



Yahara Fishing Club April 2025 Newsletter

Editor: Tom Raschke tomraschke50@gmail.com
Assistant Editor: John Pribek honorthymusic2@gmail.com

<http://www.yaharafishingclub.org>
Club email: yaharafishingclub@gmail.com

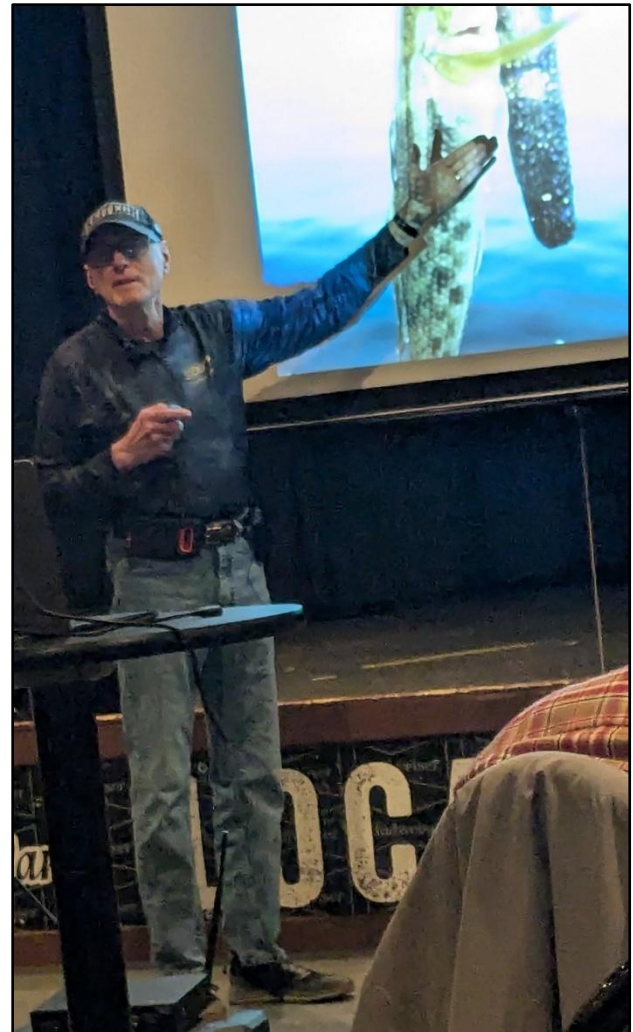
Smallie Success with Ned Rigs and Other Top Lures

By Stan Nichols

Bill Schultz, the March YFC speaker, says clean out your tackle box. All you the lures you need to catch smallmouth you can fit in a cereal bowl. You can catch a large number of smallmouths with a small number of lures.

The top lure or at least the rigging is the Ned rig. The Ned rig is named for Ned Kehde. Kehde claims he didn't invent the technique but he popularized it. It is a refinement of the Midwest finesse bass fishing technique. Kehde didn't start with all the Ned Rig equipment available today. He just cut down readily available stick worms to a smaller size.

Today Ned rigs consists of a jig head that holds a plastic tail in a vertical position when it sits on the bottom. The jig heads are pill shaped. Z-Man are the top plastics for the Ned rig. They are tough and they float so they stand up off the bottom. The most common resemble a small stick worm but they come in a variety of styles including the Canada Craw, TRD HogZ, Hula Stick, TicklerZ, and probably others.



March speaker Bill Schultz has caught no small number of smallies – 33,300-plus and counting. Story continued on page 2.

APRIL MEETING: FISHING TRIBUTARIES FOR SALMON AND TROUT? YES PLEASE.

Charter fishing captain Louie Dazzo will speak about fishing for salmon and trout in the streams that feed Lake Michigan. Join us at 7 p.m. on April 9 at Bowl-A-Vard Lanes in Madison. Mini session starts at 6.

Notes from the President on page 4

Spring and summer club outing opportunities on pages 4 and 5

The most common presentation is the hop and bounce, but it can also be retrieved with a swim and glide, a drag and dead stick, or a straight swim.

Bill fishes a lot in the clear waters of Green Bay and Lake Michigan so he uses long casts, let it settle, then twitch-twitch, let it settle and repeat.

