

MIDWEEK BASS ANGLERS OF ARIZONA INC

Bass Bites

FISHING WEDNESDAYS - NOT WEEKENDS!



DECEMBER 2020 EDITION
15 YEARS OF SERVICE TO FISHERMEN

ESTABLISHED JANUARY 27, 2005
EDITOR: TERRY TASSIN



**President's
Perspective**
By Gary Grimes

Merry Christmas! Happy New Year!

2020 has certainly been the most unusual of years. In spite of all the advances in technology our country enjoys, a microscopic bug (Covid 19) has really set the hook on us. Covid caused the cancellation of our April tournament and we are still seeing limited park services around the state. Social distancing during our weigh-ins has been the norm since March. The virus caused the closure of our normal monthly meeting place, the Deer Valley Airport Restaurant, which is unfortunate. Our guys have been really great about self-policing during this whole mess, thank you. 2021 will be better.

In spite of the pandemic, Midweek fielded an average of 31 boats per tournament for the 10 tournaments we fished. Two flights are now the norm, helping to ease the congestion at the end of the tournament. We also welcomed 29 new members, which is remarkable since we have had no meetings. Thankfully the internet still works. We said goodbye to George Cobasky and Lionel Frailey, who passed; and so long to Lou Hirlemann,

who returned to his roots in Wisconsin. Longtime member Sean Ballard won Angler of the Year, needing enough points to come from behind at our last tournament. Vern Ridgway and Tom Savage won Boater of the Year and Co-Angler of the year, respectively.

Of course, none of this would be possible without the sacrificial efforts of the board. Terry Tassin, club secretary, original club member and maybe the last one, continues to electrify his keyboard with news and notes to keep us up to date with the latest info. Tom Savage wears a variety of hats throughout the year as Vice President, always helping and coordinating club

activities, as well as providing level headed wisdom on matters before the board. Vern Ridgway, our treasurer, still has hair left after his first year on the job. Doing great Sir. Gary Martlage runs our weigh-ins, and hauls all our weigh-in equipment to and from the lake for every event. You guys are the best, thank you.

In closing, thanks to all the men who help throughout the year whenever a need arises, and thank you for your support and cooperation; our job is much easier because of it. 2021 is the 15th year for Midweek, which has somehow grown itself into the largest club in the whole state. Business as usual

Continued on page 3

**CANCELLED UNTIL
FURTHER NOTICE
WATCH FOR EMAILS**
Monthly Breakfast Meeting
Deer Valley Airport Restaurant
702 W. Deer Valley Rd
Phoenix, AZ
1st Wednesday of Each
Month 8:00 A.M.

MIDWEEK BASS - HALL OF FAME
2020 Tournament Season Winners!

Angler of the Year - Sean Ballard

1st Place Boater of the Year - - - - - Vern Ridgway
2nd Place Boater of the Year - - - - - Jeff Mabry
3rd Place Boater of the Year - - - - - Gary Grimes

1st Place Co-Angler of the Year - - - - - Tom Savage
2nd Place Co-Angler of the Year - - - - - David Sapyta
3rd Place Co-Angler of the Year - - - - - Warren Brackey

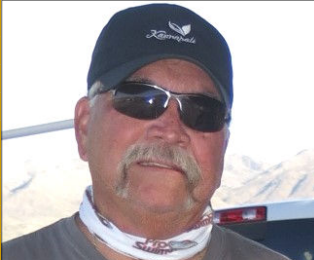
Lunker of the Year - Lannes Brock (9.00 lbs)
February 2020 - Lake Martinez

“We Practice Catch and Release”

Midweek Bass Anglers of Arizona Hall of Fame Class of 2020



Angler of the Year 2020
Sean Ballard



Vern Ridgeway
1st Place
Boater of the Year



Tom Savage
1st Place
Co-Angler of the Year



Jeff Mabry
2nd Place
Boater of the Year



David Sapyta
2nd Place
Co-Angler of the Year



Gary Grimes
3rd Place
Boater of the Year



Lunker of the Year
Lannes Brock 9 lbs



Warren Brackey
3rd Place
Co-Angler of the Year

for the most part, and yes, we are fishing the same lakes as last year. While Minnesota may be the home of 10,000 lakes, we have only 10 to choose from for our purposes, and right now 3 of those are not viable options. Hope to see you guys on the water soon, and the Grimes' family wishes each and all Merry Christmas and Happy New Year.

