



# HATCHES

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



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



### From Your President:

Well it’s been a year since I took office as your president and I am very thankful to be surrounded by a supportive Board and DFTU volunteers and members. Special thanks to Rich DiStanislaio, our past president, and Bob Pennell, DFTU Board member, for guiding me through all the administrative tasks to make the chapter function. I guess it went well, as you elected

me for another term at the March meeting.

We accomplished a lot and embarked on new adventures with our chapter. We continue our quest for stream improvements and grants through the leadership of Russ Collins. Our diversion well on Rausch Creek through Dennis Coffman and the “Diversion Well Gang” overcame some glitches and is continuing to improve the PH on the stream. We conducted clean-ups on local streams and helped stock local waters with the PA Fish & Boat Commission. Our Board passed the annual budget with funds generated from fundraising activities, business partners and sponsors. It is interesting to note that membership dues generate a one-time rebate for new members only. Our Chapter does not receive financial support from TU National. Chapter sponsorship continues to grow as we welcomed increased support from existing sponsors and the recruitment of new sponsors. This program started several years ago and enables local businesses to contribute to our chapter mission while gaining focused advertising to over 500 members and friends. Please support them and mention DFTU as you patronize our sponsors.

Education programs are always well received with fly-tying classes, Ladies Day, Trout in the Classroom, and partnerships with area Vets Programs, Ladies Fly Fishing Clubs, Casting for Recovery, Sportsman’s Field Days, Angling Clubs, Legislative Conservation Day, and exhibits at Wildwoods Nature Center and Ned Smith Center. We have sponsorships committed for 3 area youth to attend the 2024 Rivers Camp at Messiah College in June. We added the Bass Pro Fishing Festival, Hershey Company Vets Program and a pilot fishing section with the Harrisburg school program “All You Can” as a part of their Leadership Academy. I was pleased to see an increase in new faces among our chapter volunteers. We have added over 100 new members this year, and it is up to us to get them involved in our chapter. More on this under the Membership Update.

Our communications and public relations programs are alive and well under the leadership of Andy Link, webmaster, Becca Fronk, Facebook page manager and graphic designer, and Bill Zeiders, “Hatches” newsletter editor for our chapter

activities. We are fortunate to have these talented individuals on our team.

At the March 26<sup>th</sup> General Membership Meeting, I gave an in-depth look at our chapter and urged members to get involved in some of our great programs. Many hands do make light work, as they say. As I suggested in my last column, make a New Year’s resolution to devote some of your time, talent or treasure to our chapter. It’s not too late to make good and help us out. Wishing you a successful fishing season and a safe summer and I hope to see you on the stream, at our meetings, or at our August 25<sup>th</sup> annual DFTU Picnic.

Chuck Swanderski

### Gerry Miller Volunteer Award

The 2024 Gerald L. Miller Outstanding Volunteer Award was presented to Dennis Coffman at our Annual Meeting on March 26<sup>th</sup>.



Dennis is a Life Member of TU who has been consistently involved with chapter activities for many years, including serving as a board member for almost 10 years, beginning in 2006.

He has been a participant in many stream restoration projects as well as coordinating stocking efforts with the

PFBC. He has been a participant for many years and currently heads up our stream remediation work at the Rausch Creek diversion wells. Dennis is passionate about cold water conservation issues and can always be counted on to pitch in when help is needed. He truly exemplifies what this award is all about.

This annual award honors the work of Gerry Miller, who passed away at age 66 in 2013. Gerry became a member of our chapter in 1999 and served as treasurer, board member and chair of the Stocking Committee. He also served on PA State Council as chair of the Awards Committee. Gerry was one of those TU members who could always be counted on to step up and volunteer when some new task was to be undertaken, always with a cheerful demeanor.

Join us in congratulating Dennis on this well-deserved honor.

## Annual Passing of the Net



*Bill Zeiders and Willie Bixler*

Our chapter has a long-standing tradition of the "Passing of The Net."

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

Howard (Willie) Bixler, our chapter treasurer, was the most recent recipient of the net, who received it from Fran Barilar. At the recent March meeting, Willie passed the net on for its next year of adventure to newly elected board member and "Hatches" newsletter editor Bill Zeiders.

The original landing net was first owned by Frank Viozzi, a past chapter president, and the net-passing tradition is a special memorial to Frank. Each year, the recipient of the net carries it on their fishing expeditions, adding to the variety of places 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 Rocky Mountains, Yellowstone National Park, and, of course, well-known and lesser-known streams here in Pennsylvania.

## 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](http://dftu.org)).

## 2024-2025 Officers and Board Members

The Nominating Committee presented the following slate of nominees for Executive officers and for Board of Director members to the membership at the March 26<sup>th</sup> meeting. The slate presented was elected by the general membership.

