

# VJA Bass Fishing

## ***Special Interest Articles (pg. 1):***

**April 10<sup>th</sup>, 2010**

- DesPlaines River  
"Spring Showdown"  
(1st annual)

**June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2010**

- Lake Wisconsin

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- **Head Coach, John Bartgen:** [JBartgen@d230.org](mailto:JBartgen@d230.org)
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  - Assistant Coach, Jimmy Flynn: [JFlynn@d230.org](mailto:JFlynn@d230.org)

## **2010 1<sup>st</sup> annual VJA SPRING SHOWDOWN: VJA Takes 4<sup>th</sup> Place**

On April 10, 2010, Victor J, Andrew High School hosted their first annual *Spring Showdown* bass fishing tournament on the DesPlaines/Kankakee rivers. Boats started arriving around 4:30 am, and with the help of Doug Kauffmann, PJ Miller, Mike Murphy, Allan Cunningham, and many others, the tournament went off without a glitch. The VJA Bass Club would like to thank everyone for helping run the tournament!

The fisherman fished from approximately 7 am until 1:30 pm, and in the end, Marist prevailed with a 3 fish total weighing just over 6 pounds. Second through fourth place were as follows: Bradley, Reavis, and Victor J. Andrew. Big Bass went to Brother Rice High School with 1.99 pounds. Overall, many great fish were caught....

For the 2011 season, Victor J. Andrew hopes to have its 2<sup>nd</sup> annual *Spring Showdown* on Saturday, April 9, 2011, at Big Basin in Channahon. At last year's tournament, there were approximately 20 boats. This year, we would like to maximize the number of boats and participants. Overall, the event has been a success, and we look to promote the event, so we have more fans at the 1:00 pm weigh-in!!!

**WE HOPE TO SEE OUR FANS @ BIG BASIN FOR THE WEIGH-IN...**

## **Lake Wisconsin: 12 Guys, Great Food, Good Stories, Wonderful Memories, and 1 Great Fish!**

On June 11<sup>th</sup>, 2010, a group of dedicated teachers and friends within district 230 ventured to Poynette, Wisconsin, for a weekend fishing getaway on Lake Wisconsin. The fisherman included John Bartgen, Dave Arndt, Jim Corcoran, Jimmy Flynn, Charles Even, Bobby Matz, Mike Litton, Mike Bartgen, Ray Sabo, Lloyd Eichwald, and Erich Eichwald.

With the years of fishing experience in our group, it was only fitting that a 1<sup>st</sup> timer—Erich Eichwald—caught the fish of a lifetime (40 + Inch Muskellunge)! The exciting aspect of the catch was that all 4 boats were in the same area watching Erich as he wrestled the beast to and fro and finally into the net. The moment the fish got into the boat, I truly think Erich wanted to pass out from pure elation! That single catch made the trip a success...

Overall, the trip was a great time and a fantastic way to build strong relationships with other staff members. The 2011 trip will be in Orr, Minnesota, on Pelican Lake, and we hope to duplicate the awesome trip of 2010! Any information on Pelican Lake would be gladly accepted.

Email [JFlynn@d230.org](mailto:JFlynn@d230.org) with any tips!

## PAST EVENTS/ACCOMPLISHMENTS

### **Fish Tales Comes through, AGAIN...THANK YOU!**

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*"Fish Tales has played a vital role in our club's success this year, and we will continue to work closely with them to promote fishing and environmentalism in our community and state!"*

Last year, many people played a great part in building our club, none bigger, however, than Fish Tales. At the conclusion of the 2010 season, Fish Tales donated a number of rods and reels, so that each student had a rod when they fish with us! Our gratitude towards Fish Tales is endless, and we can't thank them enough. What an awesome club to be part of! Below is information about joining Fish Tales if you so choose:

Every 3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month, Fish Tales—a south side fishing club—has their club meeting at the Bremen Township community building off of Oak Park Avenue in Oak Forest, IL. Anyone interested in attending a meeting as a guest can attend for \$5.00, and the meetings are extremely informative and enjoyable. If you are interested in joining or participating, go to a meeting and talk to the many members who are very caring and giving.

Fish Tales has played a vital role in our club's success this year, and we will continue to work closely with them to promote fishing and environmentalism in our community and state! Thanks, Fish Tales!

### **VJA Captures 1<sup>st</sup> Place at the 2010 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual District 230 Bass Fishing Tournament & Takes 8<sup>th</sup> at Sectionals**

#### D230 Tournament

For the second straight year, Victor J. Andrew captured the crown of the fishing champions in district 230. In Coach Bartgen's boat, Evan Connolly and Brian Watters led the Thunderbolts by catching 5 healthy largemouths weighing approximately 8 pounds. Great job, Boys. We look forward to much success in 2011!

