



## **March 2017 President's Message**

Hi Lee Wulff members.

Well we glided through February with some very peculiar and unseasonable weather. Some of us were fortunate enough to wet a line or two in the Driftless a couple of weekends ago. I couldn't believe I was outside in some powerful sun with 60 degree temperatures!

Also, I am hearing from several of my local fly fishing comrades that they have already been fishing the Kankakee with amazing results. Big, big smallies and northerns, folks! Great time of the year to get out there!

I hear the fly tying classes at Cabela's are doing well. There is only a short time left before we take off for fishing season! So come out and join us.

Some of our biggest news has had to do with the fantastic progress at Fox Bluff. We started our work days recently and it's going quite well. Attendance has averaged 25-30 participants. I wish I could take credit for more, but Jerry Sapp, our conservation chair, has been instrumental in planning this project, persisting in his efforts to make connections and form a network of support, and setting up these work days. We want to thank everyone from Lee Wulff, Elliott Donnelley, and Gary Borger chapters who have made time on some chilly Saturday mornings to help us clear the wooded areas and prepare the ponds for our brook trout! Please come out and join the excitement. No task is too small for all to be of help. As a matter of fact we are looking for some folks who would be interested in being "gofer's", helping with signup and paper work, messengers, as well as helping out preparing/setting up lunch for these guys. I haven't seen such a dedicated hard working group of guys and gals in some time! And after a full morning of work they are very hungry by noon!

Jerry will be giving us an update at the meeting about further progress. We should be ready for the TIC brook trout to enjoy their new home in May.

Please strongly consider joining us this year at WaWaSum June 7-11. We are seeing a nice list of folks signing up to attend already, but there is still ample space. I am in charge this year of setting up this trip; and you all need to make me look good by making a fantastic showing this year. ☺

We need to show MI State and the folks in Grayling that we have a vested interest in supporting WaWaSum lodge and the area. Please see the newsletter for more details. Oh yes! And by the way--

***We will ALSO be offering a little incentive for new attendees to WaWaSum this year!!***

I am going to be booking a half day evening float trip one evening with my guide and friend Dave Mauro. Anyone who is attending WaWaSum for the **first time** will have their name included in a **drawing**. One lucky winner will be joining me for that evening float. The Au Sable offers some of the most amazing evening and night fishing I've ever encountered. Who knows what will be hatching by then with all of the unseasonably warm temps we've been experiencing!!

We will be offering a lot of opportunities for several outings for this year. Please see Gordon Rudd for signup and further information.

I cannot thank our board/officers enough for all of their support and participation in finding speakers and leading several of our meetings; as I have been recovering from a way too eventful year with this broken ankle! We have some amazing leadership in this great team of people. I appreciate everyone's participation and support of these guys as they have done such a great job! Please be sure to thank them and tell them how much you appreciate all that they do.

This month we will be welcoming Javier Guevara of Ecuador Fly Fishing to our meeting. Javier is an amazing fly fishing guide in some of the most intriguing spots in Mexico, South America and the Galapagos Islands. You will be mesmerized by his videos, photos, and stories he will be sharing.

So let's fill up our meeting room again this month! I'm impressed with our attendance numbers as more people are finding out about us and seeking to join the chapter.

Thanks to each of you for making this chapter a warm, caring, energetic group of individuals who love conservation and fly fishing!

See you soon! Meg

Where We Meet  
Village Pizza and Pub  
145 N. Kennedy Drive  
Carpentersville, IL

Social Hour: 6:00 - 7:30 p.m. with all you can eat pizza and pop served for \$15.00 per person

Main program: 7:30 p.m.

Other menu choices, cocktails and spirits are available for purchase.

