



THE MUNSUNGAN MUSE

April

News from Heaven

2006



FROM THE PORCH

A decade has officially passed since Karen and I took over the operation of the Bradford Camps. Ten years in the history of the camps is a small percentage, but a significant part of our lives. Munsungan Lake is a loved part of the world for hundreds of people and you all have made this such a good memory for us as well. We hope that for years to come we will provide a supportive place for our employees, continued protection for our wild fish and game, and a haven for all of you.

We had a great year in 2005 in many respects. The fishery in the lake was superb, probably due in large part to your efforts to keep the breeders alive. The weather was at times difficult (that is putting it nicely, isn't it?). Our loyal staff was with us again for the third year in a row (and will be with us again in 2006).

Ice out occurred May 4th in a light northwest wind. The smelt run was spread out over a period of more than a week, with no real spawning peak that there usually is. All in all, May turned out to be a great month for salmon fishing. The salmon pictured below was a typical healthy 15 inch-er caught by young Patrick Vossmer right around the fifteenth. Average salmon sizes for the month ranged around 19 inches. Our May fisherman by and large found the salmon to be noticeably larger and healthier than they remember.

No doubt this is due in large part to our camp slot limit of 14-17: release the ones you want to catch again and release the breeders.



I am going to let the newsletter pictures tell the rest of the story for the fishing season last year. They say it's worth a thousand words. It really was a great season and I think everyone was very satisfied with their fly fishing, trolling, and casting. Thank you for being a part of it all.

Ice Out

I am always the last person to leave the movie theatre, watching the screen until the last credits roll off into blackness. My delight in delaying (as my father would say) qualifies me to be fascinated with the barely perceptible motion of the ice leaving the lake in the spring. To me, it is not like grass growing or paint drying, but has subtle movement, with shifts in direction and speed, both reactions to wind and weather; and ice out includes its own background soundtrack.

Last spring the ice shifted around for days, indecisive about direction and not unified in an evacuation plan. First, a great split appeared in front of the lodge. Next, the upper end of the lake cleared off enough for fishing. Different gaps and fissures developed. The two great rectangular spots from last January's ice cutting shrank, and the wind picked up and the ice islands began to collide.

Millions of small rectangular pieces of clear ice, 6-8 inches long floated along the edges of the ice floes. The wind-driven ice pushed these needles ashore, and they piled up with loud crashing and tinkling noises. The ice was on the move.

Time to get back to work (it's time to go fishing!) I found myself just standing at the edge of the lake and taking it all in; then Igor found me just standing at the edge of the lake! We smile and I got up to leave this movie theatre!

The Life of Riley....



Floatplane Scenic Flights

This year Bradford Camps will be offering scenic flights to all of you wishing to get a birds-eye view of the land around Munsungan Lake. Destinations will also include Katahdin Mountain (Maine's highest), the Allagash River and its historical locomotives, and the trout ponds of our area that you fish. In years to come we will be offering fly out trips to drop you off at these destinations and to our outpost camps, but not this year.



Outpost Cabins

We have two outpost cabins that are for rent for anyone wishing a more remote experience, and a few less amenities. These cabins are located on Reed Pond and on Bluffer Pond. The cost is \$40 per person per night (\$240 minimum). You are responsible for your own food, sleeping bags and transportation to the cabin. Reed Pond is fly-in only and a round trip price begins at \$160 ppdo. Bluffer pond is a drive-in cabin requiring a 1/2 mile hike. A fly-in/hike out trip to Bluffer Pond can also be arranged.

As you can imagine these ponds are very remote and offer a wilderness experience that is unsurpassed in the lower 48. Reed Pond is in the middle of the Northeast's largest old growth forest on land owned by the Nature Conservancy, and the Bluffer Pond camp is, well, it's simply in the middle of nowhere. Both places offer a comfortable waterfront setting on a truly pristine body of water. *PLUS there's wild trout in them thar waters!*



Jack and Skip's Moose

This photo was taken by Jack Juechter about a quarter of a mile away from camp. He and Skip Johnson were on their way home when they stopped beside an unusual site in the road: the afterbirth of a calf moose. Knowing something interesting was afoot they drove along, and in the shade of a yellow birch sapling was the baby moose, still unable to get on its feet. Off in the woods was the cow, which eventually came out to begin nudging the calf up on its feet. After several long minutes of watching from their truck, the calf succeeded and on wobbly legs, began its life in the North Maine Woods! This photo is this year's winner for the best photo prize and will entitle the taker to \$100 off his stay this year. Hooray for Skip and Jack (and the baby moose!).