Seam Ballard (AOY 2020): Winning AOY has been a goal of mine for many years. Until now I never knew how hard it is to win that title, and having to be consistent for 11 months is a grind.

I started with this club many years ago fishing as a co-angler, and eventually getting my own boat, "The Kiddie Boat"; never the less it's not the boat that catches the fish. My New Year's resolutions have been to learn a new technique every year, and that has helped me be able to break down a lake and figure out the bite. I now know when and where to use any technique. I used flick shake this year to catch most of the fish that my teams weighed in. It not only catches fish, but it catches all of the fish in the area. So to quote one of my favorite boaters Paul Cormany "I don't want to catch just one fish, I want to catch them all off this spot,"

Next Meeting Next Tournament

Our next club general meeting scheduled for **Wednesday, 6 January** starting at 8:00 AM, at **Deer Valley Airport Restaurant** (just one mile north of I-101 at the intersection of 7th Ave & Deer Valley Road) has been cancelled due to the Corona Virus situation. Pairings will be announced by email when completed.

The next club points tournament is scheduled to be a day event at **Lake Bartlett** on **20 January 2021**. Club launch headquarters and weigh-in location will be announced. Tournament hours are **Safe Light to 3 PM**.

and the flick shake does it.

I want to thank all of the members of Midweek Bass for always being the best fishing clubs in AZ. Hanging out with the guys around the fire at the lakes are some of the best times of the year. I also want to thank my wife for putting up with my obsession and all the mystery baits that show up in the mail. I grew up in Montana and I fished for food mostly. My dad would use me as his personal fish finder. I would sit on the front of the boat with my feet in the water just paddling and moving the boat, and when I would set the hook on a fish, my dad would drop the anchor and we would fish until I didn't get bit. Then he would pull up the anchor just enough so I would move the boat and start catching fish again. I never knew he did this until I was an adult, and it made perfect sense why he never yelled at me for playing in the water.

The memories I made this year I will hold on to for the rest of my life. I'll be 90 years old hanging out with Floyd and thinking back to 2020 as the year I brought 5 fish, and not 6 fish, to the scales at each tournament and managed to win AOY with the Midweek Bass Anglers of Arizona.

Lannes Brock: The secret of my success! Although it would be great to tell you that my long experience of fishing the waters of the lower Colorado River was responsible for my catching the big bass that won the 5 pound pot and Lunker of the Year honor; I can't. It would be a lie. The truth is that it was dumb luck; luck that paid off very nicely for my partner Ron Pikul and me.

Here is how it happened. The fish was in the water. I cast a lure into that water. The fish was hungry or irritated and bit the lure. I set the hook and reeled him to the boat. My partner netted the 9 pound lunker. End of story. What was the bait at the end of the line? It was a pumpkin seed Yamamoto Senko.

Wishing a Merry Christmas and Happy New Year to all of the Midweek Bass fishermen and their families. See you at the 2021 tournaments.

Vern Ridgway: Thoughts about the

"First Place Boater" award. First of all it was a total surprise with the likes of Sean, Jeff, Tom and Gary Grimes hanging around the "upper crust" of things. I just wanted to be consistent, do the best that could be done and try to "horn in" a little and let the cards fall as they may.

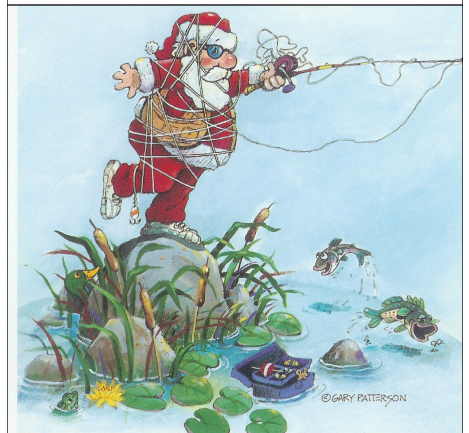
I started the year off in the hole with a couple of "middle of the pack" finishes as Sean, Jeff and Tom posted solid finishes and served notice of their intent to be tuff this year. I was thinking that my strongest effort was to hang in there and be consistent with the angling effort and soon I was able to pick up a few points here and there in the points column.

