Arlington Anglers Fishing Club

Volume 6, Issue 1
January 2026

Tight Lines Newsletter

www.arlingtonanglers.com

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

President's Note	1
Jan Speaker Preview	2
Jan Raffle Prizes	3
Steve's Fishing Report	3
Navy Pier Outing Rpt	4
Fish Contest results	5
Donations and Dues	6
Outings and Shows	7
Community Outreach	8
Big Fish of the Year	9
Sponsors/Discounts	10/11
Membership Info	12

Key Dates

Club Meetings
Jan 20
Feb 17

Chicagoland Fishing Show
Jan 22-25

Outings
Jan 31
Fox Chain Ice
Feb 18-20
Sturgeon Bay Ice
Mar 22-25
Wisc River/Dells

President's Note:

As a member of the Arlington Anglers for 17 years, which included 4 years as the Speaker Chairman and President for the last 4, I've met some incredible people through the club. Many have become some of my best friends.

That is one of the reasons I'm so excited about the upcoming season. Getting a chance to reconnect with the returning members and looking forward to meeting others that become new members or speakers I haven't heard before. I marvel at what each has to offer to make my "fishing life" all the better. I hope you realize the same.

Speaking of returning members, it's time to get your 2026 dues paid. And don't forget the liability waiver form that is required this year. Get on that now to help us out.

We have a booth at the Chicagoland Fishing Show. Come out to say Hi.

Our first meeting of the year is around the corner. A great speaker, great raffle prizes, and the awesome camaraderie of your fellow members is the reason to make this one and every other one all year. Get them on your calendar so you never forget!

I hope to see you all return to the fold for 2026. It's sure to be a great year. Don't miss out on the fun. C'mon back or join if you haven't yet!

Chris Popp - President

This Month's Speaker

If you are like most anglers in January you might be sitting on the couch randomly watching fishing videos or waiting for the outdoors expos to begin. But there are things you can do now to prepare for successful fishing all year long.

Chris Taurisano was a highly sought after multi species, multi season guide for many years. Due to his busy schedule he had to use whatever time he had to optimize his planning for each outing well in advance. He will share many tips to help you be ready to go this year.

This Month's Speaker

Arlington Anglers Fishing Club

Visit our website at: www.arlingtonanglers.com

Tuesday, October 20, 2026

Chris Taurisano

Optimizing your Time in the Winter Months

Chris Taurisano has been ice fishing and searching out local winter bites his entire life. He's also guided 300+ days a year for well over a decade…and is very in tune with our local fisheries and the great opportunities that exist around us. Tonight, Chris will talk about optimizing your time in the winter months to stay successful year-round in Northern Illinois. Please join me in welcoming T-Bone back to the club!

Club Meetings are on the 3rd Tuesday of each month Jan.- Nov.

Poplar Creek Banquets **2354 W. Higgins Rd.** **Hoffman Estates, IL 60169**	**Guests Welcome** **Fee $3 members | $8 non** **6:30 PM Start**

January Raffle Grand Prize – Grandt Rod

Our January raffle Grand Prize will be a Grandt All American Pro Series 6'6" Medium Light action spinning rod valued at over $225!

This rod is perfect for a wide range of finesses techniques or casting light baits. Ned rig, drop shot, vertical jigging, and tossing small spinners and paddle tails are all exceptionally effective with this rod.

Grandt Rods has been a longtime sponsor of the Arlington Anglers. Thank you, Jim Grandt!

Five awesome consolation prizes will also be included in the raffle to give you more chances to win.

Tickets are 1 for $5 or 3 for $10.

Be sure to attend the Monday January 20th meeting to get tickets for a chance to win a Grandt Rod!

Steve's Fishing Report

By: Steve Jung

Weather has been warm then cold. With colder weather on the way it should stabilize the ice conditions.

AREA LAKES: Some lakes are good for ice while others are ice free. If you can get out it has been worth it for panfish on jig/plastics and waxies/spikes.

