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President's Message & Upcoming Chapter Events

Greetings fellow LWTU members,

Our **November Monthly Meeting** will take place at [Village Pizza & Pub \(145 N John F. Kennedy Dr, Carpentersville, IL 60110\)](#) on Thursday, November 20, 2025 with social hour starting at 6:00 PM. Consider joining us even if you live further out, tollway access is convenient.

Our program will feature **Justin Haglund and Lloyd Meng**. Justin and Lloyd will present the Driftless Riparian Habitat Maintenance Program and also the tree planting program to provide cooling shade to our beloved Driftless trout streams.

Our **book exchange** program will once again be available at in-person chapter meetings. Purchase books for as little as \$5, and then optionally return them after reading for a \$3 exchange credit. There will also be **raffle** prize-drawings! Tickets will be available to purchase at \$5 each.

The October meeting was one to remember. Peter Jonas spoke to us about the Northern Driftless, opening up the “final frontier” of Buffalo and Trempealeau Counties in western Wisconsin. There was also a great discussion of TUDARE restoration projects past, present, and future. We also had a visit from Gene Hansen who was present when the Lee Wulff Chapter was formed out of the Elliott Donnelly in 1984.



“Northern Driftless by Peter Jonas”

Fall is finally almost here. Don’t let the cooler temperatures keep you from getting out to fish. Remember that **Iowa trout season is open year round**, so head on over there if you need to scratch an itch.

It’s also time to think about **Lake Michigan tributary fishing** for big chinook, coho, steelhead, and brown trout. Rain drives fish into the tributaries, but be mindful of **water flows** and do not wade if levels are unsafe. If you need a few pointers, feel free to ask fellow chapter members for tips at our monthly meetings.

We will hold our **Annual Holiday Banquet on Sunday, December 7 starting at 5:00 PM**. Please note the change from our usual Saturday evening and we will begin a bit earlier than in past years. The event will once again be hosted by Max McGraw Wildlife Foundation. We are currently seeking prizes for the fundraiser, so don’t be shy. If you have a prize or two to donate, please contact Scott Lammers (secretary@leewulfftu.org)

and plan to bring it to an upcoming chapter meeting. See details further below or [click here to purchase meal and prize tickets](#).

WIDNR's move to purchase the **Anderson property** along the West Fork and Seas Branch near Avalanche WI is progressing. The state's offer is currently being evaluated by the landowners and may still close this fall. Our pledge of \$10,000 from our conservation fund will go a long way to reserving this invaluable resource for public recreation in perpetuity.

Our **Trout in the Classroom** program will be running in two classrooms at Crystal Lake North Elementary and Elgin Math & Science Academy. We hope to be rearing brook trout again this year. We expect to place the eggs in the tanks in January 2026 and release the fish sometime in the spring. Please email me at prez@leewulfftu.org for further information.

Winter Fly Tying will happen on Tuesday nights from early January through late March. Both long-time tiers and beginners are welcome to join in the fun. This year we're asking folks to share with the group a pattern or two they enjoy tying and fishing. Please contact Ralph Lessor at tying@leewulfftu.org to ask questions or express interest.

Upcoming Events

- November Chapter Meeting - Thursday, November 20 - Village Pizza
- Holiday Banquet - Sunday, December 7, 5:00 PM - Max McGraw Wildlife Foundation (see details further below or [click here to purchase meal and prize tickets](#))
- Winter Fly Tying - Beginning in January on Tuesday evenings - Village Pizza
- January Chapter Meeting - Thursday, January 15 - Village Pizza
- February Chapter Meeting - Thursday, February 19 - Village Pizza

Do you have an idea for a **future speaker** or program? Please email speakers@leewulfftu.org.

Finally, we are always seeking **volunteers** to help out the chapter. Please email me at prez@leewulfftu.org for further information. Here's an easy one - could someone take the initiative to **snap some photos at the monthly meetings**? We need to save some

memories for posterity and obtain new content for our banquet slideshow (email photos to photos@leewulfftu.org).

Watch your email for **Evite** invitations to upcoming events. I hope to see all of you very soon.

Tight Lines!!

Jonathan Culli

December 7th Holiday Banquet & Fundraiser



On the evening of Sunday, December, 7th 2025 the Lee Wulff chapter of Trout Unlimited will be hosting its annual holiday banquet and fundraiser at [Max McGraw Wildlife Foundation](#). Proceeds help support the chapter's conservation efforts.

