



JIMMY'S JOURNAL

An Update for Friends of Fishing for Life



VOL. 4, ISSUE 7 • WINTER 2022



Tom Goodrich

From Isolation To Building Relationships

Hello from Fishing For Life!

I am not sure if you are sensing what I am, but getting outdoors is more important then ever. We are fighting a great demonic force that wants us isolated. People are isolated. And

we, as an organization are choosing to get kids, adults and veterans outdoors and to get connected. Our tagline says it all, "Where the Great Commission Meets the Great Outdoors." We are being purposeful and making a difference in peoples lives by meeting them where they are at and most importantly, including them in the mission of getting connected and less isolated.

When we choose to demonstrate the great commission, everything and everybody has potential to change. It is true in my personal story, I said "Yes" to Christ and my world began to change! We offer chances to change in many of our events that serve kids, veterans and families. It is this simple recipe that makes us effective. Get outdoors, initiate conversations, include Christ and good things happen!

Fishing For Life has a responsibility to execute great events, and we do! This coming year we have over 85 events scheduled on our calendar (see page 15 or check out our website: FishingForLife.org). Twenty-one of our events are youth camps. Along with our camps we have events to refurbish rods, reels and tackle boxes that we give away to different groups. This year we refurbished and gave away over 4,000 rods & reels along with 300 tackle boxes. Our trout ponds served 15,000 kids this year at various sport shows and private and public events. Our Men's and Women's ministries have 5 great groups that meet at various times and places each month. These groups aim to build each other up while learning what God has planned for them. In all, we have over 6,000 volunteer hours of service recorded. We create opportunities to spend quality-time with God and others in the great outdoors. And needless to say, we can't do this without God or your help.

As you read through this newsletter, please notice all of the things that are going on in Fishing For Life and all the ways God has come into our story and worked thorough our organization. From youth attending camps to veterans being able to have conversations with other veterans, and for all to enjoy the outdoors. We are thankful for all that have helped us get to this place and thank you for choosing us and supporting us with your time, talents and treasures. If you see something that sparks your interest or gets you excited, please share with us your thoughts at info@FishingForLife.org. We would love to add new volunteers and new ideas to the mix.

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FISHINGFORLIFE.ORG

SERVING YOUTH, FAMILIES, VETERANS & COMMUNITIES THROUGH FISHING & OUTDOOR PROGRAMS

New Employees

Please Welcome to the Team...



Laura Hudson, Director of Administrative Services

Laura has a Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice from St. Cloud State University and is a Bi-Lingual Auctioneer from World

Wide College of Auctioneering. Most recently a Victim Witness Specialist with the Anoka County Attorney's office. Other work experience includes Auctioneer, Sales and Marketing manager with Ella Enterprises Inc., Criminal Investigation Division Case Aide with Anoka County Attorney's office, Member Services with YMCA of Greater Twin Cities, and Public Relations Assistant with Anoka County Attorney's office.

Laura is an active volunteer in her community as the Community Outreach Fundraising Director of the Andover Flag Football Association and just finished her last term as Chair of the School Advisory Committee, in 2008 was Commissioned as a Stephen Minister of St. Stephen's Catholic Church. She has been active as the Chair of Women of Wonder and the Mardi Gras Fundraiser/Gala at St. Stephen's Church. she has served as the Leader of Family Readiness Group for Military Families ARMY National Guard. Laura is married with 3 beautiful children and lives in Andover, MN. Laura began working with Fishing For Life December 6th, 2021.



Linda Crosson Posavad Administrative Coordinator

Linda Crosson Posavad started May 24th as our new Administrative Coordinator. Linda has over 25 years of experience in customer service. Most recently the Branch Director of the White

Bear Area YMCA. She brings a strong proven history with good judgment, analytical skills, communication, fundraising success, budget development and a deep understanding of leading a large loyal client base of over 8,000 members. Linda understands best practices around personal attention, quality programs, consistent and timely follow through.

Linda has been working in our matrixed ministry structure, being supervised by Tom and Laura. Her focus is to support the team around fund development, camp, Deep C's/Owls and NextGEN, along with data management support.



Ryan Strugar, Camp Director

Starting in November, Ryan moved from being our Specialty Camp Director to taking on the Camp Director position and is focused on expanding our year-round camps and continuing to include our core values and vision of

Fishing For Life.

Ryan attended Montana Wilderness School of Bible learning scriptural foundations, along with a degree in natural resources/wildland firefighting from Itasca Community College. Ryan is passionate about sharing Christ's good news, hunting, fishing, and public service. Ryan resides in Dent, Minnesota is married and has been blessed with 2 amazing boys.



Mark Schwietz, Program Director

Mark Schwietz has accepted a Full-time Program Director position with Fishing For Life that started the beginning of December.

Mark's focus is on our Military R&R (Relationships through Recreation) program, NextGEN, Deep C's and OWLs ministries, along with supporting our other programs as needed.

Mark comes to us with a wealth of knowledge and years of experience. Mark has his undergraduate degree in Theology from Bethel, and IT degree from Lakewood Community College, a Teaching degree from Augsburg, and most recently a master's degree in EBD from Bethel. Yes, 3 undergrad degrees and 1 masters degree. Mark has worked as a youth pastor and has over 18 years of teaching experience. Mark comes from a family with veteran backgrounds and can relate with the military, he has years of experience working with individuals and families.

Mark is very knowledgeable about Fishing For Life as he has volunteered with us for the last 2.5 years in our Military R&R program, Camps, NextGEN and more, he also is a currently finishing his time as a Fishing For Life board member and working on the Fund Development committee.

Mark brings passion, appreciation, respect, a big heart, he is caring, comforting, he loves to share and serve. With his ministry-focused visions, and interest in being a team player, Mark is the perfect fit as we grow.