However, I would like to point out, I drew some solid fishing partners that were equally interested in winning and put forth their best efforts to succeed and that also helped us; take a bow gentlemen. I enjoyed all my fishing partners and I hope they learned something in the boat that'll help them next time on the water.

To achieve this overall game plan, I planned to use reaction baits in the mornings this season until the sun came out and then switching to "bottom scratching" baits, to include the usual jigs, drop shots, and Carolina Rigs with an occasional Texas rigged, worm or creature bait.

Alamo was the turning point in this effort and with a solid draw partner of Mr. Gary Grimes we pulled it off and scratched out the win.

Congratulations to all the fisherman that worked hard for the top spots, it came down to the wire



“Dag Nab It”

and could have gone a number of different ways. Sean Ballard prevailed after Tom Savage made a gallant effort for the coveted award and Sean came out on top as your 2020 Angler of the Year.

I suspect there will be folks looking for that title again in 2021. Bass Wishes to you all next season.

Dave Sapyta: To all my fishing buddies I want to thank all of you for a great year. With Covid19, fishing in the club was a bright spot in my life. I enjoyed getting to know other men in the club I got to fish with this year. It was just a fun and great year. We are so lucky to have so many great men in this club and great fishermen. Thanks to everyone from the club leadership and to you Terry for everything you do. Everyone have a great holiday and stay safe.

John Milkint: With no club meetings for most of 2020 and no meetings scheduled for the near future I wanted to use this Bass Bites to wish everyone a Merry Christmas! Also, as a co-angler since 2009, I wanted to thank all of the boaters for the great fishing at the club tournaments over the last 11 years. It has been a pleasure fishing with some of the best bass fishermen on the water; there are far too many of you to begin to name each one.

I discovered, after a couple of MRIs, that I have a PCL (posterior cruciate ligament) of the left knee. The surgeon indicated that it was not repairable; just the body wearing out as one ages. It doesn't prevent me from fishing, but it does prevent me from jumping onto and from the dock into a bass boat on tournament day. The club tournaments are now in my rearview mirror.

2021 Fishing License

Tell Mom/Wife/Significant Other a nice Christmas gift for you would be a 2021 fishing license in case you need a new one. Whether she gives you one or not, please remember to have a current license before our January tournament.

I'm still a dues paying member and look forward to the next breakfast meeting of Midweek Bass, whenever that will occur.

Ray Riley: Congratulations to all the winners in 2020, what a crazy year. Hopefully everyone is staying safe and secure. The fishing this year was still fun and exciting, but I miss the meetings and the camaraderie. Maybe next year will bring us back to normal. I lucked out, with all of my partners being great fishermen and friendly, but it has been the same every year, what a great club with super members. Have a safe holiday season.

Bill Briggs: I just want to say a big thank you to all of the members who take care of business in this club. And to all the people I have met. I recently retired and love to bass and tournament fish and wanted to learn how other anglers caught fish. So I found this club online. I told my amazing wife how much this fits the bill for me. We all know what it's like to fish while there are a bunch of ski boats making it almost impossible for boat control, so the fact that we fish in the middle of the week is awesome. Once again, thank you everyone and God Bless.

Charles Mackintosh: Reflections on my first year with MBA.

Once retired, my wife and I decided to return to Arizona. I fished with a great club when I lived in New York but in Michigan, our most recent locale, I never joined a club and missed that aspect of fishing. So, I searched online for a club and found MBA. The MBA club concept far exceeded my expectations. Midweek tournament dates and randomized team draws are great, innovative features and ones I have not seen with any other clubs. The monthly Bass Bites write up assembled by Terry is fantastic. And the camping and camaraderie associated with the "road" tournaments are welcoming social events. The club designers have my admiration. And the club officials have my gratitude for the hard work and dedication that goes into executing the well-run tournaments every month. Thank you to the partners I drew this year who

shared their boats and friendship.

By design, the club is competitive at a fun level, but also fosters great learning opportunities so that we can all continue improving our fishing skills. Randomized draws assure the exposure to partners with various specialized skill sets and the Bass Bites write-ups share techniques and strategies of the top finishers.

Though my angling aptitude is nothing exceptional, I have learned a few useful things over time. With that in mind, I would like to share some fishing observations others may find interesting and helpful.

