



The Buzz

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January 25, 2017

Pete Robbins To Speak on Mexican Largemouths

Upcoming Events

PRSC Meeting
February 22, 2017

Fishing Shows
February-April

In This Issue

UPCOMING P. 2

RAPIDAN TU SHOW P. 3

FLY FISHING AND WINE P.4

PRSC ON THE WATER P.5

LAKE ANNA: CURE FOR YOUR WINTER FISHING BLUES P.6

CONSERVATION CORNER P.8

FISHING CONTEST P.9

Vienna residents Pete and Hanna Robbins spend most, if not all, of their free time traveling and chasing the next bite. In addition to domestic travel, they've fished the Amazon tributaries for peacock bass multiple times and recently returned from a tigerfish expedition to southern Africa.

Pete is a Senior Writer for *Bassmaster* magazine and has also written for other publications, including *In-Fisherman*, *Field & Stream*, and *Gary Yamamoto's Inside Line*. He also consults for a number of fishing tackle companies. Despite those credentials, Hanna often catches bigger fish. Here's Hanna with a 9lb-12oz lunker from Lake Picachos.

They will join PRSC at the January meeting to discuss bass fishing opportunities in Mexico, specifically those at Anglers Inn International's properties at Lake El Salto and Lake Picachos, both near Mazatlan.

They've been there 10 times and consider it one of the most accessible "exotic" fishing trips available. They'll discuss best times to go, key presentations, and some of the experiences they've had chasing big Mexican bass.

Here's Pete with a big El Salto bass from last January. Pete has provided on-the-water tournament coverage for every Bassmaster Classic since 2010, and he has been known to bring bad weather with him to venues that have not previously experienced any. He's blogged for *Gary Yamamoto's Inside Line* since 2008, where he explores issues related to fishing, food and popular culture, with a particular interest in the intersection of those three seemingly unrelated topics. He has not yet been featured on "Hoarders," although his tackle collection is beyond extensive, with a particular focus on rare Japanese hard baits.



Pete calls the Potomac River his home water, but has made multiple trips to the Amazon in search of peacock bass, and tries to make at least one trip per year to Mexico to chase big largemouths and drink margaritas.

He lives in Vienna, Virginia with his wife Hanna and their precocious Australian Shepherd Rooster, who has been known to herd small animals and children.

This ought to be an interesting presentation in the dead of winter. Maybe Pete will be able to shed some warm Mexican sunshine during his talk.



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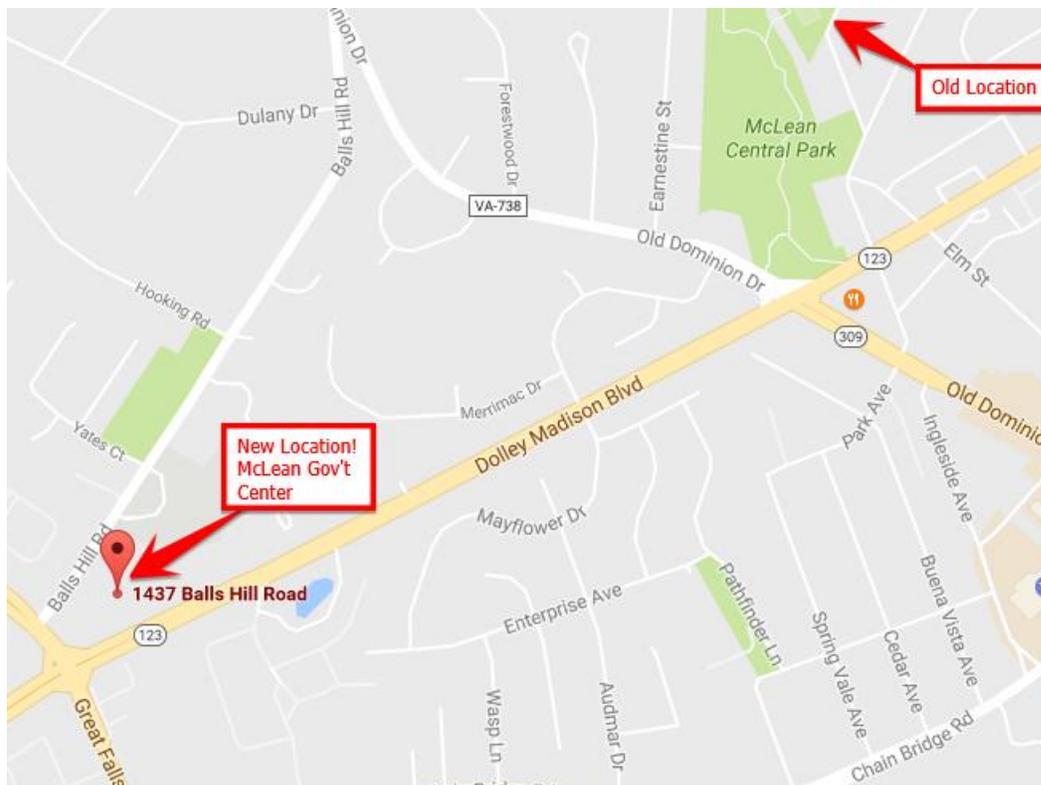
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Upcoming Events

