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President's Message

Dear Fellow Chapter Members,

Please join us at our next monthly chapter meeting at [Village Pizza & Pub in Carpentersville](#) on Thursday, April 20th, 2023 with social hour starting at 6:00 PM (additional meeting details, including presentation information, included below). Consider joining us even if you live further out, tollway access is relatively convenient. And save the date for our June 3rd chapter picnic & fly casting clinic to be held closer to Rockford, IL at the [Kinnikinnick Creek Conservation Area](#) in part to help attract

members unable or unwilling to drive to regular chapter meetings in Carpentersville. Watch your email for invitations and additional details, and please R.S.V.P. accordingly.

Warm spring weather has arrived, insect activity is picking up, bankside vegetation is near its thinnest, and trout fishing season is open in [Illinois](#) (regular season) and [Wisconsin](#) (early season, until May 6th when regular season opens) – spring is one of the best times to get out and fish your favorite streams.



Speaking of fishing, it's not too late to participate in the chapter outing coming up at the end of this month, or to sign up for outings taking place later in the year. Please see the Chapter Fishing Outings section of this newsletter further below for additional details. If you are new to fly fishing, we can pair you up with a more experienced member through our buddy system. The upcoming outing will also provide a special opportunity to get involved with our conservation committee's fence crossing [stile](#) building and installation efforts. Three stiles will be installed in Monroe County, adding to our [extensive network of existing stiles](#) (where there are [stiles](#), there generally is high quality trout habitat nearby). Special thanks to the [Coulee Region TU chapter](#) for covering the costs of materials for stiles to be installed in April. If you are interested in participating with the stile building please email conservation@leewulfftu.org.

We are seeking volunteers for upcoming community fishing events and programs. Our next event takes place on Sunday, April 16th, 2023. See the Community Fishing Events & Programs section of this newsletter further below for more information.

Watch for news about our chapter's annual spring conservation fundraiser coming soon. This year's conservation fundraiser will start a bit later and run a bit longer than those of years past to ensure we make the most out of several very nice prize donations made to the chapter.

We are down to one 2023 TIC location: our longstanding reliable West Dundee classroom teacher Beth and her students have reared healthy trout scheduled to be stocked in [Piscasaw Creek](#) on May 5th with permission from Gabe Powers at MCCD. If you are interested in participating in the release please email tic@leewulfftu.org.

As planned, last month our chapter invested a portion of its conservation funds in two \$10K FDIC-insured certificates of deposit earning over 4% interest, having 11- and 23-month terms respectively. In other fiscal related news, our chapter is forming a budgeting committee, if you are interested in joining this committee please email treasurer@leewulfftu.org.

Be sure to check out our new book exchange program available at in-person chapter meetings. Purchase books for as little as \$5, and optionally return them after reading for a \$3 exchange credit.

This month's chapter meeting presentation will be a broadcast of three very informative segments from the 2023 Driftless Area Symposium:

1. [Risks Posed by Neonicotinoid Insecticides to Wisconsin's Wadeable Streams](#)
2. [Lunch with Sara & Paul: Open Discussion with TU Driftless Area program staff](#)
3. [Trout Stream Restoration Program in Southeast Minnesota](#)

(Recordings of select past meeting programs are [available on YouTube](#).)

Watch your email for Evite invitations to meetings, events, etc. I hope to see all of you in-person at our next meeting. However if you cannot join us in-person, please join us via Zoom, the main program typically starts at approximately 7:15 PM.

In-Person Chapter Meeting Remote Participation Details

Participate via web browser or Zoom app:

<https://us06web.zoom.us/j/81388953190?pwd=cFZjaUUzbnY4Q2J2OVFJM2VkSkFIZz09>

Participate by phone (one tap for mobile): +13126266799,,81388953190#,,,*041277#

Participate by phone: +1 312-626-6799

Meeting ID: 813 8895 3190

Passcode: 041277

Weekly fly tying sessions ended recently. Watch for sessions to resume again next year. (Recordings of select past sessions are [available on YouTube](#).)

The chapter is seeking volunteers to get involved in several committees, and to take on select club duties. Please email me at prez@leewulfftu.org if you'd like further information or are willing to volunteer. Thank you to those of you who are already volunteering.

And last, but certainly not least, I'm sad to announce that chapter member Joe Gallik recently passed away. Joe will be missed. You might consider honoring friends and loved ones by participating in collecting sycamore seeds and planting seedlings along the banks of Wisconsin trout streams (see Sycamore seed collection details below).

