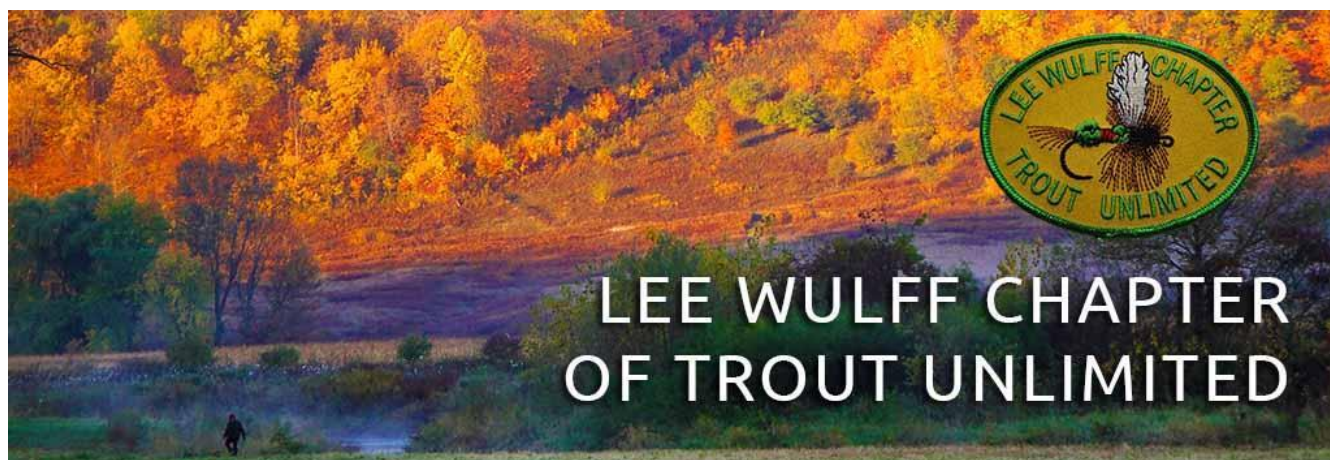




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President's Message & Upcoming Chapter Events

Greetings fellow LWTU members,

Welcome Back to Lee Wulff TU for our 2026-2027 season. I hope everyone had a great summer. Please plan to join us for an exciting series of monthly programs, fishing outings, winter weekly fly tying, and our holiday banquet.

Our **September Monthly Meetup** will take place at [Village Pizza & Pub \(145 N John F. Kennedy Dr, Carpentersville, IL 60110\)](#) on Thursday, September 17th, 2026. Our program will feature **Matt Jennings**. Matt is a long time friend of the chapter and is considered a leading expert chasing steelhead and salmon in area rivers. His program will prepare us to chase these amazing fish in the **Great Lakes Tributaries** through the fall and winter.

As always, social hour starts at 6:00PM. Our book exchange program will once again be available at select 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 prize-drawings! Tickets will be available to purchase at \$5 each. Please consider joining us even if you live further out, tollway access is convenient.

Sad news to report as **Ralph Lessor** passed away earlier this summer. Through the years, Ralph gave timeless time and energy to the chapter. He organized our outings and winter fly tying sessions. He was an amazing human; everything he put his mind to doing was done with passion and style. All of us lucky enough to have Ralph in our lives know that he will be sorely missed.

Our **2026 Spring into the Season Conservation Sweepstakes** was a resounding success. Contributions totaled a record \$4,865 and will fund our conservation objectives this year. For the second year in a row, Ken Volin was the lucky winner of the grand prize - an Orvis Helios rod, reel, and line combo. Rick Stevens won the guided Peter Jonas trip to the Northern Driftless. Terry Hanson, a LWTU member from the Quad Cities area, won the Sage rod and Orvis reel combo.

As autumn approaches, please consider joining our **2026 Fall Fishing Outing** in the Wisconsin Driftless. The outing will be based out of the Logan Mill Lodge in Westby WI from Thursday, October 8 till Sunday, October 11. The Fall Outing is a great opportunity to make new friends, explore pristine spring-fed streams, and enjoy the hopper bite. While you're in the area, be sure to explore our [extensive network of stiles](#). Remember, where there are stiles there are fish. See the Outings section below for additional details and email Ken Volin (outings@leewulfftu.org) to inquire or RSVP.

