



HATCHES

Newsletter of the Doc Fritchey Chapter
P. O. Box 227, Palmyra, PA 17078 www.dftu.org
Fall 2023



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



From Your President:

While the earth is winding down for a winter's nap our Chapter is still in high gear. Meetings, stocking, clean ups, educational programs, legislative interactions, grant writing, and reports. Planning for the future is a sign of a healthy organization and “yep” we’re doing that too. Our board is involved with the five groups that oversee activities and there are plenty of opportunities for member involvement.

This issue of “Hatches” contains a great synopsis of our recent activities and I urge you to try at least one activity in the upcoming months.

The chapter showed our appreciation to retiring WCO Douglas L. Deppen for his years of service, especially helping our Chapter in stocking and keeping local anglers honest in their visits to our streams. Doug has been a great partner.

We are in the process of improving our chapter activities and member involvement by surveying the membership to focus our efforts on continuing our mission while increasing our member involvement. Please complete the survey in this issue to help us meet your needs. We recognize gaps in the membership and volunteer process starting with “yes I’m interested” to “I’ll join DFTU” to “I’d like to help out” to “sign me up”.

My process started with Russ Collins asking me to be a greeter. For me, my involvement in DFTU is a fun and rewarding process. Please cinch up your waders and join us.

Recognizing the importance of the economic and outdoor recreational opportunities in Pennsylvania, the DCNR has created the position of Director of Outdoor Recreation and appointed Nathan Reigner its first Director. At the PA Trout annual meeting in September Nathan pledged to expand the benefits of outdoor recreation for all Pennsylvanians. As many of you know, our chapter has been reaching out to more communities via informational booths, and website and Face Book pages. Nathan’s appointment will enhance our efforts to become a diverse and inclusive chapter.

Here’s hoping you take up the challenge to participate in our member survey and commit to participating in at least one chapter activity this fall and winter. The November meeting with Dusty Wissmath talking about fly fishing in Iceland would be a great way to start.

Chuck Swanderski

Chapter’s Diversity Efforts Receive PA Trout Award

Four members of our chapter’s leadership team (Chuck Swanderski, Bob Pennell, Russ Collins, and Stephan Vegoe) joined a nice crowd of about 100 TU chapter members from across the Commonwealth for the PA Council of Trout Unlimited’s annual meeting, this year along the banks of Big Fishing Creek in Mill Hall, Clinton County.



Chuck Swanderski and Judi Sittler

Judi Sittler from the Spring Creek Chapter, chair of the 2023 Award’s Committee, presented the annual Diversity Award to chapter president Chuck Swanderski – in recognition of the chapter’s efforts to promote diversity and inclusion in chapter membership in support of the DFTU mission.

The Chapter sponsors a Ladies Introduction to Conservation and Flyfishing Program, Community Outreach through participation in local events, Trout in the Classroom in area schools, participating in the National and PA Council TU committees in Women, Diversity, and Inclusion, and cooperating in the Harrisburg "Healing Waters Program" for veterans.

We Celebrated Wildwood in the Rain



Our chapter staffed a table at the annual “Celebrate Wildwood” event held on Saturday, September 23. Celebrate Wildwood is typically a beautiful outdoor Fall family event featuring plenty of vendors and exhibitors, activities for the kids, local musicians, and food trucks.

However, the spinoff nasty weather from the hurricane coming up from the Carolinas forced everyone to cram inside the Olewine Nature Center building. We still had our table, with plenty of help from chapter members Richard Green, Bill Irwin, Patrick Mulcahy, Steve Long, Rebecca Fronk, Chuck Swanderski, and Rich DiStanislao.

Along with table displays, we infused a heavy dose of promotion for our annual Ladies Day Introduction to Fly Fishing. We also featured fly-tying demonstrations, coupled with plenty of great conversations with families who were checking out all the exhibitors. The weather kept the usual number of attendees down, but it didn’t dampen our spirits.