New Location for Monthly Meetings!!! Our **new meeting location** for 2017 will be the McLean Government Center, 1437 Balls Hill Road, McLean, VA 22101. We will still meet at the same time 7:30-9:00 PM.



Join us Wednesday, February 22nd, for our monthly meeting. Our Canadian member, Jed Woodill will be speaking about his fishing experiences in his native Nova Scotia. Come listen to our very own Canuck! 7:30-9:00 PM at the McLean Government Center, 1437 Balls Hill Road, McLean, VA 22101.

The Great American Outdoor Show, February 4-12, 2017. If winter can't end soon enough or you want to book a hunting or fishing adventure, head to Harrisburg, Pennsylvania for the best outdoors sports show on the East Coast. For more information or to buy tickets online go to: <https://www.greatamericanoutdoorshow.org/>

Rapidan Trout Unlimited Fishing Show, Saturday, February 11, 2017. The show is held at the Fauquier Fairgrounds, 6209 Old Auburn Rd, Warrenton, VA. See the flyer on page 3. More info is available here: <http://www.rapidantu.org/>

South River Fly Fishing Expo, April 22-23, 2017. The Expo will be held in Constitution Park on the banks of the South River in Waynesboro, VA. Info is available here: <https://www.facebook.com/southernriverflyfishingexpo/>

RAPIDAN TROUT UNLIMITED

29TH ANNUAL FISHING SHOW

Saturday February 11, 9:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Sponsored by : Rapidan Chapter Trout Unlimited (WWW.RAPIDANTU.ORG)

Fauquier County Fairgrounds
6209 Old Auburn Road,
Warrenton, VA 20186



Admission:
Adults \$5.00
Children under 12—Free
Credit cards accepted

Featuring Vendors Offering Modern & Antique Fishing Tackle, Guided Trips, Flies, Hackle, Outdoor Accessories, Art, Seminars, Fishing Equipment, Fishing Services, Beginner / Advanced Fly Tying

HOURLY DOOR PRIZES, BUCKET RAFFLES, PREMIUM ROD RAFFLE AND MONTANA / YELLOWSTONE TRIP RAFFLE.

Raffle drawings will start at 3:30 PM

For more information and speaker schedule:
<http://www.rapidantu.org/>
Chuck Hoysa choysa1@comcast.net

2017 Premium Rod Raffle Prizes

1. Park Classic Custom Cane Rod--6'3", 3/4wt, 2pc, 2 tips (C Bogart)
2. Orvis Vintage Madison Cane Rod--7'6", 5/6wt, 2pc (R Bourdage).
3. Streamlight Ultra Rod/Reel Outfit--8'6", 5wt, 4pc (LLBean/JWalls)
4. Orvis Clearwater Rod-9', 5wt, 4pc (Mossy Creek Fly Fishing, Harrisonburg, VA)
5. Custom Fly Reel--Firehole 1, 3/4wt(FFBenefactors)

<p>1 Week in Yellowstone For 2 people <small>Subject to guidelines (see back)</small></p> <p>Airfare Rental Car Lodging--7 Days/6 Nights Flies Permits</p> <p>\$25 per Ticket (only 300 tickets sold)</p>	<p>Rapidan Chapter <small>Virginia Council of Trout Unlimited</small> Drawing 2/11/2017</p>
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To purchase a Montana raffle ticket send a check payable to Rapidan TU for \$25 per ticket to: Doug Farmer, 5231 Swain Dr., Warrenton, VA 20187

Please enclose a self-addressed, stamped envelope.



Upcoming Events

Virginia Fly Fishing and Wine Festival, April 8-9, 2017. The festival is in a new, expanded location this year at the Meadow Events Center, 13191 Dawn Blvd., Doswell, VA 23047. Hours are 9:00 AM to 5:00 PM. More info is available here: <http://www.vaflyfishingfestival.com/>



Welcome!