FOX CHAIN: Good ice available even with the recent warm front. Perch, bluegills, crappie on a jig with plastics, spikes, wigglers. Walleye on minnows. A 29"er taken recently.

LAKE MICHIGAN: Lake trout from boats on spoons and jig/plastics in harbors from Milwaukee to Chicago.

LAKEFRONT: Perch - hit or miss from 87th street, Usual baits working.

NORTHERN WISCONSIN: Most lakes reporting 10"-12" of ice. Northern Pike on 5-6" sucker minnows in 8'-12' on weed edges. Walleye mid-afternoon to dusk is best on golden or river shiners in 10'-12'. Perch are good on mud flats in 17'-20' on jigs, spoons with wigglers and red spikes. Crappie are best in the basin in 18'-20' on Kastmasters tipped with spikes or waxies. Bluegills are good in 7'-9' on weedlines with jigs and small plastics or spikes and waxies.

MILWAUKEE LAKEFRONT: If you can get in a boat, launch out of Riverfront or South Shore Park for: Perch on drop shot with a minnow, or Lake Trout on Shiver Minnow Spoons or White flukes on a jig fishing vertically.

QUICK TIP: When storing reels for the Winter, loosen the drag to avoid wear on the washers and gears.

Navy Pier Outing Report By: Dave Rohlwing

After a couple postponements for bad weather, the Navy Pier outing was finally held on December 16th. Due to the changing schedule some members that wanted to go couldn't swing the new date that had to be decided at the last minute. That still left 5 hardy souls to try their luck.

New this year was the addition of several piers that were constructed in the slot north of the main pier allowing much more access to the deeper water. A Winter season pass is required to get on these new piers, which was only $20. Definitely worth it to gain additional fishing spots. Parking was the same.

Conditions were still sketchy as the piers were snow covered and a bit icy. But we were careful and able to fish without too much concern.

Unfortunately, the results were disappointing. Only a few perch were caught by the group. It's always a hit or miss proposition at Navy Pier. Sometimes the perch are there, sometimes not.

Regardless, all that attended had a good time being out together. Just getting off the couch and experiencing the crisp fresh air, in an incredible setting, is worth the trek downtown.

2025 Big Fish Contest Winners

Our yearlong Big Fish Contest was hotly contested with all of the categories being won with outstanding fish. There were also a large number of 2nd place entries that really pushed the leaders making it a razor close contest.

Following is the list of category winners, the winning fish length, and the date of the catch. All received a certificate and Cabelas gift card.

Can 2026 live up to these impressive results?

Fish Species	Winner	Length (In.)	Date
Crappie	Quinn McCoy	14-3/4	10/17/25
Perch	Quinn McCoy	15-3/4	1/3/25
Sunfish/Bluegill	Kevin Ruetsche	11	10/8/25
White Bass	Bob Diebold	16-3/4	5/14/25
Largemouth Bass	Dan Draz	23-1/2	2/26/25
Smallmouth Bass	Dave McCoy	22-1/4	5/20/25
Walleye	Dan Blaszinski	30-1/4	11/6/25
Northern Pike	Quinn McCoy	44-3/4	8/12/25
Muskie	Rob Romolo	42	8/19/25
Catfish	Dave Beyer	34	10/25/25
Carp	Ron Cappello	37	4/26/25
Sauger	Quinn McCoy	20-3/4	10/31/25
Lake Salmon	Chris Popp	35	10/2/25
Lake Trout	Quinn McCoy	37-1/2	11/13/25
Inland Trout	John Gacki	26	9/22/25
Other (Sturgeon)	Mike Bakos	67	7/16/25

Tackle Donations Needed

A significant contribution to our operating funds is the proceeds from our sales at the Rolling Meadows Fishing Flea market, which is one of the largest such events held in the Chicago area. This year it will be held on March 7 at Rolling Meadow H.S.