On Saturday, April 2, 2011, boats from all three District 230 schools will launch at approximately 7:00 am to compete in the 3<sup>rd</sup> annual District 230 Bass Fishing Tournament. The wonderful relationships made over the past 3 years between staff members and between students are wonderful. The District 230 bass fishing tournament is a great showcase of IHSA Bass Fishing, and we are proud to display our fishing abilities. Hopefully VJA can bring home the crown for the 3<sup>rd</sup> straight year.

The weigh in will either be at the Conservation Area on the Kankakee River or at Big Basin on the DesPlaines River. The approximate weigh-in time will be 1:30 pm.

#### Wolf Lake Sectional Tournament

At Wolf Lake, Coach Arndt's boat almost pulled off a miracle by catching 3 fish the last 10 minutes of the tournament for a 3 fish bag weighing 4.38 pounds, missing state by a measly 1.77 pounds (one good fish away). Sometimes winning a tournament comes down to seconds and inches. After a memorable State Tournament appearance in 2009, the T-Bolts aspire to return to state during 2011! Go T-Bolts!!!

**PLEASE COME TO THE WEIGH-INS TO SUPPORT OUR STUDENT ATHLETES.**

***We hope to see you there!!!!***

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*"The wonderful relationships created over the past 3 years between staff members and between students are wonderful."*



## MEETINGS/SPEAKERS

### Welcome Aboard, Freshmen!!!

At the start of the school year for Victor J. Andrew, the Activity Fair for freshmen was a huge success because over 100 students attended the bass fishing seminar. Coach Bartgen would like to personally thank every student who attended, and all of the coaches are excited for the opportunity to work with all fishermen regardless of experience level.

If you are a freshman and want to fish tournaments or if you simply enjoy the outdoors and prefer bobber fishing, our club is for you! As a club, we have two divisions: the tournament division and the novice division. For the tournament division, we will go in boats, fish tournaments, and practice on the water. For the novice division, we will go shore-fishing fishing two to three times a week once the weather gets nice, and we will target many different species on our outings. So, if you have a passion for the outdoors, and if you are interested in fishing, there is a spot for you in our club.

*(Rumor has it that there is another Multon running around on VJA's campus; he has some pretty big shoes to fill!)*

**WE HOPE THAT SEE ALL FRESHMEN AT OUR WEEKLY MEETINGS!**

**For any questions, please see Mr. Bartgen...**

### Jeremy Bilecki and Jake Reinbolt

After Victor J. Andrew's state appearance two years ago, numerous anglers have graced the decks of Mr. Bartgen's, Mr. Arndt's, and Mr. Flynn's boats, but few have had the potential as these two VJA anglers—Jeremy Bilecki and Jake Reinbolt.

With the departure of Evan Connolly and Robert Pohlman, Jeremy and Jake are going to have to learn quickly all of the signature trademarks of tournament fishing. Robert and Evan were two year tournament fishermen for the T-Bolts, and are going to be missed greatly. Luckily for Jeremy and Jake, they had the opportunity to fish numerous tournaments as underclassman, which has hopefully prepared them for a smooth transition into leadership roles within the VJA bass team.

As for the rest of the team, many tournament spots are wide open, and more fishermen are needed to fill those roster spots. This year, many fishermen are going to have to work hard, learn quickly, and dedicate themselves to another successful year. We hope to have 12-15 tournament fishermen on this year's team, and as the tournament guys last year understand, tournament fishing means hot weather, cold weather, early mornings, late nights, and a whole lot of pride, passion, and fun!!! To be a VJA tournament angler, it takes work, long hours, and dedication. In the end, I am certain that every VJA tournament angler will look back proudly and fondly of his or her memories.

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*"Over 100 students attended the bass fishing seminar."*

**ALL FRESHMAN INTERESTED IN JOINING, MUST SEE COACH BARTGEN!**

**WE WANT AS MANY STUDENTS AS POSSIBLE!!!**



Above: Jake Reinbolt hoists up a beautiful smallmouth bass.

## *FUTURE Events and Meeting* **Fishing Connection**

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Greg Katello  
**Fishing Connection**  
Phone: 708-532-1476  
7897 W. 159<sup>th</sup> Street  
Tinley Park, IL 60477

**Thank you, Greg.**

Our club's success last year was a direct result of having the best equipment on the water. From rods to reels to lures, Greg's store has it all. His store is a full service shop where he sells rods, reels, lures, and other needed fishing equipment for every species of fishing. Approximately during the second week of February 2011, our club will visit Greg's store prior to the start of the fishing season. While at Greg's store, local professionals will assist our student/athletes in purchasing the correct rod/reel/lures/plastics for the appropriate applications.

