



March 2021 President's Message

The spring fishing season is here and after a long winter I am more than ready to get out for some of the best fishing of the year. White Pines and Apple river Canyon have catch and release season scheduled to begin March 20 and end on April 2. If all goes well and with the fish stocking and weather, some of the fly-tying group and any chapter members who want to join in will meet at White Pines State Forest, near Oregon on March 22. This is not an official outing just a day that you might want to be there if you like to experience a few rainbows on your line. We will park in the lot the furthest from the entrance after you cross the creek several times. Email questions to sapp375@aol.com.

The conservation committee burnt brush piles on Fox Bluff recently. Many thanks to Jerry Ward, Mark Reinhart, Pete Koenig, and Matt Jennings for all the time they put in. There was little damage at the ponds after winter, but a workday will be needed soon to move a brush pile and do some pond work. Be sure to go to Fox Bluff in late April and early May for some great wildflower walks.

If you haven't taken a look at the Spring Auction, we have some very nice gear for sale, lots of rods and even guided trip to Fennimore with some old guy. The auction ends on March 29 at midnight. Please feel free to share it on Facebook and Instagram with your friends. Many thanks to Jon Culli for organizing the online auction and making this work. Remember all profit goes to supporting the chapter and its conservation projects. Here is a link.

<https://go.tulocalevents.org/lwtu-spring-2021-auction>

This month we have **Tim Flagler** as our speaker. If you have not watched any of the videos that he does search out Tightline Productions on Facebook or look for the Orvis Fly Fishing page. Tim is a nationally known fly tyer and guide. It will be our privilege to spend an hour with him. Tim is going to do a program on " **What Trout Like to Eat & Flies to Feed Them**". This is an hour you will want to take notes on to improve your catch rate. I hope you can join us for an interesting evening.

Stay safe; keep wearing that mask it ain't over yet!

Jerry Sapp

March Lee Wulff T U Meeting

Topic: LWTU Meeting

Time: Mar 18, 2021 06:30 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82448609660?pwd=UVpPM2R3dk5CL3MwTDg3QWtpZWVkdz09>

Meeting ID: 824 4860 9660

Passcode: 804000

From Gordon Rudd 2021 Lee Wulff Outings

Because of COVID 19 there will be no restaurant group meals.

Because we will not have a signup sheet for attendance, please notify Gordon Rudd if your plan on attending any or all of the outings. McHenryFlyFisher@gmail.com 815-245-2425.

Early Spring Outing April 23rd-25th-

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. Also, there's the Old Towne Motel in Westby, no association with the restaurant, Logan Mill Lodge and Central Express in Westby. Only the Vernon Inn has blocked rooms.

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 \$30 per year. The campground does not take reservations unless you are going to rent the cabin they have. www.westforksportsmansclub.org for more information.

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

There is a great fly shop in Viroqua called the Driftless Angler owned by Mat Wagner and Geri Meyer, 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
-) Jim Bartel, Spring Creek Specialties, 608-206-5651 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 4 ½ hours from the Chicago area and 2 hours northwest of Madison, WI on Route 14. If you have any questions or need additional information contact Gordon Rudd, 815-245-2425 or mchenryflyfisher@gmail.com

Fennimore Outing May 21st-23rd -

A block of rooms has been reserved at Napps Motel, 645 12th Street, Highway 18 East. This is on the east side of town on the south side of the street. 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. **Rooms are difficult to get this time of year and I must release any vacant rooms by the end of the day, May 14th.**

This area includes the Little Green River, Big Green River, Castle Rock Creek, Blue River, Borah Creek and Platte River.

Friday night we will have a brat cookout at the motel. This will include brats, chips, potato salad and bottled water. BYOB for adult libations. A RSVP **and payment** are required no later than May 8th to Gordon Rudd 1303 Hillside Lane, McHenry, IL 60051. **Cost is \$7 per person paid by May 8th.** Approximate time 7-7:30.

There are no fly shops in the area so make sure you have what you need prior to arriving including your fishing license. Below are some guides and books of interest for the area.

-) Dave Barron, Jacquish Hollow Angler, 608-604-6690 dbarron@wicw.net
-) Jim Bartel, Spring Creek Specialties, 608-206-5651 jimbartelt@yahoo.com
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-) Flyfisher's Guide to Wisconsin & Iowa by John Motoviloff
-) Wisconsin Atlas & Gazetteer by DeLorme.

Fennimore is located approximately 1 ½ hours west of Madison, WI on Route 18.

Wa Wa Sum, Grayling, MI-June 2nd-6th

This outing is limited to 10 this year. RSVP and payment is on a first come basis.

This is our annual trip to the fly fishing only, catch-and-release section known as the “Holy Water” of the famed AuSable River in Grayling, MI. Wa Wa Sum is located just downstream from the birth place of Trout Unlimited. TU was formed at George Griffith’s home, The Barbless Hook, in July of 1959.