Regards,

Brent Burval

Sycamore Seed Collection

Our chapter vice president, Jerry Sapp, has long suggested that Sycamore trees might be a useful tool in building sustainable ecosystems that will help Driftless Area trout streams stand up to the tests of global climate change over time. His voice has been heard by Wisconsin officials. Here is a special message from Jerry, please help out with this important effort if you are able:

"Do you have a Sycamore tree in your yard or one close to you where you could collect seeds? Then if you do you can help the Wisconsin Forestry Department and TUDARE start growing seedlings to be planted along trout streams by TU members. Wisconsin does not have many Sycamores growing there. Their range is usually a little further south. Sycamores will be able to grow there now because of climate change. If we start now, by planting a tree that is more heat tolerant than oaks, has a great root system that hold stream banks, has fast growth, has a large canopy to provide shade to streams for cooling and has few low branches to tangle flies as it ages, we can mitigate the effects of global warming on trout.

We need to start this project now so that as average yearly temperatures warm the environment the spring fed streams of the Driftless will be protected by the shade of 80 foot tall trees. Future fish and fishermen will benefit from the shade. Macro invertebrates will break down the leaves of the trees and benefit also.

If you have access to a Sycamore we need you to collect those ping pong sized seed clusters that are falling off the tree now. Just keep them in a paper bag and take them inside to dry out a bit. Bring them to the next chapter meeting or contact Jerry Sapp sapp375@aol.com or 847-284-4824 to arrange pick up. If you need help identifying the tree and the seeds click [here](#)."

– Jerry Sapp

Sycamore Seed Collection Events

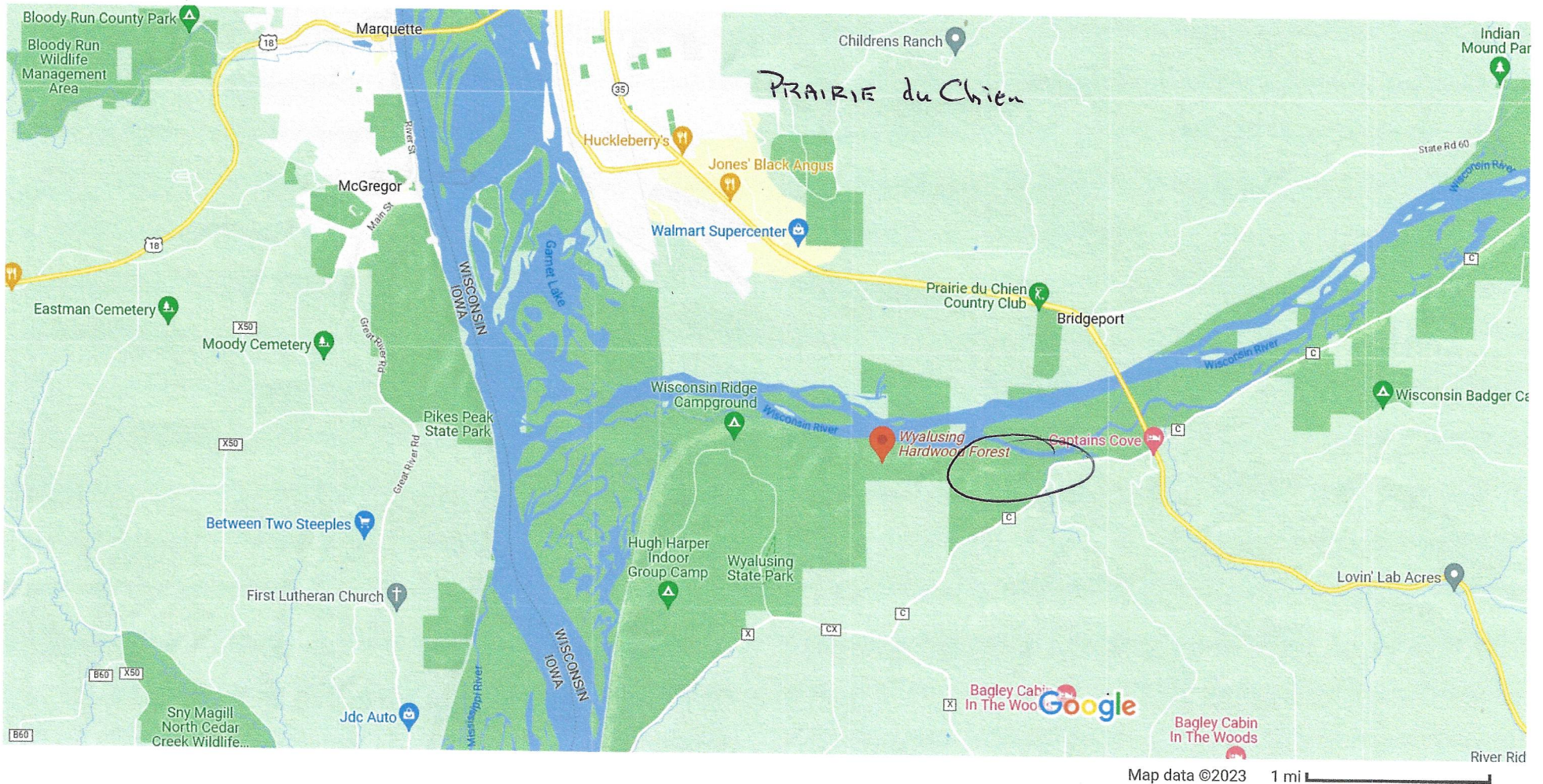
- [Wyalusing State Park](#) in WI (see map on next page or [click here](#)) - Saturday, April 29th, 2023 9:00 AM to Noon, organized by Paul Krahn (Paul.Krahn@tu.org). Tips from Paul: *“Bring rubber knee boots because we will be in the Wisconsin river bottoms. If you have large paper grocery bags bring a few to store the seeds in. Also, a 5-gallon bucket may be handy to begin collecting seeds in. The DNR pays \$125/bushel for the seed. If we can keep each chapter’s collection marked, I can make sure each chapter gets paid for what they collect. This is our first event like this but maybe will become an annual event if successful. You will need to bring your own drinks and food.”*
- [White Pines Forest State Park](#) in IL - Date(s) TBA. The IL DNR has approved collecting of [sycamore seeds](#) off of the ground within the park. If you are at this park fishing or otherwise, please collect seeds on your own and then contact Jerry Sapp as outlined further above to convey seeds.