Friends, as we begin our new season, I encourage you to **reflect on what the Lee Wulff Chapter means to you**. Think about the friendships and camaraderie, the fishing outings, the meetups, and the many ways this chapter brings us together. What we share is truly special, and it is made possible by the members who step forward with their time and energy.

In the coming year, **we will need your help** to keep that tradition going. This will be Scott Lammers' final year coordinating our holiday party, and we need someone to work alongside Scott this year and take the reins next year. Wintertime fly tying also needs a

leader to build the schedule of flies. The next election of chapter officers will take place in April 2027, so we will also need members willing to step forward and help lead the chapter. Taking on a leadership role may sound daunting, but it really doesn't have to be. We have a great support cast, so no one person takes on every task. Please think about the joy this chapter has brought you and consider giving a little of your time and talents back. We'd love to have you join us.

The **Wisconsin Inland Trout Season closes October 15**. Fishing the coulees ablaze with fall colors is an experience not to be missed. If you need to scratch an itch after that, remember that Iowa streams are open year round. There are many stretches of public access featuring less pressure than on the Wisconsin side.

We will hold our **Annual Holiday Banquet on Saturday, December 12**. The event will once again be hosted by Max McGraw Wildlife Foundation. We're always seeking prizes for the fundraiser, so don't be shy. If you have a prize or two to donate, please contact Scott Lammers (banquet@leewulfftu.org) and plan to bring it to an upcoming chapter meeting.

Upcoming Events

- September Chapter Meeting - Thursday, September 17 - Village Pizza
- Fall Driftless Outing - Thursday, October 8 through Sunday, October 11 - Westby WI
- Wisconsin Inland Trout Season Closes - Thursday, October 15
- October Chapter Meeting - Thursday, October 15 - Village Pizza
- November Chapter Meeting - Thursday, November 19 - Village Pizza
- Holiday Banquet - Saturday, December 12 - Max McGraw Wildlife Foundation
- Winter Fly Tying - Beginning in January on Tuesday evenings - Village Pizza

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

Tight Lines!!

Jonathan Culli

Upcoming Chapter Fishing Outings

Time to go fishin'! LWTU outings provide the opportunity to sample some great small stream fishing in Wisconsin (and potentially Colorado waters too as part of periodic Exchange Outings with the West Denver Chapter of TU).

New chapter members and less experienced anglers are encouraged to attend! If you don't know the area, or need some guidance on techniques and tactics to catch the wily trout of the Driftless region, we can pair you up with a more experienced chapter member to assist you and/or share your frustration...

The Chapter also typically conducts conservation activities during our outings, usually building or repairing stiles to provide stream access to public waters or private land where the owner has granted a fishing easement.

Please contact the Outings Coordinator at outings@leewulfftu.org if you plan to attend any of the outings. Space may be limited, and an accurate headcount is essential for lodging and meal arrangements. Group dinners will be arranged for most evenings during the outings, on a pay-as-you-go basis.

Fall Outing (Westby/Viroqua, WI area, Thursday October 8 through Sunday October 11, 2026)

The Lee Wulff Chapter Fall Outing is scheduled for October 8-11, 2026 in the Westby/Viroqua area of Wisconsin. This is a great time of year for fishing terrestrial flies as trout try to fatten up for winter. The Driftless area has hundreds of miles of productive trout waters, and we'll be staying right in the middle of it! For many of us, this annual outing is a final chance to fish the Driftless Area before the Wisconsin inland trout season closes on October 15. As with previous outings, we will have group accommodations available at the [Logan Mill Lodge](#) in Westby. The lodge owners, Michael and Courtney Havel, have been very supportive of our chapter in the past and have been very accommodating. Space is limited, so if you are interested, contact Ken Volin, the Outings Coordinator, at outings@leewulfftu.org and reserve a space. Payment for the lodging will be due in advance of the outing, as we need to pay the full amount upon arrival at the lodge. Once we have a list of participants, Ken will let people know what the final cost is and where/how to pay it.