“The fish and I were both stunned and disbelieving to find ourselves connected by a line.” William Humphrey in “The Armchair Angler”

Chapter Thanks WCO Douglas L. Deppen

On Tuesday evening September 26th, as part of our general membership meeting, the chapter took time to recognize and thank the Water Conservation Officer (WCO) that has served central Pennsylvania and Dauphin and Lebanon Counties for the past thirty years, Douglas L. Deppen. Doug joined us at the community club at Ft. Indiantown Gap so we could present him with a plaque to recognize his service. Dennis Coffman, our chapter's *resident expert* on trout stocking and diversion well maintenance, presented Doug Deppen with a special plaque, and a framed print to hang on the wall in his home office.



Tim Schaeffer, Doug Deppen, and Dennis Coffman

Many of our chapter members have worked with Doug for upwards of twenty years, especially in the spring and fall when we help the PA Fish and Boat Commission stock trout in the special regulation's sections of Clarks Creek, Manada Creek, and the Quittapahilla Creek.

Since Doug plans to officially retire in early 2024, the float stocking we helped with on October 12th on the Quittapahilla in Quittie Creek Nature Park will be our last official time working with Doug. However, Doug has promised/threatened to show up to help after he retires. We sure hope so.

Joining Doug Deppen at our chapter meeting was Tim Schaeffer, executive director of the PA Fish and Boat Commission. In addition to his comments about Doug Deppen's thirty year career, Tim Schaeffer talked about the importance of TU's role as a partner in coldwater conservation throughout the Commonwealth.

Mark Your Calendars

The 32nd International Fly Tying Symposium is returning to Somerset, N. J. at the Double Tree by Hilton at 200 Atrium Drive. Mark your calendar for November 11-12, 2023.

"I think I fish, in part, because it's an anti-social, bohemian business that, when gone about properly, puts you forever outside the mainstream culture without actually landing you in an institution." John Gierach

Fly Fishing in Iceland - November 28th

Our next chapter meeting will be held on Tuesday, November 28th at the Community Club at Ft. Indiantown Gap beginning at 7:00 PM. Because of an unexpected scheduling conflict in May, our November program will once again feature our friend Dusty Wissmath, who will present a program on fly fishing in Iceland.



Dusty Wissmath will introduce us to the northeast coast of Iceland, and he will share some of his memorable Iceland fishing experiences; fly fishing for large brown trout and Arctic char, primarily on dry flies, and sea run Atlantic salmon.

Dusty's presentation will feature the Mýrarkvísl and Reykjadalsá watersheds, which are relatively small rivers that hold large brown trout along with good runs of salmon throughout the summer. These rivers run through flatland plains, making them perfect for dry fly fishing.

For those of you who have not joined us at the Community Club at Ft. Indiantown Gap, please be assured this is an excellent meeting location. We are in a large private room adjacent to the bar and grill, so many of our members arrive early for burgers, beer and conversation before the program begins. This year's chapter president, Chuck Swanderski, runs an excellent meeting. Nice and tight and operating on the SOT squared formula – *start on time and stop on time*.

Please take two minutes to complete and return the survey in this issue to help us with our meeting planning for 2024.

Intermediate Fly Tying

The Chapter's popular Intermediate Fly Tying class will be held at the Olewine Nature Center building in Wildwood Park starting Thursday, February 15, 2024, and running for five consecutive Thursdays. The Intermediate class is intended for students who have already familiarized themselves with beginner skills and who wish to advance into tying more complex patterns.

The class will focus on teaching new tying skills as well as instruction on effective fly patterns. It is expected that students of this level will already own their tying tools, although we will offer tools for purchase for anyone who wishes to upgrade. We provide hooks and materials. The cost of the course is \$35. Weblinks to the registration form will appear on our chapter website starting in mid-December. Questions can be directed to Rich DiStanislaio at rdistani@comcast.net.