Wyalusing Hardwood Forest

To sycamore trees, take County Hwy C to the west of Hwy 18 like you are going toward the park. Wyalusing Forest bottom is on the right before you go up the big hill about a mile west of hwy 18.



Community Fishing Events & Programs - Volunteers Needed!

Our chapter has a great opportunity to help kids and some adults get into fly tying and fly fishing.

We need more volunteers for the following events:

- [McHenry County Conservation District's Gone Fishing with Trout Unlimited](#) - Help kids and adults with casting and fly tying on Sunday, April 16th, 2023, 1:00 - 5:00 PM. at [The Hollows Conservation Area, 3804 US-14, Cary, IL.](#)
- *Chauncey H. Duker School Outdoor Program* - Help students with casting and fly tying on Tuesday, May 16th (our chapter plans to focus on volunteering on the 16th) and Wednesday, May 17th (the Gary Borger chapter plans to focus on volunteering on the 17th), 2023, 8:30 AM to 2:00 PM at [Fort McHenry Park, 4301 Front Royal Dr, McHenry, IL.](#)
- *Fishin' So Fly* - Our longstanding partner school in West Dundee is unable to participate this year. We are investigating alternative partnerships.

We have done all of these before. See the pics below. Make kids and adults smile.

Our chapter has vises and rods we can bring out, but for you Monday night tyers you are welcome to bring your own stuff and enough to tie about 10-20 wooly buggers (we aren't starting out with Meg's Salmon flies).

We are looking for a preliminary volunteer headcount. Details on times and exact locations to follow.

Please email me at volunteer@leewulfftu.org if you are available to volunteer or interested in learning more.

Thank you so very much from all the kids and adults that want to learn but don't know how.

Tight lines (fishing and tying),

– Scott Roane



2023 Chapter Fishing Outings - Sign Up Today!

Sign-up is open for our spring outings! [Outings](#) are a great opportunity to:

- Meet new fishing buddies, or renew your friendship with old ones
- Learn some new places to fish in the [Driftless Area](#)
- Learn techniques and strategies from more experienced anglers through our buddy system that pairs newbies up with experienced hands
- Eat, drink and tell bald-faced lies with a bunch of like-minded folks

For more information on the areas we fish, and recaps and photos from last year's outings, [click here](#).

Our first two outings of 2023 are:

- April 27-30, Westby/Viroqua, WI - Group accommodations at [Logan Mill Lodge](#) in Westby (which were a big hit last year when we first tried it out). All rooms are currently spoken for, however you are welcome to contact Ralph Lessor, Outings Coordinator r_lessor@msn.com, 908-295-9728, to be added to the waitlist.

Some solo reservation holders may be open to taking on a roommate. You are also welcome to make your own accommodations in the area and participate in outing weekend activities. Email outings@leewulfftu.org if interested in either of these two alternatives.

