



# HATCHES

Newsletter of the Doc Fritchey Chapter  
P. O. Box 227, Palmyra, PA 17078 [www.dftu.org](http://www.dftu.org)  
Spring 2023



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

## From Your President:

### Reflections and Passing the Torch



My term as the chapter President has ended and now the role falls into the very capable hands of Chuck Swanderski. Chuck has been my main support for my entire term as President, as he was the “Always There Guy” serving as my Vice President. I will now become the Immediate Past President, and do my best to

provide Chuck with comments, suggestions, and sometimes advice (hopefully more good advice than bad), just as Russ Collins did for me. I was fortunate to have a very copacetic, knowledgeable group of members serving as our Board of Directors, and an outstanding Executive Committee, and I wish to let everyone know how much I have appreciated these folks.

Despite the downtrodden throes of the pandemic, we continued to meet via the internet, and I believe that we have made great strides for our chapter in spite of the hardships of not having face-to-face meetings. We all found out just how valuable our tech support members and our newsletter people are!

Our chapter has cornered a phenomenal amount of grant funding to improve our watersheds within our chapter, thanks to the efforts of Russ Collins, Kent Crawford, and such a host of others that are too numerous to name directly.

This past year we bounced back, participating in community events across both counties and made our presence known.

Our treasury has been enriched through our auctions and raffles, through corporate sponsorships, and through donations, putting us in a position where we can comfortably look to enhance our stream restoration projects, assure generous maintenance funding for our Acid Mine Drainage Diversion Well, sponsor youth camp attendees, support partner organizations, provide educational programs, purchase high tech equipment to monitor our streams, and much more.

There were disappointments during the past two years, such as the inability to conduct work sessions on our projects, mainly due to social distancing and practicing caution against contagion. This certainly threw a wrench into annual planning. We definitely need to get back on track with some good old “hands-on” workdays on our project streams.

I think chapter members would love to participate in these work days, and that they have missed the camaraderie that these sessions provide.

Very recently (January of this current year), a group of our members formed a Strategic Planning Committee, and through some good thinking and discussion, they have put together what I consider to be a truly outstanding document to serve as a blueprint for our chapter’s direction for the next couple of years. This document can be found on our website, at [www.dftu.org](http://www.dftu.org), linking to our Strategic Plan.

Our chapter is a non-profit organization made up of volunteers; it is up to the chapter membership to carry this plan out. I can’t overstate this: WE DEPEND ON ALL OF YOU TO KEEP OUR ORGANIZATION VIABLE AND SUCCESSFUL. Please consider becoming an active participant. You might be surprised at how good it feels to become a truly active member.

It has been a pleasure for me to serve you, and I look forward to continuing under new and fresh leadership. Best regards,

Rich DiStanislaio

## Gerry Miller Volunteer Award



Chuck Swanderski and Bob Pennell

The “Gerry Miller Outstanding Volunteer Award” was presented at our Annual Meeting on March 28<sup>th</sup>. Named in honor of Gerry Miller, a chapter member beloved by all for his “Always There” service, the award is a memorial, for Gerry left our world far too soon.

The award was presented to Chuck Swanderski, who served as our chapter’s Vice President these past two years. Chuck has personified the “Always There” to assist concept. He was a major source of support in our chapter efforts, being the coordinator for the Beginner Fly Tying course, the Diversity and Membership chair, our liaison with Casting for Recovery, kindling a new relationship with the veteran’s program “Project Healing Waters”, and always staffing our information booths. A well-deserved recognition for Chuck’s outstanding work and devotion to our programs this past year. We feel certain that his acceptance of the position as the incoming President for our chapter will in no way diminish his zeal for our chapter, but only serve to increase his efforts. Congratulations, Chuck.

## 2023-2024 Officers and Board Members

The Nominating Committee presented the following slate of nominees for Executive officer vacancies and for Board of Director members to the membership at the March 28<sup>th</sup> meeting. After a brief discussion, the slate as presented was elected by the general membership.

### 2023-2024 Officers

President	Chuck Swanderski
Vice President	Russ Collins
Secretary	Trip McGarvey
Treasurer	Howard (Willie) Bixler
Past President	Rich DiStanislao

### 2023-2024 Board Members

Joseph Connor  
Bryon Correll  
Rebecca Fronk  
Richard Green  
Andy Link  
Steve Long  
Francis O’Gorman  
Bob Pennell  
James Suleski  
Stephan Vegoe

We extend a heartfelt thanks to retiring board members George Dodson and Fran Barilar for their exceptional service to the chapter.