Please RSVP to Yves Charron at [treasurer@leewulfftu.org](mailto:treasurer@leewulfftu.org) by Tuesday March 14th so we know how many pizzas to preorder

### **Our March Speaker - Javier Guevara From Ecuador Fly Fishing**



**Javier Guevara will take us on a fly fishing tour thru Ecuador. Join us for an exciting journey to South America.**

Javier Guevara is an avid fly fisherman, fly tyer, and fly casting instructor. He is also the owner/guide of Ecuador Fly Fishing. Javier has helped establish the growth of the fly fishing community in Ecuador, South America. He is also an active member in numerous clubs and organizations in the Midwest Including TU. If you don't see him out on the water you'll find him on his tying bench. You can follow him on Facebook, Instagram, and Youtube

### **In Memoriam**

Vic Becker lifelong TU member and Lee Wulff chapter member passed away March 4 after a long battle with Pneumonia. Vic was the father of our Vice Present Robert Becker. He was quite a guy. If any of you were privileged to sit at his table at a Christmas party in recent years you will remember him well. Our condolences go out to the Becker family.

### **Conservation News**

Two work days completed, and two more to go this spring at Fox Bluff, in our joint restoration project with McHenry County. If you have not been to one of the work days yet you are missing some fun, friendship, fatigue, and great chili. The volunteers have accomplished more than was ever expected of them in two mornings. The upper pond has been improved by channeling the clogged entrance. Volunteers raked muck, cut and pulled brush and scooped out a channel that will narrow the stream and keep it cooler for the Brook Trout that will be introduced this May. This was just one example of the many really hard jobs the volunteers have done. The volunteers have also removed brush from around the upper pond and improved a meander between the upper and middle ponds. The cascade below the upper pond has been saved from wash-out and the middle pond dam has been repaired avoiding a possible breach at that point.

In the next two sessions volunteers will be clearing more brush along the middle and lower ponds making them more accessible for fishing. The final project will be to build a rock barrier at the termination of third pond to retain the trout in that pond.

The next workdays are March 18 and April 1 from 9 till noon. Please consider coming out to help make this project a place you will want to fish. At the end of the spring project, as a special thanks to the dedicated volunteers, a raffle ticket for each day they participated which will be entered into a drawing for a fly rod.

Thanks again to all of the volunteers that have spent Saturday mornings achieving what this Trout Unlimited organization is dedicated to: preserving cold, clean waters.

**Fox Bluff – Before we started**



**What we have done so far**



## **Youth Program 2017 – Volunteer Today!**

In partnership with the Northern Illinois Special Recreation Association (NISRA), Max McGraw Wildlife Foundation and LL Bean, our Chapter created the award winning Fishin' So Fly program for at-risk youth. This unique program brings local needy children together with Lee Wulff TU members to create valuable and life-changing experiences to both the children and members. Fishin' So Fly includes 4 weekly fly fishing instruction and conservation clinics and a day trip to the streams of the Driftless Area of Southwest Wisconsin during the month of May. Consider sharing your love of fly fishing with children, who would otherwise, never have these opportunities. Consider volunteering today....you will be hooked on this rewarding experience!

Fishin So Fly Dates for 2017 April 26th, May 3rd, May 10th and May 17th. The Wisconsin trip with the kids will be held on June 5th with a rainout date of June 6<sup>th</sup>

## **Veteran's Programs – Scott Roane**

We have 2 great Veterans programs we can participate in and help the Vets.

- PHWFF (Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing) for North Chicago VA Vets. This is being run by Jeff Reinke from the Gary Borger chapter. This is a more traditional program. See <http://www.projecthealingwaters.org/> They are based to Holy Cross Lutheran Church in Libertyville. This is traditional fly tying and fly fishing at a local forest preserve when the weather permits. Jeff is working on expanding this to outpatient Vets.

- Hines VA (in Maywood) Vets program run by DRIFT; Glenn Hazen and Gene Kazmark. The Vets are associated with the Hines Blind Center. They are mostly low vision ladies and gentlemen. They are either residents or attend school for a few weeks to learn computer skills, etc. There is a fly tying program and also a fishing program. This is not strictly fly fishing. It's spin casting or whatever works. See the picture from the last outing a few weeks ago.



Either program is really about one on one camaraderie and just having something interesting to do and getting out.

You don't have to be a Vet to help out. It's just one on one conversation and building a relationship.

Anyone interested send me an email and I can fill you in on more detail and which program may be better depending on your interest and location.

Thanks,

Scott Roane

[rscottroane@gmail.com](mailto:rscottroane@gmail.com)

847-687-5856

"To him, all good things - trout as well as eternal salvation- come by grace, and grace comes by art, and art does not come easy."