- May 18-21, Fennimore, WI - The Chapter will hold a block of rooms at [Napps Motel](#) in Fennimore; anglers will need to contact [Napps Motel](#) to reserve one of those rooms. We plan to host a bratwurst cookout for Thursday 5/18, cost TBD (approx.. \$8 based on last year's costs). Contact Ralph Lessor, Outings Coordinator r_lessor@msn.com , 908-295-9728, if you plan to attend.

Visit our [chapter's outings web page](#) for information about additional planned 2023 outings.

Take Action

Illinois House Bill 1568

As an angler, you know that the many beautiful streams in Illinois could be much greater recreational assets than they now are. Those streams could provide some of those same memorable, on the water experiences that are available to our neighbors in Wisconsin and Michigan just outside their back-doors. An Illinois Supreme Court decision recently called on the state legislature to reassert the public right to use state waters. The idea is to pass a new law clarifying and modernizing existing rights for river access. [House Bill 1568](#) is the legislation that can get this done. Your help is needed to tell your legislators to support this much needed legislation. Please do it now. [Please click here to use the Illinois Environmental Council's website to easily take action in under a minute if your time.](#)

Clean Water Act

A new common-sense rule to reinstate important Clean Water Act protections for small streams and wetlands is facing [renewed opposition](#). A new definition of the “Waters of the United States” (WOTUS) would improve the rivers, streams, and wetlands we care so much about, and protect the health of watersheds we work so hard to conserve. It is based on sound science (and common sense): If we pollute upstream reaches, we put our downstream waters at risk. [Reach out to your congressional representatives today and urge them to defend a strong Clean Water Act](#) that protects America’s rivers, streams, and trout and salmon.

Bob Olach's Fly of the Month

Christmas Soft Hackle

Because Bob was feeling “under the weather” and the weather so far has been bad enough that no one wants to be under it, Bob asked me to post that “bead-headed green thing” I tied years ago. The fly this month is something of a mongrel, a little of this and a little of that. My only claim about this fly is that it works as well downstream as it does upstream. There was a time years ago when Bob and I stumbled on a beaver dam south of Richland Center that had created a very deep, clear pool with hundreds of trout that had nowhere to go. I needed a fly that would get down eight feet or so and be large enough to see a “take.” We caught several dozen that day; almost all of mine were on the Christmas soft hackle. As usual, Bob out-fished me, but I did well enough that he remembered this fly. Tight lines. Kurt Haberl

Dressing: I've tied two variations of this fly, one with a partridge soft hackle, usually white-banded to contrast with the dark body, or with a few strands of pearl or olive Krystal Flash tied to jut out and wave in the water like a soft hackle. There seems to be something about the contrast of red wire over peacock herl that fish like.

Hook: 12 to 16 nymph/Klinkhammer style. Lately I've been using black, barbless Firehole Sticks, # 315, 2XG heavy, but I don't think the hook matters that much.

Tail: (Optional) a few strands of barred wood duck or pearl Krystal Flash

Body: several strands of peacock herl

Segment: 5 or 6 wraps of fine red wire wrapped opposite the peacock herl



Collar: partridge soft hackle or Krystal Flash



Grumpy's Page by Kurt Haberl

Old Ben Waverley's Pool looked like it always did, a long, deep, slow run with a ledge on one side, a cobble beach at the top, and a meandering riffle below. Even the mudbank near the top looked the same. The same redwing black birds screeched their warnings at us from the tangle of bushes and cattails that hid the spring and the small rivulet above us. Schnoz, Ghost Mary, and I looked at each other. We had followed Old Ben's instructions to the letter, including the oath concerning the property he gave us, and the twisting drive to the pool where Old Ben, the giant brown trout lived.

It was my turn with the rod this year. I tied on the proscribed size 18 zebra midge, played out some line, and bounced my first cast off the rock ledge, letting it sink. My hands were shaking as I waited for the line to grow taut like I was snagged. In previous years, it was not snagged. Often it was the beginning of an epic, if short tug-o-war. This time, nothing happened as the line drifted through the pool.

"Cast again," Schnoz said. Mary watched my line closely and took another sip from the travel mug she carried.

I put the fly closer to the top of the pool and didn't bounce it off the ledge this time. Again it drifted through the run. At one point, I thought I felt a slight hesitation, but I couldn't be sure.

"I wonder if someone has found this place and fished it out before we got here. If they caught Old Ben, they would have taken him home, for sure."

"They probably wouldn't have been able to land him," Mary said. "How many times have you landed him?"

