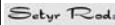




Illinois B.A.S.S. Federation Nation

P.O. Box 703 Streator, IL 61364

www.ilfednation.com



Words From The IBFN President

IBFN Begins a New Year

During the past year the IBFN has once again seen growth. This is a great trend and I look for it to continue over the coming year. After all, we have the greatest bass fishing organization in the state. This is because of our clubs and more importantly our members. It is a privilege to belong to an organization with so many anglers who not only want to compete on the water and

someday have a shot at the Bassmaster Classic, but also take a sound interest in youth and conservation.

This year we will hold our State Qualifier in southern Illinois at Rend Lake. The southern clubs have always supported the State Qualifiers in other regions and I am confident the northern clubs will support a State Qualifier down state as well.

We have some great sponsors and in this time of economic uncertainty, if you are going to shop, please help support them. They have contributed to help our organization for the coming

year. Each month we will continue to feature a different sponsor as a way of thanking them for their support. Our national sponsors have also put together some great programs for this year. Over the coming weeks keep an eye on the IBFN message board for all of the details.

As we look forward to a new year and the challenge of chasing trophy bass, always keep safety and sportsmanship in mind on the water. I hope all of our members and their families have a great 2010.

See you on the water.

Frank Labanowski
President IBFN

2010 IBFN Board of Directors



Happy New Year from Illinois B.A.S.S. Federation Nation board of directors. We wish you a year full of happiness, good health, peace and good fishing. As a group that is representative of all IBFN members, we hope that the IBFN will be a means

through which your club will maintain and enrich your commitment to Youth, Conservation and Competition over the coming year. www.ilfednation.com

Conservation Times

BY MILT WALTERMIRE

In 2009, I was often driven to rant on such issues as our former governor's ruinous attempts to illegally gut our DNR and his theft of earmarked federal funds; his laughable appointment of a completely inept and unqualified IDNR chief; the gluttonous efforts of ethanol investors to force E-15 upon us; the sleazy organization known as the Humane Society of the U.S. (not to be confused with the support-worthy American Humane Society); Obama's appointment of anti-outdoorsman Cass Sunstein to head the Office of Information & Regulatory Affairs; and probably several other issues that I can't remember. (Note: I recently and suddenly, without warning, became afflicted with old age, the big SixZero, so I should not officially be excused for memory loss). However, as is often the case with many Americans this time of year, it's time to soothe the soul by recounting our blessings this past year.

As a fisherman in Illinois, I am thankful for knowing that our current governor and IDNR chief Marc Miller are doing their very best under extremely difficult circumstances to rebuild the state's natural resources, including re-opening the state parks. The bringing of an improved Illinois Conservation Congress out of mothballs is proof they are serious about making real improvements by listening to the people who are out there enjoying and supporting the conservation of our natural resources. I'm even thankful that annual fishing licenses only increased \$5; a pittance compared to the overall expense of enjoying our sport over the course of a year. I am also grateful for the outstanding efforts of our member clubs who performed conservation projects this year. Some, like Illinois Valley Bassmasters and Champaign-Urbana Bass Club, have projects that are virtually year-round endeavors. These two projects are both worthy of national attention (which they did receive in B.A.S.S. Times and Bassmaster) and the IBFN should be proud of them. Other than Texas, I know of no other state BFN who has clubs who annually perform conservation efforts of this size and effectiveness.

On the national scene, I'm thankful for the defeat of the E-15 initiative, even if more battles loom on the horizon. The greed and large pockets of the ethanol investors ensure that this fight won't go away anytime soon, but as long as true science, not money and politics, rule on this issue, we can beat them. I'm also heartened by the statement released by Mr. Sunstein that, through our efforts to defeat his confirmation, he became "educated" on the role sportsmen play in the funding of conservation and how much we do for our natural resources. I would have thought someone in his position should have already known that, and it says little for Obama's concern for our natural resources for him to appoint such an "uneducated" person to this role. Perhaps, through this ordeal, Obama became a little

more educated himself on the role we play for our natural resources. It remains to be seen whether he cares about that or whether he has a different agenda.

Finally, I am thankful for the support B.A.S.S. has given over the years to conservation. B.A.S.S.'s Conservation Director Chris Horton and his predecessors have done phenomenal jobs, often under duress, in fighting off the efforts of many anti-fishing groups in Congress and in various states, like Louisiana where there are major access issues. They have also spear-headed many huge conservation projects, such as the National Habitat Initiative. All of these efforts have come with the aid of many BFN's who have jumped on board to assist. Now, however, that support may be reduced or eliminated as a result of "fiscal difficulties". The annual Conservation Directors conferences were an exceptional educational opportunity for all of our nation's BFN Conservation Directors. We were schooled by experts in many areas of conservation, including aquatic vegetation, invasive species (both animal and plant), wood habitat, political assistance, acquiring grants, fighting the anti's, etc.

Perhaps the most educational benefit was the informal gathering of groups of us over dinner and a beer to go over what's happening in our states and coming up with suggested solutions. Well, in spite of Chris's best efforts, these conferences have been deemed an unnecessary expense by the bean-counters at ESPN/BASS (they paid for our rooms and a few meals during the four-day meetings, provided buses to and from the airports and hotels, plus the expense of renting conference rooms and providing travel for all the professors and other experts who served as speakers).

I am thankful that I was able to attend several of these as your CD. I am worried about the new CDs, of which there are many, who will not have the benefit of these conferences. I would have been, and would continue to be, lost without them. Chris has been told that this cancellation is necessary due to the difficult fiscal situation this year at B.A.S.S. and that there's a good chance they'll be back in 2011.

Perhaps I'm getting cynical in my old age (see above), but I have difficulty believing that they will re-institute an expense next year that, in their mind, they did just fine without in 2010. If they can't afford it with an increased membership and 50% increase in national dues, what else is expected to happen next year that will make the expense worthy again? Because the fiscal bottom line of conservation is impossible to determine, this expense should be viewed as an insurance policy premium insuring that the BUSINESS of fishing will be protected against the anti's, invasive species, etc. Instead, it has been viewed as an unnecessary expense.

I am worried that the most effective grassroots conservation organization in the world may become extinct as a final result of this action and I have shared my concerns with them and the nation's CD's. I truly hope my concerns are unfounded and that I will have teeth marks on my foot at this time next year.

2010 IBFN Presidents Conference

The IBFN will hold their annual Presidents Conference January 23, 2010.

This year's conference will be held at Bass Pro Shops in Bolingbrook, Ill. We will be going with a one-day conference this year to help clubs hold down the cost of sending their representatives. The check-in time is 9 a.m. with the meeting to start at 10 a.m. There is a lot to cover in one day so we will be starting on time. All clubs need to be represented in order to submit a roster to fish the State Qualifier in 2010.

Don't forget to bring some spending cash. During the breaks, shopping in the store will be encouraged to show our support to Bass Pro Shops our Casting Kids sponsor for 2010. See you all there.

Brian Tutko
IBFN Secretary



IBFN 2010 Schedule

Date	Event
Jan. 23	IBFN Presidents' Meeting
April 24-25	State Qualifier / Rend Lake
May 14-17	PVA / Rend Lake
June 13	Jr. Bassmasters SQ / TBD
Aug. 11-13	BFN Northern Divisional / Escanaba, MI
Sept. 12	Casting Kids State Finals
TBD	FNC / TBD

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 your club rosters and enclosed check to Brian Tutko, IBFN Secretary at:

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

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

Featured Sponsor of the Month

MINN-KOTA
Anywhere. Anytime.

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