

HATCHES

Newsletter of the Doc Fritchey Chapter
P. O. Box 227, Palmyra, PA 17078 www.dftu.org
Spring 2022



“Dedicated to the conservation, protection and restoration of the cold water resources of Dauphin & Lebanon Counties”

From Your President:



Rich DiStanislao, Chapter President

Another new trout season Opening Day is in the books! We are off to a good start.

Our chapter helped the PA Fish and Boat Commission stock our TU project waters and other Dauphin and Lebanon County streams, and the creeks are holding more than enough water to go around. The fish that were put in look great, and better yet, many are taking artificials.

We further readied ourselves for the season by teaching a Beginner and an Advanced Fly-Tying course. In March, we held our first “in-person” general membership meeting in over two years, and it was great to see so many faces, old, and even new ones. The Executive Committee of our Board of Directors met in mid-April to lay out our chapter’s calendar for the upcoming year, and this information will be shared with all our members at our May meeting. One of the main focuses for this year will be to reignite our chapter’s volunteer force. We have some work planned on our special chapter project waters, tree planting, log removal, clean-up, and wish to have our chapter members show up *en masse* to maintain a healthy stream environment. We wish to establish a Youth Mentoring program and find a chairperson within our ranks. We had no takers this year for the Rivers Conservation Camp at Messiah University, and TU national has established a “youth leadership conference”, which we have agreed to support. I would love to see us create a Fly-Fishing Scouting Merit Badge counselor within our membership, and the PA Fish and Boat is willing to work with us to create a group of “certified” fishing instructors. We have a request to add a school into our Trout In The Classroom program, also. These are all fantastic opportunities to get us back into touch with younger people, for which there was no contact the last two years.

Although we did not have a Spring banquet again, we had a very successful Spring raffle, with six excellent prizes. We raised \$7,000.

A couple of our Executive Committee members attended the Keystone Coldwater Conference in State College in February, and I, for one, established many new contacts during this event.

I’m looking forward to seeing all of you again, and I wish you all a successful angling season!

Gerald Miller Volunteer Award



Becca Fronk is the 2021-22 recipient of the Gerald Miller Volunteer Award. Becca has always been an advocate for conservation of natural resources and clean water. Becca became involved in our Chapter by taking our Beginner's Fly Tying class and the introduction to Fly Fishing "Ladies Day". Currently she is serving on our Board of Directors (providing different perspectives) and coordinates our Facebook page. With her background in

Graphic Arts Becca has been instrumental in developing many graphic publications for our programs, special events, membership brochures, online store and most recently Chapter Event Banners. Other Chapters closely watch our website and Facebook page to "copy and share" her works. Last year she was in charge of our annual picnic and did an outstanding job for our members and families. Let's congratulate Becca on the honor she deserves.

Chapter Calendar

- May 31 – General Membership Meeting in Hershey
- June 11 – Work Day on Snitz Creek
- June 21 – Chapter Board Meeting
- July 24 – Chapter Picnic at Memorial Lake State Park
- July 30 – Fly Tying at the Ned Smith Center
- August 13 – Manada Creek Work Day
- August 23 – Chapter Board Meeting
- Sept. 17 – Ladies Day at Limestone Springs

Annual Meeting Report and Chapter Officer Elections

On Tuesday, March 22nd our chapter held its annual meeting to present our operating budget and elect our chapter officers. The presented slate of nominees was approved.

- President – Rich DiStanislao
- Vice President – Chuck Swanderski
- Secretary – Bob Pennell
- Treasurer – Trip McGarvey
- Asst. Treasurer – Howard Bixler
- Board Members:

- Fran Barilar
- Howard Bixler
- Russ Collins
- Joe Connor
- George Dodson
- Rebecca Fronk
- Andy Link
- Steve Long
- Francis O’Gorman
- James Suleski
- Stephan Vegoe

General Membership Meeting in Hershey

The chapter's next general membership meeting will be held at the Hershey History Center on **May 31st** starting at 7:00, with socializing starting at 6:30. The History Center is located in Hershey, near the Tanger Outlets at 40 Northeast Drive.

We hope this meeting will give those of you who want to be part of "how we operate the chapter" a chance to sign up, volunteer for specific activities, and, for some of you, an opportunity to accept leadership roles. We are particularly looking for volunteers to chair some committees - for our annual banquet, for Youth Mentoring, for our successful Veterans Home Waters program, and a trout stocking coordinator.