The banquet will feature many great prizes, a photo slideshow (please email any photos you'd like to see included to photos@leewulfftu.org), and plenty of merriment. Social hour will begin at 5 pm with dinner at 6 pm. The banquet dinner will be a buffet meal including grilled chicken / barbecued pulled pork / fried lake perch, sauteed Lyonnaise potatoes, cole slaw, corn O'Brien, McGraw aquaponics salad with ranch or balsamic dressing, dinner rolls w/ butter, and lemon pound cake with strawberries and whipped cream for dessert. Soft drinks, coffee, decaffeinated coffee, hot tea, and water are included. The cost of the meal is \$60 including tip and room rental (plus \$2.50 per ticket if purchased online to cover online transaction fees). There is no bar so bring your own bottle of wine, beer, or spirits if so desired.

If you need a special meal due to diet restrictions, please note that with your registration. Please register early if you wish to attend. **Seating is limited**, the event routinely sells out.

Prize tickets are available for purchase in advance and at the event. Prize ticket denominations are: 1 for \$5, 5 for \$20, 15 for \$50, 25 for \$75, and 40 for \$100.

Banquet meal and prize tickets can be purchased online [here](#) (online convenience fee applies), at chapter meetings, or by check made out to "Lee Wulff TU" and mailed to the chapter treasurer or Zelle (contact treasurer@leewulfftu.org for offline ticket purchasing and payment details). Non-members are welcome to purchase tickets and attend.

If you have items you would like to donate for the fundraising portion of the event, please contact Scott Lammers at 1-312-206-5189 or banquet@leewulfftu.org. You can also bring items to chapter meetings for handoff.

Bob Olach's Fly of the Month

Halloween Candy Soft Hackled Steelhead Fly

For the past several months, in addition to tying more soft hackles and North Country Spiders, I started looking for and tying various hair wing and soft hackled salmon and steelhead flies.

There are a few YouTube videos of soft hackled steelhead flies, including a couple where a standard soft hackle, like a Partridge & Orange are simply tied on larger hooks with bigger hackles. Recently, I sent pics of the Steelhead P&O to a fellow in Wisconsin who then tied a few on salmon hooks and went Steelhead fishing. He texted me that he had several hits on the P&O and was going to fish it again soon!.

In addition, there's a YouTube video of a fly called "*The Moody Blue Steelhead Slayer*" that looked good to me and now there's few "Moody Blues" in my storage fly boxes.

The Moody Blue dressing gave me the idea for today's fly. Because it's Halloween season soon, I thought I'd modify the Moody Blue using orange and black threads and hackles. Have no idea if this fly will work, but what the heck, it fits the season, eh?

HAPPY HALLOWEEN



Dressing

Hook: Partridge N2 Low Water Salmon Hook - Sizes 4 - 6
Thread: Hot Orange and Black 6/0 Danville or Uni Synthetic Threads
Body: Back Half Hot Orange - Front Half Black 6/0 threads
Ribbing: Lagartun Medium Flat Gold Tinsel
Hackle: Orange and Black Saddle Hackle - approximately 6 turns of each

Grumpy's Page by Kurt Haberl



It was my lucky day. Only a few months before, Schnoz had donned camo, painted his face, packed a relatively quiet battery-powered chain saw, and crawled his way along Farmer Farmer's beautiful meadow stream to take down a cursed tree that guarded the most promising run we had nicknamed Farmer Farmer's Oxbow. Its moderate current swirled in a deep switchback that ran for thirty yards beginning with a riffle that often teemed with hatching insects which drifted into a deep curl that led to a calm pool that was impossible to wade. The run was unfishable because of the depth, the swirling current, and the sentinel tree. Many had tried when a hatch carried insects into the run, and the surface churned with overlapping rises, splashes, and sips as trout gorged themselves. The tree, an ancient cedar of the worst spiky, twisted kind stooped over the pool and was festooned with tangles of leaders, tippets, and flies of every pattern, some stuck to the unforgiving branches, and some swinging in the wind. Schnoz had taken down the tree, and then sent a box of chocolates and some fancy bourbon to Farmer Farmer as a belated apology for the most serious violation of a landowner's rights. What followed was a lottery in our chapter to decide who would fish the prized run in turn. The earliest winners returned to camp with tales of many fish caught, large fish escaped, stout tippet broken, and they all related their stories to us with head shakes and sighs so real we agreed no exaggeration was necessary in the telling.