*~ Norman Maclean from the book "A River Runs Through It"*

## **To all Illinois TU members:**

We are actively recruiting campers to attend the Illinois Council of TU Conservation and Fly Fishing Camp which is an exceptional opportunity for boys & girls aged 13 to 18. The camp takes place on the Au Sable River near Grayling, Michigan from July 23 thru July 28, 2017. Transportation, lodging, meals and equipment are all provided.

We encourage you to browse the latest version of our Illinois Youth Camp presentation which provides a good overview & pictures from camp: <http://obtu.org/wp-content/uploads/2017/02/2017-TU-Youth-Camp-Overview.pdf>

We also request your assistance in passing the word to interested youth. For more information please contact:

Willie Beshire  
Camp Director  
(630) 200-2532  
[wbeshire@aol.com](mailto:wbeshire@aol.com)

## **How about a show? Last few of the winter**

### **Canoecopia – Rutabaga Paddlesport Shop**

Date: March 10 -12, 2017

Location: Alliant Energy Center, Madison, WI

Sponsor: Rutabaga Paddlesports, Madison, WI

Speakers/Program: Experience the best antidote for March's cabin fever! Canoecopia is the largest paddlesports consumer event in the world, with over 250,000 square feet of kayaks, canoes, Stand Up Paddleboards, outdoor equipment and clothing. Over 150 seminars, speakers and clinics make Canoecopia an educational event where you can be inspired and learn everything you need to know to select, purchase and use the perfect gear for your style of paddling.

<http://www.paddlers.com/canoecopia/page.asp?pgid=1001>



### **Midwest Fly Fishing Expo (the granddaddy of fly fishing shows)**

Date: March 11 - 12, 2017

Location: Macomb Community College Sports & Expo Center, Warren, MI

Sponsor: Michigan Fly Fishing Club

Speakers/Program: TBA

Show has demonstrations and programs on fly tying, fly casting, fly fishing seminars and more in 61,000 square feet of exhibition space.

Website has information on the 2016 show to help pique your interest in this show.

<http://mffc.org>

### **Three Rivers Fly Fishing & Fly Tying Show**

Date: April 1, 2017

Location: Classic Café, 4832 Hillegas, Road, Fort Wayne, IN

Sponsor: Three Rivers Fly Fishers Club

Speakers/Program: TBA

<http://3rff.org/flyshow.html>

## **Chapter Outings for 2017**

### **2017 Early Spring Outing April 28th-30th - Viroqua, WI**

This is our annual outing to Southwest WI in the Driftless area. Our Chapter will gather at the Vernon Inn in Viroqua, WI. For reservations call 800/501-0664. Let them know you are with the Lee Wulff Chapter of Trout Unlimited as a block of rooms has been reserved. Members are responsible for finding their own roommate, if they want one, and making their own reservations.

Some will be camping at the West Fork Sportsmans Club in Avalanche, WI. You must be a member to camp and the cost for membership is currently \$10 per year. The campground does not take reservations unless you are going to rent one of the two cabins they have.

This area includes the famed West Fork of the Kickapoo, Timber Coulee, Bishops Branch, Tainter Creek and Elk Creek to only mention a few. The early WI season is open only to catch and release.

We offer, to current Lee Wulff members, an opportunity to spend some time with an experienced member. So, if you're new to the area, new to fly fishing or would like to

hook up with, and spend some time with, an experienced member this is the trip for you. **You must RSVP to Gordon Rudd at 815/245-2425 or McHenryFlyFisher@sbcglobal.net no later than April 20th for the Buddy System.** If there is a work project scheduled the Buddy System will be rescheduled. The Buddy System takes place Saturday morning until noon.

Dinner is scheduled at the Old Towne Inn, located northwest of Viroqua on Route 14 in Westby, WI. Dinner reservations are at 7:30 PM for Friday and **7:15** PM Saturday and individuals are responsible for their own meals and libations. We will be seated as soon as our table is ready.

There is a great fly shop in Viroqua called the Driftless Angler owned by Mat Wagner and Geri Meyer, [www.driftlessangler.com](http://www.driftlessangler.com) 608/637-8779. Guide service is available from them as well as from the following guides.