Following the review and discussion of our 2022 activity calendar, Russ Collins will present his current program - "Climate Change" and its impact on the Class A trout streams of Pennsylvania.

September and November Programs

For September 27th, Dr. James Suleski will present his program on "Protecting our Native Brook Trout". Doctor Jim is well-known for his passion in saving our Pennsylvania brookies, and he is currently gathering research for inclusion in this presentation. This is one that you don't want to miss!

Also, we plan to reschedule the rod building program - featuring Tom Whittle and Barry Weaver - that was planned for January. We hope to make it our November meeting. Most folks don't realize the special talent that these two gentlemen have for creating the tools of our trade, and how fortunate we are to have them right here in our backyard.

More details on these programs in the Summer and Fall issues.

Fly-Tying Courses

This past winter, the chapter sponsored two fly-tying courses, a beginner's course, and an advanced tying course. The two programs - 6 weeks each - met on the same nights in the Palmyra Sportsmen's Association clubhouse. A total of 14 tiers registered and took the courses, 11 of them in the beginner's group and 3 in the advanced class. Of these, it was interesting to note that five of the students were women; the highest number of females to take the course.

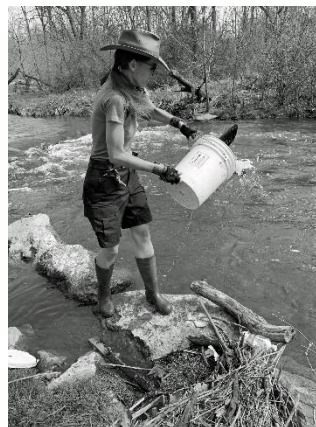


Special thanks to Chuck Swanderski for coordinating the Beginner's class, and to Rich DiStanislao for leading the Advanced class.

A dozen chapter members helped throughout the length of the program, serving as "mentors" and adding their assistance and expertise at the vise. You really can't teach a course without the help of these mentors. Several mentors rotated as lead tiers with the Beginner class.

TU Volunteers Stock Special Regs Streams

In cooperation with Doug Deppen and Mark Sweppenhiser, the WCO's in Lebanon and Dauphin Counties, Doc Fritchey volunteers, including a good sized group of "newbies," helped stock the special regulations sections of the Quittie and Manada Creeks in March/ April.



Included in the fish for the Quittie were a significant number of larger trout for the program the Fish and Boat Commission calls Keystone Select.

On Saturday morning, April 16th it was fun to watch fly fishermen of all ages and sizes

catching and releasing the browns and rainbows that had been stocked just a few days before, with numerous stories of large fish that took tiny nymphs under the surface.

We extend our thanks to everyone that helped stock our local trout streams. We'll be back at it in the fall on both streams.

Grant Requests/Projects Progress Report

Russ Collins recently advised the TU board of the status of the projects he and his small team are working on in the Hammer Creek watershed in SE Lebanon County and several projects in Lebanon and Dauphin Counties. It's an exciting time of grant writing, land-owner negotiations, volunteer and consultant discussions, and implementation.

Hammer Creek-Shuey property - Received National Fish & Wildlife Foundation approval of the workaround on a bog turtle habitat issue/problem. We are now awaiting DEP approval to move forward with the project.

Hammer Creek-Zimmerman property - DEP received our permit reapplication after redoing a new wetlands delineation and phase 1 bog turtle study. Now it's a waiting game till the permit is approved.

Hammer Creek-Barry property - Two months ago we installed groundwater wells and a stream water temperature logger to gather data to confirm the plan of relocating the entire creek to the adjacent wetlands area; to increase the cold water input to the stream. Rob Smith has assumed leadership of this effort and is leading a team to collect the data each month.

Hammer Creek-Fisher Farm - We submitted a grant request to National Fish and Wildlife Foundation for a small watershed implementation grant of \$271,630 on the Hammer with the cooperation of an Amish farmer; to restore a tributary on his property. The initial design process has been completed by US Fish and Wildlife - thanks to Adam Smith and Bob Vierck (USFW).

Hammer Creek - Two additional projects are in discussion with property owners on an unnamed tributary locally referred to as Old Mill Run or Distillery Run. Stay tuned, exciting things happening, with more to come.

Spring Creek Hershey area - We received and have accepted a grant of \$132,000 for the creation of a Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP). The creation of the Watershed Implementation Plan (WIP, also known as APR-Alternate Restoration Plan) is under way and the various sub-consultants have begun submitting their parts of the combined effort. It will take nearly a year to complete the work. Eventually, a non-profit, Watershed Association will be created to restore the creek.