### 2024-2025 Officers

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

### 2024-2025 Board Members

Joe Connor  
Bryon Correll  
Richard Green  
Andy Link  
Steve Long  
Francis O'Gorman  
Bob Pennell  
Brian Royer  
Brett Wood  
Bill Zeiders

## Upcoming Activities & Call for Volunteers

Quittie Stocking - **April 8**

Quittie Community Clean up - **April 13**

Riparian Buffer Planting Workshop - **April 13**

Clarks Creek Valley Adopt-A-Highway clean-up - **April 20**, 9:00-12. *8 volunteers needed*

Quittie Stocking Palmyra Sportsman's Assoc. (PSA) - **April 21**

Celebrate Earth Day – Lawn Community Park - **April 21**

DFTU Executive Board - **April 23**

"All You Can" Pilot Program - **April 25**

Wildwoods Wetlands Festival - **April 27**

Hershey Vets Program Pilot - **April 27**

Quittie Stocking PSA - **April 28**

Manada Stocking - **May 3**

Manada Adopt A Highway clean-up - **May 4**, 9:00 - 12:00. Meet at Furnace Road. *10 volunteers needed*

DFTU General Membership - **May 28**

Send a note to [chucks@dftu.org](mailto:chucks@dftu.org) and I'll forward your **request to volunteer** to the appropriate person.

## Treasurer's Report March 2024

Over the last two years, DFTU has received grants and paid contractors over 1 million dollars for stream restoration projects in Dauphin & Lebanon counties. Thanks to Russ Collins for spearheading these projects. We have received \$520,000 this year.

Please support our sponsors, they support the following projects and initiatives:

### Community Outreach

- Ladies Day \$200.00
- Fly tying \$-40 + Rich intermediate class
- River's camp \$550.00
- Summer Picnic is sponsored by individual donations and breaks even

### Diversion Well

- Square well repairs \$920
- Equipment \$1,100

### Operating Expenses \$12,000

- Accounting \$2,975
- Newsletter \$2,868
- Storage \$802
- SAMS Registration \$1,198
- Meeting Expenses \$588
- Constant Contact \$639

DFTU uses only 2.1% of our income to support overhead!

### Volunteer Hours. 4,522

- Conservation 1,874
  - Diversion Well 866
- Communications 909
- Board Operations 1,458
- Youth Education 46

## Membership Update

Last year we recruited over 100 new members and this year we are on track to do even better. Our total DFTU roster numbers over 550. The majority of our members reside in the Harrisburg area and the second most in the Lebanon area. The question is: why are they not at our meetings and activities? Communications is the key to member involvement and retention.

Looking into our member roster revealed that almost 50% of our new members do not share their email addresses on their TU membership application. The reluctance is understandable, but not having our members' email addresses makes it difficult for us to stay in contact. If you are reading this and would like to be put on our DFTU email list, contact Andy Link ([andy.link@dftu.org](mailto:andy.link@dftu.org)).

The "Hatches" newsletter mailings go out once a quarter and all members have access to our website and Facebook page. Appearing in this newsletter and on our website is a list of upcoming activities. Please review this list and volunteer to help out with at least one activity this spring.

## Planning our Chapter's Summer Picnic

A chapter family picnic is in the works again for this summer, and a reservation has already been made for the event to be held on Sunday afternoon, August 24, from 3pm until 7pm at the Middle Pavilion at Memorial Lake State Park.

Our late August picnic typically caps off summer activities before the new school year begins, and the weather is usually a bit more hospitable than the midsummer heat. In the past this has been a catered event and most likely will follow the same pattern this year. We are in the early stages of the planning and welcome other chapter members to join the Picnic Committee.

If you are interested in helping, please contact Rich DiStanislaio [richd@dftu.org](mailto:richd@dftu.org)

## Hummelstown Print House is New Bronze Sponsor



Joining our family of partnering sponsors is the Hummelstown Print House, a full-service screen printing and embroidery business operating from downtown Hummelstown. HPH is responsible for filling orders for DFTU merchandise offered on our online store, and also operates a companion business, Travel Champs, which organizes tournaments for a variety of sporting events.

## Trout Stocking



DFTU members once again answered the call and turned out to help stock the Quittapahilla and Manada creeks in March. A big thanks to Dennis Coffman, who took the reins in coordinating our chapter's stocking efforts this year after Stephen Vegoe stepped back from the role.

We will float stock the Quittie at Quittie Creek Nature Park on April 8<sup>th</sup> and Manada Creek at Furnace Road on May 3<sup>rd</sup>.

If interested in helping, please contact Dennis Coffman ([dcstreamwalker@gmail.com](mailto:dcstreamwalker@gmail.com)).

