



December 2021 President's Message

We have arrived at year's end, but it looks like fall has returned. Where is the snow! The past year was full of very nice surprises: the ponds at Fox Bluff contained a 12-inch brook trout, stile builders received some very positive comments about the stiles we have been building, and we are contemplating the prospect of a fishing trip exchange with the West Denver TU Chapter.

The mid-winter fly-tying program will start on Tuesday January 11 at 7:00 at Village Pizza. That is if the Omicron virus proves to be controlled by vaccinations. Updates about our meetings will be given as we learn the latest about this variant. The sessions will also be connected to Zoom. So, if you choose to stay at home, you can still follow along. The Zoom link will be sent out before the first session so look for it. To tie at Village Pizza, you must be triple vaccinated and wear a mask.

The Holiday auction will be ending on Wednesday Dec.14 so bid on those great items. The link is <https://go.tulocalevents.org/lwtu-holiday-2021-auction>

Over a thousand Brook Trout eggs for *Trout in the Classroom* were placed in three classrooms on Dec.8 by Bob Meschewski and me. Students at the Dundee Middle School, Huntly High School and Belvedere High School will be caring for the Brook Trout till spring. We are hoping for lots of fingerlings this year to restock Fox Bluff's ponds.

Our speaker this month is Ann R. Miller, author of *Hatch Guide for Upper Midwest Streams*. Ann spoke to us in-person several years ago. She was a dynamic speaker with lots of great photography and a fantastic amount of information. Her knowledge of stream entomology is guaranteed to help you choose the right fly on your next fishing trip. While teaching beginning and intermediate fly fishing schools, Ann became frustrated with the lack of comprehensive Midwest information on insect hatches, taxonomy, behavior, and flies to match them. An aquatic biologist, she decided to tackle the world of bugs head on, and the result is the *Hatch Guide for Upper Midwest Streams*. The comprehensive field guide was published in January, 2012 by Frank Amato Publications.

Ann is a founder and current president of Flygirls, an organization whose purpose is to help women become involved in fly fishing. The club was founded in 1996 and continues in its purpose to teach women to fly fish as well as provide fly fishing and fly tying outings in Michigan and beyond. While focused on women in fly fishing, the club welcomes men as well.

Ann's presentation "Virtually Buggy" will discuss some of the intricacies in writing her hatch guide as well as an overview of trout stream entomology. She is working on republishing her hatch guide, currently out of print, in 2022. The new guide will include a section on terrestrial insects.

The link to join our December meeting is:

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82298939724?pwd=SEVteWFwMHlmMlhIN2VEeTBPM0VGUT09>

Meeting ID: 822 9893 9724

Passcode: 170737

Dial 1 312 626 6799 Use either computer audio or call in not both

Hopefully the chapter can meet in-person next year and exchange fishing stories and renew friendships. But with the Omicron variant looming over our shoulders, we will be having our January meeting on Zoom.

Have a happy and healthy holiday season.

Jerry Sapp

Lee Wulff TU Meeting

Join Zoom Meeting

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The Spring Outing calendar for LWTU for 2022 has been tentatively set as follows:

Early Spring Outing (Fennimore, WI) April 28-May 1

The year's first outing will be to the Fennimore area, with fishing available on the Little Green River, Big Green River, Castle Rock Creek, Blue River and a variety of other tributaries and creeks. Details on reservations and activities will follow early in 2022.

Spring Outing/Colorado Chapter Exchange (Viroqua/Westby, WI, May 19-22)

Our spring trip to the Viroqua/Westby area (May 19-22) will include a new wrinkle; we will be joined by some anglers from the Colorado West Denver TU chapter that our former LWTU President, Bob Becker, has joined. We envision this as an exchange program, with a reciprocal visit to Colorado for interested LWTU members, to be scheduled sometime during mid to late July (after the spring runoff has ended).

We're looking for individual LWTU members who will volunteer to guide visiting anglers on Driftless area waters around Viroqua/Westby on a 1:1 or 1:2 basis, on one or more days of the outing. If interested please contact Ralph Lessor (new LWTU Outings Coordinator, email r_lessor@msn.com) by the end of this year. Volunteer guides for this outing would have preference for inclusion in the reciprocal outing to Colorado, with members of the West Denver chapter acting as guides to their local waters, if that outing ends up with space limitations. If you're interested in fishing in Colorado with the group, whether you will be able to guide anglers in May or not, please let Ralph know.