New this year, all sales will be directed to our philanthropic budget, an initiative we began at the end of 2025.

We rely on donations from existing or previous club members for the tackle and gear we sell at the flea market. So, your assistance is needed for this year's event to be a success.

Everyone has old tackle that will never again see the light of day. While re-organizing this winter please set aside 2 or 3 items for donation to our cause.

Items most needed are lures, jigs and terminal tackle. Tackle bags, working reels, decent rods, and various outdoor gear is also good. Please be generous giving up the things you'll no longer use. It's a big help!

We will have a collection box for misc items and a table for larger items at the back of the room at both the Jan and Feb meetings. Please contribute what you can.

2026 Dues Are Now Being Collected

The beginning of every new season brings a great sense of anticipation along with some trepidation. Have we done enough to make membership a positive experience, motivating members to return and others to join? We think so and work hard to make ours is the best club around. We hope you agree.

We are happy to announce that, in spite of inflation, we are holding the family membership to $40. This is possible because our growing membership helps spread the costs of running the club among more members.

This year looks to be another great one. With outstanding speakers, more outings, great raffle prizes, and networking opportunities, you won't want to miss out. Even if you weren't very active in 2025, it's still a bargain to stay involved.

Please get your dues in early, along with your signed waiver form, which is required for membership. Everyone paid by the February meeting will be entered to win one of 25 subscriptions to the Midwest Outdoors Magazine we will raffle off in early March.

2026 Fishing Show Season Gets Underway

When it's too uncomfortably cold to hit the open water or there isn't safe ice to try the hard water fishery, what do you do?

Go to fishing club meetings and visit fishing shows to get your fix! Luckily there is no shortage of fishing and outdoors shows of various kinds to fill a number of winter weekends.

There are general industry shows, like the Chicagoland Fishing Show and the Tinley Park Fishing Show for example, that give you a chance to see what's new or trending in the fishing world and a chance to pick up deals on new tackle. There are species shows like the Muskie Expo. And there are destination shows like All Canada.

But a favorite of many are the fishing flea markets and swap meets where you can find tackle to fill your box for pennies on the dollar, or just have fun scrounging in the aisles.

A list of local options is shown below. These are also posted in the Members Only section of our website. Check it out. Search the web for more details on each event.

The Arlington Anglers will have a booth at the Chicagoland Show to promote the club. Stop by to say hi. We will also have a booth at the RM Fishing Flea Market to generate extra funds for our operations. Stop in and buy something to help out. Bottom line - Get out to see a show!

CHICAGOLAND FISHING EXPO

2026 Fishing Shows, Flea Markets, & Events

Fishing Shows

Jan 16-18	Muskie Expo	Kane Co. Fairground
Jan 22-25	Chicagoland Fishing Show	Schaumburg Conv. Ctr.
Jan 29-Feb 1	All Canada Show	Kane Co. Fairground
Feb 13-15	Tinley Park Fishing Show	Tinley Park Convention Ctr.
Feb 20-22	Rockford Boat, Vac, Fishing Show	Indoor Sports Ctr. Loves Park
Feb 27-Mar 1	Wisconsin Fishing Expo	Alliant Energy Ctr. Madison
Mar 6-8	Milwaukee Journal Sports Show	State Fair Park West Allis

Fishing Equipment Flea Markets

Jan 17	Musky Swap Meet (QCHH)	St. Charles Moose Lodge
Feb 7	Midwest Musky Club Flea Mkt	Alsip – Vlg. Sportsman's Club
Mar 7	Fish & Hook Show	Lockport VFW
Mar 7	R. M. Fishing Flea Market	Rolling Meadows HS
Mar 14	Salmon Unlimited Swap Meet	Schlader Rec Ctr Winthrop Harbor
Mar 15	QCHH Flea market	Yorkville American Legion
Mar 15	Fishing Garage Sale	Rockford – Hoffman House
Mar 21	Chain O Lakes Fishing Flea Mkt	Fox Lake American Legion
Mar 21	Riverside FC Swap Meet	Berwyn Moose Lodge
tbd	So. Side Muskie Hawks	Alsip – Vlg. Sportsman's Club