Dave Barron, Jacquish Hollow Angler, 608-604-6690 [dbarron@wicw.net](mailto:dbarron@wicw.net)

Jim Bartelt, Spring Creek Specialties, 608-206-5651 [jimbartelt@yahoo.com](mailto:jimbartelt@yahoo.com)

Rich Osthoff - 608/847-5192

Some books of interest for these outings include; No Hatch to Match by Rich Osthoff

Fly Fishing Midwestern Spring Creeks by Ross Mueller

Exploring Wisconsin Trout Streams-The Angler's Guide by Steve Born

Flyfisher's Guide to Wisconsin & Iowa by John Motoviloff

Wisconsin Atlas & Gazetteer by DeLorme.

Viroqua is located approximately 2 hours northwest of Madison, WI on Route 14.

## **2017 Fennimore Outing May 19th-21st Outing/Fennimore, WI**

The second outing takes place in the Southwest part of Wisconsin, again in the Driftless Area. A block of rooms have been reserved at Napps Motel, 645 12<sup>th</sup> Street, Highway 18 East. This is on the east side of town on the south side of the street. We have reserved, 4 single rooms and 4 double rooms. Members are responsible for finding their own roommate, if they want one, and making their own reservations. Make sure to let them know that you are with the Lee Wulff Chapter of TU. Their phone number is 608-822-3226. Camping is not readily available however if you Google "camping in Grant County, WI", you will see there is some camping in the area, just not close to Fennimore. Fennimore is located approximately 1½ hours due west of Madison.

There are many great trout streams, with easy access, in this part of the state. Some to mention include The Big Green, Castle Rock, Doc Smith, Crooked Creek the Blue and Big Spring. These streams have sizeable trout populations and sizeable fish. There are no fly shops in the area so if you need anything shop before you arrive. If you are interested in a guide here are some that I would recommend;

Dave Barron, Jacquish Hollow Angler, 608-604-6690 [dbarron@wicw.net](mailto:dbarron@wicw.net)

Jim Bartelt, Spring Creek Specialties, 608-206-5651 [jimbartelt@yahoo.com](mailto:jimbartelt@yahoo.com)

Rich Osthoff, 608-847-5192

Jim Romberg, Flyfisherman's Lair Guide Service, 608-822-3005

**Option one.** Friday night we will have a brat cookout at the motel. This will include brats, chips, potato salad and soft drinks/water. BYOB for adult libations. A RSVP is required no later than May 12th to Gordon Rudd, [mchenryflyfisher@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mchenryflyfisher@sbcglobal.net) or 815-245-2425. Cost is \$7 per person paid by May 16<sup>th</sup>. Approximate time 7-7:30.

Saturday night we will have pizza party at the motel. This will include pizza, chips and soft drinks/water. BYOB for adult libations. A RSVP is required no later than May 12th to Gordon Rudd, [mchenryflyfisher@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mchenryflyfisher@sbcglobal.net) or 815-245-2425. Cost is \$8 per person paid by May 16<sup>th</sup>. Approximate time 7-7:30.

**Option two.** Friday night we will have a brat cookout at the motel. This will include brats, chips, potato salad and soft drinks/water. BYOB for adult libations. A RSVP is required no later than May 12th to Gordon Rudd, [mchenryflyfisher@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mchenryflyfisher@sbcglobal.net) or 815-245-2425. Cost is \$7 per person paid by May 16<sup>th</sup>. Approximate time 7-7:30.

Saturday night we will meet at the Cottonwood Sports Bar, 4716 Green River Rd., Fennimore, WI off of Highway 61 north of town. Everyone will be responsible for their own food and drinks. Approximate time 7-7:30.

## 2017 Wa Wa Sum Outing June 7th-11<sup>th</sup> Grayling, MI

This is an excellent outing to the historic rustic lodge owned by Michigan State University and situated on the banks of the "Holy Waters" of the famed Au Sable River. This location is a short walk upstream from the very spot upon which Trout Unlimited was founded. The outing includes four nights lodging and fabulous fishing *opportunities* on the Au Sable and Manistee Rivers. Wa Wa Sum lodge is located just east of Grayling and it takes approximately 7 hours to drive there from the Chicago area.

