

## Spring Smallies in the Northwoods

Tired of catching spring walleyes? Arms ache from casting for muskies? Try fishing for smallmouth bass when you are up north this spring. Smallie fishing has many advantages: they maybe more plentiful than walleyes or muskies, they are usually more cooperative at biting, there is no better fighting fish for their size, Northwoods local don't appreciate them so you often have a lake to yourself, they can be trophy sized fish, and basically they are fun to catch.

Nate Bergman introduced the club to Northwoods smallmouth bass fishing at the April meeting. Nate is president of the Rock Valley Anglers club. He is a multispecies angler but more and more is getting "tilted" to fishing smallmouth bass in Wisconsin's Northwoods.

Nate broke down spring smallmouth fishing into three periods: prespawn, spawn, and post-spawn. There are many similarities between periods but some important differences. He considers water temperature to be the most important factor in separating the periods. Water temperatures for prespawn are about 40-58 degrees, spawn from about 58-70 degrees, and post spawn from 70-80 degrees. Over 80 degrees you are on your own.

Places to look for prespawn fish are sand flats, shoreline points, mid-lake rocks, shallow wood laydowns, rocky or windblown shores-places near where fish will spawn. He recommends many of the same areas to look for spawning fish but adds first and secondary breaks, fish cribs, and piers. For post-spawn fish deep sand grass, reed beds, and weed lines are places to try. Sometimes after spawning the fish will suspend over open water. Sounds to me you could look for them about anywhere except shallow, muddy areas.

Fishing for prespawn fish Nate recommends using suspending jerkbaits, deep diving shad baits, lipless crankbaits, swim jigs, swim grubs, spinner baits, hair jigs, and blade baits. Remember that fish are cold blooded and don't react quickly in cold water. The cadence is to jerk the bait and wait for 10-15 seconds for a second jerk. As the water warms crayfish imitations, creature baits, tube jigs, wacky worms, drop shot rigs, swim jigs, and Neiko rigs are added to the arsenal. Add Carolina rigged worms and top water lures to the post spawn arsenal. Again, I don't know how much this narrows down the choices of what to take, but remember smallmouths are curious and likely to bite on just about anything. A specific rigging options for using crayfish



imitation (usually 3-inch, recommends Zoom Speed Craws) - rig them Texas style on a 1/0 offset worm hook and use tungsten bullet weights. For dropshot rigs Nate recommends putting the hook about 18-inches above the sinker for casting but only about 6-inches if fishing vertically. A Neiko rig is a Senko style worm hooked wacky style with a weight in one end so the worm tail rises. You can buy weight that push into the end of the worm or use a small nail (finishing nails with ribs work well). Three of Nate's go to lures are a cuttail worm hooked weedless and weightless, A fat IKA-Yamamoto weightless tube, and if things get really tough a live nightcrawler or leech on a drop shot rig. During the post spawn smallmouth in shallow water will be feeding on crayfish while those in deep water will target baitfish.

Both spinning and casting gear work for catching smallmouth. The preference seems to be geographical. Northerners seem to prefer spinning gear and southerners prefer casting gear. For rigging use about 6-foot of 6-10 pound fluorocarbon leader attached ahead of 10-20 pound braided line. Much the same

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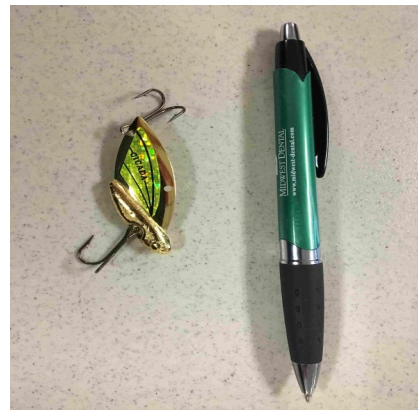
**Yahara Fishing Club**

rigging is recommended for casting gear but you may want to use a heavier weight line. Nate likes Hi-Vis Suffix 832 braided line because you can see slight line twitches better. If you are a walleye angler you probably have enough rods and reels. Nate likes 6.5-7.5 foot rods. Smallmouth gear and walleye gear are interchangeable and you might pick up a walleye or even a musky when smallmouth fishing.

