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President's Message

Dear LWTU Chapter Members,

Please join us at our next monthly chapter meeting at [Village Pizza & Pub](#) (145 N John F. Kennedy Dr, Carpentersville, IL 60110 location) on Thursday, October 17th, 2024 with social hour starting at 6:00 PM. Frank Sladek, Illinois Department of Natural Resources Education Program Coordinator for Northern Illinois, and [author](#) of Outdoor Illinois Journal articles such as “[Hail to The King](#)” (as in king salmon) and “[Fishing on a Budget](#)”, will be presenting in-person about getting youth involved in fishing, and more. Consider joining us even if you live further out, tollway access is convenient. Guests are always welcome so be sure to invite your interested friends and family members. We plan to have an array of flies donated by Bob Olach available for sale at the meeting at great prices, and free for veterans in attendance!



Orvis Helios Fly Rod

Our chapter's [2024 Conservation Sweepstakes](#) is ongoing with terrific prizes including an Orvis Helios combo package (winner picks weight/length), fifty flies hand-tied by chapter member Bob Olach accompanied by a beautiful hardbound demo copy of his “Bob’s Flies” book, and more. Please see the sweepstakes section further below for further details. Don't delay, ticket sales close October 31st, [get your tickets today!](#)

Cool weather makes for great trout fishing. Get out there! We are nearing the close of Wisconsin's inland trout season on October 15th. The Illinois catch-and release trout season opens on October 5th at select sites, with harvest season opening on October 19th ([click here for details](#)). Pine Creek within [White Pines Forest State Park](#) and Apple River

within [Apple River Canyon State Park](#) being great places to try your luck fishing for Illinois trout. The [Iowa trout fishing](#) season remains open all year (and Iowa fairly uniquely allows dispersed camping on the banks of trout waters in some state-managed areas).



Milwaukee River

And it's time to start thinking about fishing great lake tributaries for big chinook, coho, steelhead, and brown trout. Rain drives fish into the tributaries...be mindful of [water flows](#) and do not wade if levels are unsafe. Do not hesitate to ask fellow chapter members for tips at our monthly meetings. Also, the following DNR resources offer helpful tributary fishing information: [Wisconsin](#), [Michigan](#), [Indiana](#).



Driftless Area Stile Installed by LWTU in 2023

The chapter's 2024 fall fishing outing was a success. Participants repaired several stiles during the outing, enhancing our [extensive network of existing stiles](#) (where there are [stiles](#), generally there are fish). Thank you to the volunteers who repaired stiles and to our conservation committee for making this happen with pre-prepared stile repair kits.



2024 MCCD Youth Fishing Camp Event

We are seeking volunteers for an all-ages fly tying event with MCCD on October 23rd. Please see the chapter events section for details and email. Please email volunteer@leewulfftu.org or leave a voicemail at (224) 414-2400 if you would like more information or are available and willing to assist. Thank you to those who volunteered at the Dundee-Crown High School event on October 3rd.

On the evening of December 7th, 2024 the Lee Wulff chapter of Trout Unlimited will be hosting the annual holiday banquet and fundraiser at [Max McGraw Wildlife Foundation](#). Further details TBA. The chapter is seeking banquet prizes, and assistance in soliciting commercial donors, see related section further below for details.

Our TIC program will be running in two schools for the 2024/2025 season including returning Crystal Lake's North Elementary, and newcomer Elgin Math and Science Academy. Our program will again involve rearing brook trout, unique to our chapter in Illinois (other Illinois TU TIC programs raise rainbow trout). Eggs are expected to be placed in classrooms in January, 2025.



May 2024 LWTU TIC Release Day at Fox Bluff

The rock dam at the outlet of the last of the series of three ponds in which we stock trout at Fox Bluff is in need of minor repairs. We are seeking volunteers. Please email volunteer@leewulfftu.org if you are interested in assisting.

The Sycamore Tree program designed to help mitigate [the effects of climate change on coldwater fisheries](#) is progressing. Plans to plant seedlings along streams in Wisconsin are still being formulated. The 2025 Driftless Symposium will include sessions regarding the topic of combating climate change with strategic tree plantings.

If you missed last month's presentation by Tim Flagler, or would like to re-watch the presentation, feel free to email me at prez@leewulfftu.org for a link to the video.

Watch your email for Evite invitations to meetings, events, etc. I hope to see all of you in-person at our next meeting. The October meeting will not be available via Zoom. The main program typically starts at approximately 7:00 PM, preceded by a chapter business discussion.