For those staying at the lodge who wish to partake of shared coffee and cold breakfast supplies (fruit, cereal, pastries, juice, etc), an optional surcharge of \$5 per night will be due along with the lodging payment.

As in the past, group dinners will be arranged for Friday and Saturday nights. We will definitely be at the [Olde Town Supper Club](#) on Saturday night but perhaps we will try [KOS-A Gastropub](#) in Westby on Friday night. When you contact the Outings Coordinator to join the outing group list, let him know which evenings you would like to have dinner with the other anglers. As always, each attendee will be responsible for their own dinner check.

So contact Ken Volin, the Outings Coordinator, at outings@leewulfftu.org, at your earliest convenience to reserve your place for this final Chapter outing of 2026!

2027 Save the Dates

We have set the dates for our spring 2027 outings and made reservations for lodging:

Early Spring Outing - April 22-25, 2027 [Logan Mill Lodge](#), Westby, WI - This will be the same as for our fall outing. Individuals should contact the chapter's Outing Coordinator after the first of the year.

Spring Outing - May 13-16, 2027 [Fenmore Hills Hotel](#), Fennimore, WI - A block of rooms has been set aside for our chapter. Individuals must contact the hotel at 1-608-822-3281 after the first of the year to make their own reservations. Be sure to mention TU Lee Wulff Chapter to get our discounted rate.

Please email our Outings Coordinator at outings@leewulfftu.org if you are interested in participating in any outings.



765 Line

Two multi-billion-dollar, 765,000-volt transmission lines are proposed to cross much of southern Wisconsin including the Driftless Area from Bell Center to Genoa. Two routes are on the table, primary and alternate. Across nearly their entire length they run through cold-water trout streams and karst bedrock — because that is what the Driftless is. There is no low-impact route here. [Learn more here.](#)

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.](#)

Trout Unlimited's latest report, [Roadless: America's Sporting Lands](#), illustrates how our outdoor traditions depend on maintaining strong safeguards for roadless areas.

Tell Congress to Reauthorize the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative

Great Lakes advocates know that Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) investments mean major conservation wins for the region's freshwater resources — from reconnecting 9,000 river miles to restoring over 529,000 acres of habitat since its inception.

However, this successful program is set to expire in September 2026 unless Congress acts soon.

Bipartisan legislation reauthorizing the GLRI has advanced through Congress, which would put the program on solid footing so that the GLRI can continue to support healthy fish and wildlife habitat, prevent the spread of invasive species, boost clean water, and more. [Click here to take action](#).

WOTUS - EPA to Reopen Comment on Clean Water Act Rewrite That Could Leave 80 Percent of U.S. Wetlands Unprotected

Redefining the waters of the U.S. could strip protections from thousands of miles of tributary streams and an estimated 80 percent of inventoried wetlands. [This Outdoor Life article is a must-read](#). The 30-day comment period will open once the EPA publishes the supplemental proposed rule to the [Federal Register](#).

Protect Public Lands

Efforts to sell, dispose, or divest public lands undermine our outdoor traditions and threaten rural economies. These lands belong to all Americans and provide vital access for hunters and anglers. [Click here](#) to take action.

Tell your Members of Congress to Pass Comprehensive Mining Reform

Congress is considering a number of policy options to streamline the permitting process for mining on public lands and provide greater certainty for the mining industry. As Congress weighs these policy options, it is imperative that legislation also includes updates to the outdated 1872 Mining Law. Currently, there are no royalties paid on

hardrock minerals extracted from public lands and public land managers lack the authority to say “no” to the wrong mine in the wrong place.

A responsible path forward for domestic mining should include dedicating revenue from public lands mining to abandoned mine cleanups, as well as discretion by local public land management professionals to determine – upfront – public lands that are incompatible with mining, such as sensitive fish and wildlife habitats, community drinking water supplies, or sacred sites, for example. Comprehensive mining reform should address these issues alongside policy options for permitting new mines. [Read more about balancing responsible mining and conservation.](#) [Click here](#) to take action.