Beginner's Fly Tying Classes

DFTU will sponsor our annual Beginner's fly tying classes starting on Thursday February 1, 2024, at 6:00 PM continuing on Thursday evenings ending March 7. The location is the Palmyra Sportsman's Association Club in Palmyra. You must be at least 16 years of age to attend. The objective of the class is to teach basic tying skills and combine these techniques with materials, colors, and proportions to create the perception of food for trout. The fee is \$40 with quality tying kits available for purchase at \$70. Class size is limited to 12 with registration beginning November 1. To register please send your check payable to DFTU along with the registration form to:

Doc Fritchey Trout Unlimited
P.O. Box 227
Palmyra, PA 17078

Register on-line at either DFTU.org or palmyrasportsmensassoc.wildapricot.org/

If you have questions, contact Trip McGarvey at Trip@dftu.org

Another Year of Float Stocking Completed



Probably a record turnout

A blue bird perfect fall day brought about a large group of TU volunteers to help float stock the Quittapahilla Creek on Thursday, October 12th. As you can see from the photo, we filled the lens. The youngster on the right was with his grandfather from Philadelphia (Go Phillies!) and they were in the park to check out the scenery and volunteered to help carry buckets.

Centered in the photo is WCO Doug Deppen who was in a great mood as his thirty-year career with the Fish and Boat Commission is coming to an end. Joining Doug on the Quittie was Mike Parker, communications director for the Commission. Mike created a video that's available on YouTube. It's also on the chapter's website.

And, a special "shout-out to the public works department at Annville Township. Their crew cleaned up a fallen tree across the creek, one day before our "old men" were going to take on the task. Well done and thank you.

"The great charm of fly-fishing is that we are always learning." Theodore Gordon

A Special Thank You to Dr. Kent Crawford



Dr. Kent Crawford has stepped down from his role leading the chapter's Stream Monitoring Program. After much discussion, Kent and Michael Schroeder, president of the Quittapahilla Watershed Association (QWA) agreed that in order to effectively continue, our Monitoring Program needs to fill four key positions: 1) Data Manager (to manage and store the mountains of data we expect to be collecting); 2) Communications Manager (to communicate among fellow volunteers and with the wider public; Michael Schroeder has agreed to fill this position); 3) Fieldwork Coordinator (to coordinate our fieldwork efforts, as Kent has been doing); 4) Equipment Manager (to coordinate with LVC and others to manage the needed monitoring equipment).

To recruit people for these positions Kent Crawford sent out a blanket call for volunteers, focusing on DFTU members. Then, Kent and Michael sent out targeted invitations to specific individuals soliciting their help. In the meantime, Katie Hollen (Lebanon County Conservation District) agreed to coordinate our water sampling efforts in October.

If you have an interest in working on the chapter's monitoring efforts, please send an email to Michael Schroeder msinpa@gmail.com so he can add you to the list.

As a sidenote, Michael Schroeder, among everything else he is doing, is running for Lebanon County Commissioner, with election day scheduled for Tuesday, November 7th.

"There is certainly something in angling that tends to produce a gentleness of spirit and a pure sincerity of mind." Washington Irving

Fun at the Annual Picnic



Our chapter held its annual summer family picnic at Memorial Lake State Park on Sunday afternoon, August 27th.

It was a gloriously comfortable summer day, with plenty of sunshine and mild temperatures, a true respite from the withering heat of July and early August. A nice turnout of about 50 people came and enjoyed the day. In addition to casting lessons, we featured a fly casting tournament with fly placement into hula hoop rings. Francis O'Gorman won the event, in a runoff for the title! We also had a cornhole bean bag toss tournament and gave prizes for the best number of bags sunk on long tosses. Mission BBQ again catered the picnic, and the food was both delicious and plentiful. It was a real joy to mingle with family members, make some new friends, and to renew old acquaintances. It was a perfect way to wrap up the summer.