REEL'EM IN Finds Huge Success in Community Partnerships

By Chad Lanners

Fishing For Life's Reel 'Em In program continues to grow, as it is all about putting gear into the hands of those in need. This program collects and refurbishes donations of used rods, reels and tackle boxes which volunteers invest time cleaning, refurbishing and rebuilding. The rods, reels and tackle boxes are then gifted to people in need throughout our community and the entire country.

The Reel 'Em In program also collects used sporting goods and recreational vehicles of all kinds, including boats, RV's, trailers, ATVs, motors and more. These donations are either directly used in our programs or sold to help fund our programming needs.

This past year we were honored to partner with the YMCA of the North, Egan Company, and Cummins Diesel to collect and refurbish equipment right here in the Twin Cities. Other year-round collections sites include Vado's Bait and Tackle, Joe's Sporting Goods and Cabin Fever. New partners this year included the Bass Classic Tour and the Pine County Fair. At Fishing For Life, we find this program is a powerful way to develop community collaboration. Corporations, small businesses and other non-profits have used this to increase motivation, improve productivity, encourage creativity and just an all-around way to reinforce positivity for their employees.

In 2022, Fishing For Life has been very proud of our community outreach through our Reel 'Em In program. With more 125 volunteers and over 500 volunteer hours Fishing For Life has been blessed to donate 4,000 rod and reel combos and tackle boxes to 30 plus community groups and individuals. This impact is amazing!

Our Reel 'Em In program is one way we strive to grow servant leaders and fulfill our mission of serving kids, families and communities through fishing and outdoor programs. If you are interested in becoming a financial supporter, have equipment to donate or becoming a corporate partner, please contact us at info@FishingForLife.org.

IB Partnership

Year After Year

We are so thankful for partnerships with other organizations, businesses and individuals. And, for many years, Insurance Brokers of Minnesota has done just that! They keep us on their calendar in many ways, and one of those ways is through their annual golf tournament, this year we received a check for over \$32,750 from funds raised at this event.

We are so grateful to have this yearly support and for how Gary Sorenson and the IB Insurance team promotes our organization throughout the year.

This is how an organization or organizations like ours run, with partnerships like these and with donors like you that come together and support causes that we can all be proud to call our own.

We are extremely humbled that you continue to



grow and provide financial support to Fishing For Life, these funds are helping to grow the organization and give access to more people through fishing and outdoor programming. Thank You!

12th Annual Men's Deep C's Retreat and Fishing Derby

Fellowship and Fishing

By Chad Lanners

This life-changing weekend included 3 nights and 4 days, with 56 men having the opportunity to connect with others and share stories about the great outdoors, while fellowshiping with one another through faith in Jesus Christ. While we deepened our relationship with him, Fishing For Life hosted our annual fishing derby and cribbage tournament.

As the Fishing For Life Ministry retreat attendees spent time at Mount Carmel Retreat Center on beautiful Lake Carlos near Alexandria MN, we grew in the Lord and focused in on the power of prayer. Our chapel time centered around bible-centered teachings with live music that was intended to encourage conversation. The environment was perfect for all to grow together.

We were honored to have a special guest speaker, Pastor Gary Keese, founder and senior Pastor of Faith Life church in Columbus, OH. Pastor Keese shared biblical strategies for balanced living in the areas of faith, family, and finances. He has written numerous books and dozens of biblical studies and he is the host of the popular cable TV show called "Fixing the Money Thing".

The Alexandria lakes area stood up to its reputation as one of the best places in central Minnesota to go fishing. Our 2-day fishing derby was blessed as we put a lot of fish in our boats. Thanks to our Deep C's North coordinator, Travis Busch who put together a high-quality mixed species fishing derby.

CONGRATULATIONS to the following fishing derby winners:



Henry Busch, Steve Cruikshank,
Tom Goodrich

- **Todd Lindley:** Largest Sunfish 10"
- **Henry Busch:** Largest Muskie 42"
- **Ryan Schmidt:** Largest Rock Bass 12"
- **Steve Cummins:** Largest Crappie 13"

- **Steve Cruikshank:** Fisherman of the Year
- **Dwight Nelson:** Largest Walleye 25"
- **John Peterson:** Largest Northern Pike 31"
- **Gary Pflipsen:** Largest Small mouth Bass 18"
- **Mike Sheldon:** Largest Largemouth Bass 18"
- **Travis Busch:** Largest Perch 9"



Mike Sheldon, Gary Pflipsen, Ryan Schmidt Travis Busch, Henry Busch, John Peterson, Steve Cummins (not pictured, Dwight Nelson and Todd Lindley)

Chapter Champions

- 1st Place-Deep C's North: 160"
- 2nd place-Deep 's East: 120"
- 3rd place- Deep C's West: 117"
- 4th Place- Deep C's South: 112"

Throughout this impactful weekend of building friendships, many attendees participated in fellowship through our 2-night cribbage tournament led by Deep C's West volunteer, Ron Buster. With 5 amazing wins and lots of prayers we are proud to recognize past board member, Tim Asleson as our 2022 champion!

Here are a few comments heard from this years attendees:

"I caught a fish and broke my streak!" – Mike P.

"I was able to bring someone new to the retreat and talk to him about the Lord. Another buddy got baptized and believes in Christ and the good news is that I will see him in heaven." – Kent L.

"I like how we pick our own lakes to fish and the live music at chapel was great." – Henry B.

"Good staff, good food, good music, good times. I had the opportunity to meet new people, go fishing and chapel kept it interesting." – Tyler G.

"This was a season to focus." – Joe J.

"The weekend was very peaceful and helped me find a path with God." – Chris P.

SAVE THE DATE

The 2023 Men's Fall Retreat and Fishing Derby will once again take place at Mount Carmel Retreat center near Alexandria, MN. Save the Dates and invite others!
September 14th–17th.