Be sure to check out our 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.

Feel free to email any speaker suggestions to speakers@leewulfftu.org.

Please track your volunteer hours and report volunteer hours to the chapter treasurer by 4/10/2025 at treasurer@leewulfftu.org.

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.

Be sure to check out Bob Olach's Fly of the Month and Kurt Haberl's Grumpy's Page contributions this month further below.

Tight lines,

Brent Burval



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.

Conservation Sweepstakes Tickets on Sale



[Protect, conserve, and win!](#)

Tickets for our chapter's annual conservation sweepstakes are now on sale. 100% of net proceeds support the chapter's conservation fund which in turn helps the chapter protect and conserve the places you love to fish, and also helps fund the installation of stiles, giving you easy access to many of the best Wisconsin Driftless Area streams. It's a win-win situation! Don't delay, ticket sales close October 31st, [get your tickets today!](#)

This year's prizes:

- Orvis Helios rod/reel/line package (winner picks from D or F series, and picks weight)
- Box of 50 flies hand-tied and curated for Driftless streams by chapter member Bob Olach, plus a signed copy of "Bob Olach's Flies" book
- Caddis Sports Navigator EX Fisherman Float Tube

Don't miss your opportunity for a chance to win one of these great prizes while helping support the chapter's conservation efforts!

[CLICK HERE TO GET YOUR SWEEPSTAKES
TICKETS BEFORE THEY ARE GONE!](#)

Seeking December Chapter Banquet Prizes



On the evening of December, 7th 2024 the Lee Wulff chapter of Trout Unlimited will be hosting its annual holiday banquet and fundraiser at [Max McGraw Wildlife Foundation](#). Proceeds support the chapter's conservation efforts.

The banquet will feature many great prizes, a photo slideshow, and plenty of merriment. The banquet dinner will be a plated meal with your choice of entrée (pan-fried walleye, piccata chicken, or vegetarian plate), McGraw aquaponics salad, grilled vegetables, oven roasted red potatoes, rolls and butter, and warm apple pie à la mode for dessert. Soft drinks, coffee, decaffeinated coffee, hot tea, and water are included. The cost of the meal is \$55 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.

Banquet meal tickets can be purchased online [here](#) (convenience fee applies), at chapter meetings, or by check made out to "Lee Wulff TU" and mailed by mid-November to the chapter treasurer (contact treasurer@leewulfftu.org for mailing address). Please indicate on your check your meal choice for each meal ticket purchased. 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.

We are also looking for members to assist in soliciting donations from commercial donors. Please contact Scott Lammers at 1-312-206-5189 or banquet@leewulfftu.org for a list of past commercial donors and a paperwork toolkit to help get you started.



Upcoming Chapter Events

- Monthly Chapter Meeting - Thursday, October 17, 2024, 6:00 PM
- Volunteer Event - MCCD's "Tying Flies with TU" - Prairieview Education Center, 2112 Behan Rd, Crystal Lake, IL 60014 - Wednesday, October 23, 2024 6:00 PM to 7:30 PM (click [here](#) to RSVP via email)
- Monthly Chapter Meeting - Thursday, November 21, 2024, 6:00 PM
- Chapter Holiday Banquet - Saturday, December 7, 2024
- Monthly Chapter Meeting - Thursday, January 16, 2025, 6:00 PM

Please email volunteer@leewulfftu.org or leave a voicemail at (224) 414-2400 if you would like more information about volunteer events or are available and willing to assist.



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](#).

Help Pass Good Samaritan Legislation

Trout Unlimited's restoration specialists know how to leverage public and private dollars to fix degraded streams, creating jobs, and clean water along the way. TU is eager to take on leaking abandoned mines, but under Federal law, groups who have no legal responsibility or connection to an abandoned mine (e.g. Good Samaritans) are deterred from cleaning up these messes due to the incredible liability risks.

We can solve this conundrum by passing legislation that provides bona fide Good Samaritans liability protections... [Read on and take action](#)

Protect Illinois Wetlands

The U.S. Supreme Court recently gutted the Clean Water Act, eliminating the protection of many wetlands we rely on for flood control and habitat along major rivers. Now, Illinois wetlands are left vulnerable to developer bulldozers because our state lacks a comprehensive program to protect them. Wetlands act as nature's sponges, improving water quality, providing important flood control, and preserving endangered habitats.

Illinois has already lost nearly 90% of our wetlands. In our warming climate and increasing extreme weather, we can't afford to lose any more. Consider asking your legislators to vote 'Yes' and cosponsor SB0771/[HB5386](#), which will protect Illinois wetlands left vulnerable by the US Supreme Court by filling out [this form](#).