## Beginners Fly Tying Class Wrap-up

Beginners Fly Tying classes started February 1st and concluded on March 7<sup>th</sup>. This year we had 10 participants learning basic techniques. Classes were held at the Palmyra Sportsman's Club in Palmyra on 6 consecutive Thursday nights. The skills taught enabled the

participants to tie inch worms, eggs, squirmy and Walt's worms, muskrat nymphs, zebra midges, bead heads, wet flies, dumbbell eye streamers and wooly buggers using both natural and synthetic materials. A real bonus was the sharing of the history and best uses of each fly, as well as where to fish the fly, and mentor techniques not found in videos and books.

Thanks to DFTU Members and featured tyers Bill Byrne, Joe Noterangelo, Brett Wood, Lou Samsel, Chuck Swanderski and mentors Rick Frazier, Fran Brarilar, Joe Connor and Bill Zeiders for sharing their time and talents with the participants. Always a fun time for our chapter.



## Intermediate Fly Tying Class Wrap-up

Our chapter offered an Intermediate Fly-Tying course on February 15<sup>th</sup> in partnership with the Wildwood Nature Center (Pennsylvania Parks and Recreation). The course was held at the Olewine Nature Center building in Harrisburg on Thursday evenings for 5 consecutive weeks.

We had a total of 9 students in the course, and several of our chapter fly-tyers served as lead tyers and as mentors. The students learned a variety of patterns, including Adams, parachute duns, Grannom caddis, perdigon Euro nymphs, Prince and dragonfly nymphs, marabou Royal Coachman and Clouser Minnow streamers. All the students showed exceptional skills in learning to tie these flies, and often brought in the flies that they tied at home after class.

Special thanks to chapter fly-tyers and mentors Brian Royer, Richard Green, Bill Byrne, Steve Long, Jim Foose, and Rich DiStanislao for their help in making this course successful.

## Bass Pro Shop Fishing Festival



On March 16<sup>th</sup> our chapter was invited to participate in the annual Fishing Festival at Bass Pro Shops. We took advantage of the offer (a new partnership between Bass Pro Shops and TU) to share our mission, distribute literature, offer advice on fishing opportunities in the area, recruit new members and demonstrate tying our favorite patterns. Folks that stopped by our booth were surprised that we are more than just a fishing club. Our literature and posters on the diversion well, ecology, stream improvement and conservation initiated some interesting conversations.

It was a new experience for our chapter and one that we hope continues. We invited the Cumberland Valley Chapter to share our new DFTU "pop up" canopy and swap some TU stories. Thanks to our chapter volunteers and tyers from the two DFTU winter tying classes for sharing their skills and time.



*Several of the fly-tying class students displayed their tying talents at our TU sponsored tent at the Bass Pro Shop's Fishing Festival.*

## The Stony Valley Group



In February, the crew had a bit more work than usual getting into the project. It wasn't the snow, it was the trees and branches blocking the road into the project. It took the crew of 9 that day and 3 chainsaws two hours to make it into the project, only to find a large tree had fallen over the round well. The tree was removed from around the well over the next three weeks.

This past year – April 1, 2023 to March 31, 2024 – TU Volunteer hours of maintaining the Rausch Creek project were 1008.5 hours. A special thank you to Tony Rose who brought his tractor in March and did a great job moving the stone closer to the wells. During the winter months, with both wells running, the PH has been in the 5.75 - 6.5 range downstream of the project and a PH range of 4.75 - 4.97 upstream of the project.

Note: Starting on April 1, we will move to meeting Monday evenings at 6:00 p.m. throughout the spring and summer season.



## Two More Stream Restoration Projects Completed



A couple of weeks into the New year, the Spruce Street project construction on the Quittie was completed. From all reports from folks fishing in that section, it seems that it fishes very well. In the coming months, the chapter will have a tree planting party, so find your shovels and gloves.

This project was funded by Pennsylvania Fish and Boat and the Lebanon County Conservation District. Thanks to both organizations for supporting our work to restore the Quittie.



The second project on the Quittie is the Syner Road Project. Two property owners were gracious to allow us to do the project. Thanks to Mr. and Mrs. Klinefelter and the Palmyra Sportsman Association for their support. Very similar to the Spruce Street project, the eroded embankments were

fixed, and some great fish habitat structure was installed. We will not be planting any trees on this project footprint because the pasture is used to graze dairy cattle. The long-term plan is to phase in additional projects in the same area as funds become available.

Our chapter is by far the conservation leader in the state. We recently applied for two additional grants totaling two million seven hundred fifty thousand dollars. The Lebanon County Conservation District is submitting a one million dollar grant adding to our project portfolio.



## Adopt-A-Highway Cleanup Dates

There are two upcoming DFTU Adopt-A-Highway Spring Clean Ups. On April 20, at 8:30 a.m. at Clarks Creek along Route 225, volunteers will meet midway in the special regs area. Signs will mark the meeting parking lot.

And the other is at Manada Creek on May 4, 8:30 a.m., meeting at Furnace Road.

Contact Dennis Coffman to sign up as a volunteer at [dcstreamwalker@gmail.com](mailto:dcstreamwalker@gmail.com)

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