Baptized & Thankful

Multiple Fall Retreats And Now Baptized in Christ

By Chris Ray

The first fall retreat I attended was in McGregor on Big Sandy Lake in northern Minnesota. That is where I witnessed other men being baptized. I almost joined them but hesitated and did not at that time. Every year since I have thought about getting baptized but did not because of not wanting to put myself on the spot.

My parents were agnostic. Oddly enough though, they did send me to Breck which was a Christian school at the time. They mainly sent me for the education rather than the Christianity, but I loved religion class and partook in our daily chapel. I loved Breck for the teachers, my classmates, the Christianity but not so much for the education!

I left Breck after 8th grade, attended and graduated from Hopkins. There was no chapel and because my parents never attended church, no Jesus. From 1984 to 2007 not much Christianity with the exception of thanking God for a specific scenery or setting that I was a part of until I met Robin and then was married in 2009. She is Catholic and has poked at me for not being baptized.

I have had a few “faces of death” experiences in my life where I survived and to me are unexplainable without the aid of a superior power. The power of God.

When I was 6, I was riding in the back of a pickup truck and it was struck by another car and I was catapulted through the air onto the highway. Last thing I remember is seeing a light or whiteness. Seeing the woman in the ambulance and then waking up in the hospital. Walking out of the hospital a week later with some road rash.

Another time where I felt Jesus was watching over me was when I was in my twenties, falling asleep and the driver also ended up falling asleep at the wheel. I woke up just before the van was heading to go over a cliff into a ravine and we were able to avoid the whole catastrophe.

Thanks to my longtime friend Kent Lillehaugen, his participation in Fishing For Life, which has been life changing for him in the best sense, introducing me to this organization has been very inspiring to me. A great bunch of Christian men that I am honored to be a part of has allowed me to open up and has been a huge part in my decision to be baptized.”



Pastor Vaughn Blackburn was honored to baptize Chris at the Fall retreat



From left to right: Cindy Weybright, Patti Murray, Mary Wilcox, Rachel Ramsey, Becky Lausen, Tammy Madsen, Hillary Kassube & Sara Shrode.

Outdoor Women for Life

2nd Annual Fall Retreat

By Sara Shrode

We may be small in numbers but we are BIG in building relationships and looking forward to learning what Christ has in store for us. This past October, the Outdoor Women for Life (OWLs) had a great time at the Mount Carmel Retreat Center near Alexandria, Minnesota. This year we were tucked away in the very beautiful cabins that gave us plenty of room to relax, catch up with friends and to make new friends.

The weekend filled us up with great memories, conversations, devotional times, hikes, crafts, morning stretch yoga, and jewelry making.

Our group is slowly taking pace and growing. While we only added 1 person to our numbers for this year, half of our group were new to our ministry! Many from last year wanted to come, but had other things on their schedules.

We are planning to have some fun activities in 2023 so that we can continue to build this group. We are also working through a bible study called, "Get Out of Your Head" by Jennie Allen. This is a study on Philippians and we are learning about the messages that Paul had for his supporters and in most cases his non-supporters. We are enjoying this study that will take us through January. In January we are planning a snowshoe event in Waite Park, MN along with a social time at a nearby members home. You don't have to do the study to join us for this event. The more the merrier! Please check out the calendar for more events. FishingForLife.org.

This group is open to any women 18+ and the mission of the group is to connect with God and with other women, while enjoying outdoor (or indoor) activities. Join us in 2023. If you or someone you know is interested in being apart of this women's group, please reach out to info@FishingForLife.org.



Rather Outdoors Filming Opportunity

*A fun opportunity with memories
to last a lifetime.*

By Laura Hudson

In July Fishing For Life's own Hudson Family had an amazing opportunity to be filmed by Rather Outdoors while fishing on White Bear Lake. This story begins many months earlier when Rather Outdoors had contacted Fishing For Life about filming some of our programs but wanting to have a storyline for the overall shoot.

As discussions began a Fishing For Life story developed. Our Director of Administration, Laura Hudson's spouse Chris is currently serving in Kuwait, Iraq, and Bagdad. With Chris being deployed last summer, "Fishing For Life was more important to us as a family than ever before. Fishing For Life gave my sons, Marvin and Cole, productive things to do, amazing learning experiences, and male role models who speak openly about their love of the Lord. It gave me some time to do some self-care while being a single parent home, knowing they were safe and having fun. But what meant the

most was the opportunity it gave to bring my three teenagers together and give us something to share as a family."

Fast forward to July when Rather Outdoors came to do the video story of the Hudson family and how Fishing For Life was making a difference in their lives while Chris is away. During the shoot we had two pros at the helms of our guide boats and that alone was a treat for the Hudsons. But to make it more interesting we decided to have a competition, girls against boys. Laura's daughter, Ceci who is 15 years old, had stopped fishing about 4 years prior just losing interest for time tanning and jetskiing. "She had to be pushed a little, but with a camera on her she didn't want to be embarrassed and her competitive side took over." Laura was the first one to catch a fish, but the boys quickly caught up and threatened the lead. In the end it was a last-minute catch by Cecilia with a Large Mouth Bass that took it for the girl's team. However, no contracts to become fishing pros or TV personalities have come yet for either team.

Laura shared, "While the memories of that day, with the laughs, the embarrassing things caught on film like a few wayward casts, Ceci almost touching a fish many times, and the bonding of my family were amazing it was what happened for the rest of the summer that will always bring me great joy and leave me forever grateful. Cecilia remembered her love of the sport and found common ground with her brothers. The boys, who are younger, finally had something they could teach and help their older sister and mom with, because she still isn't touching a fish and I don't want to take them off the hook. We enjoyed many hours at our cabin this summer, just the 4 of us fishing together. Everyone working together, laughing, learning, talking, sharing, and finding peace for awhile even with dad overseas at war."