Michigan has two "free fishing weekends" per year and this year, while we are there, fishing on Saturday and Sunday do not require a license or trout stamp however, you will need a license and trout stamp to fish the other days while there. You can obtain your license and stamp on line or at one of the local fly shops.

The cost for this outing is estimated at \$325. A non-refundable deposit is of \$50 is required to reserve you spot and the balance is due by May 15th. As stated, this is a rustic lodge, and you need to bring your own bed linens (sleeping bag & pillow) along with towel and washcloth.

Guided float trips are very popular, but hard to get this time of year. So, if you think this is something you'd like to do make your reservations early. Here are some fly shops and guides to consider:

Gates Au Sable Lodge, [www.gateslodge.com](http://www.gateslodge.com) 989/348-8462

Old Au Sable Fly Shop, [www.oldausable.com](http://www.oldausable.com) 989/343-3330

Fuller's North Branch Outing Club [www.fullersnboc.com](http://www.fullersnboc.com) 989/348-7951

Dave Mauro-[www.brooksandbrownsguideservice.com/about-us.html](http://www.brooksandbrownsguideservice.com/about-us.html)

***We will be offering a nice incentive for new attendees to WaWaSum this year !!***

Meg is going to be booking a half day evening float trip one evening with her guide and friend Dave Mauro. Anyone who is attending WaWaSum for the **first time** will have their name dropped into a **drawing** to join her for the evening. The AuSable offers some of the most amazing evening and night fishing !

To RSVP or for more information on any of these outings, contact

Meg Gallagher : [prez@leewulfftu.org](mailto:prez@leewulfftu.org)

### **2017 Early Summer Outing/June 23rd-25<sup>th</sup> /Viroqua, WI**

This is the fourth outing of the year. It takes place in one of the finest trout fishing areas of the Country known as the Driftless Area. A block of 6 rooms have been reserved at the Vernon Inn in Viroqua (Toll free: 800-501-0664). Let them know you're with the Lee Wulff group when you make your reservation. Members are responsible for finding their own roommate, if they want one, and making their own reservations.

Some will be camping at the West Fork Sportsmans Club in Avalanche, WI. You must be a member to camp and the cost for membership is currently \$10 per year. The campground does not take reservations unless you are going to rent one of the two cabins they have.

This area includes the famed West Fork of the Kickapoo, Timber Coulee and Camp Creek to only mention a few. The early WI season is open only to catch and release fishing.

A group dinner is scheduled at the Old Towne Inn, located northwest of Viroqua on Route 14 in Westby, WI. Dinner reservations are at 7:30 PM for Friday and Saturday and individuals are responsible for their own meals and libations.

There is a great fly shop in Viroqua called the Driftless Angler owned by Mat Wagner and Geri Meyer. Guide service is available by calling 608/637-8779.

Some other guides to consider are:

Dave Barron, Jacquish Hollow Angler, 608-604-6690 [dbarron@wicw.net](mailto:dbarron@wicw.net)

Jim Bartelt, Spring Creek Specialties, 608-206-5651 [jimbartelt@yahoo.com](mailto:jimbartelt@yahoo.com)

Rich Osthoff - 608/847-5192

Some books of interest for these outings include; No Hatch to Match by Rich Osthoff  
Fly Fishing Midwestern Spring Creeks by Ross Mueller

Exploring Wisconsin Trout Streams-The Angler's Guide by Steve Born

Flyfisher's Guide to Wisconsin & Iowa by John Motoviloff

Wisconsin Atlas & Gazetteer by DeLorme.

Viroqua is located approximately 2 hours northwest of Madison, WI on Route 14.

## End of the Season Outing Oct 13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>, 2017

The last WI outing will be on Oct 13<sup>th</sup>-15<sup>th</sup>. We will once again be in the Viroqua/Westby area and several will be camping at the West Fork Sportsmens Club in Avalanche along the West Fork of the Kickapoo. You must be a member to camp and the cost for membership is currently \$10 per year. The campground does not take reservations unless you are going to rent one of the two cabins they have.

A block of 5 rooms have been reserved at the Vernon Inn in Viroqua (Toll free: 800-501-0664). Let them know you're with the Lee Wulff group when you make your reservation. Members are responsible for finding their own roommate, if they want one, and making their own reservations.