Bachman Run Horst/Bachman properties - We received a grant of \$161,000 for streambank restoration.

Growing Greener Grants in Lebanon County

As part of the 2021 Growing Greener grant awards, (Growing Greener is the single largest investment of state funds that goes directly towards addressing critical environmental concerns of the 21st century) projects associated with two Lebanon County creeks will receive more than \$370,000 in total funding for restoration efforts.

A Quittapahilla Creek floodplain restoration project in North Cornwall Township will receive \$110,500 towards a functional floodplain-wetland system that will provide better flood storage, water quality benefits, and significant reductions in sediment load.

In South Londonderry Township, a similar effort for Killinger Creek will receive \$260,000 for a 1,600 foot streambank stabilization project that will significantly reduce sediment and protect the stream channel and wetlands corridor.

These Lebanon County projects are two of 65 funded through the Department of Environmental Protection's \$18.2 million funding round as part of the 2021 Growing Greener program.

Keystone Coldwater Conference held in February

On a cold weekend at the end of February, three of our chapter's Executive Committee - Collins, Pennell, and DiStanislawo - attended the annual Keystone Coldwater Conference in State College. This biennial conference was co-hosted by the Pennsylvania Council of Trout Unlimited and by the Pennsylvania Chapter of the American Fisheries Society.

This well attended two-day event featured speakers and presentations on conservation, development of volunteers, recruiting members from diverse backgrounds, poster sessions with matching discussion groups led by college faculty and college students, and exhibit booths. The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission was also on hand to lead several discussions. Our own chapter continues to receive recognition for the good work that we are doing with our projects, the Diversion Well, and with grants for stream improvements.

Reminder - Doc Fritchey Logo Gear

You can find a wide-variety of quality clothing and hats on DFTU's online store. All the gear comes from Travel Champs in Hershey. The chapter receives a check every time you make a purchase. Click the STORE button at the top of DFTU.org.

Schaeffer Visits Stony Valley

It could not have been a worse evening in April (cold with two inches of snow) to drive into Stony Valley to visit the chapter's diversion wells but Tim Schaeffer, executive director of the Pennsylvania Fish & Boat Commission, kept his commitment (and dressed for the weather) to spend two hours with the intrepid crew of Doc Fritchey volunteers who weekly make the trip into Rausch Gap to shovel limestone into the chapter's two Acid Mine Drainage remediation wells.



Schaeffer had been invited to visit the wells after a recent discussion with chapter president Rich DiStanislao, so Dennis Coffman, the leader of the *Stony Valley Gang*, contacted Schaeffer and arranged for the recent, Monday-after-Easter evening visit. The "Gang" goes in the four miles to Rausch Gap every Monday evening to replenish the wells with limestone and to clean and service whatever needs to be serviced. Thanks to lots of early spring rain, the wells are working perfectly, consuming a significant amount of limestone every week. The chapter's diversion well is now in its fourth decade of operation.

Meet the Legislators Night



On Tuesday, April 12, a "Cast and Blast" evening was held on the grounds of the Harrisburg Hunters and Anglers Association. Hosted by the Pennsylvania Sportsmen and Women's Policy Workgroup, all the members of the Pennsylvania Senate and the House of Representatives were invited to visit the ten outdoor sportsmen's organizations that had exhibits on the grounds, including our TU chapter and CVTU. Thanks to the board members who staffed our booth: Chuck Swanderski, Rich DiStanislao, and Russ Collins.

Ready to Get Your Hands Dirty?

It has been a long time since we could get together to actually do hands-on stream work. So, we have scheduled two workdays, Saturday June 11th, and Saturday August 13th to improve two of our project areas.

On June 11th at 8:30 AM we will work on the Snitz Creek project on the Nolt property on Dairy Road in North Cornwall Township. We need volunteers to plant fifty trees to replace the previously planted trees that have not survived. We are also going to plant a larger willow tree as a memorial tree for our late friend Dick Puerzer. Thanks to the contributions of several chapter members, we have sufficient money to plant a strategically-located, lasting memorial.

A general email will be sent to the membership in advance of June 11th, but if you are not on our email distribution list (about one-third of our membership), then please mark your calendars and join us at 8:30 at the Nolt family's property on Dairy Road for a couple hours of tree planting and assorted streambank restoration work. Park at the North Cornwall Township athletic field which is directly across the street from the TU project.



