



May 2020 President's Message

Greetings fellow LWTU members,

Damn you COVID-19! You certainly put a damper on our chapter's plans for 2020. As I write this message Lenore and I are finalizing our plans for our move to Colorado in June. I can't believe that it's been almost four years since I took over for Meg in October 2016. I was hoping to be able to spend some time with all of you at our chapter meetings, outings and conservation projects but COVID-19 took care of that.

I would like to thank all of you for making my time as your president so enjoyable. I've learned a lot and made a few more friends along the way. I'll always cherish the contributions you've all made during my time here and hope that you'll continue as Jerry transitions to the president's role. I'd also like to thank Gordon Rudd for his work in setting up our outings, Bob Meschewski for his work as Youth Coordinator, Yves and Al for their great work as Treasurer, Bev DeJovine for her dedication as Secretary, Jerry for his work as Conservation Chair and NLC rep, Dennis Higham for the newsletter, Mark Domagalski for the website work and Scott Roane for his great work with our veterans.

We have a great group of people filling in some roles that became vacant with me leaving. Thanks to Jerry Sapp for taking my place as president, I can't think of a better person to lead you going forward. Brent Berval has agreed to fill in for Jerry as VP and Scott Roane and Jerry Ward have stepped up to take over Jerry's spot as Conservation Chairs. Thanks to all of you for continuing the cause.

I'll miss you all but hope to cross paths with some of you in the future. Please remember to strive to protect those special places we all hold so dear.

Tight lines,

Bob

Conservation News - Jerry Sapp

The Corona virus has prevented us from doing any work at Fox Bluff or stiles in Wisconsin this spring, but it doesn't mean things aren't happening, so here is the latest. The grant money that was obtained for the Habitat Maintenance Crew from Cabela's Outdoor Fund has been switched to funding a stream restoration project on Citron Creek in Crawford County. I have seen the creek and it will be a great project when completed. With the DNR in Wisconsin shut down and the prospect of not having a Habitat Maintenance crew at all loomed heavily, that meant returning the grant money, luckily Cabela's consented to the switch. The money to fund a crew for this year is nearly complete just from TU chapters and can be used if the crew went forward. Wednesday May 13 the Wisconsin Supreme court opened things up in Wisconsin and now there is a possibility that we could have a crew this summer, but we are in a wait and see mode at this moment. In any case we are ready. TUDARE has projects going on Citron Creek and Conway Creek near Soldiers Grove in Vernon County. There are also projects starting on Warner, Knapp/West Fork, Norwegian Hollow and Esofea creeks in Crawford County, quite a list and our chapter contributed \$5,000 toward these projects and \$1,000 for the Habitat Crew. The Wisconsin DNR is stalled currently but may be back to work on Bohemian and Timber Coulee this summer if things are opened again.

The Brook Trout from Algonquin and Belvidere schools have been released into Fox Bluff recently. There have been a couple of sightings of the mature trout there in the past few months too.

In other news Jerry Ward and Mark Reinhart have volunteered to take over the conservation chairmanship as I will be transitioning into the president role. Brent Berval has volunteered to take vice president position. I have enjoyed working with Bob Becker the past three or more years. He is leaving in June and I know we all thank him for the great job as president. I hope to fish with Bob on the Blue River in Dillion when I get to Colorado and see my grandkids. I would also like to thank his wife Lenore for the time she has spent at chapter meetings collecting fees. Thanks to both of you and enjoy your new home.

I hope we can have a virtual meeting on Zoom this summer and I will be working on that. We are hoping to have some sort of program too and I have one in mind about the work on the Blue river, but nothing is definite. I am open for ideas and my phone is 847 284 4824 or email at

Sapp375@aol.com

Stay safe, fish safely and get out of the house.

Jerry Sapp

From Gordon Rudd

This is from the WI DNR weekly report. Sort of scary.



What Happens When The Fish Just Can't Live Here

As a state that is well-known for its world-class coldwater fishing experiences, Wisconsin could see significant changes to trout distribution through its streams as a result of climate change. These fish, namely brook trout and brown trout, require cold water to live.

