NATION NEWS

GRASS-ROOTS ANGLERS DEDICATED TO BASS FISHING'S FUTURE

B.A.S.S. Nation — Find out what's behind the new name of your grass-roots organization, the B.A.S.S. Nation. 26

Jersey space — Young anglers in North Carolina are funding their clubs while learning business skills by selling jersey sponsorships. 27

Habitat helpers — Members in the Carolinas are planting beneficial vegetation in their fisheries, and anglers in Oregon are dropping more artificial habitat. 28

Marina stays open, thanks to Minnesota club

VICTORIA, Minn. — Quick action by B.A.S.S. members helped a friend, saved public access and preserved a tradition at Shutz Lake, just outside the Twin Cities.

Archie Leizinger, an 84-year-old mentally disabled man, has been welcoming anglers to his property for nearly a half century. He charges $6 a boat and a Dr. Pepper for the right to launch at the only public access site at the 99-acre lake.

But a complaint in April by another lake resident forced closure of Archie's Landing, with the city of Victoria requiring the disabled man to obtain a business license and a $1,500 conditional use permit. The complaint alleged that Archie was operating without a business license and noted that boats launched at his property could introduce zebra mussels to the lake.

"As everyone found out about the closure, services and donations poured in from all over the state," said Chris Glaze, a member of the Sportsmen Bassmasters who has been fishing Shutz for 18 years. "People lined up to do the right thing.

"Archie burst into tears when his guardian told us what happened," continued Glaze. "He has caused nobody any grief for all that time, and he's brought a lot of joy to my life," he added. "People were trying to mess with him because they thought he didn't have any backup."

But he did, and among them were members of the Sportsmen Bassmasters and Paul Becka, past president of the Minnesota B.A.S.S. Nation (MBN). Becka handled the legalities and represented Archie and his allies at public meetings.

Meanwhile, the MBN, Cabin Fever Sporting Goods and others donated money for both the permit and dock repairs. The board of directors for the Shutz Lake Association voiced its support for Archie, and the Victoria City Council voted 4-0 to grant his permit.

Then the city's planning commission recommended approval of the permit during a public meeting attended by many wearing "Friends of Archie" stickers. And officials voted to refund the $1,500 permit fee.

Now donated funds are being used to refurbish Archie's Landing. "We ripped out the old launch so we can set up the new one correctly," said Glaze. "It's a roll-in, roll-out dock. Also, we're paving and striping a parking lot and setting up a compost area for weeds that come out of the lake."

Archie's guardian, Sue Leizinger, called the response "phenomenal."

Archie Leizinger, left, has his marina permit now, thanks to Chris Glaze, right, and other Minnesota B.A.S.S. Nation members.
Photo courtesy of Paul Becka

Previously, he was crying tears of sadness, she said. "But now it's tears of joy."

ROBERT MONTGOMERY

Submit your 2012 projects!

TULSA, Okla. — Would you like to hear your club's name read at the 2013 Bassmaster Classic in Tulsa? The winning clubs in the 2012 Berkley Conservation Institute Awards program will be announced there, and representatives will be presented with a prize.

Top fisheries on 2013 B.A.S.S. Nation divisional schedule

BIRMINGHAM, Ala. — Some of America's best bass fishing waters will play host to competitors in the 2013 Cabela's B.A.S.S. Nation

Bass Lakes, a list of the best waters for bass anglers.

Anglers who have qualified for the divisionals this year will have the great

Nation Championship.

Each state sends a team of its top anglers to its respective divisional. The top angler from each state ad-