A group dinner is scheduled at the Old Towne Inn, located northwest of Viroqua on Route 14 in Westby, WI. Dinner reservations are at 7:30 PM for Saturday and individuals are responsible for their own meals and libations. Please keep in mind we will sit down as soon as our table is ready so if you're running late you may be on your own.

If you have any questions or would like to RSVP for dinner contact Gordon Rudd at [mchenryflyfisher@sbcglobal.net](mailto:mchenryflyfisher@sbcglobal.net) or 815/245-2425.

"Only an extraordinary person would purposely risk being outsmarted by a creature often less than twelve inches long, over and over again."

~ *Janna Bialek*

"Three-fourths of the Earth's surface is water, and one-fourth is land. It is quite clear that the good Lord intended us to spend triple the amount of time fishing as taking care of the lawn."

~ *Chuck Clark*

"And finally, I fish not because I regard fishing as being terribly important, but because I suspect that so many of the other concerns of men are equally unimportant, and not nearly so much fun."

~ *John Volke*

## Bob Olach's Fly of the Month

W.C. Stewart's Spiders – North Country Spiders – Soft Hackles & Flymphs



The “*Orange Partridge*” is documented as far back as the late 1400s, in “*Treatyse of fysshynge wyth an Angle*” – written by the prioress of the Priory of St Mary of Sopwell, near St Albans in Hertfordshire, England by Juliana Berners, O.S.B. and has been catching trout ever since then.

*Join us on April 8, 2017 from 10:00 am to 2:00 pm at the LL Bean store's fly fishing area in South Barrington, IL to watch a demonstration on how to tie the English North Country fly dressing known as the “Orange Partridge” as well as modern variations of this old English trout fly dressing.*

The unique hackling method attributed to James Baillie's “*Black Spider*” dressing from W. C. Stewart's 1857 book “*The Practical Angler*” plus other North Country Spider / Soft Hackled dressings from Edmonds' & Lee's “*Brook and River Trouting*” and T.E. Pritt's book “*Yorkshire Trout Flies*” / “*North Country Flies*” will also be discussed plus modern trout fly dressings for the Pheasant Tail, Hare's Ear, March Brown and other soft hackled dressings.



Book references, sources for the materials used / needed and some suggested web site links will be available for you.

We hope to see you on April 8<sup>th</sup>



## **Grumpy's Page by Kurt Haberl**

“Okay, let’s do this,” Schnoz said as I got into his old fishing car. It was our first trip out after the season opening, but last year we had been simply unable to keep our promise or do what any respectable flyfishers should have done at the opening of the season. It was just too hard. We drove without talking to the coffee shop in town, bought three black coffees and a dozen donuts, then took our time looking at our GPS and following its directions.

“There it is,” I said, and Schnoz nodded.

He pulled into the parking lot, and we took the coffee and donuts into the lobby of the spotless building. A small woman behind an information desk said, “Good morning, gentlemen, may I help you?”

“No,” I said, putting the coffee and donuts on top of the desk. “This is for you and any staff who walk by. We had an old friend here named Ben Waverly, and you took good care of him. We appreciate that. Is Miss Angela here?”

“I’m sorry, but she left Wisteria Lodge about a year ago. I think she’s studying to be a doctor. Someone left her some money, so she went back to school. I remember your friend Ben. We all loved him.”

Schnoz and I looked at each other, then we nodded to her and went back to the car. We knew where the money for Angela’s medical schooling came from.

“Do you have the directions?” Schnoz said.

I pulled my old Christmas card out and read it over. “Take Highway P for three miles, then turn left at Owl Trail or what’s left of the red barn...”

“Good for Angela,” Schnoz said. “Ben used to call that place ‘Hysteria Ledge.’” It made me smile.

We followed Ben’s directions to the nondescript field where he had led us two years before. It was a silent drive, kind of a reverent time when we thought about Ben and what he had given us – a way to begin the year and a deed to go with it. After crossing the two bridges, we lurched on to the tractor path by a rock outcropping that looked like a sitting buddha. The path hadn’t changed much – maybe a little more overgrown. Across the field we could see the single black walnut, standing like a sentinel, the tree Ben’s father had planted.