Planting 1,000 Trees

The Lebanon County Conservation District is looking for volunteers for three tree planting events in late October. Two of the plantings are on Saturday, October 28th in Millcreek Township and the third is Tuesday, October 31st in South Annville Township. LCCD provides free trees to landowners through the Chesapeake Bay Foundation's Keystone 10 Million Trees Partnership, with a goal of establishing riparian buffers and upland forest throughout Lebanon County. This fall, LCCD will be planting over 1,000 trees! Additionally, each tree or shrub seedling will be fitted with a shelter to prevent deer damage. Contact Katie Hollen at 717-277-5275 ext. 114 or katie.hollen@lccd.org for more information or to sign up as a volunteer!

2023 Legislative Cast and Blast

For the second year Emily Baldauff, TU Mid Atlantic Organizer, sponsored a Legislative Cast and Blast Program for PA Legislatures to make them aware of the outdoor programs, opportunities and conservation organizations that can benefit from budgeted monies and grants. The event took place on October 17 at the Harrisburg Hunters and Anglers Association. Chapter members Cyndi Camp, Becca Fronk, Russ Collins, and Chuck Swanderski attended

"There is only one reason in the world to go fishing: to enjoy yourself. Anything that detracts from enjoying yourself is to be avoided." Leigh Perkins

Ladies Day Introduction to Fly Fishing

On Saturday October 7th our Chapter sponsored its annual educational program introducing 18 women to conservation and flyfishing.



Lucy and Jack

The participants were given instructions in flyfishing gear, equipment, knots and knot tying, entomology, fly tying, and casting.

Lead instructors were Cyndi Camp, Lynn Langer, Alana Nicoletti, Marina Swartz, and Sarah Stark. Assisting the instructors: Steve Long, Joe Notarangelo, and Rich DiStanislao. Assisting as mentors in fishing and casting: Jack Billmyer, Russ Collins, Greg Silva, and Bill Bryne.

Following the morning sessions and lunch the ladies were given casting lessons and then they fished the stocked waters of Limestone Springs Fishing Preserve.

A special thanks to Precision Fly and Tackle, Casting for Recovery, DFTU volunteers, and the staff at Limestone Springs.

Palmyra Sportsmen's Assoc. Field Day



Chuck Swanderski Teaching

On Sunday October 8th DFTU once again supported Palmyra Sportsmen's Association family field day with a fly casting clinic. Lots of children were able to practice casting one-on-one with coaches (Chuck Swanderski and Trip McGarvey) using our chapter's training materials.

"It is only the inexperienced and thoughtless who find pleasure in killing fish for the mere sake of killing them. No sportsman does this." W.C. Prime, 1888

Quittie Floodplain Restoration Project

Back when the Lebanon County Stormwater Consortium was first organized in 2017 and they started to assess an annual fee (\$60 per residence and more for business property owners) with the goal of meeting MS4 (Municipal Separate Storm Sewer Systems) regulations to reduce pollutants reaching the vulnerable Chesapeake Bay, one of the first project ideas put forward was an idea first developed by Rocky Powell, a consultant the chapter has worked with for more than twenty years. When Rocky first walked the main branch and all of the tributaries in the Quittapahilla watershed he suggested the project with the biggest benefit would be the creation of a wetland where the Hazel Dike, which is the concrete channel created after Hurricane Agnes devastated the City of Lebanon, ends at 19th Street, to create a wetland running for several thousand feet, past 22nd Street.



The new wetlands on the Quittie just east of 22nd Street

Construction took place this summer, June to September, with the goal of restoring the Quittapahilla Creek's channel and floodplain to conditions that existed centuries ago before the Lebanon Valley was populated and developed, and sediment began to build up and become a serious, downstream issue. The contractor removed a mature forest, cutting down and hauling away hundreds of large hardwoods to create an open environment, and then the contractor dug out 400 years of sediment, lowering the stream level to approximately where it was at the time William Penn came to Philadelphia. Four to six feet of topsoil was excavated and hauled to the Lebanon County Landfill where that soil will be used as overfill; at least a year's worth.