It was my lucky day. Clouds hung overhead like a wedding veil, and the wind came only in occasional sighs. I did not see a hatch, but only the unbroken glide of water past Schnoz's stump like folds of a silky skirt. No hatch meant I would start with a bead head nymph, heavy enough to sink into the depths, starting with a pink squirrel and then I would try a series of smaller nymphs all the way down to an 18 Perdigon if I needed to go that small.

"Howdy, Grumpy," I heard in a raspy voice behind me before I made my first cast. I turned around to see Farmer Farmer slowly coming along the bank in a slight crouch.

"Oh, Farmer Farmer," I said in surprise.

"I didn't want to disturb the fish, so I came up from downstream. I see it's your turn to fish the run. What number did you get in the drawing? Six?"

"I was fifth. You know about that?"

"Sure. Schnoz told me. It seemed like the fair thing to do. Since he cut down the tree, he should have been given the first turn."

"You knew he cut it down?"

"Saw him do it. It was on my long list of things to get to someday, but since I don't fish and there's always more pressing things to do on a farm, I appreciated Schnoz doing it for me. I would have come out to help him, but he looked like he was having so much fun in his camouflage and all, I just watched from up in the barn on top of my hay bales. The only thing I didn't get is why he dragged the tree home with him. He roped it to the top of his fishing hearse. I hope he didn't put it up in his living room for Christmas. It was the ugliest tree on my farm."

"No. We had a ceremonial burning. He should have invited you."

"That's okay. I watch a lot of murder mysteries in the winter, so I might not have gone anyway. Did anybody notify the fire department?"

"I think Huldry called them. Schnoz expected a ticket for unauthorized burning, but by the time Chief got there, the tree was gone. Schnoz tried to talk him into a ticket for burning the tree, but the chief wouldn't do it. 'I admit to an unauthorized burning of the tree,' Schnoz said, but the chief said, 'What tree?' and Schnoz said, 'The one I just burned,' and the chief said, 'I don't see no tree, and I'm not writing a ticket for some tree I can't see.' We were all confused. It was rather funny."

"You, know, Grump, I don't think I could be around Schnoz as a friend, but his entertainment value is immeasurable."

"I'm glad you're not angry with him or us."

"Angry? Grumpy, do you have any idea what a boon this has been for me? Farming is mostly a solitary occupation. Maisie and me have reached the point where we finish each others' sentences, or she will say something like, 'Isn't today the day you were going to fix that pasture gate' and I say, 'How did you know?' and she just does that woman's eye roll thing and the rest of the day goes on like that. She knows everything I'm going to do, and I know what she's going to say about it. With Schnoz, you never know, except when the fire department shows up."

"I'm just glad you don't mind us fishing on your land. Thank you."

"Well, the fly fishers in your club are interesting to talk to. I've only had one stranger show up here in the past year, so I went out to talk to him. He was some kind of jerk. The first thing he did was spout off about how it was his legal right in this state to fish any stream with access, which we all know, and I get paid by the DNR for access, but he was so arrogant and unfriendly, I just let him fish for a little bit until I saw him pull out a sandwich and just throw the packaging away in the stream. That did it."

"Did you chase him off?"

“Sort of. I opened the north pasture gate and let all the cows come down here to do it for me. They’re really curious about strangers, and they got into the stream with him because they want to be petted, and then Fat Bossy took over and grunted at him. The last I saw, he was jogging toward his fancy Range Rover. Left his landing net tangled in some bushes. You need a landing net?”

“No. Dewey might when it’s his turn. Last year he made one out of some piece of a seine and an old wooden Slazenger tennis racket. It looks pretty heavy.”

“I’ll watch for him. Do you know what number he drew?”

“No, but I’ll find out.”

“Uh-oh,” Farmer Farmer said then. “I’m sorry, but we’ve had such a nice talk.”

“What is it?”

“Look.” Farmer Farmer pointed at the stream. The riffle had exploded in a storm of rising caddis, many drifting into the run, where they were attacked by dozens of trout. “You’ve got that pinkie thing on your line that all the people use, and now they’re coming up. How fast can you tie on something that floats?”

“Fast enough,” I said. In a minute that seemed like ten, I snipped off the pink squirrel and tied on a #16 tan caddis. Farmer Farmer moved away from the stream and sat on a rock the size of a toy box, his stubby hands clapping with glee as I cast and cast and cast again, each throw slashed at by trout as soon as the fly drifted to the water. Some came to hand, some got off. The largest one, large because he was wily, gave one immovable throb and then ran right at me until it was free.

“Oooh,” Farmer Farmer said. “Over there, over there!” He pointed to a spot near the run’s drop-off, where it looked like some kid had thrown a handful of pebbles into the stream.