"This truly was a once in a lifetime opportunity and we are so grateful to have the memories and the other unmeasurable things it brought to our summer."

"Thank you to Fishing For Life and Rather Outdoors "
- Laura Hudson





12th Annual Fishing For Life Pastor's Tournament

Giving Pastors A Respite During Uneasy Times.

This is not an easy time to be a pastor, especially in the inner city. The picture above was painted on the church wall of our co-host and partner in this event, Pastor Micheal Pilla and Jesus in The City Fellowship.

The 12th annual pastors event was conducted on Aug 9th to support pastors like Mike. Helping pastors who help so many along the journey is the least we can do. It is a joy to see the smiles on the pastor's faces as they talk of fish stories at the weigh-in scale. This year we had over 50 participants and many of these came from the urban environment.

These pastors have been exhausted with trying to minister to constituents in their area. It is Fishing For Life's objective to give these pastors a day of rest and build relationships with them and their kids. The event is complete with a fish fry, trophies and great fellowship, it is our joy to put these pastors in a boat with a boat guide and give them this opportunity to rest, share and enjoy God's great outdoors.

This tournament is open to any pastor or pastoral church employee and volunteer boat guides. Please connect with us (info@FishingForLife.org) if you are interested in joining our next pastors tournament, Aug 8, 2023. Special thanks to Cambridge Motors and Luther Auto for sponsoring this wonderful event.



Serving the Amigos

Hola and Hello!

By Chris 'Marson' Rinkenburger



Lake Josephine in Roseville was the setting for a fun evening of fishing and tubing. The Lord God provided a beautiful sunny afternoon & evening to enjoy as we served the boys, girls and their families from the Amigo's group (a Spanish speaking community group coming out of the North Heights Lutheran ministry).

We had 5 boat guides from our Deep C's chapters take out the group for fishing from 4-5:30pm, then Amigos families, guides & shore volunteers took a break & time for a meal. A number of other volunteers helped prepare & serve the picnic meal. Pastor Bob Burmeister of North Heights Lutheran Church stopped by & provided Dairy Queen dilly bars as an extra treat.

After the meal some of the kiddos went tubing while others went back out to do some more fishing. The event ended with a sunny shoot out on the dock. The winner of the shoot out caught 5 fish in five minutes & won a new fishing rod as his prize.

Lots of sunfish were caught as well as some bass & pike. Awards were given for the most fish caught & the biggest fish caught. All of the youth walked away with a prize making this another successful Fishing For Life & Amigos event.



Steve Cummins and Robert

BWCA Camp

Perspective From A Camper

By BWCA Camper, Robert

I liked the Fishing For Life Boundary waters experience because it was fun to be there and I got to be around kids and adults that made me feel welcomed!

I especially liked to be with my NextGEN mentor, Steve. We got to share stories around the fire. I got to sleep outside! I got to be a man. Yeah!

Us kids were responsible for all the fire and chopping. It was fun to maintain the fire and cut wood. We carved walking sticks, we even took some home as cool souvenirs. We also made a shoreline live well with rocks to store fish alive so we could eat them when we needed them. Some escaped, so we learned to build it better. We even had a turtle get in there!

One night we had fish tacos and another night we had mac & cheese shells, fish with cheese, and some beans. I don't remember the rest of the nights food but they were all very good meals.

We went hiking one day and found where a bear had stashed a previous campers loot. I salvaged a nice knife from the stash.

We left the boundary waters camp in great condition because we picked



The BWCA Campers and Guides

up all the trash and made a better campsite for the next campers.

All and all a great trip!

If you or a youth in your life would like to join us on the next BWCA trip, please check out our website, FishingForLife.org and search our calendar. We list all of our camps on our calendar to register. More questions? Contact info@FishingForLife.org.



Upland Adventure

Pheasant Hunting with Firearms Safety

By Ryan Sturgar

Fishing For Life put on another spectacular firearm safety field day and pheasant hunt at the caribou hunt club in beautiful LeSuer MN. 16 campers and over 20 volunteers were involved in putting together another great camp. Campers were indoctrinated with not only how to handle a firearm safely but they also got to experience a visit from the local conservation officers and were blessed with the inspiring word from Pastor Vaughn Blackburn. This was all before lunch.

After lunch campers took to the range putting their new found skills into practice. Between target range with .22lrs, (graciously donated by Backwater Inc.) to shooting clay pigeons on the trap range, it all prepared the campers for the next step of hunting roosters with the fantastically trained dogs of our volunteers.

In the field the campers got to experience every aspect of pheasant hunting including what a beautiful world God made for them to enjoy. They took in the fall colors, learned to read the hard working dogs and caught the wild excitement of flushing birds.. When in the wild the wild in us is both amplified and satisfied, experiences like these awakens a new found respect and awe of God's great creation of the natural world around us. Don't miss out on all the awesome camps we have in store for the coming year.



Camper Tyler and his 44" catch.

Trolling for Trophies

Muskie Fishing, Looking For The BIG Ones!

By Cody Klaus

On Saturday, October 15th 2022, Fishing For Life again partnered with Twin Cities Muskies Inc. for the annual “Trolling For Trophies” camp on White Bear Lake. Seven boat guides took 15 kids ages 10-17 musky fishing for the day.

For most of these kids, this was their first-ever experience musky fishing. The kids learned from their guides how to rig decoy suckers with quick-set rigs and how to use a bait casting setup, if they didn’t already know how.