“I believe it’s your turn,” Schnoz said. After our last encounter with the giant brown trout Ben had named after himself, I decided waders were not going to be of much use, so I just put on some knee-high rubber boots, strung up my rod, and put on the early season zebra midge Ben recommended.

“Net?” Schnoz said.

“If Old Ben is still there, my net would be useless.”

We followed the scrubby tree line, headed toward a large willow, and found the overgrown spring Ben had said belonged to his grandpa. We traced the rivulet down a hill and along the cliff. Beyond it, we found Ben’s pool.

“It looks the same,” I said.



“Well, cast over to the moss on that ledge, and let’s see.”

I admit my hands were shaking, but I managed strip out enough line to get an adequate cast to the deep side of the pool. The midge bounced against the ledge and began a slow descent into the depths of our memory. Unlike two years ago, there was no sudden surge of water, no submarine lunging up to take the fly. I heard Schnoz sigh.

“Things change,” he said.

I waited as long as I could stand it, and then waited some more.

“Your midge has to be on the bottom,” Schnoz said. “Maybe try another cast a little over from the ledge.”

I started the retrieve, and then it stopped.

“I must be snagged on the log where Old Ben broke off last year,” I said. “I’ll pop it and just re-rig.”

And then the log moved. I felt it slide off toward the shallow side, then come up, and then throb.

“Grumpy?” Schnoz said.

“Um, I don’t know. It’s big.”

I moved off toward the shallow side, thinking my only chance if I could tire it or get an angle would be to beach it. I felt a head shaking, saw a long shadow deep under the surface, and then only slack as the fish turned and headed straight toward us. I backed away and stripped as fast as I could, but there was no keeping up. Old Ben came all the way in to a mere foot of water, turned, and sent a great tail-slapping spray that wet Schnoz and made him laugh out loud.

“Did you see?” he said. “Did you see it? It’s a yard long.”

All I could do was tighten the line, hold my rod tip up, switch it to the side, and hope – but there was no turning it – it was too big and just went down into the depths. I could feel it, a regular head shaking as it pulled against the pesky line, pulled with no urgency or panic, just a connection to the strange human on the other end of the line. It knew it was stronger than I was.

“Okay,” Schnoz said, “I’m going to go down the shallow side and wade out as far as I can so maybe he’ll come back up to you and you can keep him away from the snag.”

“But Schnoz-“

It made no difference that he was wearing only his wool winter pants and hiking boots instead of waders. He traced the shallow side and waded out almost to his waist splashing and kicking and whooping as if the great fish could hear him and he could herd it. The fish turned for a second, then came right at me again. I stripped and stripped and it came right up to my feet, splashed me, turned and then swam back into the depths, no longer hooked, no longer attached to the strange human at the other end of the line.

Schnoz continued to splash and holler until he saw the slack in my line as I reeled in. He waded out and came up to me, dripping like a wet collie. He raised my free hand to see how much I was shaking.

“Now you know,” he said. “Now you know what it was like. Old Ben, yep, he’s still here.”

“I think they both are,” I said.

Following our promise, the rules Ben made us swear to, we started back to the car, having had our one shot for that year. About halfway back, Schnoz stopped, ignored how much he was shivering from the cold water and crisp spring air, looked directly at me, and said, “You know, Grumpy, I had Old Ben on the line longer than you did. I’m pretty sure I had him about twenty seconds longer.”

Then he started laughing, great uncontrolled guffaws, the same laughing that had erupted from our friend Ben two years ago. I was sure it would be a good season. It already was.

"The water you touch in a river is the last of that which has passed, and the first of that which is coming; thus it is with time."

-Leonardo DaVinci

"I look into ... my fly box, and think about all the elements I should consider in choosing the perfect fly: water temperature, what stage of development the bugs are in, what the fish are eating right now. Then I remember what a guide told me: 'Ninety percent of what a trout eats is brown and fuzzy and about five-eighths of an inch long.'"

~by Allison Moir

## Chapter Officers

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## Newsletter Editor

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PS: Any grammatical errors spotted in  
this newsletter were purposefully put  
there to keep you on your toes.  
PPS: You Are Welcome.