So, we all know fish see color, right? I always wondered, how the heck does anyone know what fish can see? One day, I was walking the banks of the Black river in AZ casting from shore. There was a decent smallmouth bite in the river and my wife and I had a fun time hiking and fishing. Late in the day on the way back to camp, we hit a spot in the river where there must have been a good school of fish because every cast produced a fish. Small, ¾ to 1 lb fish, but fun. Well as time went by, the bite eventually died. At that point, I stayed with the exact same bait, a small grub on a jig head, but changed to a different color. The voracious bite resumed. I had my proof that fish see color. I also learned that fish become conditioned and can learn and that a small change can fire a school back up and that a voracious school of fish offers an opportunity to experiment.

The lessons from that day helped me in later tournaments. I learned the importance of rotating baits when in a school of fish and to always have a follow up rod and bait ready for a missed bite. If pre-fishing a tournament and I find active fish I may try some baits other than my preferred selection to see what else is working or if something is working better.

Is there anything more frustrating than being in a boat with someone who is slamming fish while you are hauling water? Especially if you are using the exact same bait. I imagine everyone has had this happen to them at some point. I don't have all the answers to why, but I

have a few ideas.

One day, my friend and I were fishing for smallies on a large flat during pre-spawn. One of our go to baits at the time was a lipless crankbait. My buddy goes to town and starts hauling them in steadily while I can't get bit. Same bait, same color, I can't get bit. After a couple of hours, I conclude there is something wrong with my bait and I decide to switch. Slow learner, but hit me with hammer long enough and I'll eventually figure it out. Well, as I go to cut off the bait, I notice a tine on one of the two trebles is slightly bent. Instead of swapping the bait, I replaced the hook and resumed fishing. After the hook change my catch rate was on par with my buddy.

At that point a light bulb went on in my head. A tournament disaster from about 10 years prior had been haunting me. It was a two-day BFL super tournament on Lake Champlain. I had several days of practice and had established a simple but reliable white spinnerbait pattern. I had decent spots lined up and felt pretty confident going into the tournament. Early in the tournament I had a hard hit and soon realized it was no bass but a large Northern Pike. I unhooked it, released it and resumed fishing. I never had another bite that day. The co-angler in my boat had a good day, throwing a white spinner bait and harvesting enough fish from each of my spots to qualify for day two. So, what happened? I'm sure a white spinnerbait was a great choice to throw that day so sticking with it was not the problem. But my white spinnerbait was likely damaged from the Northern Pike and I should have just switched it out for another white spinnerbait.

If your boat partner is whipping' you with the same bait, look for small subtle differences. Besides a damaged bait, it could be a heavy wire hook vs. a light wire hook, retrieve speed or technique, a difference in drop shot or sinker weight, etc. Be assured there is a

subtle difference somewhere; it is just a matter of finding it.

I'm thankful and grateful for the opportunity to fish with MBA in 2020, and I'm looking forward to fishing with you all in 2021. Best wishes to you and your families for the Holidays! Charlie Mackintosh



Christmas Weighing-In By Gary Martlage Tournament Director

Gary Martlage: December is a great time to set goals for next year. Club members might want to commit to more events in 2021. Members may wish to set milestones as a Boater, or a Co-angler, or even attaining Angler of the Year status. Maybe with a little bit of effort we can all just finish higher than our previous year's points position. If nothing else happens, setting goals for yourself helps you manage your efforts to succeed.

My personal goal is to talk up the club, and try to get our membership to 150. I know we have the BEST and LARGEST bass club in Arizona, but the 150 mark seems reachable, if all current members would keep the club in mind when you talk fishing at the breakfast table, during an outdoor event, or even a happy hour at the local pub! I think we have a great crew that would be willing to run a tournament fielding 40 plus boats!

Another commitment for 2021 is donate \$5 to the AZGF when you register for a tournament. It's not much, but really adds up to keep our bass stocking program alive. The Game and Fish Department appreciates this effort, and it will do nothing but keep Midweek Bass as the number one club in the state. Merry Christmas and I hope to see you in January at Lake Bartlett.



