



Johnny Morris and Bass Pro Shops Donate 55,000 Rods and Reels to Inspire the Next Generation of Anglers



Over 500,000 rods and reels donated in the past decade as the annual Gone Fishing event returns with free in-store fishing events and the Johnny Morris Bass Pro Shops Kids' Braggin' Board

SPRINGFIELD, Mo. (June 2, 2026) – Johnny Morris, Bass Pro Shops founder and noted conservationist, is encouraging families to get outside and enjoy the joys of fishing this summer, reminding them to “take a kid fishin’, you’ll be happy you did!” To help make those moments possible, Johnny and Bass Pro Shops are donating more than 55,000 rods and reels to youth-focused nonprofit organizations across the United States and Canada, helping more kids experience the excitement of their first catch.

With this donation, Bass Pro Shops has provided more than half a million rods and reels to youth-focused nonprofit partners across North America through the *Gone Fishing* program, opening the door for hundreds of thousands of kids to discover a lifelong love of fishing.

“The most special memories in life come from spending time in nature with the people you care about,” said Johnny, who spent his summers as a youngster fishing with his family on the beautiful waters of the Missouri Ozarks. “We want to help as many kids as possible discover the joy of fishing, and we’re excited to encourage families to get outside and take someone they love fishing this summer.”



Annual Rod and Reel Donation Event kicks off *Gone Fishing*

The *Gone Fishing* celebration begins with the annual rod and reel donation event on **Thursday, June 11**, when Bass Pro Shops and Cabela’s locations across the United States and Canada will host special events with nonprofit partners. Local youth organizations will receive rods and reels, while Outfitters and conservation partners will share how fishing licenses support conservation in local communities and across the state.

The donated rods and reels are made possible through Bass Pro Shops and Cabela’s annual Spring Classic Fishing Event, where customers traded in gently used gear to be refurbished and given to the next generation of anglers.



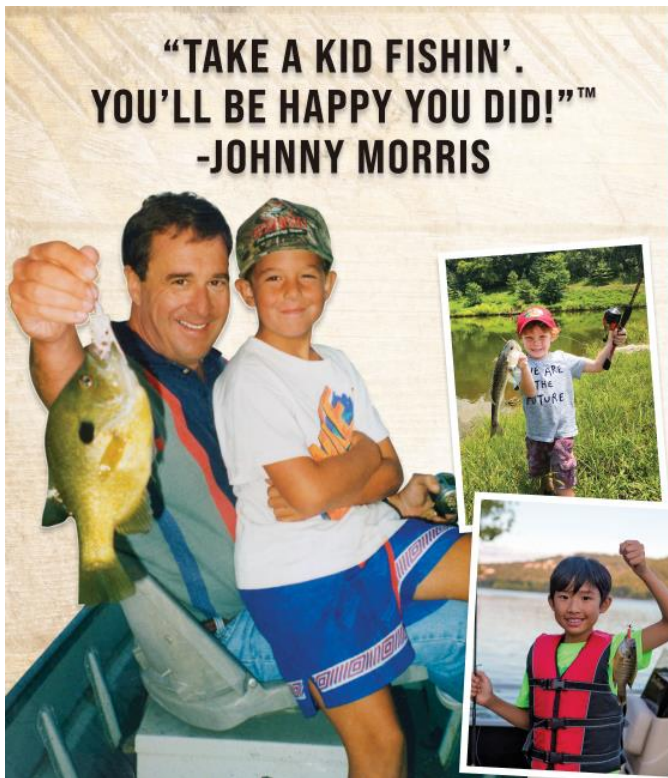
Free family fishing events return nationwide

Gone Fishing continues with free, family-friendly in-store events designed to help kids of all ages experience the excitement of fishing firsthand.

Special weekend events will take place June 13-14 and June 20-21 from 10 a.m. to 2 p.m., offering families a free, easy and fun way to unplug and spend time together.

Activities at Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's locations include:

- **FREE Catch-and-Release Fishing:** Kids can catch their first fish in stocked in-store ponds and receive a FREE photo download to celebrate the moment.
- **FREE Fishing Activities and Giveaways:** Including hands-on learning opportunities and a free slip bobber craft for kids, while supplies last.
- **Tips from Expert Outfitters:** Guidance for beginners and experienced anglers alike to help kids of all ages create more happy memories on the water.



Johnny Morris
Bass Pro Shops **KIDS'**
BRAGGIN' BOARD

Share your kids' favorite fishin' photos. We'll post them on our new kids' braggin' board!

Celebrating the next generation of anglers

As families enjoy free fishing events, they are invited to share their favorite fishing photos for a chance to be featured on the **Johnny Morris Bass Pro Shops Kids' Braggin' Board**. The online photo board offers an opportunity to share memorable moments, from first catches to summer adventures on the water, and inspire other families to get outside and create their own. For more details, visit basspro.com/bragginboard.

For more information about *Gone Fishing*, visit basspro.com/gonefishing.

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About Bass Pro Shops

Bass Pro Shops, North America's premier outdoor and conservation company, was founded in 1972 when avid young angler Johnny Morris started selling tackle out of his father's liquor store in Springfield, Missouri. That was the company's sole location for the first 13 years, and it has since grown to nearly 200 retail locations throughout North America. Today the company provides customers with unmatched offerings spanning premier destination retail, outdoor equipment manufacturing, world-class resort destinations and more. In 2017 Bass Pro Shops united with Cabela's to create a "best-of-the-best" experience with superior products, dynamic locations and outstanding customer service. Bass Pro Shops also

operates [White River Marine Group](#), offering an unsurpassed collection of industry-leading boat brands, and [Big Cedar Lodge](#), America's Premier Wilderness Resort. Under the visionary conservation leadership of Johnny Morris, Bass Pro Shops is a national leader in protecting habitat and introducing families to the outdoors and has been named by Newsweek as "America's Best Outdoor Retailer" for four consecutive years and "America's Most Trusted Retailer for Outdoor Gear."

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