

Tight Lines Newsletter

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President's Note:

The open water fishing season is shifting into high gear. I hope you've been getting out to take advantage. I've been to the Wisconsin River where I boated the "pretty" sauger at right (they never get enough love), caught rainbows on the opening day of Illinois catchable trout, and got some monster pre-spawn walleyes on the Fox River in DePere. It's too bad I haven't found time to hit local waters which are warming fast and getting productive. I have 3 more travel trips planned in April and May, so lots of fishing ahead for me.

I was recently informed by our treasurer that we've exceeded 130 members for 2026! That likely makes us the biggest multi-species fishing club in the Chicagoland area. With all we have going on it's no wonder so many want to be part of it.

Lots of reports in this issue. Be sure to take 10 minutes and read through them all. Be informed on what we do!

This Month's Speaker

Spring is the season for love. Ok, fish don't feel that emotion, but they are driven to begin the courting process as temperatures rise and their metabolisms begin to increase. Now is the best time to find concentrated populations of fish as they move shallow.

Smallmouth bass are the favorite of many. Normally inhabiting deeper water during most of the year, they are more accessible and perhaps more predictable during the pre-spawn period. Todd Huynh will be sharing his tactics for taking advantage of this timeframe.

www.arlingtonanglers.com



We have 6 more new member profiles in this issue. Check 'em out. They want to know you and this is your first step in getting to know them. Introduce yourself and welcome them when you see them.

Our April meeting promises to be another big one, with a packed agenda. Attendance has been huge so get there early to find the best seat and have time to chat with other members. That can often be the best part. Don't miss this one!

Chris Popp - President

Key Dates

Club Meetings
Apr 21
May 19

Outings
Apr 23-25
Lake Shelbyville

May 13-15
Lake Wisconsin

Jun 18
Lake Delavan

Jun 23-26
Big Green Lake

This Month's Speaker

Arlington Anglers Fishing Club



Visit our website at: www.arlingtonanglers.com

Tuesday, April 21, 2026

Todd Huynh

Targeting Trophy Pre-Spawn Smallmouth



Todd Huynh has been focused on chasing Great Lakes smallies for the past 8 years. As a pro staffer for St. Croix and Yamamoto Baits, as well as being on the national team for Ranger & Nitro boats, Todd is excited to share his favorite tactics in targeting pre-spawn Sturgeon Bay SMB. Please help me in welcome Todd 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

April Raffle Grand Prize – St Croix/Diawa Combo



Our April raffle Grand Prize will be a St. Croix Triumph/Diawa Regal spinning combo valued at over \$215!



The Triumph is 6'6" with a Lite power rating & fast action, perfect for throwing small baits to crappie, bluegill and bass, or vertical jigging for eater walleye. The Regal LT2500-XH has six bearings for smooth action.

Five awesome consolation prizes (plus 3 bonus prizes!) worth another \$310 will also be included in the raffle for even more chances to win big. \$525 total raffle value!

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

Be sure to attend the Tuesday April 21st meeting to get your tickets for a chance to win one of these outstanding prizes.!

Steve's Fishing Report By: Steve Jung

High winds, rain, and fluctuating air temps have created an interesting spring for fishing. Remember, there is no such thing as bad weather, just bad gear. Fish are being caught by many an angler on a variety of baits.



AREA LAKES: Bluegill and Crappie are doing very good. Minnows, spikes under a float along with small plastics. You may have to work to find them, but once you do, it is game on. Largemouth on crankbaits, chatter baits, and a variety of plastics.

FOX CHAIN: Walleye, stripers, crappie, and bluegills were doing well. High water due to continued rain has created a no wake due to high water. No recreational boating from the Stratton Dam to Millington-Bridge Street Bridge. Caution!

CHICAGO LAKEFRONT: Browns and Coho on spoons, crankbaits, and jig/plastics. Smallmouth showing in good numbers on crankbaits, spinners, and plastics.