Accommodations for this outing will likely be at the Logan Mill Lodge in Westby, which offers better opportunities for socialization and exchange of fish stories than the Vernon Inn, but to reserve these rooms we will need a preliminary headcount, so if you're interested let us know ASAP.

Late Spring Outing (Wa-Wa-Sum replacement, late June)

Due to declining attendance by LWTU members and decreased fishing quality, the Board has decided not to renew our window at Wa-Wa-Sum in Michigan, to allow other groups that can more fully utilize the facility a chance to experience it. Instead, we will likely organize a second outing to the Viroqua/Westby area if there is sufficient interest. Details to follow early in 2022.

Colorado Exchange Outing (July)

Details will follow once we've worked them out with the Colorado chapter

Bob Olach's Fly of the Month

*T.E. Pritt's
#3 – Winter Brown*

Back in the late 1800s, a fellow named Thomas Evan Pritt (T.E. Pritt) wrote a book called **“Yorkshire Trout Flies”**, the title of which was later changed to **“North Country Flies”** in subsequent publishings.

Pritt's book has been reprinted several times in hardcover versions and a few years back; a paperback printing was made that's available at a very reasonable price, priced around \$10.00

Whether it's the hard cover, paperback or a .pdf copy that can be downloaded from various sites, the flies' dressings, pictures of the flies and sometimes even the stated best times of the (UK) trout season to fish some of the flies are stated in the books.

When tying the old North Country **“Spider”** dressings, most fly tiers continue to use silk threads, as stated in the original publications. For many years, the go-to silk thread used in tying these old North Country dressings was Pearsall's Gossamer silks. But in the past decade (maybe less), the Gossamer silks were discontinued and other brands of silk of now being used.

Personally, I use either the Gossamer silks that I have left or YLI100 silks of similar colors, since silks change color when wet and the use of modern threads change the fly's appearance when the fly gets wet.

In tying these **“Winter Brown”** flies, I first waxed the silk thread, did a couple thread wraps before tying in the peacock herl head immediately behind the eye of the hook. After 4 or 5 peacock herl turns to make the **“head”**, the hackle is then attached and wrapped backwards towards the hook bend.

After 3 or 4 hackle turns, the hackle is secured with the silk thread (behind the hackle) and the remaining hackle is trimmed. The silk thread body is then wrapped towards the end of the hook shank and then back to a place immediately behind the wound hackle where a 4 or 5 turn whip finish is then made.

In the flies shown below, I used Pearsall Gold (6a) silk thread on size 14 Daiichi 1550 wet fly hooks, peacock herl for the head and the light colored feather from the underside of an English Woodcock's wing.



#3. WINTER BROWN. (Pritt's Original Dressing)

HOOK – No. 2

WINGS - Hackled with a feather from the inside of a Woodcock's wing.

BODY – Orange silk, not too bright.

HEAD – Peacock herl.



Grumpy's Page by Kurt Haberl

Ghost Mary's backyard was expansive, bordered by a mixture of evergreens and unidentifiable bare bushes in the early winter night. Near the center was a fire ring of blackened steel with crackling flames in the middle and dancing shadows on the faces of half a dozen of us in camp chairs around it. It was a good night for a gathering between the rainy bluster of Thanksgiving, and the stinging frost of Christmas. Mary had set up a table with plenty to drink, including hot chocolate, the makings for S'mores, and a tray of sliced sausage, cheese and crackers.

“Two things,” Mary announced. “I invited y’all to this gathering as validation. When I come home from an outing and tell my husband, Tom - I believe you’ve all met Tom - what happened and who it happened to, he doesn’t believe me. Maybe after tonight, he will. The second is that in the off season it might be fun to compare notes, share something we learned about trout fishing last year, and have a better season next year. What do you think?”

“I like it,” Schnoz said. “I’d be happy to start. I learned last season that whenever Grumpy catches a trout it’s almost always due to luck.”

With this group, it doesn’t take long for any well-intentioned gathering to go off the rails.

“Ah,” I said. “I learned that my plan is working.”