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## Chapter in the News

Brian Whipkey, the outdoors columnist for USA TODAY Network sites in Pennsylvania, contacted chapter leadership in February and proposed a series of articles for his outdoor columns, which appear in thirteen newspaper properties across Pennsylvania, including the *Lebanon Daily News*. The first article, an in-depth look at the work of the Doc Fritchey Chapter, appeared at the end of March, with numerous photos of chapter leadership and the chapter’s conservation projects.

"Listen to the sound of the river and you will get a trout."  
Irish proverb

## Chapter Secures Grant For Quittie Creek

Two years ago, while a chapter member was working on clearing a nasty stretch of Japanese Knot Weed from the south bank of the Quittie below the Spruce Street Bridge, in what we thought was Quittie Creek Nature Park, the adjacent landowners, Larry and Tonya Mayes, came over to introduce themselves, and to tell us that they were hoping to purchase the property at auction from Annville Township, which they subsequently did. That chance encounter eventually led to a new friendship and many conversations about how the Doc Fritchey Chapter might be able to help them with obviously needed streambank improvements.



Thanks to the cooperation of Annville Township, the north bank property owner, and the Mayes’, and with outstanding work, once again, from Russ Collins, a significant grant was obtained last fall, totaling just short of \$100,000, from the Lebanon County Conservation District (their Countywide Action Plan contributed over \$27,000 in matching funds - thank you Johanna Willieme and Katie Doster) and from the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission’s Tulpehocken and Quittapahilla Watershed Enhancement Program - \$72,000. The project will begin in the fall of 2023 and will be supervised by one of the chapter’s corporate sponsors, Aquatic Resource Restoration Company. The work will involve installing modified muddills and log vanes and bank grading to narrow the stream, increase water velocities, create deeper pools, and increase fish habitat.

One of the many requirements of the project is that the chapter perform “before and after surveys” to document the improvements to the Creek. These two surveys will each take about half a day and will require support from chapter volunteers. We have no set date to get this work done, but ARRC says we can do the before survey “sometime this spring”. Then, the after survey would be done during the same time frame next year when the project is completed.

"If one really loves nature, one can find beauty everywhere."  
Vincent Van Gogh

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"The solution to any problem -- work, love, money, whatever -- is to go fishing, and the worse the problem, the longer the trip should be." John Gierach

## Annual Passing of the Net



Willie Bixler and Fran Barilar

For many years our chapter has carried out the tradition of "Passing a landing Net."

This is an honored and fun tradition, whereby the current holder of the net gets to name the next chapter member to use it for the next year.

The original landing net was first owned by Frank Viozzi, a past chapter president, and this net-passing tradition is a special memorial to Frank.

Each year, the recipient of the net carries it on his/her fishing expeditions, adding to the variety of places where the net has been and to the numbers and sizes of the fish that the net has landed.

The net has been to Ireland and Iceland, to Argentina several times, to remote areas of the Rockies, and on well-known and lesser-known streams here in Pennsylvania.

Fran Barilar was the most recent recipient of the net, and Fran gave it a heck of a workout. Fran received the net from Dennis Coffman, who also gave it heavy use, especially in Yellowstone National Park. If only the net could talk.

Fran passed the net on for its next adventurous year to Howard (Willie) Bixler, the chapter's new treasurer. A year from now we are looking forward to hearing how well-traveled Willie was during the year.

## Chapter Members to Collect Water-Quality Samples

Dr. Kent Crawford and a growing number of dedicated chapter volunteers have been accelerating their watershed monitoring efforts, especially now that our new sophisticated equipment is up and running. Dr. Crawford recently advised his "work group" that "Our primary goal for the monitoring program is to characterize the water-quality of the Quittapahilla Creek. This requires collecting water-quality samples, analyzing those samples, interpreting the results, and reporting the findings. We will do this several times during the year, hopefully for several years. We now have the equipment on hand to complete this activity. It may seem simple, but there are lots of guidelines to follow.

We will take it slow at first to make sure we are comfortable with our protocols."

