



HATCHES

Newsletter of the Doc Fritchey Chapter
P. O. Box 227, Palmyra, PA 17078 www.dftu.org
Winter 2024



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



From Your President:

It's difficult to believe we are in the year 2024 so I guess it's a Happy and Healthy New Year's wish to all! As we ponder personal, community, and professional accomplishments and vow to improve our lifestyles, lose weight, be nice to people, pay it forward, and give back, let's peer into the future of the Doc Fritchey Chapter.

We have one of the largest and most active chapters in both the Commonwealth and the National TU organization. Our Chapter has received recognition, awards and acknowledgements from many other conservation organizations, the state, and (thanks to Russ Collins) our National Trout Unlimited Organization.

DFTU has made commitments to regular member/board meetings, fly tying classes, ladies' programs, vet's organizations, the Ned Smith Center, Wildwood Nature Center, Legislative Outings, regular stream float stocking, stream improvements and trash collection, Rivers Conservation Camp, Casting for Recovery, Sportsman Field Days and several youth programs to name a few.

January brings a member meeting on the 23rd featuring Rick Nyles, Owner of Sky Blue Outfitters, with an exciting program on fly fishing in Montana and Idaho. March is a biggie as our tying classes continue, stocking has started, Mentored Youth Day is scheduled, fishing in the special regulation streams has begun and our annual meeting is scheduled for March 26th. At this meeting will elect a slate of members willing to serve our Chapter in an even greater capacity as Officers, Committee Chairpersons and Board members. The program's speaker is George Fallon who will talk about wild brook trout.

The final section of this message is asking as a part of your 2024 resolutions that you reach out and join the active members of our chapter in supporting one or more of our chapter activities. We have members that track 5 volunteer hours a year while some perform over 500 volunteer hours. The activities are fun and enable you to meet other chapter members, help in keeping our streams accessible and clean, improve our programs and serve as an example to others that you can pay it forward in many ways including your time, talent, or treasure.

All the best in 2024 and looking forward to meeting/seeing you at one of our many activities.

Chuck Swanderski

January Chapter Meeting – January 23rd

Our next General Membership Chapter Meeting will be held on Tuesday, January 23rd at the Community Club at Fort Indiantown Gap, beginning at 7:00. This program will feature a presentation by Rick Nyles, owner of Sky Blue Outfitters Guide Service. Rick's presentation will highlight fly fishing in Idaho and Montana from the Henry Fork's River to the Missouri River.



Fly fishing for over 45 years, Rick started guiding in 1999. As his business grew, he decided to start Sky Blue Outfitters. Sky Blue has grown to be a comprehensive guide service in Pennsylvania.

Rick is also an accomplished fly tier, who is known for his CDC patterns and his simple approach to fly tying and fishing techniques. He placed 3rd in an ORVIS fly tying contest by entering his unique Green Drake pattern.

For those of you who have not joined us at the Community Club at Fort Indiantown Gap, please be aware that there is a newly constructed main gate, and you need ID,

March Membership Meeting – March 26th

Wild Brook Trout – Fishing Strategies for the Wheres, Whens and Hows for Success with George Fallon, who recently joined the guide staff at Sky Blue Outfitters.



Fly fishing became George's passion in the early 90s. Like most residents of Philadelphia, he started fishing stocked streams until someone introduced him to wild trout opportunities. While finding enjoyment catching browns and bows, brookies stole his heart. George has found many little-fished wild brook trout streams in eastern and central PA.

He developed his own style for success and loves to share his knowledge. His passion for hunting, catching, and protecting these beautiful fish and their habitat is difficult to match.

In 2020, George retired from over 40 years in inventory management to really start to explore as many wild brook trout streams as possible. He will visit streams from PFBC's Class A Wild Trout and Natural Reproduction lists, as well as streams he may just drive by and think....hmm, why not?

Rivers Conservation Fly Fishing Youth Camp



DFTU will sponsor up to three teenagers from Dauphin and Lebanon counties for the 2024 Rivers Conservation and Fly Fishing Camp at Messiah Univ.

