

FROM THE PRESIDENT

Trout season is upon us! I hope you had the chance to properly herald the annual trout opener by wetting a line in a river and not just in the rain.

This past year has been a delightful return to normal for the chapter.

We've been able to resume our in-person meetings, and we're making up for lost time with an ambitious smorgasbord of activities planned for spring and summer. We had a very successful banquet, our Michigan Youth Conservation and Trout Camp is prepping for campers in June after a two-year absence, a newly regrouped stream restoration committee is making big plans, and we've got several outings, classes, and fishing fairs in the works. Check them out and join where you can!

The chapter voted in new directors for the board at our April meeting. See the list at right.

We thank all of our past and present board members for their service to KVCTU.

We also would like to recognize a few members who are no longer with us: Matt Priebe, John Good, and Herb Spencer. Judy Spencer (Herb's wife) would like all donations to go to KVCTU in his memory.

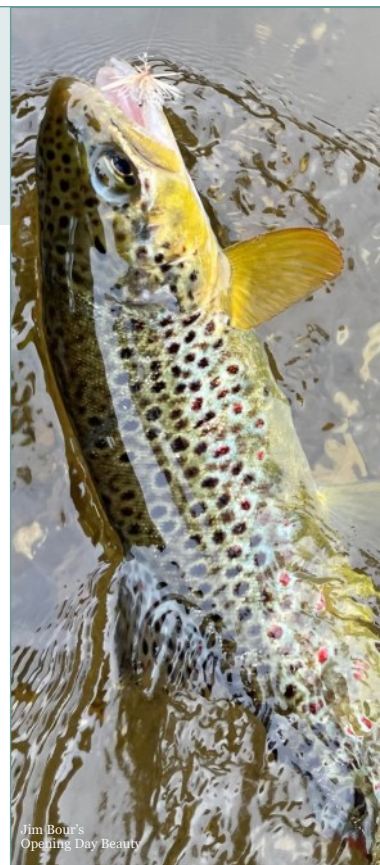
Remember, board meetings are open to all, and KVCTU is always seeking new expertise, ideas, and energy for its ongoing as well as new activities. Please let us know how you can lend your talents, whether it be a board position, conservation or education projects, assist with communications and social media messaging, helping with our upcoming website redesign—whatever floats your boat is sure to float our boat!

Drop me an email and I'll get you connected (emilygundlach@kvctu.org).

Emily



From a recent board meeting. Back: Paul Tulgetske, Al Henderson, Pete Mathews, Jim Bour, Jon Chizmadia. Middle: Tom Morse, Paul Hammond, Pete Huver. Front: Emily Gundlach, Char Hammond, Connie Morse, TJ Morse.



Jim Bour's Opening Day Beauty

KVCTU BOARD OF DIRECTORS APRIL 2022

Executive Committee

President—Emily Gundlach
 Vice-President—Jim Bour
 Secretary—Connie Morse
 Treasurer—Char Hammond
 Past President—Paul Tulgetske

Continuing Directors

(term exp March 31, 2023)
 Paul Hammond (Membership List)
 Leroy Heikes
 Al Henderson
 Pete Mathews (Stream Committee)
 Jim Shotwell

New Directors (two-year term)

Jon Chizmadia (Youth Committee)
 Bill Comai
 Pete Huver
 Tom (TJ) Morse

New Directors (one-year term)

Lee Goldner (Co-chair Fund Mgmt)
 Jerry Reed (Co-chair Fund Mgmt)



ANNUAL BANQUET

Our 2022 Fundraising Banquet in April was a resounding success. Being able to host it in person after three years led to high attendance, high energy, and high proceeds to benefit our youth camps and conservation projects.

As usual the banquet started with refreshments, hors d'oeuvres and bidding! Our emcees, Jack Spinner and Paul Hammond, worked the crowd and encouraged attendees to support our chapter. People wasted no time bidding on silent auction items, perusing bucket items, and inspecting live auction offerings.

We had no shortage of wonderful items to choose from. Fantastic

artwork, modern and antique fishing items and many home goods graced the tables of the Fountains Event Center. Paintings by David Ruimveld, Russ Chatham and Chet Reneson were well received. Our most talented Jim Wellever again donated amazing works of wood. Fishing gear by Hardy, Abel, Orvis, TFO, Scientific Anglers, Keough/Hareline, and many others enticed bidders. We had tables for a day trip of fishing, including a one-person pontoon, as well as a table of kitchen accessories, a custom basket table, and a new smart television table. A new Old Town Canoe loomed over the live auction table creating much interest.

continued next page



We thank the many generous donors — and all who generously opened their pocketbooks—for some awesome items and an even more awesome cause.





ANNUAL BANQUET (CONTINUED)

A brief business meeting, with recognition of past presidents and current board members, was followed by an invitation to the buffet table to enjoy delicious entrees of Chicken Grand Traverse or Steamship Roast Beef followed by a scrumptious dessert of Chocolate Mousse.

Live Auction bidding followed, emceed by our preeminent auctioneer, Glen Blackwood. The auction was most exciting with the usual punctuation of humor thrown in to keep the mood high. Donated fishing trips by Kevin Feenstra, Jon Lee, and our own Paul Hammond, as well as a stay at Gates' Lodge were very popular, resulting in competitive bidding and some nail

biting! After the Silent Auction, winners were revealed, bucket items were distributed, and folks reluctantly began saying goodbye, treasures in hand.