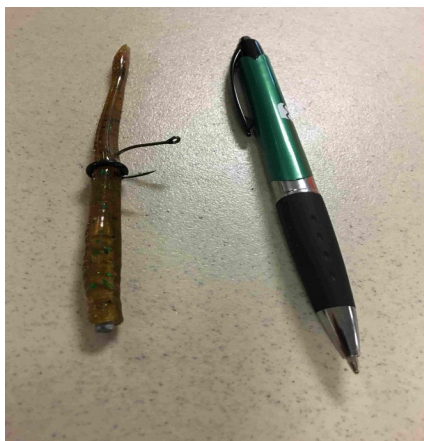
Where to fish? Before heading north Nate recommends picking a half-dozen lakes varying in size, depth, and water clarity to try. Clear lakes generally have cooler water than stained lakes. Smallmouths are sight feeder so they

see better in clear lakes and for trophy fish look for large, clear, lakes. When fishing clear lakes use natural colored lures where as "hotter" colored lures work better in stained lakes. Some lakes specifically recommended by Nate are: Razorback, Plum, Blue, Starr, Escanaba, Trout, Squirrel, and the Gile Flowage in the Oneida, Vilas, and Iron Counties.

Finally to catch fish and to work down all the options you have to be out there fishing. Go with your usually



Cicada , "Zip" type lure

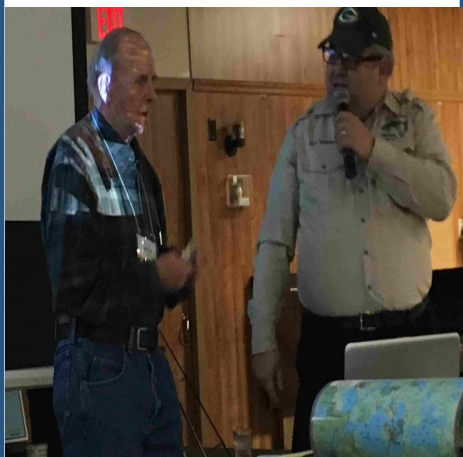


Neiko rig because there is a weight in one end of the worm so the worm hangs down at one end rather than laying horizontal.

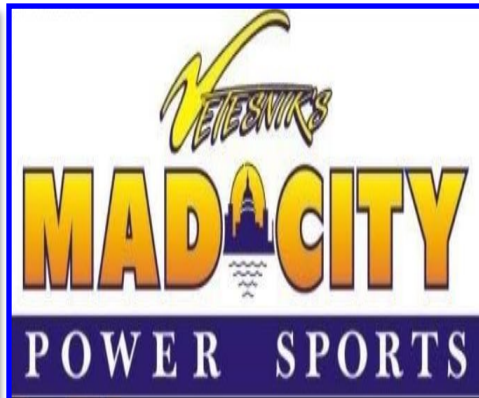
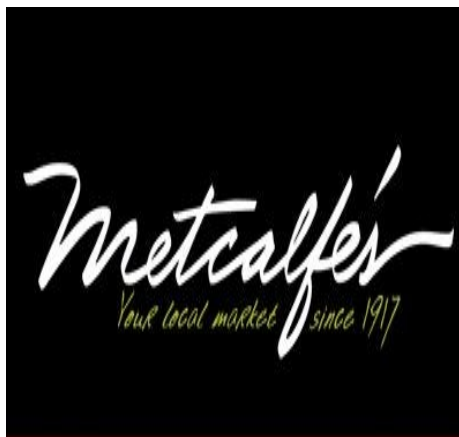


Paddle Tail Plastic On Magic Minnow Jig

**Jack Hurst top ticket seller**



Jack Hurst donates his cash prize for selling the most raffle tickets back to the club. Thank you again Jack!



# Notes From President Gard

Yahara Fishing Club

I have a few more-or-less random thoughts this month, so you readers of the Club's monthly newsletter won't have to wade through one of my narratives.

I stopped at Dorn's and got my 2018-2019 Wisconsin fishing license last Friday. \$7.00 for another "senior" license. What a fantastic deal! Almost worth getting past age 65.

Speaking of Dorn's, thanks to the many club members who cooked and sold hot dogs (and other items) at the Dorn's Fishing Extravaganza last month. It's just a shame the weather was so poor. Whether we made much money or not, the event gave the Club some very favorable exposure in the local fishing community.