Volunteers in Action

On Saturday morning August 13th at 8:30 AM we are going to take on the challenges presented by downed trees in the special regulations section of Manada Creek. If you have visited the special regs section on Manada, you are

aware that high winds and storms/floods have ravaged the creek bottom; fallen trees have created a real challenge. It is impossible to float stock this section of stream and the downed trees make fly fishing nearly impossible. With the use of chainsaws, winches, pry bars, and strong hands, we plan to open up some of the choked places on this stretch of water.

Details in the summer issue of this newsletter.

"They say you forget your troubles on a trout stream, but that's not quite it. What happens is that you begin to see where your troubles fit into the grand scheme of things, and suddenly they're just not such a big deal anymore." John Gierach

Day of Caring on Quittie Creek

As part of the annual Lebanon County United Way's Day of Caring, seven Doc Fritchey members showed up to clean up an "impressive mess of downed trees" on the Quittapahilla Creek in Quittie Creek Park.



Jim Rauch and Joe Connor

Joined by an adjacent landowner, Jim Rauch, Joe Connor, Rick Wasserman, Stephan Vegoe, Gary Zelenski, Greg Silva, and Trip McGarvey spent three hours in the water, with Jim Rauch operating the chair saw/ The crew removed all of an accumulated debris pile and a large, heavy tree that was blocking the main channel.

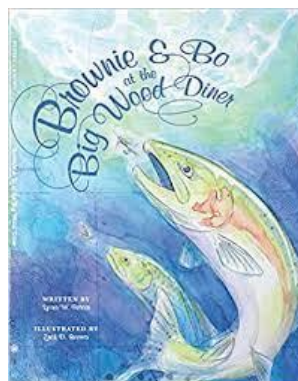
DFTU Membership Update

Currently there are 592 members assigned to our Doc Fritchey Chapter. 75 of our members have chosen to attain the status of "Life Membership". Our oldest member signed up in 1986 and I'll bet he has stories to tell. Our Chapter now has 35 ladies, including Becca Fronk, a board member) reinforcing our diversity and inclusion efforts. Since April of 2021 we have enrolled 104 new members.

We welcome the following new members since February 2022:

Charles Longreen
Harvey Stern
Jennifer Nichols
Glenn Rowe
Louis Bracale
Patrick Combs
Jason Ecenroad
Brett Whittle
Chuck Daley
Michael Collins
Stuart Knead
Anna Madra
Jacob Field
Roy Hoffman
Kevin Witt
William Allison

Looking for Something to Educate Your Children/Grandchildren About Trout and Their Environment?



Lynn W. Peters, a member of the Donegal Chapter, has written an endearing book, stunningly illustrated by watercolor artist Zack D. Brown, which takes a look at two hungry trout as they spin a tale of life in their

natural habitat and the how they survived. . . thanks to "catch and release."

"*Brownie & Bo at the Big Wood Diner*" is a 32-page hardcover book available for purchase from the PA Council of TU, along with several other books on PA fly fishing, fly rods, custom-tied leaders, PATU-logoed T-shirts, and hats, "Back the Brookie" license plates and "Catch & Release" license plate frames. Go to patrout.org and look for the Merchandise button.

DFTU Winter Raffle Was a Big Success!

We are pleased to report that 351 tickets were sold for the Winter Raffle amounting to \$7,020, plus a \$50 donation, for a total income of \$7,070. We greatly appreciate the support of all those chapter members who purchased tickets to assist with our fundraising efforts.

Our Winners:

Chuck Swanderski - Delaware River Fishing Trip
Francis O'Gorman - Orvis Rod & Lamson Reel
Gary Zelinske - Bill Kosmer Photo Print on Canvas
Richard Evans - \$150 Gift Card for TCO Fly Shops
John Zebel - 6 Dozen Rich DiStanislaos Flies
Chris Liartis - Carved Rainbow Trout

We are planning another raffle in November.

Wildwood Wetlands Festival - April 23

At the same time seven of our members were helping clean-up Quittie Creek Nature Park, another group of volunteers from Doc Fritchey (Chuck Swanderski, Steve Long, Rebecca Fronk, George Dodson, and Bob Pennell) represented the chapter at the Annual Wildwood Wetlands Festival. The group explained the chapter's conservation programs to a wide-variety of festival visitors. They also tied a variety of trout flies and explained how those flies are used in fly fishing.

"Angling may be said to be so like the mathematics that it can never be fully learnt" Izaak Walton

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