



# Illinois B.A.S.S. Federation Nation

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## Holiday Wishes

The IBFN Board of Directors would like to wish all of the IBFN members and their families; Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

### IBFN BOD

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## Conservation Times

BY MILT WALTERMIRE

In late October, a popular program from years ago was revived with the first general session meeting of the new Illinois Conservation Congress. The session was held at the IDNR headquarters in Springfield and gave a chance for regular folks who are interested in what the IDNR and the state legislature are doing to voice their concerns and influence those entities with first hand experience. The participants reviewed, proposed and voted on recommendations to elected and appointed Illinois officials in three issue areas: public access, youth recruitment & retention, and conservation funding. There were more than 20 key recommendations for actions in those three areas.

For conservation funding, it was recommended that a master action plan be developed that outlined conservation and natural resources funding needs and how to pay for them. We recommended approval of pending legislation (SB 1846) to increase hunting, fishing and other fees, and to implement new and existing fees to shore up and enhance conservation programs, with guarantees that fee revenues are used only for the purposes intended.

For public access, recommendations included: establishment of a dedicated funding source to research new methods of expanding access on private land, including incentives for private landowners; development of a plan to acquire more land for public recreation; restoring liability protection for all recreational land uses permitted on private property.

For youth recruitment and retention, recommendations included: the IDNR working with partner organizations to develop programs to mentor and pass along the safe outdoor traditions of Illinois; providing conservation education in schools; enhancing promotion and marketing of existing youth programs and activities; updating and adopting the Environmental Literacy Plan, which should include methods for youth recruitment and retention.

There are many things we can do to help this effort gain strength. We should contact our legislators and urge them to act and turn these suggestions into reality. You can talk to the teachers of the schools in your area and inquire about whether there is any conservation education taking place. Perhaps you could offer someone from your club to be a guest speaker at the school. Of course, many of our clubs are already providing much of their time and effort to enhance conservation and youth recruitment. We are aware that if we wait for someone else to do it, it probably won't get done anytime soon, if at all. If you've been paying any attention at all over the last several years, you understand that there are those out there who would love to see the outdoor traditions that we so cherish be halted. They are infiltrating our state and federal legislatures, as well as media and the movie industry, especially those for children. Please take an active role in your club's conservation and youth efforts. It is absolutely vital for the future of our sport that we provide a counter to all of our enemies' efforts. The Illinois Conservation Congress may play a critical role to that end.

## IBFN Membership Renewal For 2010

It's that time of year again to renew your IBFN membership as a chartered club for the up and coming 2010 season. The IBFN dues will remain the same at \$20 per member. Send you club rosters and enclosed check to Brian Tutko, IBFN Secretary at:

IBFN, P.O. Box 703, Streator, IL, 61364

## IBFN 2010 Annual Club Presidents Conference

FRANK LABANOWSKI, IBFN PRESIDENT

The IBFN Board of Directors is gearing up for the annual IBFN Club Presidents Conference to be held on January 23 at Bass Pro Shops in Bolingbrook. This is a mandatory meeting and requires representation from all of the clubs in the IBFN. Each club should have two representatives, either their club President and VP or two appointed members.

We are going to have a one-day format for the Presidents Conference this year. The conference meetings will be held in the Conservation Room on the second floor. We will begin club check in at 8 a.m.

The agenda for the meeting is stacked with many topics for discussion and information regarding the 2010 fishing season events and tournaments as well as guest speakers and should adjourn by 5 p.m. This will give everyone time to look around at Bass Pro for a while and still have time to travel home.

Special room rates are being set up at the Hampton Inn in Bolingbrook for those who will be arriving Friday evening. Details on the hotel and conference will be sent to all club presidents very soon and will be posted on the IBFN message board as well.

Remember, if your club plans to enter a team to participate in the State Qualifier, your club must have representation at the Presidents Conference. No rosters for the State Qualifier will be accepted from a club if they did not have representation at the meeting.

Once again our sponsors have been very generous by donating many items for our raffle. Please plan to purchase some tickets and good luck to all.

I look forward to seeing all of you at the conference and let's get 2010 off to a great start.