While the weather was not in our favor, as far as helping to make muskies more active, several fish were seen and one was caught! Tyler caught this beautiful 44” musky on a sucker. Here is the story from his boat guide, Eric Hansen:

“We set up two suckers right away and then took turns casting the third rod, but it didn’t take long for Tyler’s bobber to go down. Fishing for maybe 30 minutes on the water when it started pulling out line. We circled the boat around with the trolling motor. We weren’t sure if it was a musky, but we could see the sucker in a fish’s mouth, t-boned. I told Tyler to set the hook as hard as he could once the fish started swimming away from us. He did awesome! Set the hook hard, ripped the hooks out of the sucker and into the musky. He kept the line

tight and got it into the net relatively quickly. The hooks fell out right away, and we took a bunch of pictures. The 44 inch swam away fast once back in the water... Noah (the other camper in the boat) had a bobber go down not long after we released the first one, but the sucker was dropped before we could set the hook.”

Here is what Mark Schwietz shared about the time on the water with his son and two campers:

“My son Jake and I took two young men from Kenyon, MN out on White Bear Lake for ‘High C’s Youth Trolling For Trophies’. We greeted them as they got into the boat. They shared with us that they are part of The Bass Club through their high school. They did not want to do any casting because of the weather, so they trolled decoys (suckers) behind the boat. During our time out on the lake they shared with us the club and the lakes they fish on in the summer. I was able to share about Jesus and about Fishing For Life. We were able to see three muskies, two following in on two different baits and one 50”+ on the left of the boat. Overall, the lads said they enjoyed their time out on the lake fishing for the first time for muskies.”



Campers prayer time with Vaughn.

All in all, the campers had an awesome day out on the water and were able to experience the highs and lows of musky fishing first-hand. Thank you to our guides that came out and helped! (Craig Jermasek, Robert Laliberte, Mark & Jake Schwietz, Travis Busch, Paul Kramer, Cody Klaus, & Eric Hansen). And

thank you to Chad Lanners for packing lunches for all!



Veteran Voices

By Chad Lanners

Todd Roskaft has lived most of his life in Elk River, Minnesota. He grew up with his mom and two sisters. Coming from a divorced family, he really never knew his dad. However, he had strong support from his mom, aunts, and uncles.

As a young person he tried a wide variety of activities that included golf, tennis, football, and basketball and enjoyed connecting with others through these sports, he also valued fishing. Todd liked the challenge of trying to understand what the structure of a river or lake bottom looked like. He said he, “tried to think like a fish. Where should I live? What do I want to eat? What would I do on a hot sunny day?” And that was his approach to catching fish. Now, as a kid he did not get the opportunity to go fishing a lot, but when he did, he would fish with his cousins and uncles. It did not matter what time of year as Todd liked to fish anytime he could, and really learned to enjoy ice fishing as he found it as a way to relax in the great outdoors.

At a young age Todd began to realize his family was unable to financially support him in getting a college education and while seeing news footage on the Vietnam war while watching TV he realized that this was a possible opportunity. He started working at the age of 13 and struggled to find consistency with many different part time jobs. By the time he reached 18-years-old he had joined the Air Force to create better job opportunities for himself. Todd had delayed enlistment and left for boot camp at 19-years-old and headed to San Antonio, Texas. After boot camp Todd spent three years in training at Lowry Airforce Base in Denver, Colorado and one year at Tyndall Airforce Base in Panama City, Florida. Todd was proud to be working on finishing his military career trained in Integrated Avionics and working on planes. After those four years he had an honorable discharge in 1989. He came back to Minnesota and found a consistent career for 28-years with the United States Post Office.

In 2016 Todd's life changed when he was diagnosed with heart failure. While he tried to continue to work and navigate life it just was not feasible, and he retired one year later. In 2018 Todd was fitted with a life support system called LVAD which means Left Ventricular Assist Device and he is currently waiting for a heart transplant.



Chad Lanners & Todd Roskaft

Todd takes it one day at a time and enjoys keeping busy as he has found a passion around woodworking, fishing, and trap shooting while just enjoying God's creation of nature. He needs to be extremely careful not to get his life support electronics wet in all that he does and really misses activities like canoing.

Todd met several team members and volunteers from the Fishing For Life team in 2021 at a trap shooting fundraising event for Masonic Children's Hospital and seemed to connect instantly. Todd was attending the event alone and when teams were being formed Chad Lanners asked him and another gentleman if they wanted to join the 4-person team we had. Both agreed and the afternoon was spent getting to know each other and encouraging each other as we shot. We learned both men were Veterans, and they shared a small bit about their service with us. At lunch Todd shared the information about his heart. And how he felt so good about being included in our group earlier that day. While we had thoroughly enjoyed getting to know both men, we knew we needed to serve Todd in a greater capacity, and that Todd had a lot to share with other Veterans.

Todd recently attended the Pay It Forward Veterans' Event at Lake of the Woods with his Uncle Donald Lenz and friend Charlie Hall, both Vietnam Veterans, and they all found the camaraderie with other veterans was soothing for his soul. He was able to connect with other veterans he recognized and share stories with those he was meeting for the first time. He was not sure what to expect from this event but found it to be fun, inspirational, accommodating to his medical needs, and was honored to be a part of Fishing For Life Military R&R Programming. Todd commented that sharing time with other veterans was powerful and met not only his needs but other veterans' individual needs. The big open water, floating, and fishing was an opportunity of a lifetime. While Todd is still learning about Fishing For Life, we have been blessed to serve Todd Roskaft.



We accept cash, check, and credit card donations along with Donor Advised Funds, Gifts of Stocks, IRA Charitable Rollover, which saves on taxes!

Contact us Today if you would like to donate: info@FishingForLife.org

8th Annual Pay It Forward Lake of the Woods Trip

Veterans Spending Time with Veterans



Reprinted from Lake of the Woods Tourism's Press Release

Lake of the Woods County MN (9-6-22). Every year, there is magic. The environment is created with much attention to detail, which sets the stage. It is veterans spending time with other veterans, however, that creates the magic. Such was the case for 80 veterans at this year's 2022 Pay It Forward Veterans Event up on Lake of the Woods.

This was the 8th Annual event (with one year off for COVID) which began in 2014.