Shooting School

Several times each year we have an impromptu shooting school for all abilities and almost all ages. The Bradford Camps offers the perfect surroundings for people unfamiliar with firearms to begin to learn. The typical class takes a few hours from start to finish. In it we include the standard subjects such as safety, handling and marksmanship. We also take the time to go over the mechanics of different firearms, the differences between shotguns and rifles, and etiquette when handling firearms. It is truly a pleasure for us when we help the unfamiliar non-enthusiast understand a bit of why this sport is fun, exciting, and a positive pastime.

Starkey's Bear

Wendy and Alex Starkey came to camp for the first time this fall. Wendy is an experienced big game hunter and this was to be her son's first big game hunt. After a few nights of unsuccessful hunting, Alex had a shot at what he only could tell was a bear: who knows how big. When I got to the stand he said he saw a bear, took a shot, but had no idea how large the bear was, only that it was greater than the size we had described. After a short track we found him fifty yards away and I was amazed. It was the largest bear shot at Bradford Camps in my time and weighed in at almost 450 pounds!

Sons, and Daughters



Many guests, be they 6 years old or 46 years old, come every year with their dad (and sometimes their mom). This is quality time at its finest! The fast days of fishing stay forever in memories; and as you know, they evergrow. Maybe more importantly are the slow times in the boat, when there is nothing else to do but sit, wait, and be quiet: the time for truly special memories.



2006 RATES

FISHING, HUNTING

FAMILY TRIPS

(prices include all meals and lodging)

Adults í .í í í í í \$132/Night; \$860 / 7-Night Week
Children..í .í í í í í ..\$7 X Age per Night
2 Parents, 2 Children, 7-Night Stay...\$2095 / Week
Bear Hunt, Sept (Guided, License Incl.) í .í \$1795
Deer Hunt, November í í í í .í \$695 / Week
Two Week Deer Hunt í í í ..\$1200 / 2 Weeks
(Deer Hunts Sun to Sun, addñ nights \$100 ea)

GUIDE SERVICE

(in addition to meals and lodging prices above)
Guide for Fishing and Bird Hunting í \$180 / Day
(may be shared by two sports max)
Guide for Deer Hunts í í .í í í í ..\$1050 / Week
(2 hunters max, addñ hunters at \$150 per person)

BOATS

Boat, Motor, and Gas í .í í í í \$50 / Day
Canoes and Kayak..í í í .í í .No Charge

OUTPOST CABINS

Adults í .í í í í í \$40 / pp / Night
(minimum rate í \$240)

FISHING GEAR RENTAL

Fly Rod and Gearí .í í í í í í \$20 / Day
Waders í í í í í í í í ..\$15 / Day

SPORTING CLAYS COURSE

10 Stations í í í í í í í í .No Charge
(Addñ fee for instruction, gun and shells)

THE SMALL PRINT

- *Staff tips of 15% will be added to lodging rates.
- *Prices include private waterfront cabin, full bath and three home-cooked meals.
- *State tax of 7% will be added to lodging rates.
- *15% additional for single occupancy.
- *Check in before 5:00 pm, check out before dinner.
- *\$200 deposit required per person.
- *\$600 deposit required for September bear hunts.
- *5% less on lodging for the wise, 70 years and up.



Sikorsky Seminar Dates July 14, 15, 16 Cost \$250 ppdo, meals & lodging

For aviation enthusiasts this is a great weekend to hear the story of my grandfather's three careers: Russian airplanes, American clipper ships, and helicopters. Fly in to our lodge (seaplane base ME3) or drive in. All guests will be offered a seaplane ride with I. Sikorsky III!





The Life of a Day

Like people or dogs, each day is unique and has its own personality quirks which can easily be seen if you look closely. But there are so few days as compared to people, not to mention dogs, that it would be surprising if a day were not a hundred times more interesting than most people. But usually they just pass, mostly unnoticed, unless they are wildly nice, like autumn ones full of red maple trees and hazy sunlight, or if they are grimly awful ones in a winter blizzard that kills the lost traveler and bunches of cattle. For some reason we like to see days pass, even though most of us claim we don't want to reach our last one for a long time. We examine each day before us with barely a glance and say, no, this isn't one I've been looking for, and wait in a bored sort of way for the next, when, we are convinced, our lives will start for real. Meanwhile, this day is going by perfectly well-adjusted, as some days are, with the right amounts of sunlight and shade, and a light breeze scented with a perfume made from the mixture of fallen apples, corn stubble, dry oak leaves, and the faint odor of last night's meandering skunk.

Poem by Tom Hennen
From *Good Poems*, edited by Garrison Keillor, published by Penguin Books