Warming temperatures are also more ideal for parasites, which can harm and kill trout. Projections show in the coming years that if temperatures continue to rise, 68% of the stream kilometers suitable for brook trout in Wisconsin would be lost, along with a 32% loss for brown trout

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AyHZrliijw0>

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This From Scott Roane

This is where your donation \$\$ go for Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing.

If you slide down there is a video from the 2019 12th Annual Mossy Creek Invitational that I was privileged to be invited. Made some great friends there.

It's a great video of what happens in the program. It's about 15 minutes long. You can just relax. Listen to the two Veterans near the end (Hugh and Richard) and what this program means to them.

Our funds support the local program at North Chicago but this is a good indicator of what the program does nationwide.

We have heard that 'our' vets at North Chicago are itching to get back now that the weather is getting better and the bluegill are just waiting. Hopefully we can get back real soon.



<https://projecthealingwaters.org/tournaments/the-mossy-creek-invitational/>

Note from your editor – if clicking on the above link doesn't work just copy and paste it

Bob Olach's Fly of the Month – A Classic Repeat

During the last week in August, I fished several of the Driftless Area waters using various flies, including a couple dries, several soft hackles and nymphs.

Although a few fish were caught on some of the dry flies and soft hackles, probably 90% were caught on a variation of Frank Sawyer's Pheasant Tail nymph, namely a Flashback version with copper bead heads and copper wires.

In the past, many of the nymphs that I tied utilized gold beads and wires but lately, I've changed to using copper beads and wires maybe Frank Sawyer hit upon something when he decided to use copper colored wires in his dressings.

Most of the fish that hit the PT nymphs were in the shallow riffles or directly below the riffles and equally hit the flies when fished normally upstream and also when fishing “down and across” like I often fish soft hackles and North County Spiders.



The nymphs pictured above were all tied on size 16 Daiichi 1710 2X Long nymph hooks with pinched down barbs and with natural colored pheasant tails and green Mylar flash materials.

Hook – Daiichi 1710 2X long nymph hooks (sizes 16 – 18)

Thread – 6/0 Black or Olive Danville or Uni-Thread

Bead – Copper colored Cyclop beads

Body – 5 pieces of Natural Pheasant Tails

Flashback – Size 12 Peacock / Orange (reversible) Mylar

Ribbing – Uni – Small copper wire

Tails – Approx. ¼ “long PTs

As an added note, I’ve also tied additional variations using dyed black, red, yellow and olive pheasant tails and different colored Mylar for the flashbacks. Using black pheasant tails and pearlescent Mylar makes a very nice, and effective, nymph.



Grumpy's Page by Kurt Haberl

My phone rang twice then stopped before I could find it under my pile of feathers and packets of dubbing. That meant it was Schnoz, who will make a call and if I don't answer in two rings, he assumes he tapped in a wrong key and re-enters the number. Once I took his phone away from him and put my number under "Favorites," but he objected and showed me that Huldy put the number of her brother Gary in his favorites, and Gary was not his favorite but was close enough to Grumpy to scare him off from using favorite fast dialing. In the time it took for me to get my phone and remove stray hackle, he called again.

"Grumpy, come over. I have a fire in the pit in the back yard. It's a beautiful night with that full Mother's Milk moon."

"But it's already nine o'clock and I'm tying flies."

"There aren't any bugs yet and I have some brats to roast for a bedtime snack."

"But I'm in the middle of some little black caddis in case we can find a stream that isn't a mudflow and this stupid COVID virus ravages some other state for a change."

"I have an open bottle of Dewer's scotch."

"Okay," I said. "I'll get my mask." I don't have a mask, but I bought four of those rainbow trout patterned neck gaiters to stop sunburn and they can cover my mouth and nose. If they don't keep out any virus or prevent me from giving it to someone else, at least they look cool.

It was a nice walk and I only saw one person, a guy with a dog who crossed over to the other side of the street to protect his dog, which was unnecessary because dogs love me. I must smell like Milkbone or something. When I got to Schnoz's back yard, I saw that he didn't have a fire pit. He had taken the top and the grill off his Weber and built a wood fire in it that blazed three feet high. He sat opposite an empty camp chair for me, a clinking glass in one hand and a skewer with a brat in the other. He had already nibbled half the brat directly off the skewer. He put his glass down long enough to pour me a drink from the camp table next to him and skewer another brat to hand to me.