BIG POND/CHICAGO: Coho and Browns on spoons. Water is muddy. Pay attention to the wind.

BIG POND/MILWAUKEE: Coho and Browns on spoons. Water is muddy. Pay attention to the wind.

COOLING LAKES: LaSalle, Heidecke, and Braidwood all doing well for catfish, drum, large and smallmouth. Crankbaits, blades, and plastics all working well.

DELAVAN LAKE: Bluegill and crappie on live bait with a small hook/jig under a float.

Lastly, the new fishing license for the Illinois season was 4/1. Stay compliant.

Last Month's Speaker Tips: By: Steve Jung



Jim Shell started by sharing the concepts behind the theory of Buck Perry's Structure Fishing ideology. For this presentation he focused on what we can control, not about weather conditions, fish activity, or water conditions, which are also very important. This was about action, color, size, depth, and speed. Also, what lures an angler can pick from his arsenal. He made clear this was not just about the spoonplug which Buck used to locate and catch fish.

Preferred action in shallow water is a tight wobble, with a wider wobble in deeper water. And don't be afraid to go big. Also, depth is money and the primary home of most fish.

Speed control is critical. Vary speed until you find out what the fish best react to. A good starting point is slower in colder water and faster in warmer water, but that can change. Buck touts: "All fishing successes and failures, must be answered in terms of depth and speed control."



A basic starting point is color. On clear skies white or silver/chrome are best. On cloudy days black or copper are better. Neutral colors may include chartreuse and yellow. However, Jim believes color makes fishing fun but has no real bearing on success. If you have a color you favor, stick with it if it gives you confidence.

In conclusion, check different depths and vary the speed of your trolling or casting retrieves. The fish will tell how they want the bait presented. Conditions will also vary throughout the day, so keep experimenting until you find the right combination. Don't get stuck on doing one thing.

March Meeting Raffle Winners

Our March raffle grand prize was a St. Croix Premier Series 6'6" med light, fast action rod and Okuma Inspira reel spin combo valued at \$265! The thrilled winner was Frank Mucci pictured at left, on the right, with President Chris Popp.

(GripMaster Jaws and Line Cutterz braid cutter), Kristie Powell (13 Fishing 6'6" ML spin combo), and Al Matz (Frabill minnow bucket with aerator).



Six consolation prizes worth an additional \$275 were also handed out. Winners, in order at right, were: Dave Rohlwing (Plano 3600 tackle bag), Dave Beyer (Mystery Mix jig pack), double winner Eyrlle Hilton

There were another 20 door prize winners among the 74 attendees!



Wisconsin River Outing Report By: Chris Popp



On March 22-25 we took our annual trip to the Wisconsin River near Wisconsin Dells. 18 members filled 4 cabins and 7 boats hoping for some early season walleyes and sauger, or at least something that wanted to bite.

This has never really been a numbers game, more a chance to shake off Winter's rust and get some time on the water, as well as spend quality time with other members. For the captains it was also a time to test their rigs to be sure they were ready for the year.

River fishing is a different animal and some from the group struggled to get the hang of it. Changing flow rates each day didn't help. But the majority got at least a few fish, with some doing fairly decent. Size surprises made it interesting.

Jig and minnow bounced along current seams, or slowly dragged or hopped through eddies, was the main ticket for success.

We once again stayed at the beautiful Rivers Edge Resort.

The stunning main cabin #27 was headquarters with the members gathering there before and after dinners to discuss the day's results and find out more about each other.

We went to the resort restaurant each night as a group for good food and great conversation. Several visited it each morning for a hearty breakfast before launching to allow the chilly air temps to rise a bit.

New this year, we were able to mix and match captains and co-anglers so everybody was able to fish with different people each day for more chances to interact. In spite of the relatively slow action all enjoyed the camaraderie and the opportunity to get on open water again.