Wa Wa Sum is a historic lodge dating back to 1880 and was originally owned by the Stranahan family from Toledo, OH. Michigan State University acquired it in 1982 and uses it primarily as a research center. They rent the lodge to various organizations throughout most of the year and our chapter was grandfathered in in 1983.

ACCOMMODATIONS: The Wa Sum Lodge is a historic log building with a great porch overlooking the Au Sable River. Arrangements are dorm style, so bring your own bedding or sleeping bag, towels, washcloth and soap.

Guide trips are very popular this time of year and if you think this is something you’d like to do, please make your reservation as soon as possible so you’re not disappointed.

Bob Olach's Fly of the Month

Honey Dun March Brown Soft Hackles

In several past articles, I’ve mentioned that I love tying and fishing March Brown soft hackles!

Whether it be the Edmonds’ & Lee’s 8b dressing from their book *“Brook & River Trouting”* that uses European Snipe rump feathers for the hackle and tails and *“dubbed with the fur from the nape of a rabbit’s neck which has been lightly tinged red with Crawshaw’s Red Spinner dye, and ribbed with gold wire or tinsel”* or the more traditional (in the USA) dressing of using a Natural Hare’s Ear dubbing with a Partridge hackle (some call it a *“Hare’s Ear & Partridge”* soft hackle) – I tie and fish lots of March Brown-type soft hackles.

Recently, in going through my stash of hen capes, I pulled out one of the capes that had a dark dun (grey) color near the stem and honey colored tips on the outside of the feathers. Really pretty colored feathers that I decided to use in tying a March Brown variation using these hackles and a red colored March Brown dubbing mixture that I’ve been using for many years.

The dubbing is made from some of Hareline's Natural Hare's Ear dubbing in addition some fur from a Hare's Mask that I dyed with a red Pantone marker. These were then mixed with Red and Natural colored Hare's Ear Plus dubbings.

I also used some old, discontinued Partridge-of-Redditch L2A wet fly hooks that I obtain from a guy in France (<http://www.troutandsalmonhooks.com/products/popular-trout-hooks/>).

Just like many dubbed body soft hackles that I'd like to ride higher in the water, I used "at least" 4 to 5 full turns of the hackle to make the fly somewhat fuller and to make it float a little higher than my normal soft hackles and then four or five turns of a gold wire over the dubbed body

Here's the info on the Honey Dun March Browns, as tied in the picture



Honey Dun March Brown Soft Hackles

Hook – Partridge L2A wet fly hooks

Thread – Orange Pearsall or YLI silks

Body – March Brown dubbing mixture with gold wire ribbing.

Hackle – Honey Dun Hen (5 hackle turns)

Tail – a small clump of the Honey Dun hackle



Grumpy's Page by Kurt Haberl

"Do you think we're doing the right thing?" Schnoz said. "Ben Waverly was really clear about this legacy."

"It's the right thing. Dealing with lawyers and deeds always makes me nervous, but of all the flyfishers I know, only one would understand the value of what Old Ben left us."

"Okay. Then let's do it." I pulled out of the donut shop parking lot where we had bought three coffees, a handful of creamers, and six donuts. It was a short drive to the edge of town where Ghost Mary Compson waited for us on her porch next to a pile of waders, her vest, and a single rod. As we instructed, she did not carry a net.

"You guys aren't fishing?" she said when we put her gear in the trunk and she saw we hadn't packed anything except waders and boots.

"Only one fishes today," I said. "You sit in the front and read the directions." I gave her the manila envelope with a copy of Old Ben's printed directions, a copy of the deed we had filed with her name added as a co-owner, and the rules we had to swear to. We drove on Highway P for three miles, then turned left on Owl Trail at a pile of weathered lumber that used to be red and was once a barn, but this year had become a precarious lean-to. We crossed two bridges and followed a tractor path by the stone outcropping that looked like a sitting Buddha. The rest is still secret. I couldn't really see the old path that led to Ben's Pool, but I knew it was there and stopped as close as we could get without bogging down in the muddy field not too far from the black walnut Ben's grandfather had planted near some oaks and maples.

"Okay," I said when I stopped and turned off the engine. "Schnoz, would you read the oath?"

Mary turned to look at him with a furled brow and some concern about the seriousness of this event.

"Raise your right hand, Mary Compson. Upon pain of losing important anatomical appendages..." then he paused as he looked at Mary and then at me, somewhat confused because it was obvious she didn't have the same appendages. One of Mary's eyebrows raised in some suspicion.

"He means her right arm. He means upon pain of losing your right arm."

"Right arm," Schnoz said. I solemnly swear that this information along with its customs will be held in secret as an inheritance until such time that I am too shaky to tie on a size 18 midge or too unsteady to wade..."

"Can't you still tie on a midge or wade?" Mary asked innocently, and looked at each of us.

"Yes," I said, "but we're both over 70 now and the pandemic has changed the way we look at things and we didn't want to risk being the last in this legacy."

"Exactly," Schnoz said. "And besides, you know how I am with fire, and Grumpy here, well, you know how he messes up everything else."