From the beginning angler to the touring professional, this store has all the gear a fisherman or fisherwoman could need. Greg has been a valued asset to our club and to IHSA bass fishing. His knowledge, advice, and service is unparalleled, and we look forward to scheduling our open house at his store this spring!

## **Bass Pro Shops and Kevin McLean, Bolingbrook, Illinois 60440**

On Wednesday, February 24<sup>th</sup>, 2010, the Andrew Bass Club was invited to attend a bass fishing presentation by Kevin McLean at Bass Pro Shops in Bolingbrook. The night was memorable for the kids, and I got to meet a Bass Professional and buy some much needed lures...not too bad for a Wednesday school night!

This year—2011—the VJA bass club would like to visit Bass Pro Shops at least once, if not twice. In addition to listening to a speaker, the students will be able to ask any questions they have in regards to fishing. Bass Pro Shops understands how great IHSA bass fishing is, and they donated two gift cards for our tournament last year to help out our club.

As a club at VJA, we look forward to working with Bass Pro Shops in the future to better the sport of Bass Fishing and to continue to promote positive awareness around the state.

## **Cesare Montefusco and George Liddle**

Cesare Montefusco and George Liddle—two very well respected Chicago anglers—will be coming to Andrew in January 2011 to speak to our fishermen and fisherwomen. There is no better way to improve our student's knowledge of bass fishing than to have speakers as knowledgeable as these two guys come in to talk to our kids.

This year, Cesare and George will be coming back to Andrew High School to cover the latest bass fishing techniques and to have a question and answer session where the students ask informed questions to better their knowledge of bass fishing. This should be a great experience for our kids, and we want to continue having speakers teach our student/athletes. Much thanks for Cesare and George for their continual help and support with our bass fishing club!




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**Cesare made a great point to the students:**

*"Fishing is a privilege and a passion and a sport that requires intelligence and proper decision making."*



## Fishing Tip #3: Thoughts on the Magic of Fishing...

By: Babe Winkelman

There has always been something hypnotizing about water. Imagine the way it shimmers and shines like diamonds on a bright, breezy summer day. Picture the perfect pace of a moving river, churning along as if driven by something more powerful than gravity. Think about a glass-flat lake and the way it reflects all the nature above it, to double its beauty. Water is mesmerizing, and the amazing fish that call it home—well, they're my life.

Ever since I was a little boy, I've been drawn to water. The sound of the babbling creek that coursed through the family farm was the first waterway to draw me in. Looking down from the steep bank, I saw what would be my destiny for the very first time...I saw a fish! It looked huge, and I remember running back to the farm to tell my dad. I asked him what kind of fish it was, and he joked that it was a tarpon! Being just a little whipper-snapper, I believed him. Why wouldn't I? After all, I didn't know what a tarpon was.

Naturally, it wasn't a tarpon swimming in that central-Minnesota stream. It was a sucker. And I was determined to catch it; or at least one just like it. Dad set me up with an old fiberglass rod and a push-button reel full of coiled monofilament line. I dug angle worms out of the garden and proceeded to spend many afternoons soaking worms in that little creek. Then one day it happened...an old sucker took the bait and the fight was on!

I don't think there has ever been a kid as proud as little Babe returning home with that writhing fish in the bottom of my pail. That one fish sealed my fate as an addicted angler. And it forever changed my viewpoint on the sight of water. Ever since, whether looking out at a lake, river or vast ocean, my thoughts always dive beneath the surface to all the fish swimming underneath. I wonder which species they are; and at what depth. I ponder where they're going; what they're eating. And I think of ways to catch them!

As I grew older, I spent nearly every free minute fishing—between chores as a youngster, after work, and on weekends as a young adult. I worked construction to earn money for a boat, electronics, tackle and travel. I eagerly fished the lakes and rivers around my home, and kept expanding my list of destinations. As I did, my skills as an angler grew. I kept a fishing diary to help myself unravel the effects of cold fronts, warm fronts, moon phases, wind and other conditions on all the freshwater species I pursued.

There was a magic to fishing, because there is a mystery to it. And that's what drove me to keep fishing. I was determined to solve the mysteries of fish behavior, so I could ultimately catch more. As I improved my skills, the next logical step was to fish tournaments. I have always been a competitive person, so I hit the tournament trail with gusto and fished bass and walleye tournaments all over the country. And even though it was challenging and rewarding to fish against other fishermen, the real contest was still against the fish. Those were exciting and interesting times, and they helped inspire me to make fishing more than my life. I wanted to make it my livelihood too!