Illinois House Bill 1568 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. [HB4708](#) 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/>

Bob Olach's Fly of the Month

Peacock & Partridge Soft Hackle



Quite a few years ago, the “Field of Dreams” movie had a line in the script that said something like *“If you build it, they will come!”*

I have a similar feeling in tying flies - - - namely, *“If you use peacock herl, the trout will bite!”* So, I often use peacock herl for the fly’s body, thorax, head or combination thereof.

For the last week or so, I’ve been trying to put together several dozen spiders and soft hackles for the December Lee Wulff Christmas Party, including some March Brown variations, Partridge & Orange Spiders, etc. I’ve also done a dozen *“Peacock & Partridge”* soft hackles that I hope our Chapter members will like (and bid on)!

Here’s the materials I used on the pictured flies:

DRESSING

Hook: Daiichi #1550 wet fly hook (sizes 14 - 16)
Thread: Red or Black, Orange, Olive, Danville, UNI or silk threads
Body; Green Peacock Herl
Ribbing: Small or Extra Small Gold Wire
Hackle: Grey Hungarian Partridge



Grumpy's Page by Kurt Haberl

The last outing of the season is a little like sitting through a re-run of *The Wizard of Oz*. By then, many streams are unfishable, their banks lined with head-high grasses, their best runs and pools choked by moss beds, so a fisher has to stick to a narrow yellow channel and not cast astray. Many stories get told, but by then, no one believes them. They've seen behind the curtain. Especially when gathered around the campfire, there is a looming sense that out in the dark somewhere there is a cold-hearted witch plotting to swoop in and freeze everything in a wintry spell.

Schnoz had promised to go out on the last day with Allie Vargas, mostly because she wanted to ride in his hearse. That was fine with me. He admitted the carbon monoxide return thermocouple or thermopile - I can't remember which - was sputtering, and his transmission was beginning to sound like an Insinkerator trying to grind a lemon wedge.

Roy the Plumber offered to drive me in his Suburban that was held together mostly by rust, tar, and off-road clay. Still, going with Roy seemed like a better bet than the cushioned but eventual stranding in the hearse. Besides, Roy was a philosopher, so even his tragedies were met with Stoic Phenomenology, which I did not understand, but Roy's explanations made fishless outings somewhat bearable.

The drive to Copper Creek was a sensory ramble through fields of mature, yellow soybeans, tall browning stands of corn, orange and fiery maples, mottled white birches, and purple sumac. Overhead we heard the first gathering of geese and the plaintive warning of sand hill cranes as they began to form their echelons for migration. The meadow stretch of the Copper was unfishable because the elephant grass had flourished and the slower stretches of the stream bloomed with long strands of mermaid's hair. Toward the headwaters though, the savannah kept the grasses lower, and we saw occasional dimples where fish were active, probably in courtship dances.

Roy chose a square boulder midstream to settle on and study the sparkling runs on either side before, in his words, "Choosing which bush he would select for his first cast."

"I prefer wild rose to thistles," he said. "They're more honest and civilized."

"Romantic," I said.

"Yes. Thistles are crass, brutish weeds that don't deserve my flies."

"I'll go up a few runs," I said.

"Just begin at the next one, Grump. I won't be going anywhere. We Stoics are patient, and change is bad."

It was a glorious morning, and I laughed aloud when Roy sat on his rock and posed like Rodin's *The Thinker*, chin propped on his hand. He had waited for me to turn around and mark him. I waved, and he caught the end of his tippet to tie on his first offering to the bush nymphs.

Upstream, in a slower pool, I saw a pod of fish, but they seemed disoriented, some nosing the stream bottom, and a few listlessly finning downstream. Creek chubs, I decided. Above the pool, a narrow run whirled around two boulders the size of beer coolers and above that, frothy water splashed over a log, half-buried perpendicular to the stream that created a drop pool. Nothing rose, but the water looked too fishy to ignore. My first cast brought a firm tug from a brown that hugged the bottom, then raced past me downstream and scattered all the chubs before tiring and coming to the net. It was a healthy, late season fish, already growing fat for winter, probably 12 inches long and not happy to have been fooled.

The next hour brought a dozen brothers and sisters to my net, some larger, some smaller, but all healthy. Another half dozen took a Blue Winged Olive emerger in the riffle above the sunken log.

