Patti fought the fish back to the hole. It took over one minute of Paul's arm in the icy water before he could get a good grip on the jaw. He then pulled the fish up. We were all surprised how big the muskie was – 44 inches!! We quickly took a picture and the fish swam off hard. To our knowledge, the muskie is first fish of the year.

Unfortunately, the only recognition Patti will receive are this article and comments such as “congratulations”, “great looking fish”, or “better luck choosing a date next time” because the fish was out of season for Crow Lake.

Reporting all fish, big and small.
Elaine Randolph, Contest Chair



FOR SALE: 2000 18' Alumacraft Tournament Pro 175. 80 HP 4-stroke motor (less than 50 hours), Shoreland'r trailer with spare tire (never been used), Pinpoint trolling motor with forward and rear depth finders, three swivel seats, two canvas covers (one for trailer, one for docking). \$12,000 or BO Must sell! Like new! **Call 763-745-0921.**

Thorne Bros. Seminars

Thorne Bros. has scheduled four free muskie-related seminars Thursday nights at 7 pm.

February 10 – Position Yourself for More Muskies

Bart Rosen from Beckman will show how to integrate your boat, motors, anchors, drift sock, GPS, and electronics for better boat control.

February 24 – Jigs, Swimbaits and Soft Plastics

Steve Jonesi will explain the different types, why the baits are so popular, and how to present them.

March 3 – The Basics of Muskie Fishing

Jim Murphy will show you the fundamentals – from equipment selection and how to use it to landing and releasing your catch.

March 24 – How to Make Yourself a Better Muskie Fisherman

Luke Ronnestrand will show you some simple things to boat more and bigger fish. Luke put a lot of big fish in the boat last year.

Also scheduled is **Thorne Bros.**

Annual Spring Spectacular on

Saturday, April 16. The day features a “Muskie Guide Panel” at 11:00 am. Guides on the panel include Wayne Klemz (Metro), Jason Hammernick (Mille Lacs), Tom Wehler (Vermillion) and Jim Murphy (Leech). Featured that day will be new products for 2005 and a one-day store-wide sale.

FOR SALE: 14 ft. Alumacraft with trailer. 50 hp Merc, tilt & trim, Hummingbird locator. \$2200. Russ Peterson. 612-618-0391.

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.

FEBRUARY 8

General Meeting. Speaker: Bill Diedrich.

FEBRUARY 19

Winter Picnic and Awards Ceremony.

MARCH 8

General Meeting.

MARCH 11, 12, 13

Minnesota Muskie Expo.

Minnesota Muskie Expo

Make plans now to attend the Muskie Expo March 11, 12 & 13 at the National Sports Center in Blaine. This three-day event is devoted exclusively to the muskie. The Expo is open from 2 to 9 pm Friday, Saturday from 10 to 7, and on Sunday from 10 to 4.

Muskie-related exhibitors including lure manufacturers, guides, resorts, and retailers and boat dealers with show specials will be represented at the Expo. All three days will feature seminars by top muskie pros. There will be a large "Kids Midway" area with games and prizes for kids, sponsored by Edina Realty, with all proceeds going to Hospitality House and Teen Challenge. Kids 12 and under are free, so bring the whole family. Adult entry for the Expo is \$9, a three-day pass is \$15.

Our Twin Cities chapter will have two booths at the Minnesota Muskie Expo. Volunteers are needed at both booths. One booth will be selling Project and Rearing Fund raffle tickets. The other will be promoting Muskies Inc. and our chapter. Please contact Brad Coyne at 952-884-2268 or booya626@yahoo.com to volunteer. Only those who are registered with Brad to work will get a free exhibitors pass to the the Expo.

Thank You *A special thank you to Brad Coyne and also to Jim Baker, Bob Culbertson, Joe DeMars, John Gossmann, Greg Ide, Juris Ozols, Russ Peterson and Eric Schultz who all volunteered to work the chapter booth during the St. Paul Sports Show in January. Approximately 35 new members joined our chapter at the show.*

Bill is a rep for Lowrance, and will discuss the operation and use of electronics in pursuing muskies.

**next
meeting
FEBRUARY 8
SPEAKER:
BILL DIEDRICH**

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