Co-ed participants, ages 14-17, are instructed in ecology, aquatic biology, geology, hydrogeology, erosion and sediment control, ichthyology, riparian corridor protection, watershed management, entomology, and much more. They will also participate in a hands-on stream habitat improvement project. But it's not all work. There are 10 fishing sessions, casting and fishing instruction and fly-tying classes. Over 25 instructors, all experts in their field, teach various classes. For more information, and to apply, visit www.riverscamp.com.

DFTU Storage Unit



As our Chapter grew in both membership and activities, we determined the need for a central storage area for our "stuff". Recently, the Board agreed to rent a large enough storage unit at the Forge Road Self Storage.

Thanks to Russ Collins, Trip McGarvey and Chuck Swanderski for putting together the four shelving units purchased at cost from Lowe's. Word got out to Cyndi Camp and most of the new unit's shelves are now filled with TIC aquariums, pumps, chillers, and other accessories. Gradually we will transfer and sort the various bins and boxes from the overwhelmed trailer to the storage unit. Our goal is to keep the stocking barrels, stream improvement/clean up equipment and diversion well tools in the trailer and move the fly rods, tying materials and other materials to the storage unit. Any Chapter Members wishing to store DFTU materials in the unit should contact Chuck Swanderski.

"In these sad and ominous days of mad fortune chasing, every patriotic, thoughtful citizen, whether he fishes or not, should lament that we have not among our countrymen more fishermen." Grover Cleveland

Doc Fritchey Chapter to Offer Two Fly-Tying classes in Spring 2024

Our TU chapter will once again provide two levels of fly-tying courses. The Beginner course is designed for students who have either never tried fly-tying before or for the person who believes that he/she needs a refresher course in order to grasp the basic techniques needed to complete simple fly patterns. A review of modern tying tools and the fundamental purpose and skills to use these tools will be emphasized.

Beginner's Fly Tying Classes

Beginner's fly tying classes start 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 fee is \$40 with quality tying kits available for purchase at \$70. Register at palmyrasportsmensassoc.wildapricot.org or DFTU.org. If you have questions, contact Trip McGarvey at Trip@dftu.org

Intermediate Fly Tying

The Chapter's popular Intermediate Fly-Tying class will be held at the Olewine Nature Center at Wildwood Park starting Thursday, February 15 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 cost of the course is \$35. Register at dftu.org/education/fly-tying/intermediate-fly-tying/
Questions to Rich DiStanislaio at rdistani@comcast.net

The Stony Valley Group



December 10 was wet and foggy but not enough to hinder 7 TU volunteers from making their way into Stony Valley to the Acid Mine Remediation Project. Work was done on the round well opening all 3 water nozzles. 11 loads of limestone were shoveled into the square well.

DFTU Merchandise

Several years ago, DFTU entered into an agreement with Travel Champs in Hummelstown to provide our chapter members with top quality LOGO shirts, hoodies, hats, and casual wear at affordable prices. A portion of the sales is passed on to our chapter. We have a "hot button" to our virtual store on the DFTU website (dftu.org).

Adopt-A-Highway along Manada Creek

After a significant pause in roadside cleanup (none of us can remember the last time we helped pick up trash on this section of the Manada Creek), eight DFTU volunteers showed up on Saturday morning, October 21st to see "how bad was the trash situation." Well, it did not take long to find out that we should have recruited a lot more volunteers and we should have brought a lot more trash bags.



But we made a dent: 29 trash bags, most of them filled to capacity with beer cans, plastic bottles, shoes, food containers in various stages of decomposition, and assorted debris, were left along the side of Manada Bottom Road to be collected by PennDOT. We also collected a glass refrigerator door and a variety of car parts from several obvious crashes.

Thanks to the dedication of Dennis Coffman, without whose enthusiasm for trash collection the chapter would not be working with PennDOT on roadside cleanup, the chapter now cleans up two sections along highways in Dauphin County – roads adjacent to Clarks Creek and Manada Creek. Dennis advised the group that worked on October 21st that he will organize another cleanup in the spring of 2024, this time bringing out more help and with a lot more trash bags. If you want to be on the contact list for future highway cleanup mornings, please contact Dennis Coffman at dcstreamwalker@comcast.net.