Riverside FC Flea Market Report By: Chris Popp

Due to the generosity of our members, through the donation of their unused fishing gear, we had excess inventory, even after record sales at the Rolling Meadows Fishing Flea Market reported on last month. Rather than store it for another year we booked two tables at the Riverside FC's "Huge Tackle Sale" in Berwyn on March 21.

The last minute decision, and space availability, was only possible because there were 3 fishing swap meets on the same day. A bad planning error among the organizers! While it likely had minimal effect on local attendance the regular area vendors had to choose which one to sell at. That left space open for us.



While the Riverside show is growing, it's still around half the size of Rolling Meadows, with a little more than a third the traffic. So, for us, it may not be worth the trouble to organize the donations by itself. But as a second show it worked out great. Statistically, we actually had higher sales per attendee. And we sold a different mix of product, moving some things that didn't get interest at RM. Therefore, all good!

A special thanks goes to Dan Draz for helping me man the tables. And an extra special thanks to all those members that donated gear for the cause. Several were extra generous making this year's effort far exceed our expectations.

With all proceeds going to our philanthropy initiatives, we may be able to expand the budget we originally set. That'd be awesome!



Kayak Klub Fishing Report By: Peter Laugalis



On Thursday April 9 we kicked off our inaugural kayak fishing outing of 2026 on Busse Lake's south pool. Six members attended the outing, three of which were experienced kayak fisherman, two were savvy anglers but new to kayaking, and then there was me (who has lots of kayak experience but lots to learn about fishing – Haha!).

The weather was pleasant but a north wind apparently put off the

fish as they were reluctant to cooperate by taking our offerings.

After a few hours on the water we gladly migrated down the street to the Rose Garden Café for a post excursion lunch. Everyone had success there!

In spite of the meager creel count we all had a great time this first try and look forward to the many other outings planned for the year.



Philanthropy & Community Outreach Report

The Arlington Anglers have always engaged in community outreach, volunteering for a variety of events targeting special needs groups, youth education, and general support for the Cook County Forest Preserve District activities.

Starting last year, as our revenue made it possible, we decided to establish a philanthropy element to our mission. We were able to make significant financial contributions to Toys for Tots and Chicago No Limits Fishing. This year we are looking to expand our program with a larger budget.

Advancing fishing opportunities and education for those less fortunate is our goal. While our resources are still limited, we believe every little bit we can provide should be helpful.

We've begun to create a set of guidelines for soliciting and selecting groups that can use our financial support. Finding appropriate groups to contribute to is the next challenge.

If you know of a youth group, kids or adult special needs programs, or others that promote fishing, contact President Chris Popp or Coordinator Dan Draz for consideration.



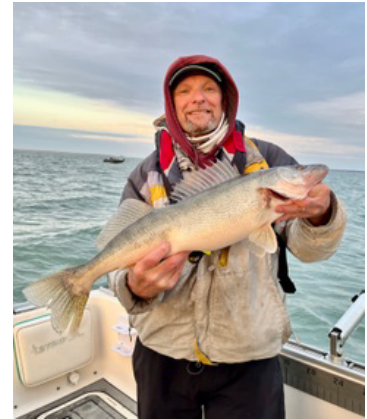
Big Fish of the Month



Big Fish of the Month goes to Bert Saxon for this 28-1/2 inch walleye. Bert was fishing the Fox River in DePere Wisconsin, hoping to get some pre-spawn big mamas. Several large ones came to hand using a hair jig with stinger hook. This was the longest, although he had a shorter, heavier one that went 9-1/2 pounds!

Way to grind, Bert.

First Honorable Mention



First Honorable mention goes to Mike Kic for this 28 inch walleye. Normally we keep to three different species on this page, but who could leave off a 28 "eye". Mike was fishing on Lake Erie when this topped a 26+ he caught the day before.

Kid Fish of the Month



Kid Fish of the Month goes to 4 month old, Ole, grandson of member and Kayak Coordinator Peter Laugalis, for this nice bass.