“Here, you take a turn,” I said, holding my rod out to him.

“I can’t,” he said, almost in panic. “I don’t understand what you’re doing and it would ruin everything. It’s only fun if I can watch.”

I was disappointed but I cast again. Fish after fish, they seemed to hook themselves, a few jumping at my fly before it even landed in the water. Farmer Farmer sounded like a young man again as he laughed and pointed and guffawed from his perch at my side.

“Wait till I tell Maisie,” he said. “She won’t believe me. That will be something she didn’t expect.”

It was a glorious hour, at least I think it was an hour. Time meant nothing then, and I had no way to measure it or sense its passing. Farmer and I were two boys, maybe 11 years old again, maybe 16, but the layer of those years rose to the surface from somewhere below many other layers in us. We laughed and he pointed while the fish ate and ran and jumped and dove and rose in a wild dizziness we could not predict or count.

As suddenly as it had started, it ended. A few casts drifted all the way through the run with no fish noting the fly at all. After a long sigh, I found I could breathe again.

"That was marvelous," I said. Farmer Farmer's eyes were wet and his whole face seemed to crinkle.

"Wait till I tell Maisie," he said again. "Even Schnoz didn't have a turn like this."

It was my lucky day. I knew that back at camp I would not be able to explain it to the others, not the magic of it. Instead, I would tell them about Farmer Farmer, about the one rude fisher who came to his stream. I would tell them about the cows and the new landing net promised to Dewey. That would be the best I could do. You can't explain magic or how a farmer and a man with a fly rod could be 11 or 16 again.



Protect Clean Water

Clean water is the lifeblood of healthy fisheries, wildlife habitat, and strong communities. But right now, Congress is considering H.R. 3898, the “Promoting Efficient Review for Modern Infrastructure Today Act” (PERMIT Act) — a bill that would severely weaken core protections under the Clean Water Act. [Click here to learn more and to take action.](#)

Keep Public Lands in Public Hands

America’s 640 million acres of public lands – the place we fish, hunt, and recreate – are under threat. Efforts to sell off or otherwise dispose of these public lands are gaining momentum around the country. Fortunately, lawmakers have introduced legislation to limit the disposal of public lands. Championed by Congressman Ryan Zinke (R-MT) and Congressman Gabe Vasquez (D-MT) in the House, the bipartisan *Public Lands in Public Hands Act* would ban the sale or transfer of most public lands managed by the Department of the Interior and the U.S. Forest Service.

Without legislation like the Public Lands in Public Hands Act, public lands and the places we cherish the most could be sold off to the highest bidder. [Please join Trout Unlimited in asking your representative to support this common-sense legislation.](#)

Tell Congress: Protect Roadless Areas

The [U.S. Forest Service recently announced](#) its intent to rescind the 2001 Roadless Area Conservation Rule. This action would remove protections for 58.5 million acres of national forest land across 39 states that are home to irreplaceable fish and wildlife habitat.

Roadless areas provide some of the most important habitat for trout and salmon in the United States. They are destination locations for hunters and anglers. Roadless areas

provide the spawning and rearing grounds for some of Alaska's most robust salmon and steelhead runs and serve as the headwaters for the majority of Blue Ribbon trout streams in the West. In the Midwest and East, roadless areas also conserve important trout fisheries. For example, 64 percent of roadless areas in Michigan and 90 percent of roadless areas in New Hampshire provide habitat for native trout.

This issue affects trout and salmon fisheries across the country and anglers need to speak up for these important public lands. Right now, your members of Congress need to hear from their constituents how important these public lands are for our outdoor traditions. Later this summer, the U.S. Forest Service will begin the process of repealing the Roadless Rule – at that time sending messages to the agency will be crucial.

[Please take a moment today to urge your members of Congress to support strong protections for Roadless Areas and to ensure that the Forest Service provides robust opportunities for the public to make their voices heard.](#)

TU Impacted by US Department of Government Efficiency

On March 4th, TU leaders hosted an urgent Town Hall meeting to help spread the word that US DOGE actions have already hit TU hard. Some highlights shared during the meeting:

- TU restoration projects across the country, including the [Driftless Area](#), rely heavily on government funding, with a government-to-private funding ratio of approximately 4-to-1.
- TU recently suffered unprecedented delays in receiving promised payments (~\$17 million) from government agencies for completed and ongoing TU restoration work.
- Up to \$180 million of promised future government funding (including [TU Driftless Area Restoration Effort](#) funding) for TU projects is now paused and in question, forcing TU to put many major current and planned restoration projects on hold. While not a TU project, here is a paused conservation project that hits close to home, resulting in major negative impacts to our Great Lakes fisheries: ["Asian Carp barrier project on Des Plaines River delayed as federal funds hang in limbo"](#) (*WGN News video*)
- TU restoration work up until this current government funding pause has provided roughly 2,500 family-wage jobs across the US each year (staff and contractors), primarily in rural areas, and many of these jobs are now in jeopardy.