“What plan?” Schnoz asked.

“My plan to make you think all the fish I catch happens by luck. That way, you never learn any of my secrets.”

“You don’t have any secrets,” Schnoz said. “You couldn’t tell us a single one.”

“Sure I can. You know that deep pool by the big rock we call Gibraltar just up from the DNR access sign on Jessup Creek? There is always a large pod of fish in there.”

“We all know that,” Roy the plumber said. “It’s just that in water so deep, they’re hard to catch.”

“It doesn’t matter,” I said. “My secret is that they’re almost all creek suckers.”

“Really?” Roy said.

“So that’s why you always offer me the chance to fish it first and then go upstream while you go downstream,” Schnoz said.

“Heh, heh, heh,” I said.

“But I’ve caught trout in that pool,” Mary said.

“I said ‘almost all,’ and you’re a really good fisher. Schnoz isn’t.”

“But I know you secretly want to start at that pool,” Schnoz said, “so I think you’re lying just so you can go first.”

“But I know you think I’m lying,” I said, “so I might be telling the truth because I know you’d think if they’re just suckers, why bother, but if you think I’m lying you’d spend an entire morning there while I’d have the whole stream to myself.”

“But I know you’d think that I’d think you’re lying, so you might be telling the truth.” Schnoz said.

“Heh, heh, heh,” I said again.

Mary sighed so deeply we all heard her.

“Okay,” Tom said. “I should know better than to doubt your stories, Mary dear.”

“Me next,” Dewey said. “I learned that when I catch a trout, it’s mostly luck.”

“That’s not true,” said Wet Curtis. “I’ve fished with you. You have one of the most important skills any trout fisher could have - persistence.”

“But that just means even a blind squirrel finds a nut every once in a while,” Dewey said.

“What about that 20-inch brown I saw you pull out from under the root wad on the Primrose Branch last July? None of us could have done that.”

“That was because I lose so many flies I switched to eight pound test tippet. Most regular fish laugh at my flies.”

“I think laughing fish are more willing to take an artificial, so it’s a good strategy,” Roy the plumber said.

“But how do you tell if they’re laughing?” Curtis asked.

“That’s easy,” Roy answered. “Have Dewey fish over them and if he catches trout, they’re laughing.”

Mary sighed again. I heard Tom chuckle, then he said, “Mary, no wonder you like those outings.”

“How about something useful?” Mary said. “I learned that a two fly rig with a bead head attractor on top will both get the interest of trout and get a much smaller fly like a zebra midge or perdigon down to their level where they’ll take it.”

“What’s a perdigon?” three of us said simultaneously.

“It’s a very small fly with a bead head, a few wraps of something light or just thread and covered with acrylic glue or epoxy to make it translucent,” Mary said.

“I want some of those,” Schnoz said. “Then I can prove to Grumpy that the Rock of Gibraltar pool has trout in it.”

“Heh heh heh,” I said.

“Is it my turn?” Curtis said. “I learned that if you’re crossing even a small stream, don’t try to jump it because the mud on the other side is slick and you can never jump as far as you think you can. Then when you fall in, I learned that you should never try to wade by putting your foot on flat rocks because they’re slick, you should put your foot in between the rocks where there’s mostly gravel.”

“That’s good advice,” I said.

“Yeah,” Wet Curtis said. “I remember it almost every time I try to jump across a four-foot wide brook. The secret is to remember it *before* you jump.”

“What about you, Roy?” Mary said. “You’re our resident philosopher.”

“I’ve learned that you have to practice a high backcast to get your fly snagged in a tree rather than a thorn bush on the bank of a stream. Trees are better because you won’t poke yourself trying to unsnap the fly. If it’s in a tree, you just break it off.”

“You could use eight pound test tippet,” Dewey said. “I’m thinking of switching to ten pound test. I’ll bet I could pull some branches down.”

“I like that idea,” Roy said. “Thanks. You know, this has been a very informative session. Thank you, Mary.”

Mary sighed. Tom chuckled. I said, “Heh heh heh” one more time, just to aggravate Schnoz, but he was struggling with the remains of a “S’more” that had somehow glued two of his fingers together on both hands and he had made the mistake of putting them in his mouth.

“Mm mm mm,” he said.

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