The driver for this project is water quality, and the newly created wetland is doing that immediately, and it's also providing four acres of wetland restoration and habitat enhancement. There's certainly a lot of ecological benefit to the project in addition to water quality. It also will provide flood control. Floodwater can now spread out and slow down. Stormwater will get out of the bank more frequently, but still stay within the boundaries of the restoration project.

Streamflow Monitoring



Katie Hollen, Kent Crawford, and Michael Schroeder

Part of the chapter's ongoing monitoring of the Quittapahilla Watershed includes an annual (at least) effort to measure and record streamflow in the Quittie and its tributaries (Bachman, Killinger, Snitz, and Beck). Three of our volunteers worked on August 15th – Kent Crawford, Katie Hollen, Stephan Vegoe – plus Mark Hoger from DEP. Michael Schroeder joined Crawford, Hollen and Vegoe on the 16th to complete the study. The process is rather straight-forward. A tape measure is used to determine stream width and ten measurements are taken with a special streamflow device, measuring the actual streamflow of the creek across its entire width.

DFTU Participates in Casting for Recovery

Our Chapter has supported for several years Casting for Recovery with both a financial contribution and providing a fishing mentor/guide to the participants.



Swanderski and Friends

The Eastern PA CfR event was held at Skytop Lodge in Sky Top, PA. The event provides a healing outdoor retreat (at no cost) and respite for women experiencing the challenges of breast cancer.

This medically endorsed 3-day program provides speakers, information, camaraderie, and teaches the principles of fly fishing for *women by women*. Our part of the program was to provide an actual stream fly fishing experience to extol the virtues of nature and the calming effect of fly fishing. The calm usually quickly ends when a fish is caught and landed. Overall, a great program for our Chapter.

"Pole far enough and the fish will find you." Steve Huff

Watershed Monitoring Updates

Prior to his giving up the leadership of the watershed monitoring efforts the chapter and the Quittapahilla Watershed Association have been conducting, Dr. Kent Crawford organized an effort at the end of August to acquire meaningful data on the current state of the Quittapahilla watershed.

Kent wrote the following message to the group of volunteers that have been assisting him.

"As you know, the Quittapahilla Creek is a stocked trout stream, but few if any of the stocked trout survive through the summer. We suspect that in the summer, either the temperature is too hot, or the dissolved oxygen (DO) is too low for their survival. We know that the hottest part of the day is mid to late afternoon. And we know that the lowest DO occurs at night when there is no photosynthesis to produce oxygen but the organisms in the creek are still respiring and taking oxygen out of the water. So, in lieu of having someone taking repetitive samples throughout the day and all night, we can use our multi-parameter water-quality instruments (sondes) to take the temperature and DO readings for us."



Kent Crawford, Katie Hollen, and Mark Hoyer

"Our plan is to deploy two sondes in the Quittapahilla Creek and leave them there for a week or two. They will measure temperature, pH, dissolved oxygen, and specific conductance for the duration of the deployment and store the readings in the memory of the sonde. We plan to place one in the newly created wetlands area between 19th Street and 22nd Street, and one sonde farther downstream, just below the Spruce Street bridge." Willie Bixler, Katie Hollen, Bob Connell, Gary Zelenski, Michael Schroeder, and Stephan Vegoe worked with Kent to calibrate the sondes and deploy them into the creek. Then, two weeks later, the same group of volunteers recovered the sondes. Unfortunately, our original calibrations were "off," and we did not recover the data we expected. Plan B is now in effect.