Now, possibly more than ever, is the time for TU members, friends, and family to stand up and take action. Here's what one can do to help:

1. Make a [special donation](#) to TU national. With government funding paused, your special donation will help sustain vital core TU operations and staff.
2. Get more involved locally at the grassroots level by volunteering for the Lee Wulff chapter (email volunteer@leewulfftu.org).

You can learn more about the impacts of the US DOGE on TU projects [here](#).

Soil and Water Conservation District Funding Slashed

The 103rd General Assembly of Illinois has finalized the FY25 budget. Sadly, this budget was signed into law with a roughly 48% decrease in Soil and Water Conservation Districts (SWCD) operational funding. Illinois' 97 SWCDs experienced a substantial funding shortfall in the FY 2025 state budget. SWCD operations funding was reduced by \$4 million from \$8.5 million in FY 24 to \$4.5 million in FY 25. The shortfall will lead to the loss of trained and qualified Soil and Water Conservation District employees which will take years of training to replace. Without sufficient funding, employees, much like unprotected soil, will erode away. Help petition to restore state funding [here](#).

Illinois House Bill 1873 Water Recreation Rights

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. [HB1873](#) (104th G.A.) 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. [Click here to easily take action in under a minute of your time](#).

Save the Kish

Despite much opposition, the Woodstock City Council recently approved all of the preliminary measures that will allow the Lennar Riverwoods proposed high-density development along the banks of the Kishwaukee River in Woodstock to go forward.

Follow this situation [here](#). But it's not over until it's over. Voice any opposition you may have by emailing the Woodstock City Council at citycouncil@woodstockil.gov and [signing this petition](#).

Additional Action Links

Trout Unlimited is not just about trout angling. [The national founders committed to conservation and preservation when they incorporated in 1959](#). In this spirit, please consider taking a few minutes to explore additional ways to take action:

<https://standup.tu.org/> & <https://www.tu.org/conservation/action-center/>



When moving between bodies of water while fishing please be extra diligent in cleaning and drying your gear. Read [this recent press release about *Previously Undetected Parasite Discovered In Wild Wisconsin Trout*](#) to learn more about why this is so important.

Upcoming Non-Chapter Events

- SWTU workdays, [contact Jim Hess, SWTU Conservation Committee Chair](#) for more information and/or to participate:
 - **Nov 15** – Dane County Duerst Property on the Sugar River (7309 Riverside Rd)
- [Chicagoland Fishing Expo](#) - Schaumburg Convention Center, Schaumburg, IL - January 22-25, 2026
- [IF4](#) screenings in the region:
 - TBD
- [Fly Fishing Film Tour](#) (F3T) screenings in the region:
 - Cedar Rapids, IA @ Hilton Garden Inn - March 1, 2026
 - Grand Rapids, MI @ Wealthy Theatre - March 5, 2026
 - Ann Arbor, MI @ The State Theatre - March 6, 2026
 - Holland, MI @ Knickerbocker Theatre - April 15, 2026
 - Madison, WI @ The Barrymore Theatre - April 30, 2026
- [TU 2026 Midwest Regional Rendezvous - Roscommon, MI](#) - May 1-3, 2026
- [TU CX3 Event](#) - St. Paul, MN - **TBD**
- *Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing* (PHWFF) - Ongoing (click [here](#) to get involved)

Chapter Officers

President: Jonathan Culli
prez@leewulfft.org

Vice-President: Ken Bruckner
viceprez@leewulfft.org

Secretary: Scott Lammers
secretary@leewulfft.org

Treasurer: Marty Jandura
treasurer@leewulfft.org

Join Trout Unlimited



When joining Trout Unlimited (TU) at the national level, TU automatically assigns you to a local chapter based on your Zip Code and [this chapter boundaries map](#).

If not already a TU member, [click here to join TU for as little as \\$17.50 for your first year](#).

Already a TU member but not assigned to the Lee Wulff chapter? Call TU customer service at 1-800-834-2419 and make the switch to the Lee Wulff chapter (#448) today!