"Hey," I said. "Just read the oath."

"Too unsteady to wade, when I will pass along this secret to a carefully chosen, worthy heir and make him or her, well, make her swear under penalty of bodily disfigurement... to pass along this sacred tradition to the ... uh, sixth generation. First was Johnny Lepp, then Old Ben's granddad, then Old Ben, then us. You're fifth, Mary. According to Old Ben's rules, we put on a size 18 zebra midge, hope we hook Old Ben, descendant of Big Johnny 1, Johnny 2, Johnny 3, Pappy 1, Pappy 2, and then Old Ben. Then after he breaks off, we salute him and head out until next year. If someone is lucky enough to beach him, we salute him and put him back and head out until next year."

"Have either of you landed him?" Mary asked.

"Once," I said, "but it was kind of an accident involving someone calling out 'snake' which forced some unusual fishing tactics and Old Ben got beached."

Mary's eyebrow raised again. Schnoz looked at me and shrugged. We were used to people not believing anything we said.

"Mary Compson, do you swear?" I said.

"Yes. Upon pain of losing my right arm."

"Okay, let's do this," Schnoz said again. We got out, struggled into our waders and boots and watched Mary string up her rod. Schnoz handed her a size 18 zebra midge with its shiny silver bead head, and she tied it to her tippet with the dexterity neither of us had ever possessed.

"My tippet is 5X, pretty heavy," she said. "Maybe that will help."

"It won't matter," I said, and her one eyebrow raised again.

We hiked toward the tangle of willows that marked the spring that fed the stream, and then to the stone outcropping of Old Ben's pool. The pool didn't look like it had changed at all. There

was still a beach and mud bank at one end, a stone outcropping that loomed over the deep, dark pool, and several willows on the opposite bank with weeping branches that swept the water at its edge.

"We usually take a moment to look around and fix this time and place in memory," I said. The air was crisp with the first waft of spring. A shaded ledge on the stone outcropping still held a lace of snow, and somewhere off in the distance, a brace of sand hill cranes called loudly as they flew to some nesting ground in the northwest. I scoured the water's edge and the muddy bank leading to the willows.

"No snakes," I announced.

"You don't like snakes much, do you?" Mary said.

"Snakes, mosquitoes and tofu," I said. "All three are evil." This time Schnoz's eyebrow raised.

Then it happened. Behind us came a sudden, frantic call, and a boy in dirty jeans, muddy boots, and a flannel shirt appeared out of the field with a look of desperation on his face.

"Thank God," he said. "Please help me. My dog, stuck in a mud bank around the bend and I can't get her out. Please. The more we struggle, the worse it gets. If she drowns..."

"Okay," I said. "You don't have to wait, Mary, we'll be right back." We walked off quickly as the boy trotted ahead of us, and as the boy said, his dog, apparently a collie with the saddest eyes and most bedraggled, muddy fur lay up to her haunches in mud. She looked as if she had given up, and as we got close, she put her head down on the mud.

"I'll wade in the water from the other side," I said. "It looks rocky there, and Schnoz, if you can lay down and lean over the bank, maybe you can reach him from this side."

"Her," the boy said. "She's a girl."

"Her," I said.

It took us ten minutes of pushing, pulling, and wrestling, but we got her out, and it was worth it to see the boy and his dog nuzzling each other. The boy didn't say anything, but he didn't have to. When he looked at us, we knew how he felt.

"Baths for both of you," Schnoz said.

"Yes, sir."

Our good deed for this year done, we went back to see how Mary was faring, but when we got back to the pool, she was sitting cross-legged on the beach, her tippet hanging in a limp tangle midway down her rod. She waved and then put her hands in her lap. They were shaking.

"Mary?" Schnoz said.

This time there wasn't a raised eyebrow.

"I hooked him," she said. "I saw him. I've never seen a brown trout that big."

"Old Ben," I said.

"Is that the old man's name?"

"What old man?"

"I made a few casts into the pool with the midge, but nothing was happening, and then this old man appeared on the bank in between the willows and said, 'Bounce your midge off the stone wall so it drops straight down.' Then the fish took it and we went back and forth for a minute or two, until it swam right at me, and then turned right around and broke off. It was the biggest trout I've ever seen. The old man was right."

Schnoz and I looked at each other. Both of us raised our eyebrows.

"Do you know the old man?" Mary said.

"Maybe," Schnoz said. He looked at me and we realized we had chosen the right fisher in picking Ghost Mary to carry the legacy.

"Maybe," I said too. Old Ben was still there. It would be a good year, a better year. We knew it.

Chapter Officers

President	Jerry Sapp <u>prez@leewulfftu.org</u>
Vice-President	Brent Burval <u>viceprez@leewulfftu.org</u>
Secretary	Meg Gallagher <u>secretary@leewulfftu.org</u>
Treasurer	Al Faleskin <u>al.faleskin@gmail.com</u>

Newsletter Editor
Dennis Higham
dennishigham@sbcglobal.net