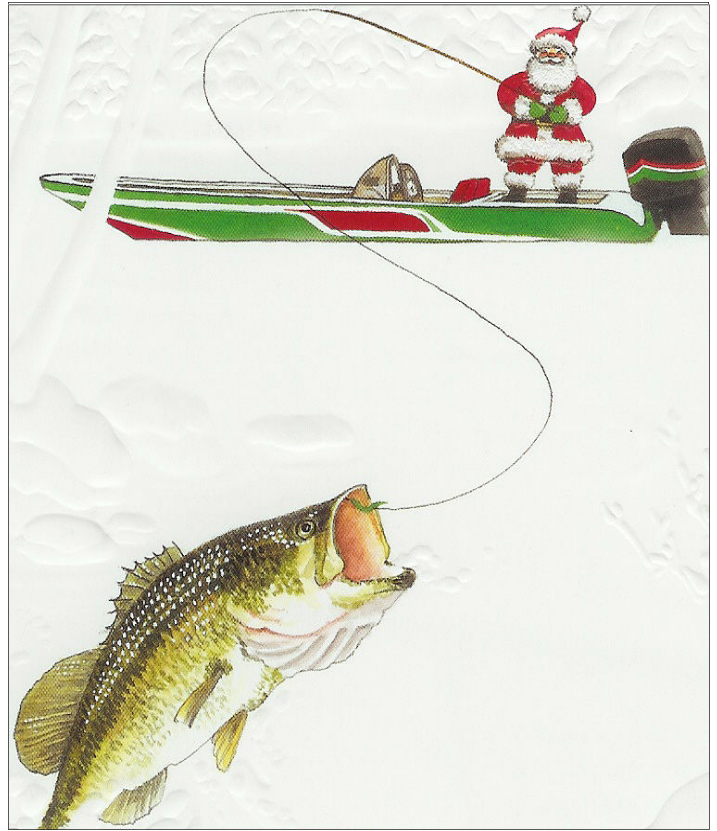
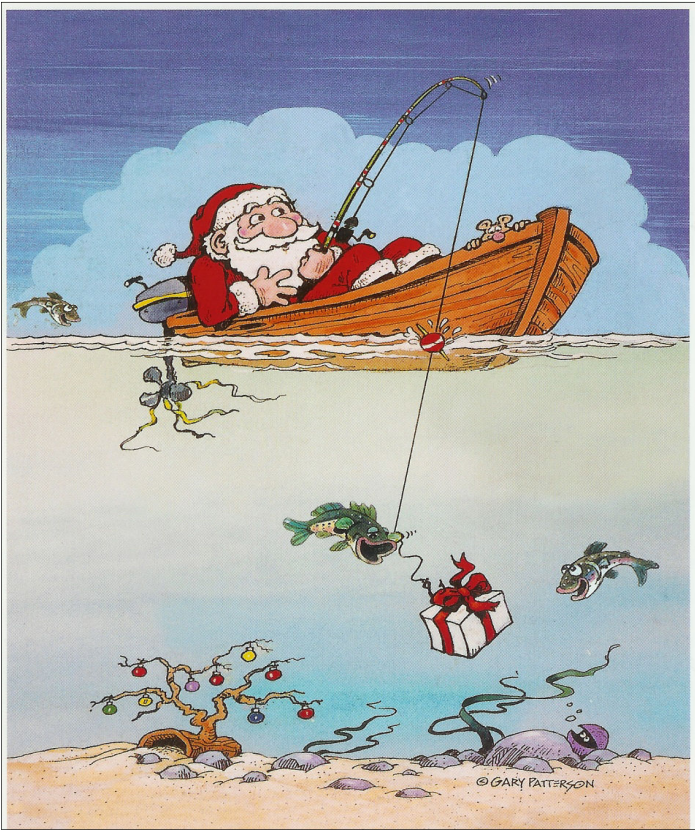
Editor's Log By Terry Tassin

In this the end of our 15th year of the club's existence, it has again been an honor and privilege to serve you as editor and publisher of *Bass Bites*. I am most pleased to count you among our readers. On behalf of the club's Board of Directors and staff, thank you and we wish you all a

**Very Merry Christmas And
A Happy New Year!**

HAPPY NEW YEAR From Your Board of Directors The Five Wise Men!





