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# Trout Talk

**Illinois man enjoys his  
return to fishing  
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**by Chris Roden**

**November 2023**



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# Illinois man enjoys his return to fishing

**CHRIS RODEN**  
REPORTER@LACLEDERECORD.COM

Almost a decade ago marked a renewal of the angling life for Ray Albertina.

“About nine years ago, I got back into it and try to spend as much time as I can,” he said.

His fishing career started when he was 5 years old and fishing with his father for blue gill and crappie.

But his angling hobby was shelved for a few decades by some necessary interruptions.

High school sports took up much of his time.

And all that time spent in colleges pursuing helpful degrees and starting his professional life kept him away for several years of reaching milestones.

Albertina holds a master’s degree in business administration and another

in health administration, both from St. Louis University.

He became a consultant and partner with two of the “big four” law firms, Ernst and Young and Deloitte Touche.

“I was a partner that ran our health care practice out of St. Louis. I worked exclusively with large health systems around the country,” Albertina said.

Albertina retired at 60, the mandatory age of partners in “the big four” law firms.

Albertina, 66, was very successful in his career and owns some homes in ideal fishing areas.

Originally living in Edwardsville, Ill., Albertina also built a home 12 years ago at Lake of Egypt, a privately owned reservoir just south of Marion, Ill. where the U.S Anglers Choice tournament is

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LCR Photo/Chris Roden

Ray Albertina, right, has plenty of places to fish but makes the trek to Bennett Spring for what he calls its pristine qualities.

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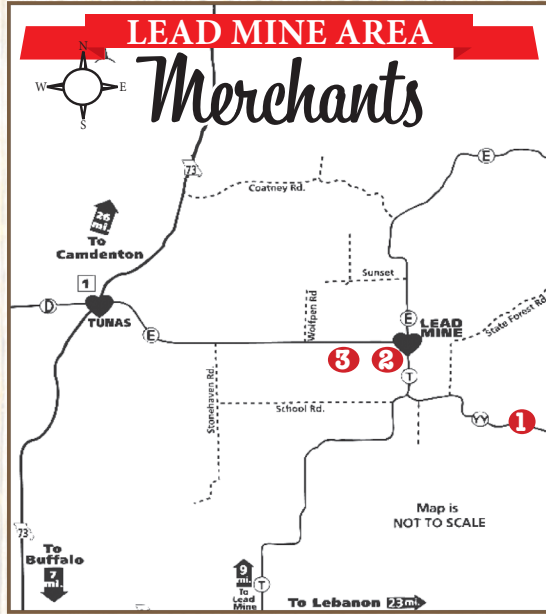
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# FISHING

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held, so he could be near good bass and crappie waters.

And he built another home near good fishing in Florida.

Although retired, he serves on the finance committee for the board at Lakewood National Golf Resort where he and his wife, Jennifer, own a home on the tenth green.

What brings Albertina, a retiree with homes near prime fishing, to Bennett Spring State Park?

"It's just absolutely gorgeous. It's the opportunity to get back into where it feels like somewhat of a wilderness environment. I grew up hunting and fishing, and this is probably one of the most pristine state parks that I've been to. It's something that attracts you. You come back here year after year once you've been here, I guess," Albertina said.

He discovered Bennett Spring State Park in pre-Covid 2018 thanks to friends who told him about one



LGR Photo/Chris Roden

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Ray Albertina waits for the big one to get interested in his mop head jig before switching to a nymph.



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We hope you will make plans to visit Downtown soon or perhaps return to our area to enjoy one of our upcoming events.



# UPCOMING DOWNTOWN EVENTS



Many men go fishing all of their lives without knowing that it is not fish they are after - Henry David Thoreau

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# FISHING

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LCR Photo/Chris Roden

Ray gets rigged out for trout. He caught two nice ones that morning and one in the afternoon.

of their favorite fishing spots where they had been going for over 20 years.

He has also been to other Missouri trout parks.

After the family attended a two-day stint at the Orvis Fly-fishing school in Branson, the waters there were too high for good fishing, so they drove to Roaring River State Park near Cassville, Mo.

"They're both nice, but Bennett just feels more sprawling, open. Everyone you meet, they're all willing to help with fly fishing, and everyone has interesting stories to tell," Albertina said.

He said he does catch-and-release fishing these days and enjoys the rare crappie dinner.

"I just think the waters are starting to get overfished, and too many quality fish are being taken out of the lakes," Albertina said.

He likes to leave fish behind for the next angler.

"I like to leave all of them — as many as I can," Albertina said.

On Oct. 17, he was using mop head jigs in different colors and alternating with some nymphs.

That day, he left them all behind, pulling out three for a quick hello, goodbye and a return to the cool waters of Bennett's stream for, perhaps, an eventual escape from the park into the Niangua River where fewer anglers cluster.

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# Gone fishin' at Bennett Spring



LCR Photos/Chris Roden

People take advantage of the cool fall weather to go fishing at Bennett Spring.

## Fly tying demos planned this month

Join volunteers Danny Goldsmith and Donald Ohler at 9 a.m. at the Bennett Spring Church of God annex building for community fly tying demonstrations Nov. 1, 8, 15, 22 and 29. This event will provide instruction on tying a basic fishing fly and will give participants an opportunity to visit, share stories and see the art of fly tying with experienced Bennett Spring anglers.

New to fly tying? No problem. Danny and Donald will be available to help out and will provide all items needed, although you are welcome to bring your own.

This demonstration is presented by the Friends of Bennett Spring State Park and is open to all ages.

The church annex building is located directly across from the park office, behind the park restaurant.



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# Trout Talk

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# Trout Talk

## BENNETT SPRING STATE PARK AND SURROUNDING AREA



# LUNKER CATCHES



Dan Ageli from St. Louis, 3 pounds, Zone 1, caught using a Mop Fly for bait.



David Jostes from Rochester, 3 pounds, Zone 1, caught using a White Zebra Nymph for bait.



Tom Jones from St. Joseph, 4 pounds, Zone 2, caught using a Blue Crackleback for bait.



Colton Thurston from Dexter, 3 1/2 pounds, Zone 2, caught using a Homemade Fly for bait.



Steve Kirchner, 5 pounds, Zone 1, caught using a Marabou Blk/YLW for bait.



Chay Her from Olathe, Kan., 3 pounds 2 ounces, Zone 2, caught using a White midge for bait.

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