Marriage is a great test and some of us were allowed to retake it until we got it right. To make a life with your most knowledgeable critic is heroic, and the reward is a spacious happiness, no doubt about it. Garrison Keillor

Chapter Involvement

Chapter membership has many benefits, especially if you are actively involved in our Chapter. We sponsor many activities throughout the year and our meetings keep you informed of these events plus providing our members with some top notch speakers. Conservation, Rod Building, Stream improvement projects, Fishing exotic destinations and fishing our PA waters to mention a few.

Get to meet guides, speakers, Waterways Conservation Officers, tyers and other craftsmen as they share their knowledge of their passions. There are numerous ways to get involved, including attending a meeting, working on one of our projects, education programs, outreach at community events, committee involvement, becoming a committee chairperson or becoming a member of our DFTU Board of Directors.

Cast and Blast

On October 17 our Chapter participated in the second annual PA Legislator Cast and Blast. The event was sponsored by Trout Unlimited through our Mid Atlantic Policy Program Manager, Emily Bauldauff. The overall purpose was to introduce PA Legislators to the many outdoor activities/ conservation programs offered by the Commonwealth and interact with agencies and nonprofit organizations that support and enhance these programs and activities. Our chapter set up an information booth with information available pertaining to our programs and conservation efforts. In addition, we were tasked with demonstrations in casting and fly tying.



Cyndi Camp, Rich DiStanislaio, Bob Pennell, Chuck Swanderski and Russ Collins.

Trout in the Classroom – An Update from Cyndi Camp

PA Trout in the Classroom is made possible through a unique partnership between Pa Council of Trout Unlimited and the PA Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC). It is an interdisciplinary environmental education program through which students learn about ecosystems, habitats, watershed conservation efforts, etc. to enhance and protect coldwater resources.



Each participating classroom is provided with a 55-gallon aquarium, chiller, filter and all other necessary equipment, provided by DFTU ("program partner"), as well as my support. In early January each year, they receive about 200 rainbow trout eggs, which the students raise to fingerling stage and then release during a field trip into a nearby stream approved by PFBC.

While we've had as many as 7 classrooms at the same time, in 2023 there were 4 - 2 at ELCO, 1 each at Middletown Middle School and Upper Dauphin High School. Currently I can only manage to support 1 new classroom per year because there's usually a lot to do to help the teacher become familiar with equipment and do problem-solving, and the distance between schools is significant. More DFTU members involved would be great, but they would need to be available on very short notice in case of equipment failure (we have, in our new storage shed and my garage, all vital replacements) and would have to have taken the PFBC workshop that is mandatory for all potential new-to-the-program teachers prior to their being able to register to participate.

If any teacher expresses interest in the 2025 program to you, invite them to look over the website at patroutintheclassroom.org and email Cyndi at ccampsilva@verizon.net.

Quittie Streambank Improvements

Thanks to the cooperation of Larry and Tonya Mayes, who own the property on the east side of the Quittapahilla Creek just downstream from the Spruce Street bridge, and Annville Township, which owns the west side of the creek (in Quittie Creek Nature Park), streambank improvements, designed and executed by ARRC (a chapter sponsor), began just before Christmas, and will be completed by the end of January. This project, about 800 feet in total, happened through a chance encounter between Stephan Vegoe and Larry Mayes. Vegoe was working on invasive weed removal on what was then township property when Larry Mayes walked over from his property to say hello and to tell Vegoe that the Mayes' were in the process of buying the streambank property from the township. Mayes told Vegoe he and his wife were contemplating streambank improvements and Vegoe explained that our TU chapter could probably find some grant money. That's when Russ Collins got involved and Russ did, indeed, find grant money (\$100,000) to make the project a reality.



Larry Mayes and Russ Collins

Several hundred feet of this new project will replace stream improvements that the chapter and the Red Horse unit of the PA Air National Guard installed in the summer of 1998. The wooden board structure that the chapter and the Air Guard installed 25 years ago is being replaced and updated. Larry Mayes has asked the ARRC construction crew to leave a parking area on his property that will give fly fishermen another place to park when accessing the creek. Sometime this spring, after the project is fully complete, the chapter will send out a call for volunteers to help us plant riparian buffer trees along the newly restored streambank.

