

# Illinois Club Meeting | Wednesday, February 22<sup>nd</sup> at 7:00 PM

American Legion Post 771 | 749 Milwaukee Ave. | Gurnee, IL 60031

**Speaker: Dale Bowman – Chicago Sun-Times Outdoors Columnist**

**Topic: *Sharing Fishing Locations – Places You Should Have on Your Bucket List***



Dale Bowman has been the outdoors columnist for the *Chicago Sun-Times* for more than 25 years and is blessed to have covered dozens of record fish and the first modern sightings of cougars, black bears and wolves in Illinois.

It is an exciting time to cover the outdoors with a multitude of good changes, including the dramatic turnaround of our waterways, largely because of environmental laws enacted more than 50 years ago. That's especially true of Chicago-area rivers: Chicago, Calumet, Des Plaines, Fox and DuPage. On the downside, there's been the advance and arrival of zebra mussels, quagga mussels and invasive carp.

There was the anomaly of the BASS Master Classic coming to Chicago in 2000.

Growing up, Dale loved the outdoors, fishing, hunting and trapping; and loved telling and listening to stories about the outdoors.

He earned a degree in English. In college, he was a sportswriter, sports editor and news editor. He studied American Studies in grad school, but never finished his thesis and started writing for his first newspaper, the Press & Journal in Middletown, Pa.

He came to Chicago in 1985 and started writing about prep sports for Lerner Newspapers in the northern suburbs. His first full-time newspaper job was with Life Newspapers in the southwest suburbs as a sportswriter. He left in 1991 to start stringing prep sports for Taylor Bell at the *Sun-Times*. Five years later, he got his shot at the outdoors column and it has worked out well, including awards from the Outdoor Writers Association of America and the Illinois Press Association. He's written for several dozen newspapers and magazines, but doing the outdoors for the *Sun-Times* is his main gig with pages on Wednesdays and Saturdays in the paper Sun-Times and more often and regularly online at [chicago.suntimes.com/outdoors](http://chicago.suntimes.com/outdoors).

The hour before shooting time on opening day of deer season is his favorite hour of the year. In fishing, he most enjoys wet wading the Kankakee River or smaller streams for smallmouth bass. Or fishing for trout, especially native brook trout, on small mountain streams. His most notable fish was a flathead catfish topping 30 pounds from the Rock River. He would like to catch a 50. His most memorable fish that got away was a tarpon, topping 100 pounds, hooked while pitching docks near Tampa Bay. But it charged under the boat and broke off.

His one claim to outdoors history is being first to thru-hike the Tuscarora-Big Blue Trail, a 250-mile alternative loop to the Appalachian Trail from Pennsylvania to Virginia.

He's married to Karyn. They have four children, three sons and a daughter, aged 18-31.