Keeping Asian Carp out of the Great Lakes

~~The state of Illinois has pressed pause on a barrier designed to keep invasive carp from entering the Great Lakes, saying it can no longer count on the federal government to honor its funding obligation to the \$1.15 billion project. [Read more](#) and stay tuned to this important topic.~~

UPDATE: A spokesperson for Michigan Gov. Gretchen Whitmer told WTTW News the governor’s office had received confirmation [on 9/2/2026] from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and the White House that the stop order was lifted. [Read more...](#)

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](#).

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/>

<https://www.federalregister.gov/>



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.

Grumpy's Page by Kurt Haberl



August can be really hard on everybody, including trout. That's one reality. Married couples find themselves snapping at each other over a few degrees on air conditioner settings. An unkind sun bakes a lawn until the grass is the color of oatmeal cookies. Gardeners check the sky many times during the day, hoping for clouds and knowing that, for once, the weather forecaster is right, dry and hot. Dogs pant. Birds quit fighting and search for puddles and ornamental baths where they can splash themselves silly. The only creatures that seem to enjoy August are the insects. Grasshoppers, ants, beetles, wasps, cicadas, and ticks abound. When a break comes with falling temperatures and a slow, cool rain, everyone except a bug acts like they just got out of jail, if not purgatory.

As a cooling, rainy break tiptoed in, we all sighed and took to our phones. With a round robin of calls, we set up an impromptu outing. Schnoz offered to drive because the air conditioner on his fishmobile/hearse still worked and he questioned how long the respite would last. At camp in the afternoon, we threw up tents and a dining fly or two as if some full-bird colonel had issued orders. Then we all checked the ice in our coolers, the stream thermometers in our vests, and headed out to creeks chosen because they were headwaters, spring-fed, shaded, or clear enough to fish after a day of rain.

I didn't bother to ask where Schnoz was driving us. Most of our favorite runs may already have fishers bending to the water to check the temperature and either smile or hurriedly move on to some coulee they hoped would be cooler. We parked on crunching gravel, geared up, clambered over a stile, and almost cantered over a small rise to a stream we nicknamed Easy Street where Schnoz had caught fish in the spring. He sloshed into the nearest riffle, held his thermometer wrist deep into the water, and counted to 60. Then he raised his thermometer to me with a smile.

"64 degrees," he said. "Good enough."

I couldn't move and didn't have the heart to tell him why. From my vantage point on the berm, I could see the run stretching before him was a bed of alligator weed, slime, rock moss, and banshee hair as far up as I could see. He struggled to wade with ribbons of green that clung to his shins, and tried to cast his soft hackle to a narrow band of sand in the middle of the stream above him. After a three-second drift, his fly paused and he raised his rod to strike at fingers of woven vines. With difficulty, he pulled in several spaghetti strands two feet long, cleared his hook and cast again. This time, he managed to snag a fine catch of watercress.

"Do you see any risers?" Schnoz asked. "This isn't nymph water."

"All I see is green."

He tried to turn back to me, but the growth clutched at his boots and wrapped his ankles with wiry strands. Struggling only made it worse. His arms and rod went wide as he wavered for balance, regained it with curses, and turned his head to look at me helplessly.

"Now what?" he said.

"Toss me your rod," I said. I managed to catch it and propped it next to my rod already tangled in a wild rose bush. I slid down to the water's edge, found a solid footing between two good-sized rocks and reached out my hand. We grasped each other's wrists, and I pulled him to the bank where he fell forward, half out, and half manacled by wraps of green devil's fingers.

"I hate August," he said.

"I may have to cut you free," I said.

"Don't even think about it. When my waders get within five feet of any blade, barbed wire, or thorns, they start to leak out of pure fear." He managed to pull himself onto the bank, then yanked at the vines, twisted some away from his ankles, stamped, shuffled, and scraped his boots free of most of the evil bindings. On the way back to the car, the gnats found us, obviously drawn by sweat and our attitude of crabbiness. Gnats feast on testy, short-tempered people. Gnats somehow know why they sweat.

"That was a bust," I said as we settled into Schnoz's hearse and he cranked the AC on high.

"You pick next," he said. I could tell he was going to add, "If you think you're so smart," but he didn't say it.