The purpose of Pay It Forward is to honor, recognize and celebrate all veterans. Organizers, Lake of the Woods Tourism and Fishing For Life, set the stage with two days fishing on charter boats, a variety of delicious meals, lodging at area resorts and some guest speakers who speak about topics pertinent to veterans.

Initially, one might think this event is for veterans severely physically or mentally wounded from combat. And it is, but it is also for those who never saw combat, stayed stateside and served with our armed forces in any way, shape or form.

This event is for all who served. Some veterans who are doing relatively well often defer opportunities like Pay It Forward so those who are "more in need" can attend. Very considerate of course, but what we see more often than not, is there is healing or perhaps a boost of life not anticipated, but appreciated and enjoyed by all veterans who attend.

A variety of passionate guest speakers helped shape this event. Special guests Todd and Eva VanLangen participated in this year's event. Both are very accomplished veterans and served in combat as special ops overseas.

Eva served in leadership positions both domestically and abroad. She served many roles and eventually retired in 2017 with her final assignment with the 1st Special Forces Com-

mand as the Assistant S3 Training/Operations Officer in Afghanistan. She has earned a variety of awards and decorations.

Todd VanLangen was the actual spotter depicted in the movie American Sniper. He is also a sharp shooter, green beret, and has earned 3 bronze stars and a myriad of other awards and decorations.

As important as their accomplishments is the fact, they are down to earth, real, approachable and you would never know their impressive military accolades by meeting them. This opens the door in being able to communicate with and reach veterans.

They are the first to tell veterans to get the help they need and that every veteran is important, regardless of their role. As a veteran, you served, were vital to the overall plan and are just as important as any other veteran. The VanLangens are both ambassadors with Beretta USA Firearms.

A highlight for veterans to Lake of the Woods is two days fishing on a charter boat. Licensed charter captains led the fishing and it was tremendous with most, if not all, limiting out on walleyes with a variety of pike, bass, and perch in the mix.

This three-night, two-day fishing extravaganza with meals included is complementary to veterans thanks to the generous donations from Lake of the Woods area resorts, guides, various small businesses, organizations and individuals.

If you would like to learn more about Pay It Forward, submit an application for the 2023 event or donate to this veteran's event, check out PayItForwardLOW.org.

Media Contact: Joe Henry | Executive Director,
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Todd & Eva VanLangen





Muskie Mayhem

Decompressing with Muskie Fishing

By Jason Hetland

Fishing For Life has given me the power to get out and enjoy all that nature and its resources have to offer.

Jason Hetland and his 44 incher Coming back from the military and trying to establish myself within the civilian world and not always having to be “on guard” is exceedingly difficult for me to do. Being given the chance to work with the Wounded Warrior Project and the Fishing For Life Organization gave me a new way to decompress, relax, share my experiences with those that have served with me, and allowed me to find a new hobby that helps me become centered with myself when needed.

This last week, I was honored to be a part of the Muskie Mayhem event again with some amazing warriors, guides, and Fishing For Life staff. This was the second time that I have been able to participate, and this year especially gave me some memories that will last a lifetime. I was able to go out with another warrior and an amazing guide on Lake Harriet for a full day of excitement. Not only was my sister-in-arms able to reel in a nice northern pike but I was honored to haul in a 46” elusive muskie, my first one ever caught, thanks to the opportunity that I had been given.

Thank you to Tom and the entire Fishing For Life staff for honoring our veterans and giving them a chance to connect with each other and give all of us some time to be at peace in this world that we live in today. I look forward to participating in this event again next year and to expand on the many different opportunities that the Fishing For Life program has to offer.



Wounded Warrior Project DUCK HUNT

Our First Duck Hunt

By Tom Goodrich

Fishing For Life LOVES serving veterans in the great outdoors! We hosted our inaugural duck hunt at the R&R Lodge near Park Rapids, MN. We had 9 veterans participate in this 3-day/2-night, all-expense paid event. Providing everything needed for a enjoyable duck hunting experience: guides, dogs, great food, boats, decoys, guns, trap shooting and instructions. It was a faith, family and fun-filled atmosphere.

The veterans were hand selected as wounded warriors who might not have opportunities to hunt in such a format. Meals were served family style around a large table which led to sharing at deep levels about our God, our Country and our passion to see these veterans grow.

Ducks, grouse and fish were all caught/shot. A special thank you to Tom and Pete Sampier for opening their doors to us and allowing us to do what we do—Serve veterans “Where the Great Commission Meets the Great Outdoors.” I personally got to share the gospel of Christ to these men while the team brought all the outdoor expertise and I’m forever grateful.



Vets had fun fishing between duck hunting



2023 LOTW Veteran ONLY Fishing Trip is planned for Aug 28-31

To apply for this trip, please contact Tom Goodrich. Tom@FishingForLife.org



The 2022 Marathon Man Team

Marathon Man 2022

3,774 Fish

By Ken Duke

CANTON, ILLINOIS — Most of us will never set a world record, much less set one and then break it multiple times, but that’s exactly what Jeff Kolodzinski has done. “Kolo,” as he’s known to friends and colleagues in the fishing industry, has held the world record for most fish caught in a 24-hour period for more than a decade. Several times over that span, he’s used his skills and efforts to best his mark and to raise money and awareness for Fishing For Life’s NextGEN Mentorship Program.

From 10:00 a.m. CT on Friday, September 9 to 10:00 a.m. on September 10, Kolo and his team of supporters, well-wishers, and fishing fans occupied a dock on a small pond at the Giant Goose Ranch, a resort area owned and operated by the Herman family. During that time, Kolo caught an astounding 3,774 fish—bluegill and green sunfish—to obliterate his previous world record of 3,168 set just a year earlier on the same property.

“This is the intersection of all the gifts that God gave me,” Kolo explained. “I love people, I love fishing, and I love the work that Fishing For Life is doing. This is my way of supporting that.”