"Maybe two out of ten," Schnoz guessed.

"Let me think," I said. "Did Ben say we couldn't change flies?"

"Yes," Schnoz said. "Zebra midge. It worked before."

"Remember last year when we didn't catch anything, but the big trout came up like a submarine and ate that piece of chocolate donut I threw out?"

"I remember," I said. "Ben didn't say we couldn't change position, though. I'm going to try that."

They followed me away from the run in a wide arc past mud and long beige grass bent flat from winter winds and heavy snow. I waded in near the bottom of the run where some irregular limestones created some shallows, which faded into a riffle.

On my first cast, I felt something for sure. It was light, a mere tick, but not the bottom. On the next cast, there was more than a tick. I raised my rod gently, and soon felt the rapid quiver of a minnow. I pulled it in and showed them my trophy, a fingerling brown trout, maybe four inches long. All wild trout are precious, so I unhooked it and held it back in the water until it scurried away upstream.

On my next cast, I felt another tick, and on the cast after that, I caught another brown, a twin to the first. There didn't seem to be anything bigger.

"Hm." Mary said. "You know, there's nothing smarter than an old brown trout, and he may have taken to *only* feeding at night. Remember last year, we didn't hook him. You two stay here and keep watch."

Mary went back up the stream along the bank, not caring if anything in the run saw her. At the top of the pool, she unwrapped a donut from the napkin she had carried in her pocket, tore off a one-inch piece, and tossed it into the center of the pool. It landed with a loud plop, and a splash before drifting toward us and beginning to settle. By the time it reached the bottom of the run, it was tumbling among the rocks. Nothing looked at it.

I tried one more cast, but this time there wasn't even the slightest tick. Schnoz and I left the stream and joined Mary at the top.

"What do you think?" I said.

"He's gone," Schnoz said. "I mean, we've seen him for - um - four or five years in a row, so maybe"

I felt a pang at that. Things always change, but still... Old Ben was gone like Old Ben was gone?

"Well," Mary said. "He may just be smarter than we give him credit for, or, yes, he may be gone. The thing is, I don't really feel so sad about that. Maybe he's gone, or maybe he's sitting safely at the bottom of the pool thinking, 'Oh, no, not those humans again. Why do they come here every year?' I don't know if he's gone or just ignoring us. It happens."

Schnoz and I looked at her. I admit I don't often understand how a woman thinks.

"You caught two parr," she said. "There's nothing else up here at the top of the run except this gravel bed, the mud and the little running spring that's only a few inches deep tumbling from the spring in that tangle of willows and sticker bushes."

"So?" Schnoz asked.

"Those little browns were from a spawning bed last fall. Maybe from right here at the top of the run. Maybe from Old Ben. They could have come upstream from another bed

below, but they still could have been from Old Ben. It's not that I'm happy if he's gone. It's about hope. Hope lasts longer than happiness. We live on hope. Every cast is a hope. We don't do this because we catch a fish on every cast. That would be a terrible curse. We cast because we hope. Sometimes we catch something. That's good enough."

"Maybe we should rest this run for a couple of years, and come back in two or three," I said. "Give those little guys a chance and hope they make it."

"Agreed," said Mary. We looked at Schnoz. He hesitated.

"Well, okay," he said.

I clipped off my midge and reeled in the slack. We walked away from the pool, but I couldn't help taking one last look back to see if Old Ben might rise to show us he had fooled us again. I didn't see anything, but I remembered the surge of water when he came up in other years. That was good enough. Hope is good enough.

Upcoming Non-Chapter Events

- Fly Fishing Film Tour ([F3T](#)) 2023
 - [Madison, WI](#) - April 20, 2023
- [Annual Illinois Trout Unlimited Youth Conservation and Fly Fishing Camp](#) - July 16-21, 2023
- Oak Brook chapter of TU 50th Anniversary Celebration - Sunday, August 12, 2023 from 2:00 - 6:00 PM at the [Oak Brook Park District](#). Admission is free. Chris Wood, current Trout Unlimited CEO, plans to speak at the event and mingle with attendees. Dupage Fly, Orvis, and Patagonia plan to be on display. Jeff Troutman and the Parachute Adams Band will be providing musical entertainment. There will be a casting area. There will be some concessions, likely food trucks. Watch the [OBTU website](#) for further details.
- International Fly Fishing Film Festival ([IF4](#)) with nearby screenings. Visit the [IF4 website](#) for further details.
 - Milwaukee, WI - TBA
 - [Wilmette Theater, IL](#) - November 7, 2023

Chapter Officers

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