Quittie Streambank Improvements

As soon as ARRC has completed this first Quittie project at Spruce Street they will relocate their heavy equipment about five miles downstream, north of the Palmyra-Bellegrove Road, to begin a major streambank improvement project along Syner Road. Once again, thanks to Russ Collins who wrote the grant proposal, significant grant funding was provided to the chapter to complete a much-needed streambank improvement project.

Howard "Willie" Bixler, Chapter Treasurer



Willie is a relatively new member of Trout Unlimited. His initial involvement began with the float stocking of trout on the Quittie, thanks to Steve Vegoe's invitation, and later, Joe Notarangelo invited him to the Diversion Well in Rausch Gap.

Willie commented that the well's science and history fascinate him, and the fellowship is an added bonus. As a lifelong resident of Lebanon County and with extensive experience as treasurer of Union Hose Fire Company, as well as holding various offices at Miller & Bixler Autoparts for 47 years, Willie was well-prepared to serve as chapter treasurer. Now in semi-retirement, working 10 hours a week, Willie decided to learn to fly fish. To enhance his skills, he attended our chapter's fly tying classes and received one-on-one training from fellow Trout Unlimited members.

Quittie Watershed Monitoring Update

After a bumpy, Covid-delayed start, the Quittie Watershed Association's (QWA's) Monitoring Program is now in full swing. Spearheaded by DFTU member and QWA Board Member Dr. J. Kent Crawford in 2018, the program has a simple goal: to measure the extent to which the restoration work in the watershed is having its intended effects. Has the amount of sediment being flushed downstream really declined? Is there a greater abundance and diversity of macroinvertebrates? Is the water really getting cleaner? Simple in outline, the program is also complex in its details and rigorous in its implementation. For a fuller discussion, see the Monitoring page of the QWA website, at <http://www.quittiecreek.org/monitoring.html>.

Soon after Kent stepped down from his leadership role this past August, five team leaders stepped up: Fieldwork Coordinator Katie Hollen; Equipment Manager Kara Lubold;

Data Managers Alyssa Bellucci and Bob Connell; and Communications Coordinator Michael Schroeder. We also draw from a team of eight fieldwork volunteers who help when they can, but we could really use a deeper bench – which is why we're issuing this call for additional help. Interested? Put "Quittie" in the subject line and email mjsch@yahoo.com.

Newsletter Under New Management



Sometime in 2016, probably during a budget discussion at a board meeting, I suggested to the board that the chapter needed to resume the production and mailing of a print newsletter to be mailed to the entire chapter on a quarterly basis.

My reasoning at the time was pretty simple: we had (and still have) way too many members that do not, for a variety of reasons, receive email communications from us, and they don't look at our Facebook page nor at our DFTU.org website. The only communication those members receive from TU is the quarterly magazine (TROUT) mailed to members around the world, but nothing from Doc Fritchey.

Since I had plenty of experience with print newsletters, I told the board I would write and edit, and take photos, for a quarterly newsletter – first issue in the winter of 2017.

My dear friend Bob Pennell seconded the motion and agreed to work with me to carry on the print newsletters that he had produced for the chapter, using the same letterhead logo – *Hatches* – that he had used when he was responsible for writing and editing the chapter's print newsletter.

So, now, after seven years, this is my last effort. Thankfully, Bill Zeiders, much younger and still eager, will assume the role of chapter newsletter editor. Bill has an extensive communications background and will carry on the newsletter that Bob Pennell started, and I resurrected. Bill is the kind of younger and active DFTU member that will keep the chapter moving forward. I look forward to working with him.

Of course, I will still be helping to float stock our special regulations streams, and I will be there for the Annual Lebanon County Day of Caring along the banks of the Quittie.

Stephan Vegoe - Newsletter Editor 2017 to 2024
Stephan.vegoe@verizon.net

"To do good is noble. To tell others to do good is even nobler and much less trouble." Mark Twain

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