

December 2011

HoHoHo!! Merry Christmas!!

Well, it doesn't feel much like Christmas yet- only a dusting of snow and about minus 2C. Bo, Jim and I are just back from a long walk over to the colony. The sunshine and blue sky really lights up the white birches- so beautiful!! It is very quiet around here- the animals are all laying low, even the human ones. Sean is just finishing up his first semester of his second year at Guelph. He loves it there and was quite fortunate to find a really nice place to live. He and three others share a huge townhouse which is an easy walk to school and the neat little city of Guelph. We will be driving down to pick him as his last exam is on the 16<sup>th</sup>. He should be back next summer to be our waiter. Jamie has moved into Sault Ste Marie where he is working at Cross Country which is an incoming call centre which handles roadside assistance. He is into his fourth week and seems to enjoy it. He also has a good place to live- close walk to work and downtown Soo.

So, we are officially empty nesters! It is rather strange for us but I think we will get used to it. Little Bo is getting extra walks and scratches!

2011 was a memorable year for sure!! The winter was closer to normal- a good amount of snow and cold combined with a third week of April ice-out. The spring was very long- cool and wet but nice breaks of warm to get things growing- just perfect. These conditions were not only great for us but our insect life too! When folks would call to see how the black flies were, Jim would tell them that he couldn't tell because the mosquitoes were so bad!! We often tell people that when the bugs are bad the fishing is good and boy, was it ever true this year!! By the end of June, bug levels had eased, just in time for the family vacations!

The water levels on Tunnel Lake were back to normal this spring with no apparent effect on the fishing. We caught a lot of walleye and smallmouth with the red jig and worm combo out-producing all other baits. We recommend a bait bucket aeration 'bubbler' to keep those costly minnows alive and kicking! By the middle of the summer, top water bass fishing was exciting and produced some large smallmouth.

Late spring brought quite a lot of rain forcing folks off the lakes. Many explored our streams, rivers and did very well. Having these extra options is a great part of Outpost fishing.

Tip of the Year- Everyone should have a depth finder when fishing. A 20' chartreuse monofilament leader attached to your line acts as a simple depth gauge. This line is very easy to see for the fisherman and invisible to the fish.

'Mad Dog' fishermen spend from dawn to dusk on the water. This was such a hot, sunny summer- there were more than a few burnt mad dogs!! The beach bunnies loved it. On sunny days, make sure to fish 30 - 40 feet deep- we use bottom bouncers or weighted live bait rigs. This year, we had a few fishermen visit the Outpost who haven't been up for years- hopefully, this is a sign of an improving economy! It is a crazy world we live in and the Outpost is a great place to escape to!

We are always concerned with conservation for the next generation! Keeping fish in the 13 - 16 inch range and letting smaller and larger ones go is something we feel strongly about and hope you do too!! This is not a rule as set out in our provincial regulations but we have promoted this for years and feel that it has helped our local populations greatly.

This winter, we will be going to sport shows in Novi (Feb 23 - 26), London (Feb 24 - 26), Toronto (Feb 17 - 20) and Grand Rapids (Mar 15 - 18). Also in production is a new brochure- retro style based on an old Outpost brochure from the 1940's. One of the photos in the old brochure, upon close inspection, shows two dogs standing watch over the Lodge. Dogs have always been a big part of our lives and many of our guests as well. Bo would like to say woof to all of the furry friends who have visited over the years. We have many other little projects planned. The winter is sure to fly by as always! A new computer is on the Christmas list for Ann- yea!!! Sending newsletters will become much easier now so look for more.

We will be spending Christmas day with Jamie in the Soo then back home for movies and junk food!! There is very little snow yet and the lakes are completely clear of ice which is unusual for this time in December. Hopefully, that will change in the days around Christmas-nothing like a snowy walk in the colony.

Canada Post has asked that we change our address so please make a note that we can be reached at **8572 Highway 129, Thessalon, Ontario, POB 10**. Guess they want the RR#3 to be removed.

We would like to sincerely thank one and all for your business and friendship over the years. We'll be thinking of you all and wish you happiness, love and peace this holiday season.

Merry Christmas and Happy New Year !

Jim, Ann,  
Jamie, Sean

Bo