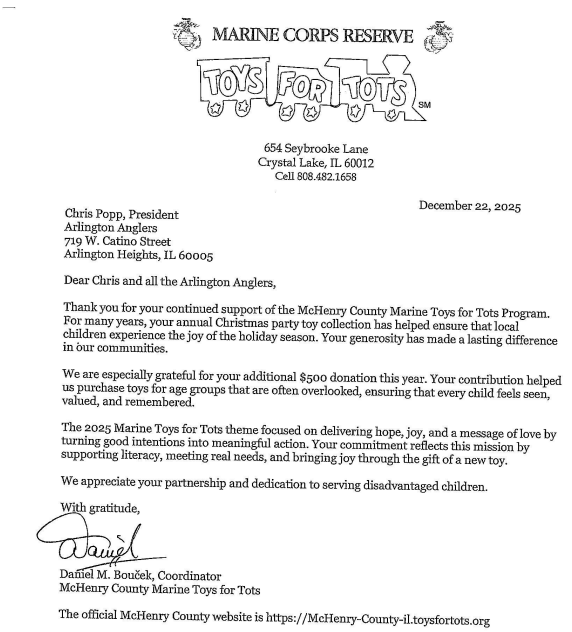
Fishing Association Events

Feb 21	DRIFT Fly Fishing Auction	Villa Park VFW
Feb 28	IL. Smallmouth Alliance Blowout	Elmhurst American Legion

Community Outreach – Toys for Tots

As mentioned last month, in addition to the almost 100 toys we donated to Toys for Tots, we wrote a check for $500 to the McHenry County chapter to help them purchase toys for those age groups that were under represented. As part of our philanthropic initiative, we felt it was especially appropriate to help families in these difficult times that many are experiencing.

We received a very nice letter of gratefulness and appreciation from the organization for our generosity.



MARINE CORPS RESERVE

TOYS FOR TOTS SM

654 Seybrooke Lane
Crystal Lake, IL 60012
Cell 808.482.1658

December 22, 2025

Chris Popp, President
Arlington Anglers
719 W. Catino Street
Arlington Heights, IL 60005

Dear Chris and all the Arlington Anglers,

Thank you for your continued support of the McHenry County Marine Toys for Tots Program. For many years, your annual Christmas party toy collection has helped ensure that local children experience the joy of the holiday season. Your generosity has made a lasting difference in our communities.

We are especially grateful for your additional $500 donation this year. Your contribution helped us purchase toys for age groups that are often overlooked, ensuring that every child feels seen, valued, and remembered.

The 2025 Marine Toys for Tots theme focused on delivering hope, joy, and a message of love by turning good intentions into meaningful action. Your commitment reflects this mission by supporting literacy, meeting real needs, and bringing joy through the gift of a new toy.

We appreciate your partnership and dedication to serving disadvantaged children.

With gratitude,

Daniel M. Bouček, Coordinator
McHenry County Marine Toys for Tots

The official McHenry County website is https://McHenry-County-il.toysfortots.org

Community Outreach – No Limits Fishing

Another recipient of our philanthropic initiative in December of 2025 was Chicago No Limits Fishing. This is a program within the Chicago Adaptive Sport umbrella that was founded and is operated by individuals with disabilities who have experience and passion for providing recreational fishing opportunities on Lake Michigan and the Chicago River for other disabled individuals regardless of age, race, gender or disability.

A couple of our members have already been assisting as crew on their twice weekly excursions. To help with their fundraiser to acquire a new, more appropriate pontoon boat, we wrote a check for $500 to contribute towards that endeavor. Co-Director Ken Carwell is seen here accepting our donation from President Chris Popp.