Organizing and engineering such an effort is even more challenging than it might seem. The water body that held all

those fish did not exist just a few months before the event, and the fish themselves were raised for the purpose. Nate Herman, co-owner of the Giant Goose Ranch, deserves credit for that. His engineering and fish stewardship made the record attainable. Kolo’s streamlined gear, custom bait, and even his wardrobe allowed for maximum angling efficiency.

And just to show that amazing fishing success is attainable without spending a lot of money, one of Kolo’s fishing poles and setups would retail for less than \$25. That’s within the reach of almost any budget.

Behind the scenes were more than a dozen friends and Fishing For Life staffers—including founder and executive director Tom Goodrich. Many held on through the overnight gloom when fishing slowed and energy waned.

Watching on the web and joining via telephone and online were some of the sport’s biggest names, including Bill Dance, Hank Parker, Jimmy Houston, Kevin VanDam, Shaw Grigsby, and Wally Marshall.

The event was broadcast on the web, but technical challenges limited connectivity. Nevertheless, spirits were as high as the catch

rate (2.62 fish per minute!) and much-needed funds were raised for a great cause.

Kolo and his team plan to break his world record yet again in 2023.

Ken Duke, Managing Editor of *Fishing Tackle Retailer*, author of two books on bass fishing, and host of a couple of fishing podcasts.



Counter keeper, Vaughn Blackburn, Marathon Man, Jeff Kolodzinski, & Co-Emcee, Ken Duke, managing the heat of the day.

KUDOS KORNER



Fishing For Life provided the New York Mills school some fishing rods for their day of fishing. Will Grieger, teacher and FFL turkey camp guide, lead a group of New York Mills Fishing Team which took the 4th grade classes fishing in Glendalough State Park. Much fun was had and worms and crappie minnows were triggering the sunfish, crappie, and bass. Thanks to Fishing For Life for the rods and Scott's Bait and Tackle for the bait.



"Fishing camp is a perfect experience for christian outdoors man. Long, thought-out bible studies in the morning, and a day full of classic up north fishing followed by a fish fry. If you are looking to connect with your religious and outdoors man side, This is the camp for you!"

— Connor Aasen

"Sgt. Michael Carlson gave his life in a Bradley accident during a night mission to secure two bomb making facilities the week before the first elections in Iraq on Jan 24, 2005. (Yes 17 years already.) While the Bradley was upside down against an embankment in 40 degree water, Michael repeatedly dove into the water to open the rear hatch of the Bradley. His action which cost him his life enabled two young men to survive. Michael changed lives... Because he lived. He wrote a credo as a high school senior in May of 2000... He wrote: "I want to live forever. The only way you can do that in this day and age is to live on in the lives of the people you have affected." Michael continues to change lives every time someone hears his story and is moved to make a difference in the lives of others. This is the opportunity that Fishing For Life gives to us... The opportunity to make a difference in the lives of children of wounded or fallen warriors."

—Merrilee Carlson



"Jimmy" is the name of the iconic boy that we use in our logo. Jimmy represents kids all around the Twin Cities: that inner-city kid who craves one-on-one attention, or the military kid who lost a parent to war, or the kid from a single-parent family longing for a father figure. Jimmy represents that kid who is looking for a little extra attention and a place to belong. At Fishing For Life we strive to help the Jimmys (and Janes!) of our cities to see Christ, delve into the Word of God, and to enjoy the wonderful creation that God provides!

Fishing For Life, founded in 2004, is a tax exempt 501(c)(3) charitable organization. Fishing For Life inspires a love of fishing and outdoor activities through Christ-centered programming. Fishing For Life expands its reach by partnering with community organizations, agencies, and churches. Customized fishing and outdoor programs are developed by our staff, ministry leaders, and volunteers to benefit youth and families in our communities.

2023 Fund Raising Gala

Join Us March 11th!

By Laura Hudson

SAVE THE DATE and get ready to **SCOUNT YOUR BLESSINGS ... NOT YOUR FISH** at the 18th Annual Fishing For Life Gala on Saturday, March 11th at North Heights Lutheran Church in Arden Hills, Minnesota.

We at Fishing For Life have been blessed by so many and with so much, but with the busy pace of our thriving ministry it can be easy to overlook each blessing as it comes. We are excited to spend time in fellowship with you celebrating the blessings in our lives, our ministry, our outreach and our fishing.

Tickets will be available on our website starting in January. Currently we are collecting new items for our silent and live auctions, and prizes for our games. If you or your company are interested in blessing us by donating or becoming one of the sponsors of the gala, please contact Laura at Laura@FishingForLife.org. Thank you for being a blessing to our organization and we look forward to counting them all up with you on March 11th!

Be Different!



Volunteer Today!

FISHINGFORLIFE.ORG

2023 Calendar

JANUARY

- 12—Reel 'Em In-Ridgedale YMCA-Minnetonka, MN
- 12-15—Trout Pond-St. Paul RV Show, Roy Wilkinson Auditorium, St Paul
- 13-15—Frozen Fest Winter Camp, Alexandria, MN
- 21—Outdoor Women For Life, Snowshoeing, Waite Park, MN

FEBRUARY

- 11—Holes 4 Heroes Ice Tournament-Medicine Lake, MN
- 16—Military (R&R)—Ramy Turf, Fish N' Chips, TPC, Blaine, MN
- 17-19—Ice Camp- Adult/Child-Perham, MN

MARCH

- 11—18th Annual Gala/Fundraiser-North Heights Lutheran Church, Arden Hills, MN
- 10-12—Trout Pond-Muskie Expo Minnesota State Fairgrounds
- 10-12—Trout Pond -Outdoor News Deer & Turkey Classic-Canterbury Park-Shakopee, MN
- 17-19—Camp Crappie, Hill City, MN
- 18—Christian Deer Hunter's Association Expo, Hutchinson, MN