As the hour passed, I thought to get Roy and encourage him to join me. It occurred to me that our friend Schnoz was a twitchy fisher, who often made the fish as nervous as he was. Our friend Dewey was a hapless fisher, who usually described his catches as luck, although we sometimes knew better. Roy was known as a patient, long-suffering fisher, whose flies decorated many bushes, and whose fish were singular, often literally singular.

There was no path for me to head back to Roy, but the grass was passable on the other side of the bushes that dotted the bank, and only a few twisting oaks were beyond the bushes. I expected to see Roy in his philosopher's pose on the rock, or perhaps tying his tenth fly on to a new tippet, but what I saw from behind a wild rose was an expert who countered a fish's every move with a rod tip leaned in the opposite direction. Roy once said he didn't need a net because his tally made it superfluous, but I saw him bring this fish skillfully to hand. He turned the fish upside down to disorient it, then quickly unhooked it and slid it into the water.

Next Roy did an expert roll cast pickup and sent a small dry fly to within six inches of the upstream bank. A fish took it before the count of three. I watched for twenty minutes as he repeated the pickup, the expert cast, the "take," the steering of a fish to hand, and the gentle release. I quit counting after fifteen. Then I stepped out from behind the bush, but he was so intent on his fishing that he did not see me until I slid into the water next to his rock.

"How'd you do?" he said.

"Well enough," I said. "A run, a drop pool, and a riffle held hungry fish. How about you?"

"Well, I lost three flies in a bush and two in a tree behind me, but I lucked into a fish or two. One fish is a successful day, you know."

"One?" I said. He noticed when I gave him the side eye.

"Well, how long have you been watching me?"

"Twenty minutes."

"Oh, well, maybe more than one."

"Maybe a couple of dozen?"

He paused to think of his reply, obviously reaching for some Aristotelian way of re-imagining numbers. I just waited. It was a long wait.

"Well," he said, "you know numbers are just a mental construct. There's no such thing really as six-"

"Or two dozen fish?" I said.

"Grumpy, as a friend, you know you can't report what you saw in the last few minutes. It would be a serious breach of friendship, akin to betrayal."

"Seriously?"

"It would ruin my reputation. I have a carefully cultivated reputation to protect. The next time out, Schnoz or Allie or Dewey would jockey to go fishing with me just to see, and I don't want that kind of pressure. You understand."

I did, until later that night, the last night of our last outing of the season, I listened to Schnoz brag about his dozen larger-than-usual fish, and Allie confirmed it.

"You know," I said, "Sometimes when you fish with a buddy you get greatly surprised-"

"Grumpy," Roy interrupted. "Would you mind handing me that stick so I can poke at the fire a little? Then you can tell them about the snake we saw."

"Snake? Oh, yeah, the snake." My surprise became the snake we never saw. I felt real bad about lying to everyone on the last night of our last outing of the season. Well, no, I didn't. I felt good about it. I'd do it again. I think Roy winked at me as he poked the fire. I wasn't sure about the wink, but he was smiling. Nothing beats the sudden rush you feel when you see a philosopher smile, and you know why he's smiling.

Upcoming Non-Chapter Events

- [*2024 Women Connect Driftless Rendezvous*](#) - Whalan, MN - October 7-13
- [*2024 TU Virtual Annual Meeting*](#) - Online - October 16th
- [*Wisconsin Neonie Forum*](#) - October 30, 2024, at the Deluca Forum, UW Discovery Center/Building, University of Wisconsin-Madison
- [*IF4*](#) 2024 screenings in the area:
 - [*Orvis, Wilmette, IL*](#) - October 24th
 - [*Wilmette Theatre, Wilmette, IL*](#) - November 12th
- [*Fly Fishing Film Tour*](#) (F3T) 2024 screenings in the area:
 - TBA
- *Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing* (PHWFF) - Ongoing (click [here](#) to get involved)
- *Fly tying with* [*NIFTY*](#)
- [*Illinois RiverWatch*](#) - Join RiverWatch staff in monitoring stream quality by conducting a habitat and biological survey. Attendees will participate in collecting data on the physical characteristics of the stream and collecting macroinvertebrates (water bugs). Our mentoring events are great for new volunteers who have not attended a workshop and current volunteers who want more practice with monitoring.
- *2025 TU Annual Members Meeting and CX3 Event* - St. Paul, MN - September 24-28, 2025

Chapter Officers

President: Brent Burval
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Vice-President: Jerry Sapp
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Secretary: Scott Lammers
secretary@leewulfftu.org

Treasurer: Jerry Ward
treasurer@leewulfftu.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 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!