## 2009 B.A.S.S. Federation Nation Championship October 26-30 - Harris Chain of Lakes, Tavares, Florida



Last month from October 28 to the 31, Gerald Sobkowiak, president of the Thunderbird Bassmasters, competed in the BASS Federation Nation Championship on the Harris Chain in Tavares, Florida. He had a chance to fish against the best anglers in the Federation Nation for a spot in the Bassmaster Classic this coming February.

The week before the tournament the weather conditions were typical for Florida. All of the competitors were on fish and had their spots for the tournament. Then the heat began to set in. On Monday and Tuesday the temperatures reached record highs and the water temp went up 10 degrees by Wednesday, the first day of the tournament. The record high temps stayed all week and the patterns set by the field no longer were there. It became a tough bite during the tournament and even the limits that came in did not have very much weight. The FNC winner had just over 31 pounds for the three days of the tournament; far below the projected 42 pounds for the win.

Gerald did a great job representing the IBFN. He did not win one of the Classic spots but he did bring fish to the scale each day of the tournament. On behalf of the IBFN and all the members, thanks for a great effort Gerald and congratulations on being the 2009 Illinois Divisional Champion.



## Casting Kids National Championship

During the BASS FNC last month the Divisional Casting Kids Champions competed for the title of BASS National Champion. This year, Dalton Fox from the Champaign area, who was the 2009 IBFN State Champion and the 2009 Divisional Champion, was invited to compete at the Nationals.

This is the last year for the BASS Casting Kids on a National level. Beginning in 2010 the IBFN will continue the Casting Kids program which will lead to our state finals where we will establish Casting Kids State Champion. The IBFN Board is working with our sponsors to put together a great program for the kids in 2010.

The IBFN and all the members want to congratulate Dalton Fox for winning not only our State Championship but the Divisional championship as well. He competed like a true professional at the BASS Nationals and was only one cast away from the title. Great job Dalton!!

## A Fisherman's Christmas



BY MICHELLE LEACH

*'Twas the night before the big fishing trip and all through the camp the liquor had been stout and the fishermen were passed out.*

*The waders were sitting by the back screen door, ready for an early start sometime around four.*

*The men were all snuggled in sleeping bags and sofa beds with visions of trophy largemouths dancing in their heads.*

*When out on the dock there arose a loud noise, shakin' the cabin and waking the boys.*

*Pillows and blankets flew about the room, Eight mad fishermen to the door did zoom.*

*They slung open the door and looked out to the bay, the moonlight above led the way.*

*Down to the pier they couldn't believe their eyes, Santa in a "21-footer" said "Hey, what's up guys!"*

*In bright red waders and a gleam in his eyes, he started banding out the supplies.*

*Carads, Calcuttas and a couple of Lews, the fishermen weren't really sure what to do.*

*They each took a new reel and put it on a new rod, jumped on the boat and gave Santa a nod.*

*Out on the water they found a perfect spot and started fishing without a second thought.*

*Trophy bass they caught on their line, they stopped at their limit and let out a sigh.*

*What a great trip this had been. They secured all their gear and were ready for breakfast. "Is there a Denny's around here?"*

*Santa smiled and said, "Gentlemen I've enjoyed your company but now I must go, got a few "honey-dos" lined up for today, ya' know."*

*"Keep the boat and all the new toys... I'll see ya' back at the pier next year and we'll get 'em again boys."*

*He sprang to a shiny red boat that came out of nowhere. Pulled not by reindeer, but eight "largies" and without a care.*

*He whistled and shouted and called them by name: Now Shimano, now Lews, now Daiwa and Quantum!*

*On Berkeley, on Mustad, on Plano and Stren across the bay we heard him proclaim, Good fishing to all and to all a good day.*

*As he flew out of sight the fishermen woke and said, "What a night!"*

*They gathered themselves and blamed their headaches on the alcohol. Each popped a few Tylenol and never mentioned their fishin' trip at all.*

*You see none of them were really sure if anyone would believe they fished all night with that guy in red. They'd probably just tell them the liquor went to their head.*

*But as they loaded their gear they glanced at the pier, and there sat that new boat with a cooler full of filets and a six-pack of beer.*

*A little red note proved their case. Inscribed to his buddies, Santa did write, "Merry Christmas to all, to all GET SOME SLEEP TONIGHT."*

**IBFN CLUBS:**  
 Send in your tournament info to be posted in Club News.

**Featured Sponsor of the Month**

*The IBFN thanks its sponsors for their dedication to the Illinois bass fisherman.*