The Virginia Fly Fishing & Wine Festival is the largest event of its kind in the country and attracts fly anglers from across the United States and the Mid-Atlantic in particular. Nowhere else can anglers learn about the quiet sport in such a beginner-friendly environment.

Our unique event combines fine wine tasting, microbrewery beer, live music, and everything you ever wanted to know about fly fishing but were afraid to ask.

The mission of the Virginia Fly Fishing & Wine Festival is to introduce as many people to the sport of fly fishing as possible, especially young families with children.

We do this believing that people, who are connected to the outdoors in their recreational activities, are more inclined to protect the natural resources they enjoy.

Save the Date!
 2017 Virginia Fly Fishing & Wine Festival
 April 8-9, 2017
 9 a.m. to 5 p.m.
 Meadow Event Park
 13191 Dawn Blvd
 Doswell, Va. 23047

We don't just attract fly anglers, we create them!

 TAKEMEFISHING.org

 VAMOSAPESCAR.org



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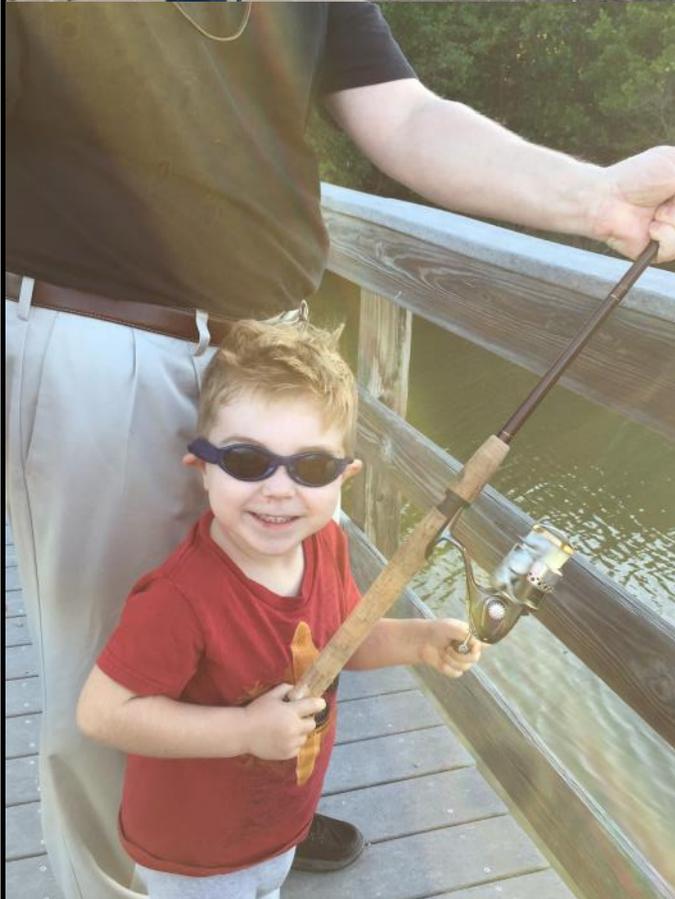
PRSC on the Water

Do your Club a favor: Visit our Facebook page and click "Like"
<https://www.facebook.com/PotomacRiverSmallmouthClub/>



The Family That Fishes Together . . .

Steve VB's three-year-old son had high hopes that he could catch a six-foot alligator on 8-pound test line, while his daughter learned to not catch fish like her Daddy.



Lake Anna: Cure For . . .

By Rick Mrstik

Why would you let your fishing rods sit in the rack all winter when there's "warm-water" fishing an hour and a half away at Lake Anna? That's exactly what was on my mind as I left home at 5:30 on December 12th headed to High Point Marina to meet up with Chris McCotter, who was our speaker during the August PRSC meeting. <http://www.mccotterslakeanna.com/>

The weather forecast looked like it might be a wash-out, and indeed my wife backed out of the trip, leaving me on my own. But Chris and I, nonetheless, headed out into 36 degrees and a light drizzle at 7:15. The water temperature was around 45 degrees. Keying on seagulls and loons chasing baitfish, Chris soon found stripers on the main lake, including the 24-inch keeper at right. It gobbled up a 4-inch soft-plastic shad bait on a 1/4-ounce jighead fished between 5 and 10 feet deep.