ARLINGTON ANGLERS
719 W CATINO ST.
ARLINGTON HEIGHTS, IL 60005

1093

22 DEC 25

PAY TO THE ORDER OF CHICAGO NO LIMITS FISHING ORG $ 500.00

Five Hundred & 00/100 DOLLARS

CHASE

MEMO 2025 DONATION

Big Fish of 2025

As can be seen in the Big Fish Contest results shown on page 5, the club caught a lot of trophies this year. 15+" perch, 21+"sauger, 23+" largemouth, and a 22+" smallie. All are crazy good for the species!

But for true behemoths these 4 examples really put the bend on the rod for the lucky anglers. Can they be topped in 2026?

Big Fish of the Year goes to Mike Bakos for his 67" Lake Sturgeon!

Mike was on his annual trip to Lake St. Clair in Michigan in search of these dinosaurs. He has caught monsters before but the size of this one was a real surprise.

Congrats Mike!

Honorable Mention #1

First Honorable Mention goes to Ron Cappello for his 37" Big Mouth Buffalo. It's shocking to catch a beast like this, especially when fishing for 10" crappies during our Lake Shelbyville April outing.

Honorable Mention #2

Second Honorable Mention goes to Quinn McCoy for this 44-3/4" Northern Pike. It's been a few years since we've seen a "gator" this size get entered in the BF contest. Quinn got this one from Lac Seul Ontario in August.

Honorable Mention #3

Third Honorable Mention goes to Dan Blaszinski. It's tough to leave a 30-1/4" walleye off of any list of big fish. This one was a bonus catch in November during a trip to Green Bay's Ellison Bay for smallmouth bass..

Sponsor Page - Please support those that support us

poplarcreekbowl.com

www.grandtrods.com

poplarcreekbowl.com

diawa.com

Lee's Bait & Tackle
1010 E. Higgins Rd.
Elk Grove Village,IL. 60007
847-593-6424

Lee's Bait & Tackle
1400 W.Army Trail Rd.
Carol Stream, IL.60188
630-830-5337

www.leesglobaltackle.com

www.stcroixrods.com

Haymes Fishing

Facebook: Haymes Fishing

trollingmotorrepairservice.com

Swimbait.com

Member Discounts

Being a member of the Arlington Anglers comes with many benefits. Following is a list of partners that offer discounts to our members with their membership card or online code. Be aware, some manufacturers do not allow discounts by their dealers. Also, discount percentages could change at any time, at our partner's discretion. See our website Members Only section for the discounts that apply.

Grandt Rods FOLLOW THE LEADER

Lee's Global Tackle

TMR Trolling Motor Repair Plus

Fish Tech "Built for Fishermen!"

Big Hammer

BSC

M&G Propeller

Live Bait Fishing Tackle

Haymes Fishing

Catch Co

Chicago Fishing School It's Catching!

Blind Cup Baits

Renew Your Membership or Join The Club

Yearly dues are the financial life-blood of our club. They pay our speakers, insurance, shows, pizza party, and other operating expenses. Presently, our annual family membership is $40.00. Please renew or join today!

We've now added Zelle quick pay to our options: (arlangfc19@gmail.com). So, 3 ways to pay: (1)Zelle, (2)at a meeting, or (3)check by mail. New members - use the form below or visit our "Join Our Club" web page.

Bring checks made out to "Arlington Anglers" to a meeting or mail to:

Arlington Anglers
C/O Rich Sutton
719 W. Catino St.
Arlington Hts., IL 60005

We're on the Web!

www.arlingtonanglers.com

or

QR Code (to the right)

or

FACEBOOK at: Arlington Anglers

Renewing members need only provide Date and Name.

Fill out completely and mail with your check.

Today's Date: ___/___/____

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____State: __ Zip: _____

Home Phone: _____ Cell: _____

Date of Birth: ___/___/____

Email Address: _____