Bill's favorite color for this fishing is green pumpkin goby. The Z-Man plastics float so even on a dead stick presentation they float off the bottom and quiver seductively to catch fish. Bill likes the 2¾-inch size the best. Jig size depends on the depth of the water you are fishing. A word of warning: Don't mix the Z-Man tails with other plastics. You will end up with a gooey mess.

The second favorite of Bill's lures is the Keitech Fat Swing Impact. These are fished on a half-round jig head. The favorite size is 2.8 inches and the favorite colors are smoke salt and pepper, black shad, and goby. A problem, Keitech tails are fragile and rip apart after catching a few fish. He uses long casts, and a slow steady retrieve at the desired depth. Chartreuse-colored Gopher jig heads are his favorite half-round jig heads.

Bill also stream fishes for smallmouth. He uses the Keitech lures here but his favorite may be the Rebel Teeny Wee Crawfish. It can be used as a floater/diver; it bounces off rocks and bottom, it has a tight wiggle with a rattle, and it has a realistic crawfish look. It is only 1.5 inches in size and Bill trades the rear size 14 treble hooks for size 10. Use a slow and steady retrieve, a slow-fast retrieve, a jerk-pause retrieve, or as a topwater lure. He also uses tube jigs.

There are also other techniques he has caught smallmouths on but presently doesn't use much. Wacky-rigging, drop shotting, and hair jigs are effective techniques but they are slow. You can't cover a lot of water using them.

I won't get into detail about Bill's favorite rod and reels. His general preference is a plus or

minus seven foot medium-fast action rod. His line preference is 8-10 pound J-braid line with a 3-4 foot fluorocarbon leader. He has fancy electronics on his boat but he uses them primarily for depth, water temperature, and time of day. He often sees other anglers cruising past fish looking for fish on their electronics.

If you want more detailed information on recommended fishing equipment, discounts on a variety of fishing tackle, kayaks, kayak paddles, etc., go to the [Member's Only page](#) of the [Yahara Fishing Club website](#) to see a PowerPoint PDF of Bill's presentation (about halfway down the page under "2025"). Or you can get a copy from Bill; contact him about this or with any other questions at smalliecentral@gmail.com.



From the club's Facebook page:



Bob added to his post that it took him about an hour to boat the prehistoric beast. He was using 10-pound braided line with a fluorocarbon leader!

Perch Outing? Sure. But the Pike Would Also Like to Have a Word ...

From the club's Facebook page:

 **Yahara Fishing Club Members**
Top contributor Jim Pankratz · 3d · 

Had our Mississippi River perch outing over the last 2 days led by Matt Camp. We fished out of La Crosse close to the dam using 1/2 ounce drop shots with chartreuse and orange hooks set at 6-8" off bottom. Most were caught using Rosie minnows but also some on red worms. A great time with action in spurts. The bite is only going to get better the next couple of weeks with warmer weather.



Jim Pankratz added to his Facebook post, "We caught mostly perch but also sauger, walleyes and lots of northerns, with some really good ones, too!" Clearly!

Notes from the President

By Phil James

I spent the last 10 days driving out to Colorado and back to visit my daughter in her new place in Fort Collins, where she is starting Vet School. We took our time, traveling through Iowa, Nebraska, Kansas, and Missouri along the way (and of course Colorado). All of those states have quality fishing and some beautiful country, but I was struck by how fortunate we are in both the quantity and quality of the water we enjoy. In many places you would have to travel hours to reach a water body that would compare to any that we have in the Yahara chain, and there simply are none that would match the Wisconsin River system, the Mississippi, the Winnebago system, or Lake Michigan, not to mention what is available in northern Wisconsin. We are truly fortunate to have so many quality resources, and I encourage you to explore and take advantage of as many as you can. Over the years I have been introduced to many new waters and fisheries through our club outings. We are also fortunate to have a system that allows us to have direct input into how those resources are managed. Take a look at the information on the Conservation Congress Spring Hearings in this issue and take the time to register your opinions on the many proposals being considered.

Remember to Get Your New License

Your 2024 fishing license expired on Monday, time to get your 2025!