### **Trout Stocking**

It looked last fall like our volunteer efforts to help float stock two special regulations' streams – Manada Creek in Dauphin County and the Quittapahilla Creek in Lebanon County – might be in jeopardy because of a lack of volunteers. Yet, when the call went out for volunteers in early March for the two, early-season stockings of these streams, we were delighted that new faces showed up to help. Joe Notarangelo and Jim Rauch took over coordinating the two days because our regular coordinators were "out of action." Joe and Jim reported that "we had plenty of help," and everything went according to plan. We introduced new float tubes, retiring the two old "work horses" that have served us so well. The new, smaller float tubes, built and donated to the chapter by Ron Machamer, were especially useful on Manada Creek, which, because of downed trees, is a bit of a nightmare to float stock. In addition, Joe Notarangelo, Jim Rauch, and Dennis Coffman, also built new float tubes.

We will float stock the Quittie in Quittie Creek Nature Park on April 10<sup>th</sup>, and Manada Creek on April 25<sup>th</sup>. For those of you who are interested, The FFO section of Clarks Creek will be stocked on May 8<sup>th</sup>.

### **Winter Auction and Raffle Raises \$8,800**

Once again, our online Winter Auction has proven to be a great success! With over 30 items, all donated by local angler shops, guides, other businesses, and artists, there was a wide selection for bidders to choose from.

The Winter Auction alone netted a total of \$7,037. Add that to our Basket Raffle total (from the *Fly Fisherman Magazine* "Over the Guardrail" film premiere this past January) of \$1,771, including a private donation of \$275, the grand total for fundraising efforts in the month of January exceeded \$8,800!

These donated dollars went directly into our budget for our continuing, and new, coldwater restoration projects in Dauphin and Lebanon Counties.

### **May Membership Meeting – May 16**

Mark your calendars for a chapter membership meeting on Tuesday, May 16<sup>th</sup> at a new location.

Linglestown Historic Venue  
Adjacent to the Linglestown Fire Hall  
5901 Linglestown Road  
Harrisburg, PA 17112-1103

As we went to press with this issue we were still working on a program, so look for a Constant Contact notice in early May with details.

"Good food is a benign weapon against the sodden way we live." Jim Harrison

### **A Big Thanks to Annville Township**

Last fall, as some of our chapter members were collecting litter throughout the length of the Quittapahilla Creek in Quittie Creek Nature Park, we realized that recent storms had brought down two large trees, one that was completely blocking water from freely flowing downstream (but catching all the litter).



We notified the Park's volunteer committee who notified Annville Township's Public Works Department, and the Township crew went to work this winter, removing both downed trees, making the creek once more free flowing. Thanks guys and nice work. We suspect the kayakers are most appreciative.

### **Quittie Creek Park Field Tour on April 30**

The Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) and the Pennsylvania Game Commission are co-hosting the 78<sup>th</sup> Annual Northeast Fish & Wildlife Conference on April 30<sup>th</sup>-May 2, 2023 in Hershey. As part of this conference the PFBC will showcase nearby stream restoration projects, including the Quittapahilla Creek Stream Restoration Projects in Annville's Quittie Creek Nature Park. A field tour has been scheduled for Sunday afternoon, April 30<sup>th</sup> (a start time has not yet been decided).

Michael Schroeder, president of the Quittapahilla Watershed Association (QWA) and an active member of the Quittie Creek Nature Park Committee (and a (D) candidate for Lebanon County Commissioner) was instrumental in making this tour happen. In addition to showing the results - half a dozen years later - of the initial, two-phase, streambank restoration project in the park, Schroeder and his QWA committee members will also walk guests upstream to the Spruce Street Bridge to show them the area that will receive much-needed streambank restoration work this fall, part of a program that is covered in-depth in an article in this newsletter.

"There is certainly something in angling that tends to produce a serenity of mind." Washington Irving

## Chapter Strategic Plan

Our chapter, much like most organizations, succeeds through planning, both long range and short-term. Budgets must be prepared in advance, based upon expected operational plans. The chapter's existing strategic plan was five years old, and although it was a good one, it needed to be updated with a plan for the coming five years.

A Strategic Planning Committee was formed within the chapter in November 2022, with the goal of working independently until early January to think over what each committee member felt was important to incorporate into the new plan. Then in early January, the committee met to discuss the new plan. Over the next few weeks, this draft was discussed, improved, and made ready for presentation to the Board of Directors for additional input and critique.