SEASONS GREETINGS 2020

*And on the first day of
2021 I will be keeping
warm by the fire
but for now I am just*



*Wishing you and
your family a very
Merry Christmas
From Your Editor*







Many Thanks to a Great Team During Another Great Fishing Year

By Terry Tassin
Editor, *Bass Bites*

As the year draws to a close, I again express my appreciation to the regular contributors to *Bass Bites* who provide the content that makes this publication so informative and useful to our members. They make my job so much easier. So here's a hearty salute to Gary Grimes, Jack Hughes, Gary Martlage, Vern Ridgway, Tom Savage and a special thanks to my wife, Fran, who proof reads every page before I send it out. Also, let's not forget all of the club members who provide write-ups after each tournament telling everyone where and how they caught their fish. Without the input from each and every one of them, readers of our monthly newsletter would have to put up with just my "word-smiting" and after **Fifteen** years of putting together the *Bass Bites* each month I have about run out of original copy ideas. Hint, hint, I am open to suggestions.

Some of you are probably saying to yourself (and others) "Why does Terry bother putting out a holiday edition of the *Bass Bites* each year? There are no fishing & catching reports to put out, so why?"

I guess it just comes down to being a glutton-for-punishment and to wanting to have a way to provide a platform for those members wishing to express their thoughts about the fishing this year and a way for them to wish all club members best wishes for the holidays. Some years members provide many articles for this end of year edition; other years not so much – we just have to take what we get and pass the information on to everyone.

As you can see from reading this edition, I also use this *Bass Bites* to recognize the top fishermen for the year by listing them with their photos on a page I call the "**Midweek Bass Anglers of Arizona Hall of Fame Class of 2020.**" It's not much and the big acknowledgement comes at the Annual Awards Banquet in January which this year has been cancelled due to the virus.

Speaking of awards, this year the awards will be presented to the winners for 2020 at the "Grudge Match" held on 16 December at Lake Bartlett at the end of the tournament at 1:00 PM. If you can make it to the lake to congratulate the winners I am sure it would be appreciated.

Just in case I don't see you before the New Year, I want to take this opportunity to wish you all a very

Merry Christmas and a Safe and Happy New Year.

Midweek Bass Anglers of Arizona - 2021 Board of Directors and Committee Chairmen

Board of Directors

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SECRETARY

Terry Tassin 623-931-1546

TOURNAMENT DIRECTOR

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Tom Savage

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NEWSLETTER EDITOR

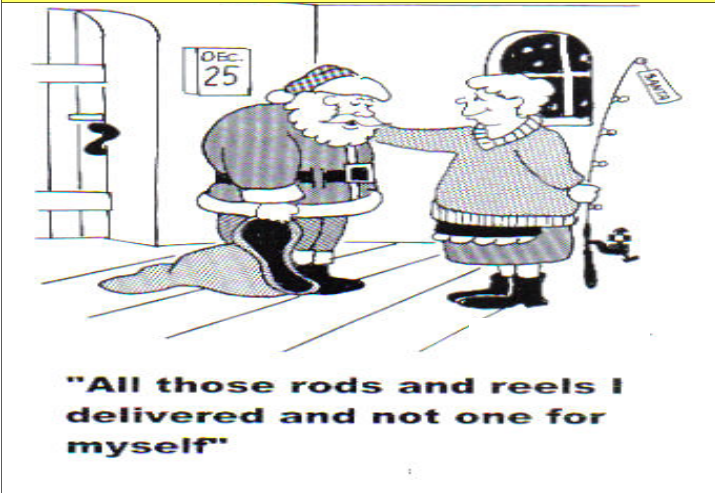
Terry Tassin

ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE

Tom Savage

RAFFLE COMMITTEE - - Vacant

Access Midweek Bass Anglers Internet Web Site at: <http://www.midweekbassaz.com/>



Best Wishes and Happy Birthday

Born in January

- Jerry Askam
- Clinton Bell
- Curtis Cernik
- Doug Cripe
- Randy Gray
- John Milkint
- Doug Moore
- Yoji Nakajima
- Rob Panaitescu
- Ron Pikul
- Vern Ridgway
- Roger Root
- Tom Savage
- Mike Seibly
- Gary Senft
- Jason Wacker
- Larry White



Club Apparel

Individuals wishing to purchase a club shirt, jersey, or cap can order directly from our president.

**Midweek Bass Anglers 2021
Tournament Schedule**

20 January	Bartlett
17 February	Alamo
17 March	Martinez
21 April	Roosevelt
19 May	Roosevelt
16 June	Pleasant
21 July	Pleasant
18 August	Bartlett
15 September	Roosevelt
20 October	Alamo
17 November	Roosevelt