Wisconsin Conservation Congress Spring Hearings

The annual spring hearings will be held Monday, April 14th, at 6 p.m. The Dane County meeting will be at McFarland High School. The Conservation Congress was formed in 1934 by Aldo Leopold and others to give citizens a voice in natural resources management. Each county elects five delegates who advise the DNR and the Natural Resources Board. At the Spring Hearings citizens are able to vote on proposed rule changes and citizen-introduced resolutions. This is where many changes to our

fishing and hunting rules originate. We are the only state in the nation that has such a system, so take advantage and make your opinions heard. You can attend the meeting in person to elect delegates, hear arguments for the proposed changes, and vote for or against them. If you want to just vote on the resolutions, you can do that online from April 14th at 7 p.m. until April 16th at 6 p.m. To see the resolutions up for vote this year or to find the link for online voting when the time comes, go to: <https://dnr.wisconsin.gov/about/wcc/springhearing>



What, all those record fish aren't enough for him? ☺ Paul Zoch accepts the Expo raffle \$1,000 first prize from club president Phil James at our March meeting.

Club Outings

Milwaukee Harbor

The word is out and the salmon and brown trout are in. On low and ideally west wind days the harbor is fishable even in a small boat. There is no need to have big water gear as you can catch anything on a medium action rod with spoons, crankbaits, jigs and plastics. It's time to get your new fishing license and include a Great Lakes

trout stamp to bring home some coho, rainbows or browns!

Mississippi Backwaters

We had a successful outing on the Mississippi backwaters two weekends ago but with the colder weather hanging on there is still time to go as it hasn't hit its peak yet. We are planning a trip to possibly Trempealeau or La Crosse to hunt down the biggest perch of the year! This will be a day outing for sure and possibly a multiday outing with enough interest.

Clements Fishing Barge

April is "river time" and anything is possible on the river! Things haven't really got going yet with the colder weather except for a few nicer days. This is a great outing for kids and adults and no boat is needed as you will get a ride across the river to the barge where you can fish all day. Cost is \$25 per adult and \$5 for kids 15 and under. Anything is possible on the river and March/April is a good time for perch, walleyes and more!

De Pere Fox River Walleye Run

Want to experience the craziness of the spring walleye run in De Pere? All those boats are there for a reason and that's for a chance at a giant Green Bay walleye! Sign up for your chance at Green Bay gold!

Nekoosa Wisconsin River Walleye Run

The walleye run on the Wisconsin River into Lake Petenwell can be just as fun as De Pere but with a lot less people.

We're planning a trip to Nekoosa for Friday April 11th and/or Saturday April 12th, for walleye and white bass on the Wisconsin River above Lake Petenwell. There is abundant shore fishing here in addition to boats that sign up.

Big Bay de Noc

It's NEVER too early to think about catching giant pre-spawn smallies in the UP. This is definitely one of our best outings by far! Join us this year for your chance to catch a 20-inch smallmouth as well as a Yooper beer and great food at the Nahma Inn! This outing will likely be in mid May (5/10-5/25) but depending on the weather could still work later in the month. We will have several groups going during this time so there will be plenty of opportunities to join us.

Port Washington Salmon Charter

Head out on Lake Michigan with Captain John Iverson of Iverson Sportfishing on June 5, 12 or 20th. This is a great time to catch the best tasting coho salmon and more! Each 5-hour charter is for six people. Due to popularity and for ensuring that we have full crews we are requiring that you pay the full \$92 ahead of time.

Sturgeon Bay Salmon Charter

Head out on Lake Michigan and beautiful Door County with Captain Dean Gordon of Hooked Up Sport Fishing Charters on July 10th or August 9th. This will be a 5-hour charter for six people. Start lifting weights now so you're in shape to hold onto the rod while a 20-plus pound king salmon screams line off the reel!

Sign up for any of these outings through our club email (yaharafishingclub@gmail.com), at a meeting, or by contacting me by phone or text.

We're a fishing club, let's go fishing together!

Jim Pankratz (608) 709-6442

Mini Sessions: Let's Keep the Momentum Going!

Before the March club meeting, Kurt Welke provided an excellent mini session on how to prepare a perfect shore lunch.



Kurt Welke at the March 12 mini session

Prior to our next meeting on April 9, beginning at 6 p.m., Eric Buzza will conduct a mini session on how to maintain and repair fishing rods. And we can always use more mini sessions on the calendar! They are completely informal and provide club members a convenient forum for sharing tips and expertise. Mini sessions start at 6 p.m. and wrap up around 6:30, or whenever the questions run out. Contact Ken Terrill (ken.terrill3011@gmail.com), our mini session coordinator, with ideas for mini sessions you'd like to present!

