



Walter Pius and Frank Vonderheide

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Walter Pius of New Lenox, Illinois and Frank Vonderheide of Effingham, Illinois were nominated by Ken Bernoteit. These two gentlemen were the makers of the P & V lures, which included the famed Redwing Blackbird lures.

The wooden lures were a great musky lure and are eagerly sought by collectors. The Illinois residents are both still living. Their lures were first made in the early 1940s. Walter Pius noticed muskies trying for the flying birds he saw on the lake he was fishing. This led to experimentation to design a lure that looked like the bird and was big enough to use for the muskies in Wisconsin lakes.

Walter worked on perfecting the surface lure, and in 1946, his friend Frank Vonderheide joined him forming a partnership to make the P& V Redwing Blackbird bait. Fixtures and tooling had to be made, and the Muskie version was five inches long and was made first. Shortly after, a bass size was then made.

The baits were first made of wood, and later made of molded plastic. Walter made the spinners for the lures. A gorgeous two-piece cardboard box was designed and approximately 8,000 Muskie lures and 8,000 bass lures were made in Joliet, Illinois. Thousands of lures were sold during the 50's and 60's, but never was really a commercial effort because both men had their regular job besides making lures. Both men are a solid choice for an Honorary Membership.

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