Chris likes to keep on the move, so we regularly motored up to fresh bird activity if we weren't getting regular bites. At times we found largemouth bass mixed in with the stripers. At other times we hit submerged rock piles with suspending jerkbaits in search of the green fish. Five hours of fishing saw us land five fish each (I insist that Chris fishes too). Despite the dismal forecast, the rain was limited to drizzle, and with the right gear I had a great day of fishing in mid-December.



... Your Winter Fishing Blues



On January 16th Jed Woodill and I paid tribute to Martin Luther King, Jr. by fishing a full day with Chris McCotter on Lake Anna. With the weather forecast calling for 43 degrees for the high and a 20-percent chance of rain, we were in high spirits heading down I-95 to our rally point at Elk Creek Country Store in Bumpass, VA. I had arranged a full day of fishing with Chris, first on the “hot” side of Lake Anna in the morning and then on the main lake in the afternoon until dark.

As Chris launched his boat, fish were chasing bait on the surface, a very good sign! The M.O. was the same as in December: keep an eye out for bird activity or breaking fish. We soon found gulls circling and diving, indicating a school of bait beneath. I had brought my own rods this trip and began throwing a thin, soft-

plastic shad imitation on a small jighead. Jed opted to use Chris’s tackle and was throwing a slightly different soft-plastic shad pattern. I hit pay-dirt with my first cast of the day: a largemouth about 14 inches long. Jed soon followed suit. We caught maybe half a dozen largemouths but then hit a lull.

Around 11:30 we decided to move over to the main lake. After putting in at High Point Marina, we headed toward the dam in search of birds. They weren’t hard to find. Jed and I threw plastics with little success. Meanwhile, Chris started vertical jigging a spoon to a school of fish suspended below bait he’d found on his Humminbird unit. We all shifted to jigging and hauled out around two dozen perch, keeping those at least 10 inches long for a fish dinner.



As the afternoon progressed, we hit a crappie hole and checked off that part of the “Anna Slam.” Under darkening skies, we headed back toward the dam for another crack at the stripers. We finally found some, chasing shad on the surface near Dike 3. They were elusive, however, breaking all over the surface but not very willing to bite our offerings. We eventually enticed two nice keepers and a couple small stripers to bite, and Jed hooked up with the 19-inch “wiper” pictured above, rounding out the slam for the boat. When all was said and done, we tallied around 40 fish for the day. A pretty good haul for a mid-January fishing trip! We motored back to the ramp in full darkness and then headed back toward Washington. By the time I finished cleaning up after fileting fish, it was midnight, the end of a 20-hour day for me, with work the next morning. It was worth every effort!

Conservation Corner

By Herschel Finch

Back in December the second biennial Shenandoah Summit was held at the Shenandoah University's Cool Springs Conservation and Education Center just off RT 7. This property was, at one time, the Virginia National Golf Course that lay along river right just past the RT 7 Bridge. The golf course went out of business several years ago and Shenandoah University bought the property and turned it into its present usage. Which, personally speaking, I find a *much* more suitable use of riparian land. I was joined by another riparian land owner, Skip Sims, who some of you know as a member of Walt Cary's "posse" and who is a fellow Izaak Walton member, and by Trace Noel, former owner of Shenandoah River Trips on the "other" side of Bentonville's low water bridge, when it was there anyway. Trace's business far outdated any of the big 3 now operating on the South Fork, having begun his business back in the late 60s with canoes and truck tire inner tubes. Trace has since become a full-time advocate for the river he so loves and is a bigtime supporter of the Riverkeeper Network. He's also one of the biggest thorns in the backside of anyone or any entity that would seek to befoul his beloved Shenandoah River. He is in attendance at every meeting concerning the river, regardless of subject, location, or issue. And I'm proud to call him my friend.

The Summit began with a report from VDGIF, given by our own Region 4 Fisheries Biologist Brad Fink. Brad had mostly good news to share, with fish populations being up and increasing. This info was gleaned from two different depletion studies done on the South Fork and Main Stem of the Shenandoah and regular shock-boat use on the North Fork last year. Brad said in his time as a biologist with VDGIF, he didn't recall a time when they had shocked up so many fish and in such variety of species. Muskie stocking is still ongoing in places, but they are now looking at recruitment numbers for them that may indicate a need to scale back on the stocking program. Smallmouth are present just about everywhere in good numbers and sizes. This due to excellent spawns from '07, '10, '12, and '14 but with the die-off we had in 2014, were not seeing the 18"+ fish we should since we lost about 65-70% of those in the die-off. The numbers we're seeing in the 10- to 12-inch range bodes well for the future. He said there are definitely Flathead catfish below Millville Dam and they are there in good numbers and sizes. He didn't say but I asked later on a break, and he said the biggest they shocked up was a 34-incher that went about 20+ lb. But he thinks there are bigger ones in that stretch.