It's Never Too Late to Renew Your Membership for 2025

Soon we'll be changing the password to the [Member's Only page](#) and pruning the email communications list, so if you haven't had a chance to renew your club membership yet, bring your checkbook or cash to the April 9 meeting. You can provide your payment to membership coordinator Paul Meyer. If you have cash and need change, treasurer Doug Galloway can help with that. Same prices as recent years – \$35 for individuals, \$45 for families, \$10 for students. Remember, you can't enter a fish in our expanded fishing contest (with a new, streamlined entry process via the [Member's Only page](#)) unless you are a paid-up member at the time the lunger is caught. Thanks!

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 **CRAIG AMACKER** *April 10th*
Fly Fishing Driftless Trout Streams: Craig is an Orvis- endorsed guide who has been putting anglers on Trout in the Madison end of the Driftless for over 25 years! If you're a veteran stream- stalker or just getting started, Craig is going to teach you plenty!

 **NOAH HUMFELD** *April 17th*
Walleye Wizardry: There aren't many people who know Walleye like Noah. From the Madison Chain, to the Wisconsin River and out to Green Bay, Noah has them dialed year-round! If Walleye are your thing, you're not going to want to miss this one!

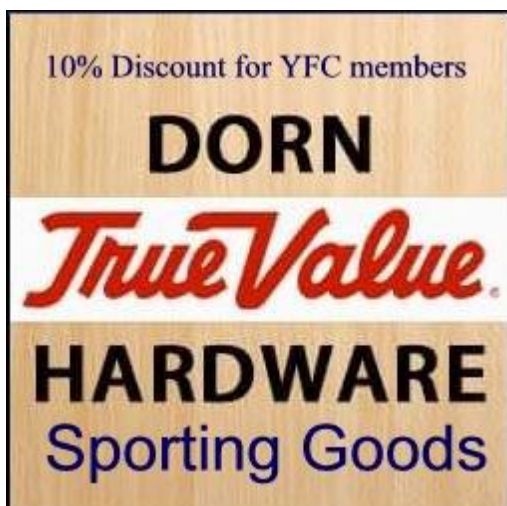
 **JALEN RIDDLE** *April 24th*
Kayak Fishing The Madison Chain: The popularity of Kayak fishing increases every year, and for many reasons! You may have seen Jalen present at the Fishing Expo but he'll be coming to the shop with some fresh tips and tricks to put more fish in your "yak"!

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The April 9th meeting is at Bowl-A-Vard Lanes

Our featured speaker, southeastern Wisconsin guide Louie Dazzo, will talk to us about fishing for salmon and trout in the streams that feed Lake Michigan. The meeting starts at 7 p.m. at Bowl-A-Vard Lanes (2121 E. Springs Drive, Madison). Eric Buzza will conduct a mini session at 6 p.m. on how to maintain and repair fishing rods.

Calendar of Upcoming Events

Wednesday, April 9th, 7 p.m.: Monthly meeting at Bowl-A-Vard Lanes (see above).

Friday, April 11th and/or Saturday, April 12th: Outing to Nekoosa for walleye and white bass on the Wisconsin River above Lake Petenwell (see page 5).

Monday, April 14th, 6 p.m.: Wisconsin Conservation Congress Spring Hearings. The Dane County meeting will be at McFarland High School (see page 4).

Early to mid-May: Club outing for pre-spawn smallmouth on Big Bay de Noc. Club members are going up at various times. See details on page 5.

Wednesday, May 14th, 7 p.m.: Monthly meeting at Bowl-A-Vard Lanes. Speaker TBD as of newsletter publication time.

June 5th, 12th and 20th: Dates reserved for Port Washington Salmon Charter (see page 5).

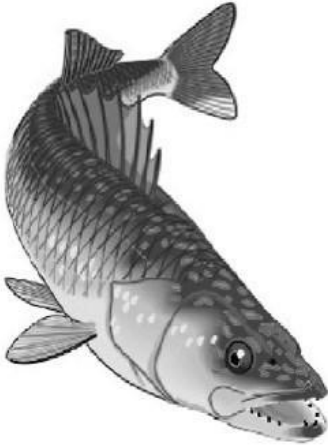
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Yahara Fishing Club
P.O. Box 259803
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Check out our web page at: www.yaharafishingclub.org

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

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