I'm getting my boat out of storage the first Sunday of May, and with a little set-up time, it will be ready to go. One bit of set-up is the reinstallation of the boat batteries after a winter in the garage. If you haven't yet discovered float chargers for maintaining your batteries over the cold months, come see me. My batteries are always ready to go in the spring, and the batteries seem to have much longer lives when maintained over the winter on these inexpensive devices.

All of those little walleyes planted in Lake Mendota awhile back have been growing up over the past couple of years, and I for one am looking forward to hooking some legal-sized fish this coming summer.

In conjunction with the April membership meeting, we had the first couple of mini-seminars for members (knot tying, and fishing boat electronics). The seminars were well-attended and apparently very successful, and I hope we can continue to offer these programs to our membership.

YFC's Kids' Fishing Day event is coming up in just a few weeks (June 2<sup>nd</sup>, at Warner Park). We will need plenty of Club volunteers to set up the fishing rods to be given to the kids, and to help the kids and their families at water's edge so that plenty of the kids can have the experience of catching fish. It's a great way for Club members, new and old, to be involved in one of the Club's most important community activities.

The first of our summer On-The-Water meetings will take place at the Warner Park boat landing on June 13<sup>th</sup>. The event and food will be coordinated by John Pribek. Thank you John! We want lots of members to attend, eat, and go fishing, and we particularly need members who can bring their boats so that everyone participating can get out on the water after a short business meeting and dinner. And, we need coordinators for the July and August meetings! These events do not materialize out of the firmament, but instead take a bit of time and effort to arrange for the attendance of members with boats, and to plan and procure the food. So, volunteer to be a coordinator, and be an active participant in creating the sort of offerings which our Club strives to give to our members.

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Pump Motors  
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◆ Mike Harder ◆

The advertisement features a dark background with a yellow lightning bolt graphic and a car battery image.

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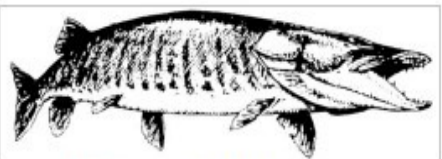
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The advertisement has a wood-grain background and features the Miller's logo and store names.



**Beavertail Lures** ©  
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The advertisement features a detailed illustration of a beavertail lure.

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The advertisement is framed and includes contact information for two locations.



**Flambeau Outdoor Store**  
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The advertisement shows various outdoor gear and features the Flambeau logo.

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and used boating needs!**

The advertisement features a blue and white color scheme with a boat silhouette.

# 2018 YFC Outings

Yahara Fishing Club

## OPENING WEEKEND HAS ARRIVED!!

**Milwaukee Harbor May 5th:** Spend opening day fishing for browns, coho, steelhead and lake trout from your small boat. Contact Phil James or myself immediately if you want to go.

**Lake Waubesa May 5<sup>th</sup> or mid-week May 7-11:** Stay local and chase panfish, walleyes and more with club members. Sign-up at our meeting, through email or ask others to do with you through our Facebook page.

**Lake WI panfish outing May 12<sup>th</sup> and the week of May 7-11<sup>th</sup>:** The lake and flow are very high right now but again as this slows down over the next week the bite should be going strong. Bluegills, crappies and more.

**Clement's Fishing Barge on the Mississippi:** The snow has been melting up north and the river is extremely high right now and the barge is closed until May 5<sup>th</sup>. After this though the fishing should get hot. This is a fun trip to Genoa with a good chance at hitting jumbo perch, walleyes, sauger and who knows what else on the mighty river! Sign-up and have lots of fun without a boat on the barge! For more information check out this link: <https://www.clementsffishing.com/faq.asp>

**Big Bay de Noc May 25-28<sup>th</sup> or mid week:** This is an awesome smallmouth outing in the UP. Small boats can handle this trip easily as you'll be catching smallies in 3-5 feet of water in less and always have opportunities to get out of wind as needed fishing in smaller bays. Trips will be Memorial weekend for sure but times also available the weeks before and after during the week or on the weekend. This is one of our most popular trips, is very cheap with great friendly accommodations in Nahma, MI.

**Oconto, Peshtigo, Menominee River walleye outing May 5<sup>th</sup>-19<sup>th</sup>:** The walleye run is basically over on the Fox river in Depere but further up the run is going strong. Now is the time to park in front of the rivers and follow the shorelines out from them on Green Bay. This bite will last a few weeks and is your chance to catch a trophy walleye or just your 5 fish limit. Kalin's grubs, Rapala Rippin Raps, Rapala Jigging Raps and Moonshine Lures Shiver Minnows are a fun great way to catch them. If you're interested let me know.