APRIL

- 15—Reel Em' In collection starts at all area YMCA's
- 20—Bob-106 Radiothon
- 20-23—Turkey Camp, Perham, MN
- 29—Crappie Fishing/Canoing/Picnic/Teen Challenge-Metro Hope, Rush Lake, MN
- 29—The Dave Vice Memorial Sporting Clays Shoot, MN Horse and Hunt

MAY

- 6—53rd Minnesota Bound Crappie Contest-Lake Minnetonka
- 10—Reel 'Em In Volunteer Day, Elk River, MN
- 18—Reel 'Em In-YMCA-Coon Rapids, MN
- 18—Volunteer Hunting Fishing Guide Training-Plymouth, MN
- 25—Reel 'Em In- Location, TBD

JUNE

- 1—Reel 'Em In- Location, TBD
- 8—Reel 'Em In-Egan Company, Champlin, MN
- 9—Bobbers & Badges-Plymouth, MN
- 12-16—OPEN Camp
- 15—Bow fishing Carp Camp, Hastings, MN
- 17—Trout Pond: Runestone Days, Kensington, MN
- 17—St. Croix River Extravaganza- Canoe, Waterfall, Cave, Picnic-Metro Hope
- 18-22—Youth Fishing Camp, at Camp House, Brimson, MN
- 20—Armed Forces Family Fun Celebration at Lake Minnetonka, MN
- 22—Bass Classic REI Collection, Big Stone Lake, Ortonville, MN
- 22-25—Youth Fly Fishing Camp, Caledonia, MN
- 23—Bobbers & Badges-Plymouth, MN
- 25-29—Youth Fishing Camp, Shores of St. Andrew, Spicer, MN

JULY

- 10-14—Fishing For Life Day Camp, Twin Cities, MN
- 12-16—Youth Fish Camp 1, Miracle Bible Camp, Hackingsack, MN
- 13—Persons with Disability Fishing Camp #1, Medicine Lake, MN

- 12—Amigos Lake Event, Lake Josephine, Roseville, MN
- 17-21—Fishing For Life Day Camp, Twin Cities, MN
- 19—Bass Classic REI Collection, Whitefish Chain, Cross Lake, MN
- 20—Persons with Disability Fishing Camp #2, Medicine Lake, MN
- 22—MN Twins Volunteer Appreciation Game
- 24-28—Fishing For Life Day Camp, Twin Cities, MN
- 26-30—Stearns County Fair-Trout Pond, Sauk Centre, MN
- 31-Aug 4-Camp Fish-Pillager, MN

AUGUST

- 2—Insurance Brokers of Minnesota Golf Tournament
- 4—Lake Event: Community And Sheriff's Together with the Anoka County Sheriff's Dept, Lake George, MN
- 6—OWLS Canoe/Kayak Event, LTBD
- 6—Pine County Trout Pond, Pine City, MN
- 7-11—Father/Son Camp BWCA, Ely, MN
- 8—Pastor's Tournament, Lake Minnetonka, MN
- 11-13—Game Fair (Weekend 1), Ramsey, MN
- 13-15—Youth Catfish Camp, TBD, MN
- 18-20—Game Fair (Weekend 2), Ramsey, MN
- 21—Jake Heath Golf Memorial Event, Buffalo, MN
- 21—Bass Classic REI Collection, Le Homme Dieu Chain, Alexandria, MN
- 26—MN Twins Volunteer Appreciation Event
- 27—Youth Outdoor Activity Day, Alexandria, MN
- 28-31—Lake of the Woods-Veterans Pay it Forward Trip
- 29—Military Appreciation Day at the Minnesota State Fair
- 30—Bass Classic REI Collection, Championship Tour, Location TBD

SEPTEMBER

- 8-9—Marathon Man, Canton, IL
- 14-17—Men's 13th Annual Fall Retreat & Fishing Derby, Alexandria, MN
- 25-27—Get your ducks/Veterans, Detroit Lakes, MN
- 22—Twins Game Volunteer Appreciation Event
- 30—Youth Upland Adventure Pheasant Camp, Location TBD

OCTOBER

- 1-4—World Class Veterans Catfish Event, Grand Forks, ND
- 4—Cackle & Spur, St. Joseph, MN
- 13-15—Outdoor Women for Life 3rd Annual Retreat, Alexandria, MN
- 14—Youth Trolling for Trophies, White Bear Lake, MN
- 25—Military R&R-Muskie Mayhem Veterans Event, Twin Cities, MN

NOVEMBER

- 16—Give to the Max Day
- 30-3—Youth Muzzleloader Deer Camp, Perham, MN

DECEMBER

- 1-3—St. Paul Ice Fishing & Winter Show
- 12—Christmas Party
- 14-17—Veterans Dark House Spearing, Squaw Lake, MN
- 27—Youth Pike Fest, Twin Cities, MN

Events/Dates are subject to change/be canceled. We will update our online calendar as soon as we have the confirmed dates in place.



**PO Box 19320
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SERVING YOUTH, FAMILIES,
VETERANS & COMMUNITIES
THROUGH FISHING & OUTDOOR
PROGRAMS

FISHINGFORLIFE.ORG

Dear Reader,

Without your generous support, promotion, and prayers our ministry would not be able to reach the many kids, veterans, and adults that benefit from the many programs described in this newsletter. Some of you may not be able to be actively involved fishing with us, but we couldn't do what we do without you. I just want to thank each of you for being a friend to Fishing For Life.

*Blessings,
Tom Goodrich,
Executive Director
Fishing For Life*

**Feb 11, 2023 – Holes 4 Heroes-Register: FishingForLife.org
March 11, 2023—Our 18th Annual Fundraising Gala**

HAPPY NEW YEAR



2023

**Get
EXCITED!!!**

Save These Dates!