

Written by Tom Presnell  
Photos by Tom Presnell  
exeditor@nybassfed.com

**Event:** Jerry McKinnis speaks at New York Federation banquet on January 29, 2011

**AUBURN, NY** – Newly minted B.A.S.S. partner and esteemed outdoor television producer, Jerry McKinnis, recently attended the New York B.A.S.S. Chapter Federation’s annual awards banquet. In a concerted effort to reach out to B.A.S.S. Federation Nation chapters for their feedback, Jerry accepted the group’s invitation to be their keynote speaker at this year’s event, in which nearly 100 people eagerly attended.

“A little bit of on the job training,” is what McKinnis explained his purpose was for making his way to upstate New York on a snowy weekend. “I needed to know about people’s feelings and concerns and which direction they want to go. Something like the Federation, somebody really can’t tell you what it’s all about. You have to dive in there and find out about it. It’s amazing how much more I know about (the Federation Nation) than I did when I closed the deal,” he added.

Besides his keynote address to the attentive crowd, McKinnis also assisted New York Chapter President, Mike Cusano in handing out awards. Each recipient got their picture taken with McKinnis as they received their award, which made it an even more memorable occasion. “I was extremely impressed with all the different things you folks did,” Jerry said afterwards.

During his speech, McKinnis gave equal time to sharing some amusing stories as he did to the subject of B.A.S.S. He urged everyone to be patient, but assured the members he’s on the right path. “B.A.S.S. is an incredibly strong brand. But you can’t move very fast when you are trying to repair things *and* grow things. But we’re identifying them, we’re going to put good people in the right places and we’re going to get it done,” he said.

In the course of the evening, the chapter held a silent auction for numerous fishing related products and this allowed McKinnis to mingle with the members and meet with committee chairpersons, like the Conservation and Youth directors. This conveys what Jerry stated throughout the evening, that he has an open door policy. "I want you to know that you can come ask me about something," he told several attendees. "Even if I don't have an answer for it, we're going to talk about it. I want everyone to be assured that I'm one of you."

After soaking it all in, McKinnis got the opportunity later that evening to reflect on his interaction with the New York chapter. "The thing that really got reinforced was that the Fed is not all about fishing tournaments. It just isn't. Of course we all like to compete and catch that little fish, but gosh, there's an awful lot more to it."