**Lake MI charter fishing outing in Port Washington July/August:** Currently we have 12 members signed up for 2 coho charters in June. Looking to chase down the mighty king salmon? We have members wanting to go and you can go with them in July or August. This is a well guided charter with club member and charter Captain John Iverson. We need to book a trip fast as spots are filling up. Trips are available during the week and weekends. Let me know if you're interested. Up to 6 people on each trip are possible with many hour options. Check out [www.iversonsportfishing.com](http://www.iversonsportfishing.com) for more information.

**Eagle Lake Ontario Canada:** We have 3 great resorts to choose from at great rates! All kinds of trips are available including a bus trip. After speaking to owner Jeff Moreau of Temple Bay Lodge and the Expo we could do the ultimate club trip with our own boats for as little as \$250 a person for a group of 6 or the ridiculously low rate of \$167 per person for a group of 9. A week in Canada at these prices is pure awesome so what are you waiting for?!

Help create YOUR outings for our club! Let me know what you want to fish for and where and I will try to set an outing up. Better yet you can volunteer to lead an outing. Below is a calendar of likely and suggested outings for 2018. Thanks and looking forward to our best fishing year yet

**May:** Big Bay de Noc smallmouth, local outing, Oconto river walleyes, Peshtigo & Menominee River walleyes, Lake MI Coho/salmon, Clements Fishing Barge, possible Door County smallmouth, possible Vilas County smallmouth

**June:** Green Bay walleyes, YFC on water meeting, local outing, possible Lake Winnebago outing

**July:** local outing, YFC on water meeting, Canada Eagle Lake, possible Green Bay, Lake MI Charter

**August:** YFC on water meeting, local outing, possible Lake Winnebago outing, Lake MI Charter

**September:** Clements Fishing Barge, Lake Mendota northern, Lake MI salmon

**October:** Lake Mendota smallmouth/northern, Lake MI salmon

**November:** Tenney Park break wall walleyes

**December:** local outing

**Guided trips on local lakes, Green Bay/Sturgeon Bay or others:** Would you like to learn a lake better or techniques with a guide and join other club members to get a better rate? Contact me if interested.

All outings above are open to club members, our Rock Valley Angler friends, your family and friends! We need members with boats but you can participate even if you don't have one. Sign-ups will be at club meetings but also on Facebook or through club emails. As always you can contact me at any time to sign-up or if you have questions or just want advice.

Jim Pankratz

608-709-6442 or [jimannepan@aol.com](mailto:jimannepan@aol.com)



# Walleye Roe for dinner

By Tom Klein

My son likes to cook and wanted to try some Walleye roe from a Walleye recently caught at Genoa.



Nicely floured and in the cast iron fry pan.



They browned out really nice and ready to eat with all the condiments and a beverage.



Ahh, the first bite.



So I asked him how they tasted – a picture is worth a thousand words.



# WHAT'S A BULLET BOBBER?

Featured at our May meeting we will have various size bullet bobbers in the raffle. Bullet bobbers are like mini planer boards except they look like bobbers sort of. You can make them go left or right away from a boat or change directions in current. Check them out at [BulletBobbers.com](http://BulletBobbers.com). Our speaker, Pat B. will be telling us how to rig and use them.

Also in the raffle will be a custom Musky bait from Lee Tauscher – a \$60 value, a \$50 gift certificate for D&S , other gift certificates, lures, 2 Crappie rod combos, plus much more. Support our club by buying raffle tickets and you will have a very good chance at winning a valuable prize.

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[ljkopf@tds.net](mailto:ljkopf@tds.net)

# A Funny Fish Story

By Greg Belanger

I joined Karl around 2:30 on Wednesday afternoon in Depere. He had started fishing around 6:00 am. Both days we trolled @ .6mph dragging and occasionally pulling forward slightly a 1/4oz firetiger colored standup jig. We covered all different depths, but seemed to have the best luck in 6-9 FOW.