"I object to fishing tournaments less for what they do to fish than what they do to fishermen." Ted Williams

Project and Grant Updates – Lebanon County

Beck Creek Project 6. Stream and Floodplain Restoration Project. On June 16, 2023 the QWA submitted on behalf of Doc Fritchey Trout Unlimited (DFTU) a grant proposal written by Rocky Powell to PA-DEP's Growing Greener Plus program for \$494,449.00. On June 15, 2023, the Lebanon County Conservation District Board voted to approve an Agriculture Conservation Assistance Program (ACAP) grant for \$173,100 to support this \$934,146 project. We are waiting to hear about the application, which is expected in December or early in 2024.

Snitz Creek Project 3. With the exception of the USACOE 404 Permit, all permits and approvals have been obtained. We are still waiting to hear from the Army Corps of Engineers –more than a year.

Snitz Creek Project 4. DFTU is wrapping up the paperwork needed to finalize our contract with PADEP. As of 19 September, we are still waiting on a contract with PADEP.

Killinger Creek Project. After both landowners approved the preliminary design, a reapplication site visit on September 7th went well. Our consultant met with USCOE, DEP, and LCCD's Karl Kerchner. The consultant is now developing the application.

Bachman Run Project. Preliminary channel alignment and buffer design was approved by the landowners and preliminary design was moving forward. Then, with the sale this summer of a major part of the project area and after a lot of back and forth between our consultant and the new landowner, the new alignment for the creek was accepted and the riparian buffer was reduced to 15 feet rather than 35 feet. The project is once again moving forward.

Snitz Creek Project 2. Completely permitted, construction is expected to begin in 2024.

Quittie Mainstem Restoration Project Downstream of Spruce Street. Although it was expected this 800-foot streambank restoration project would be completed before the end of 2023, DEP has not yet signed off on the permit (paperwork is the explanation given) so it's likely this project will now commence in 2024.

Lebanon County Stormwater Consortium Quittapahilla Creek Floodplain Restoration Project. Currently the largest project on the Quittie, a project first envisioned thirty years ago, to remove 400 years of sediment just downstream from where the Hazel Dike dumps into the normal creek, has been completed.

"The angling fever is a very real disease and can only be cured by the application of cold water and fresh, untainted air." Theodore Gordon

Doc Fritchey Chapter Membership Meeting Survey



The Doc Fritchey Chapter conducts membership meetings on the fourth Tuesday every other month, with the current meeting location being the Community Club at Ft. Indiantown Gap. Each meeting features a program on a variety of subjects, including fishing destinations, fishing techniques, or other coldwater conservation topics. Because we are interested in increasing meeting attendance, we hope you will take a few minutes to complete the following brief survey.

How many DFTU meetings have you attended in the last year?

How important are chapter speakers in influencing your attendance at chapter meetings?

Rank from #1 (very important) to #5 (not important)

1 _____ 2 _____ 3 _____ 4 _____ 5 _____

What topics are of the most interest to you?

Rank the following in order of importance (#1 being the most important):

- _____ Fishing destinations in PA
- _____ Fishing destinations in more exotic locations
- _____ Fishing techniques
- _____ Fly patterns & tying
- _____ Updates on chapter programs & projects
- _____ Updates on TU programs statewide & nationally
- _____ Presentations by other conservation organizations
- _____ Other (please specify): _____

Any specific speakers that you would be interested in hearing?

Please specify:

How important is our current meeting location in influencing your attendance?

Check one of the following:

- _____ Not important (I would attend regardless of the location)
- _____ Somewhat important (it would be nice if it was closer to where I live)
- _____ Very important (it's just too far for me to come)

If we were to change our meeting location, where would you prefer it to be?

Check one of the following:

- _____ Don't change (it's a good location where it currently is)
- _____ Other (please specify) _____

PLEASE NOTE: Your completed survey form should be mailed to Willie Bixler, 2050 Branch Road, Annville, PA 17003. If your survey is either the 1st, 10th or 15th received, you will receive a DFTU-logged hat when you attend your next chapter meeting.

Doc Fritchey Chapter
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