I looked at the dog-eared gazetteer we had used for so many years, found where we were and looked for something nearby, knowing that a difference of just a few miles could be a completely different situation. "I choose Clear Creek," I said. "Go up to the 'T' straight ahead and turn right. It's about three miles. It's a different topography."

It was. Nowhere was there a hint of green devilish fingers. The bottom was fine sand, eminently wadeable with flats and riffles and runs up to three feet deep. I waded in and started upstream. Schnoz walked the bank ahead of me for forty yards or so and then came back.

"Well, Swami, there's nothing in here. I can see the bottom all the way up."

"Hm," I said and straightened up to check the reading on my stream thermometer. "No wonder. 72 degrees. At least I didn't get tangled in weeds."

"Doesn't matter if there aren't any fish. You aren't fishing, just wading. My turn."

Back in the hearse, Schnoz looked at the gazetteer, then I looked at the gazetteer, then Schnoz again as we drove his hearse through ridge after coulee and bridge after gully. The sun had dipped below the treeline when we started back to camp.

"You're a useless guide," he said. "I want my money back."

"Yeah?" I answered, "well, what kind of idiot would go fishing with a guy he knew was a useless guide? And besides, you didn't pay any money."

We were so bad off we couldn't even think of more insults to one-up each other. We just mumbled through dinner and a campfire that ended early because a flight of vampire bugs arrived that licked sweat, drank blood, and bit like black flies.

In the morning Ghost Mary took one look at our dour faces and said to Schnoz, "I think you'd better come with me today. We don't want any murders committed on our campouts. It's bad PR."

Dewey looked at me and said, "I know a place where we can go. We might catch a few."

It's always good to have more than one friend.

Dewey's old truck grumbled and wheezed, but it started. He drove past farms and woods I'd never seen and got more excited with each passing mile. When we stopped, I took one look at the stream and groaned. It looked the same as the weed-choked jungle Schnoz had tried.

"What's wrong?" Dewey said.

"We can't fish in this," I said.

"Sure we can. I did it yesterday. First, don't get in the water. The weeds will try to drown you. Second, you see those bright green weeds? They go all the way to the surface. Don't cast anywhere near those. See those mosses that look more blue-green? They're mostly in the mud on the bottom. I have a floating foam grasshopper someone gave me. Watch. He flipped the clumsy rubber-legged grasshopper to the near side of the stream. Out of nowhere, a hungry brown snapped it up with a showy splash.

"You have to keep your rod tip up so he can't bulldog you and add four pounds of salad."

And so we fished the morning, losing some fish strong enough to bury themselves in the stringy weeds, but mostly we felt thrill after thrill as fish appeared out of nowhere to slash at grasshoppers. When the action slowed, we changed to foam beetles, then foam ants. I fell in love with foam. We caught ... a lot.

Back at camp, I couldn't wait to brag to Schnoz, now that I'd learned what a good guide could be like and how a cool spell in August could be the best fishing ever. When I saw him, he was smiling. Ghost Mary winked at me.

"How'd you do?" Schnoz asked rather tentatively.

"We caught ... a few," I said.

"Us too," he said.

Man, I love August when there's a cool spell and maybe some rain and you can find water that's 65 degrees. Who cares about weeds and bugs? You don't even notice them when there are fish. Maybe Schnoz isn't such a bad friend after all. You just have to put up with him a little when he gets testy.

Upcoming Non-Chapter Events

- [*International Fly Fishing Film Festival* \(IF4\)](#) screenings in the region:
 - [Wilmette, IL @ Wilmette Theatre - October 6, 2026](#) hosted by EDTU
- [*Fly Fishing Film Tour* \(F3T\)](#) screenings in the region:
 - [Glendale, WI @ The Bavarian Bierhaus - September 17, 2026](#) hosted by SEWTU
- [*TU CX3 Event*](#) - St. Paul, MN - September 23 - 27, 2026
- *Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing* (PHWFF) - Ongoing (click [here](#) to get involved)

Chapter Officers

President: Jonathan Culli
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Vice-President: Ken Bruckner
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Secretary: Scott Lammers
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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!