About 10 minutes or so after starting, I hooked into a fish. After fighting it for a while, I realized that this was a good fish. I was able to get it up and we got a good look at it and I think the length was in the middle twenties. It then took some drag (first time out and was set too light) and went for the back of the boat. It was about to go into the prop, so I stood up and used my rod to steer it around. To my surprised the boat quickly accelerated, lunge forward and I went flying overboard into 43 degree water. I hung onto my rod and fought this fish briefly while treading water. I couldn't keep this up and the fish finally got some slack line and swam away. It was swimming on the surface about 2 feet away tuckered out. I could have grabbed the fish, but I didn't want to let go of a custom rod I had built last winter. Karl circled around and rescued me. I could not pull myself up with all of the waterlogged clothes I was wearing. Karl helped me get into the boat.

I had to swallow my pride as a few boats were watching me fight the fish and saw me go overboard. Karl was embarrassed and was apologizing profusely. Here is what happened: The motor was in gear, but was so quiet, in combination of a lot of background city noise and traffic that we didn't know it was running. I believe he was trying to trim the motor to provide clearance around the motor for me while I was fighting the fish. Since the throttle was not locked in the neutral position, when Karl placed his hand on it to trim the motor, it lunged forward. Other than being very cold, the only casualty was my cell phone.

I had a complete change of clothes back at the car, so we motored back to the boat launch. I changed into dry clothes and we went back out. We caught some fish after that and ended our day when the trolling motor was completely discharged. I wanted to get my coat dry so I spent some of my evening at a local Laundromat.

## Fishing Report

On Wednesday, Karl boated 28 walleyes. I caught (1) 20" long Walleye. I ran into Dave McCoy while holding out in open water for our turn to pull Karl's boat out. I introduced myself to him and he asked how we did and I told him. He chuckled over my story, said that he wanted to hear the full version and asked if we wanted to meet at a Mexican restaurant for dinner. He went on to tell me his crew of 4 or 5 landed 71 walleyes. We also met for breakfast at a pancake place.

On Thursday, we caught a number of nice fish between 19" – 22". Late in the morning Karl got into a really big fish. I asked if he needed help and he asked me to grab the landing net. As I was scooping this fish into the net, he said "that is the biggest walleye of my life". It was 29"+. See the attached photos. The tally for the day was (11) for Karl and (7) for me. One of mine was a nice sized northern pike.



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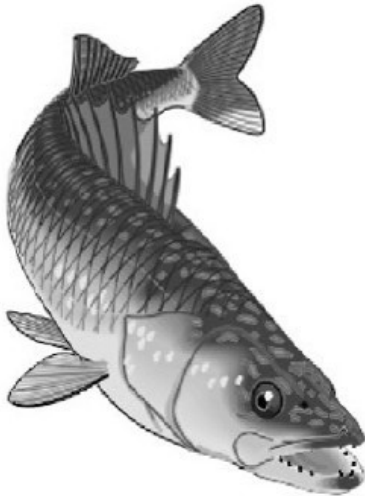
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Check out our web page at: [www.yaharafishingclub.org](http://www.yaharafishingclub.org)

### Yahara Fishing Club Membership Form

**P.O. Box 3271 Madison, WI 53704**

Annual Dues are from January 1 to December 31. Please print. \*\*\* ESSENTIAL

Name \*\*\* \_\_\_\_\_

If Family or Youth, Additional Names \_\_\_\_\_

Email \*\*\* \_\_\_\_\_ @ \_\_\_\_\_

Street Address \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone Number and Area Code \*\*\* \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_

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Once more Mary has donated \$500.00 towards the Kids Fishing Days from the Rod Regel Memorial Fund.

Thank You Mary!

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The next YFC meeting is Wednesday, May 9th 7:00 pm at the VFW Hall, 301 Cottage Grove Road  
Speaker: Pat Westburg on trolling for panfish

## Calendar of Upcoming Events

### May Events

- May 3, 2018, D&S Bait—Ron Barefield on the opening weekend
- May 5, 2018, Wisconsin Fishing Opener
- May 9, 2018, Regular club meeting at the VFW hall at 301 Cottage Grove Road  
Pat Westburg will talk on trolling for panfish.

### June Events

- June 2, 2018, a Saturday, Kids Fishing Day at Warner Park
- June 13, 2018, a Wednesday, On the Water Meeting at Warner Park Boat Launch

**Save The Date: 2nd Annual YFC Picnic Sunday, September 23.**

### Board of Directors and Officers

Gard Strother, President	Tom Wilke, Speakers	Tex Torgeson, Auctioneer
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