At the February Board meeting, it was carefully reviewed and eventually approved in March. The main focus of the new plan is a proposal for the structure of our volunteer committees. The adopted plan creates a process for the chapter to operate in an efficient manner that uses a wider range of committees, with clarified leadership roles, one that will give committee chairs greater responsibilities and at the same time encourage a larger number of participants from the general membership.

We are proud of this new plan. It can be found on our website, under the subheading "About", drop down selection "steering plan".

## Quittie Creek Cleanup on April 22<sup>nd</sup>

The Lebanon County United Way's Annual Day of Caring is Saturday, April 22<sup>nd</sup>. For as many years as we can remember, the chapter has recruited a group of volunteers, young and old, to specifically work *in the stream*. While a large group of park volunteers and college students are spreading mulch, pulling Garlic Mustard (a particularly abundant invasive weed in the park), and picking up trash, our chapter volunteers will be clearing downed trees and clearing woody materials to improve fish habitat and make fishing in the special regulations section a bit more enjoyable. Although we will be sending out an invitation email to a targeted list (our "usual suspects"), we hope some other members will join us at 9:00 at the main parking lot in Quittie Creek Nature Park. Make sure you bring chest-waders if you are OK with getting in the water, and gloves. We also need several chain saws. Please send a note to [stephan.vegoe@verizon.net](mailto:stephan.vegoe@verizon.net) if you can join us.

## Wildwood Wetlands Celebration

DFTU leadership and a few volunteers will be working/staffing a Doc Fritchey informational

booth at the Wildwood Wetlands Celebration. Please join us at Wildwood on Saturday morning, April 29<sup>th</sup>.

## Fly Tying Wrap Up

What a great Spring for our chapter's Fly-Tying Classes! We conducted two different classes this Spring, an Intermediate Course and a Beginner's Course. The Intermediate Course was five-weeks, taught on Monday evenings at the Olewine Nature Center at Wildwood Park in Harrisburg. Thirteen students attended all the sessions, with five instructors/mentors, including Rich DiStanislaw, Brian Royer, Bill Byrne, Steve Long, and Bill Irwin. The Intermediate Course wrapped up on March 20.



The Beginner's Course was also taught on Monday nights, at the Palmyra Sportsmen's Association clubhouse. A total of ten students enrolled in this six-week course. Our chapter provided seven instructors/mentors.

This basic fly-tying course provides students with technique skills, but also teaches them to tie flies that our own chapter members find productive on our local trout waters. The mentors always add tying suggestions and anecdotes about the flies being tied.

These two courses have been highly successful for our chapter, providing us with exposure to new recruits for chapter membership, new prospects for our Ladies Day later in the year,

and giving us a greater cooperative approach with local community organizations like Wildwood and Palmyra Sportsmen's Association.

Doc Fritchey Chapter  
of Trout Unlimited  
PO Box 227  
Palmyra, PA 17078



## DOC FRITCHEY CHAPTER OF TROUT UNLIMITED'S GUIDING PRINCIPLES

**WE ARE:** a local organization of approx. 600 members who are one of 49 Trout Unlimited chapters in the Commonwealth of PA.

**Our overall mission** is the conservation, protection, and restoration of the coldwater fishery resources of Dauphin and Lebanon counties.

**WE ARE:** an organization that has continued to place its emphasis on the fostering and restoring of wild trout populations, wherever that is feasible.

**WE ARE:** an organization dedicated to the education of anglers, of all ages, in the areas of stream conservation and sportsmanlike fishing practices.

**WE ARE:** a group of trout anglers, a majority of whom are fly fishers who believe primarily in catch and release angling.

**WE ARE NOT:** fly fishing elitists.

**We welcome** any angler who has an appreciation of our coldwater resources and the policies as set forth by Trout Unlimited.

**WE ARE NOT:** opposed to the raising and stocking of hatchery trout. However, we do not believe that hatchery trout have a place in trout waters which support self-sustaining populations of wild trout.

**We believe** that hatchery trout should be stocked only in the more marginal waters where a respectable wild trout fishery would be difficult to sustain.

**WE ARE NOT:** opposed to the sensible harvesting of trout within legal possession limits, particularly hatchery trout which are raised primarily for consumption.

**We believe,** however, that creel and size limits need to be tailored more strictly to the preservation and enhancement of the wild trout populations in Pennsylvania.