I'm not going bore you with all the scientific information put out by USGS. I have to admit, if I could just come hear our Fisheries Biologists and the folks from USGS Fisheries health lab and leave, that would be ideal. But they never have them first and they never put them one after the other. I think that's by design so we don't fall asleep.

That being said, there's still no one "smoking gun" cause of the health degradation of the Shenandoah. It's still a toxic soup of excess nitrogen and phosphorous from agricultural activity combined with development runoff and violations of permitted discharges from water treatment plants and other commercial operations. They are seeing an up-tick of transportation related chemicals: road salt, engine lubricants and other discharges. This is believed to be from the numerous distribution warehouses located along the I-81 corridor and the increase in truck traffic throughout the Shenandoah Valley. The Virginia inland port is about to add five more track beds in so that means an increase in containerized goods moving through the Valley by train, and then by truck into and out of, the Shenandoah watershed. We're still seeing endocrine disrupters as part of the mix, mostly coming out of water treatment plants and agricultural use.

The other bright spot was to hear some of the details of the \$52 million settlement the state received from Dupont for decades of mercury pollution on the North River from their plant above Bridgewater, Virginia. This money will be used to establish collection points (insert long scientific explanation of capture and encapsulate methods here) that will be placed in the North River and the South Fork of the Shenandoah. If these methods

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Vienna, VA 22183

Conservation Corner

Continued from page 8

work as they hope, we may actually have an opportunity to eat relatively mercury-free fish out of the Shenandoah River again in our lifetimes. It's going to take a while . . . and my fish may have to be pureed in a food processor for me to eat . . . but it could happen. I have high hopes my grandchildren may get to.

Other earmarks for the settlement include \$8 million to repair and upgrade the fish hatchery in Warren County on Passage Creek. It still looks like the 1930s out there, and some state of the art equipment in the lab and improvements and repairs of the ponds and water gates will be appreciated. More access points and landings are being planned as well as a nice chunk going to speed up development of the Seven Bends State Park on the North Fork. A soft opening was supposed to happen last summer, but they didn't make that mark, and Tony Widmar (VDGIF Sr. Conservation Police Officer who runs Andy Guest and Seven Bends parks) assures me that will happen this Spring. They're now hoping to get some VDOT funds shaken loose to do road and bridge improvements into the park. Fingers crossed here at the PRSC Tony.

2016 Fishing Contest Results

Fishing Contest

If it seemed like there were fewer trophies presented at member night this year than in years past, that's because it was true. Randy Chandler's wins in four categories in addition to taking the Grover Cleveland and William Shriver Awards helped reduce the overall numbers of trophies because we present only one trophy when a club member wins in multiple categories.

The 2017 Fishing Contest began on 1 January. Visit our contest page for rules or to submit an entry.

<http://prsc.org/fishing-contest/>

2016 Winners

Section 1, Biggest Fish:	George Thurston	17"
Section 1, Best 5 Fish:	Randy Chandler	79"
Section 2, Biggest Fish:	Randy Chandler	20"
Section 2, Best 5 Fish:	Randy Chandler	76"
Section 3, Biggest Fish:	Randy Chandler	21"
Section 3, Best 5 Fish:	Bill Pearl	85.5"
Largest on Fly:	Chip Comstock	12"
Best 5 Fish on Fly:	Chip Comstock	54"
New Member Big Fish:	Randy Hall	18.5"
New Member Best 5:	Randy Hall	75"
Grover Cleveland Award:	Randy Chandler	21"
William Shriver Award:	Randy Chandler	232"

The Potomac River Smallmouth Club was founded in 1988 as a non-profit recreational club in accordance with IRS section 501(c)(7). Dues are \$40/year. Monthly meetings are held at 7:30 PM on the last Wednesday of each month (except December) at the McLean Community Center. Club by-laws and member rosters are published once a year and available during meetings or upon request. The Club newsletter, "The Buzz," is emailed to all members prior to each month's meeting. Articles, photographs and general information relating to smallmouth bass fishing are solicited. The Buzz reserves the right to edit all materials submitted for publication. Observations, conclusions and opinions expressed in The Buzz are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect those of the club, its officers, or the editor. All materials submitted become the property of the club.