So I sold my stake in the successful construction business I had built up, and made a run at fishing for a living. It has been a wild ride, and I'm blessed to still be producing episodes of our "Good Fishing" television program today.

What keeps me going? The magic of water and the mysteries of fishing. I'm still trying to learn more about fish, every time I make a cast. But beyond that, I continue the fishing life to help others discover the same magic. I introduced all my daughters, and now my grandchildren, to angling. There is no greater place to bond with your children than in a boat. Fishing brings people together in a wonderful way, and my hope is that with every episode of our show, I can inspire others to not only go fishing, but go fishing with loved ones.

Looking back over the years, my mind always goes back to that little creek and that sucker I caught. It was such a simple beginning to a magical life on the water.

***Babe Winkelman is a nationally-known outdoorsman who has taught people to fish and hunt for nearly 30 years. Watch his award-winning "Good Fishing" and "Outdoor Secrets" television shows on Versus (VS.), Fox Sports Net, Wild TV and many local networks. Visit [www.winkelman.com](http://www.winkelman.com) for air times where you live.***







# Angler Profile



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**We're on the Web!**

See us at: *Coming Soon*

**Name & Grade:** Jeremy Bilecki, Sophomore

**Hometown:** Orland Hills, IL

**Fishing Aspirations:** To catch a *10 lb Bass* or a *50" Musky*

**Fishing Role Model(s):** Kevin Vandam

**Favorite Professional Angler:** Mike Iaconelli

**Favorite Species to Fish for:** Black Bass (Largemouth and Smallmouth)

**Favorite Fishing Technique:** Spinnerbait/Top Water

**Favorite Fishing Television Host:** Bill Dance

**Favorite Memory Fishing:** Catching a 12lb Pike in a canoe

**Favorite Lake/River to Fish:** Grandpa's pond

**Biggest Fish Ever Caught:** 15lb catfish

**About our Club:**

*The VJA Bass Fishing Club strives to give every student the best possible outdoor's experience by focusing on sportsmanship, teamwork, and the environment. As we enter our third year of existence, we are excited about the endless possibilities, exciting challenges, and great enjoyment that all participants will have.*

*Over the past three years, we have been fortunate to have community members, friends, and businesses help us get started, and we want to thank all of you who have helped our club become what it is today. If you have any questions, comments, or would like to help our club in any way, please contact John Bartgen at [JBartgen@d230.org](mailto:JBartgen@d230.org) or 708-342-5900. Thank you for all of your help and consideration!*

# VJA Bass Fishing Pictures

Below: Mr. Lloyd Eichwald and Mr. James Corcoran stand next to Erich Eichwald, the "FISH-KING!"



Above: Mr. Dan Kowalzyk with a beautiful northern pike.



Above: Diane Stefanovich with a beautiful Northern Pike from Spooner Lake, Wisconsin!

*If you have pictures that you would like submitted in an edition of our newsletter, please email them to [jflynn@d230.org](mailto:jflynn@d230.org) and [JBartgen@d230.org](mailto:JBartgen@d230.org)*



# Bass Fishing LINKS

1. Cabelas: <http://www.cabelas.com/>
2. Bass Pro Shops: <http://www.basspro.com/homepage.html>
3. Gander Mountain: <http://www.gandermountain.com/>
4. ESPN : Bass Master's Magazine: <http://sports.espn.go.com/outdoors/bassmaster/index>
5. Field and Stream: <http://www.fieldandstream.com/>
6. Bass Resource: <http://www.bassresource.com/>
7. Bass Fishing Techniques: <http://www.bassfishingtechniques.net/>
8. Pro Bass Network: <http://www.probass.net/>
9. Bass Boat Central: <http://www.bassboatcentral.com/>
10. Angler's Pride 'Tackle Coverings': <http://anglerspride.com/>
11. Tackle Warehouse (online shopping): <http://tacklewarehouse.com/>
12. IHSA Bass Fishing: <http://www.thefuturefisheshere.org/>
13. Don Dziedzina: [www.IllinoisOutdoors.com](http://www.IllinoisOutdoors.com)  
Illinois Outdoors, Inc.  
Fishing Line & Outdoor Radio  
Outdoor Columnist/Chicago Tribune
14. Jim DaRosa: <http://www.fishingandoutdoorradio.com/> & [www.FishSmallmouthBass.com](http://www.FishSmallmouthBass.com)  
Co-Host, *Fishing Line and Outdoor Radio Show*
15. Anglers-Dream Tournaments: <http://anglers-dream.com/>
16. Clark Marine, Franklin, TN: <http://www.clarkmarine.com/>
17. Ultimate Bass: <http://www.ultimatebass.com/>
18. Chicago-land Fishing: <http://chicagolandfishing.com/>