Ok, some bad photo magic, but Peter can dream of the day Ole gets his first one.

Please share your passion for fishing with a child. Whether it's a relative, a friend, or a neighbor, submit a picture when you do. There is a special joy in seeing their smiling face holding their "trophy".

Second Honorable Mention



Second Honorable Mention goes to Frank Mucci for this hawg smallmouth he caught during our Wisconsin river outing. It was easily his PB. Unfortunately, he didn't get the precise dimensions as it flipped out of his grasp as he was pulling it out of the net to measure it. Bummer!

Getting to Know Some New 2026 Members



Joe Polasek lives in Woodridge with his wife. They have four daughters.

Joe is an active middle school teacher and coach at a suburban junior high.

Joe has a 1998 Smokercraft 161 Pro Mag with a 70 HP motor that he keeps trailered in the garage all year around. He also has two kayaks.

Joe likes to fish for anything and everything. He considers the Fox Chain and the Des Plaines River his home waters.

Joe joined the club for adventure and fulfillment. Although difficult to make the monthly meeting due to his work schedule he is very interested in the club outings and kayak fishing group.



Bob Siarny lives in Hoffman Estates with his wife.

Bob is retired from a career as a professional painter.

Bob has a 16' Alumacraft with a 60 HP motor that he can trailer around.

Bob has fished for everything but he likes to focus more on crappie and walleye.

Bob joined the club because he recently retired and is looking to meet others anglers. Although he's fished for a long time he's hoping to pick up some extra tips from our meeting speakers.



Charles Hollins and his wife Wakelaah hail from Evanston. They have 4 kids.

Charles is still working as a registered nurse.

Charles has a 10' inflatable raft with a trolling motor he uses on local ponds and lakes. He just picked up a kayak to be able to explore even more areas..

Charles mostly fishes for panfish. Skokie Lagoons is a favorite destination. He would like to learn to catch walleye.

Charles met us at the Chicagoland Fishing Show and thought we were a friendly bunch. He is looking to meet other anglers to share information and is hoping to learn some new techniques.

More 2026 New Member Profiles



Tim Cochrane lives in Saint Charles with his wife. They have two sons.

Tim is retired from a long career in Finance.

Tim has a Lund 1775 Impact XS with a 115 HP Merc. He trailers it to be ready for travel.

Tim is a mixed species fisherman but mostly chases walleye and bass. But he's had some fun with northern pike.

Tim joined the club to meet new people to fish with.



Greg Kujawinski, lives in Schaumburg where he spends time with a longtime girlfriend.

Greg is retired from a career in which he sold computer communications equipment.

Greg sold his 20' walleye boat a couple years ago, which he now regrets. So, he's now boatless.

Greg primarily likes to fish for walleye. When he had his boat he spent some time chasing salmon on Lake Michigan. And he also hunts for crappie now and then.

Greg's past fishing buddies all moved so he joined the club to meet some new people and to see what other opportunities there are to go fishing.



Jim Arnott lives in Hoffman Estates with his wife, Cass. They have 3 grown children and 4 grandkids.

Jim is retired from a career in residential construction and estimating.

Jim does not have a boat but recently purchased a kayak to use on our club outings.

Jim's favorite species to chase is smallmouth bass. However, he's willing to go after whatever species of the day is biting.

Jim joined the club to see what it is all about. He mostly fished the Illinois Fox River previously and is looking forward to finding new places to fish from other members.

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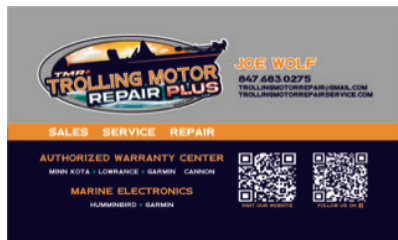
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Member Discounts

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.



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
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QR Code (to the right)
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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: _____