"Imagine we're camping," he said.

"All the campsites are closed."

"Use your imagination. You use it every time you tell me how big a trout was that you managed to snag."

I pointed to the headlamp with an elastic band circling his head, and said, "Were you afraid of getting lost?"

"No. I was just reading something in that classic book you gave me and it gave me a philosophical turn, so I called you over."

"You lured me with scotch and brats, not philosophy."

He ignored me and said, "Listen to this passage. Gordon Redd was a genius, a philosopher fisher." Having finished his brat, he took up the old book and turned on his headlamp.

"Young fishers are often an impatient lot," he read, "easily excited. The sight of a fish in its lie is enough to make him fumble with the knot on his lead or drop his winch into the water. How ironic that he who has the most time left rushes the most. I was that fisher. Now I stand and watch. Listen, there is robin red breast on a near branch with a chorus of geese heading north afar off. I see the good fish veer wee left but not rise. She must be taking a midge or blue and olive not yet winged in this cold season. I have such a fly. A careful knot puts it safely on my point. Now I let the greased line run downstream, four paces, five, and it will be enough to load my cane rod for the cast. No pretend casts for the aging fisher. Slowness saves time. All is ready. I breathe and smell the lilac in the air. It is a new season. Then the first cast rolls past, straightens, but does not land or splash; it pauses in the air and then drifts down. I flick the tip and the fly at the point curls down, hits the water first, breaks the meniscus and begins its descent. I watch but do not breathe. Then the good trout veers left again. "My Lovely," I say and raise my rod. She is on and the dance begins, not a waltz or minuet; it is a polka as she circles the pool with head shakes to and fro, around once and twice, and then she comes to hand, My Lovely. If she had not said yes, I would have waited for her. Fishing creates patience, one of our greatest virtues, and it is good. We wait for the ice to melt, for the rains to fade, for the wind to slow its breath. We wait for the opening day. We wait for the fish to leave their deep winter lies and appear like magic before us. We wait for the sun to warm the water and our faces. We wait. We wait. And it is good. We wait for the fish to finish her dance. We wait and hold her in the cold water, untethered, ready to set her free when she has recovered. And there she goes."

"That's beautiful," I said. Schnoz held up his glass in a silent toast and smiled, turned off his headlamp, and sighed so peacefully, so loud, I heard it.

I did not see the ruckus behind me, but I heard it. First there were sirens, then a sound like a gate crashing open or a garbage can being tossed aside, maybe both. I felt a looming presence just behind and to the side of me, a dark-suited large man with a badge, a hospital mask and a flashlight which he aimed at my blinking face and then at Schnoz, who sat like Buddha, his peaceful smile in stark contrast to the electricity in the air.

"You have an open fire," the officer said.

"He has a Weber kettle," I said. "We're making brats. If you want one-" but I did not get to finish. Another looming presence in a helmet and mask that made him look like a giant insect, heavy, looped boots, and firecloth with yellow reflective tape appeared, and he held a long nozzle -whoosh - the powerful stream of water smashed into the burning kettle, dousing, then blowing the embers and sticks out of it. The water drenched Schnoz, who said nothing but bowed to protect his old book.

"No open fires," the officer said. "Your neighbors thought the house was on fire and called it in."

Then the sliding door opened and Huldy appeared, backlit like some avenging goddess. She took a quick look at the masked officer and said, "Hi, Jake," and then at the giant, masked insect. "Hello, Otto."

"Hello, Huldy," they said in unison.

"Is there a problem?" Huldy said sweetly.

"Not anymore," said Otto.

"Good," Huldy said, then stepped back into the house and closed the sliding door.

As quickly as the officer and the giant insect appeared, they faded back into the moonlight. It was bright enough that I could see Schnoz sitting and dripping, holding his prized book out to keep it dry. There was another long sigh. I expected him to explode, but instead he sat in the moonlight and then said in a calm, even voice, "We wait. We wait. And it is good. The fisher learns patience, one of our greatest virtues. Do you want a second scotch?" he said, re-pouring one for himself.

"Okay," I said. Patience really is a virtue. A second scotch helps sometimes.

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