A huge thanks to Jim Bour, who headed up the committee. Jim had help from Emily Gundlach, Paul and Char Hammond, Al Henderson, Jim Shotwell, Jack Spenner, and Paul Tulgetske.

We thank to the many generous donors — and all who generously opened their pocketbooks—for some awesome items and an even more awesome cause.

We are already receiving donations for next year's banquet and look forward to seeing everyone again next spring!



*... and a good time
was had by all!*



STREAM RESTORATION NEWS

Trout Unlimited is dedicated to conserving, protecting and restoring North America's coldwater fisheries and their watersheds. As such, one of our most important endeavors is led by the Stream Restoration Committee.

Pete Mathews has spearheaded a regrouping of the committee. He, along with Jon Chizmadia, Pete Huver, Tom (TJ) Morse, and Jim Shotwell, have agreed on an outline for how the committee might proceed.

The committee plans to focus on maintaining, improving, and potentially creating sustainable coldwater fisheries—that is, those streams in our area that can maintain sustainable trout populations with some natural reproduction.

They are developing stream assessment criteria to identify these streams, with input from experts such as Kristin Thomas (MITU Aquatic Ecologist), Matt Diana (DNR-Fisheries Biologist for the Kalamazoo River watershed), Aaron Snell (cofounder of Streamside Ecological Services, Inc., who worked with us on the Rice Creek project), and Jeremy Geist (TU Great Lakes Stream Restoration Manager).

Pete has met with these experts as well as several conservation leaders in the KVCTU counties. He says that Kristin is preparing a list of potential streams in the

Kalamazoo River, Dowagiac River and Creek, Paw Paw River, and Black River watersheds that would benefit from our efforts and help.

Using their assessment criteria, the committee will evaluate potential projects from Kristen's list, and then present their preferred list and scope to the board of directors. Once all agree on which stream(s) we will devote our resources to, action plans will be drafted. Most projects will likely start with habitat assessment, stream monitoring for flow, temperature, and macroinvertebrate counts. Large-scale, long-term projects may include grant writing, partnering with fellow conservation groups, and contracting with experts for biological, structural and engineering assistance as needed.

Thanks to Pete and the Stream Restoration Committee for giving us new opportunities to get our feet wet, and to truly make a lasting difference in the health of our fisheries.

Note: Though the committee's focus is on projects of a significant scale, KVCTU will still tend to the health and accessibility of our current favorites like Portage, Rice, and Augusta Creeks. We'll continue to monitor, clean up, and clear as needed. If you see something that concerns you, don't hesitate to let a board member know.



STREAM RESTORATION ACTION



RICE CREEK IS A GEM

On a chilly day in April, several KVCTU members joined the Friends of Rice Creek for some river cleanup work, clearing obstacles and downed ash trees. Much was accomplished, especially by the hardy souls who jumped in the water!

This section of the creek (called the Holt-Rice Creek property) is definitely worth a visit—whether to kayak, fish, birdwatch, or walk the trails along 4,000 feet of a beautiful trout stream. We were even able to observe a raucous heron rookery!

To learn more, <https://www.calhouncd.org/holt-rice-creek>

or https://www2.dnr.state.mi.us/publications/pdfs/ArcGISOnline/StoryMaps/fish_troutTrails/PDFs/TT2015109.pdf



TROUT CAMP RETURNS!

KVCTU is happy to once again sponsor Michigan TU's Youth Conservation and Trout Camp at the Ralph A. McMullan Center on North Higgins Lake June 19-23.

This year's 18 young anglers from across Michigan and Northern Indiana will learn conventional and fly fishing techniques and the importance of coldwater conservation.

They'll learn fly tying, knots, and casting. They'll study macroinvertebrates, geology and stream dynamics, and how to prevent invasive species. They'll do a stream restoration project, take a canoe trip, and enjoy a float on a genuine Au Sable River boat. A visit to the Lovells Museum of Trout Fishing History will further their appreciation of Michigan's rich trout fishing heritage.

Oh ... and lots of fishing! Campers will have many opportunities to hone fishing techniques and test their new skills on nearby trout water.

It takes many, many hours to plan and conduct camp. KVCTU's Jon Chizmadia, along with Andy Pokorski of Clinton Valley TU, are new cochairs this year. They are doing a terrific job making sure we're ready. And that our more than 25-year tradition hosting successful youth camps will continue.

At the end of June, we'll have a new group of camp graduates. Many will become friends for life. Some will return to camp as junior counselors and even as adult counselors.

Best of all, our camp graduates will hopefully step up as new leaders in coldwater stewardship, helping to ensure the future sustainability of healthy rivers and happy trout fishing in Michigan.

If you know a young angler (age 14-17) interested in trout fishing or if you would like to become more involved with future camps through volunteering or sponsorship, please contact JonChizmadia@KVCTU.org.





Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing, Inc. is dedicated to the physical and emotional rehabilitation of disabled active military service personnel and disabled veterans through fly fishing and associated activities including education and outings.

For several years we've held fly tying, rod building, and outings programs through the VA Medical Center in Battle Creek.

It's great news that Mike Quigley has the program started up again.

Lend a hand to this worthy cause! Help teach beginning and advanced fly tying classes to veterans on the 1st and 3rd Mondays each month, 6-8:00 pm.

Contact Mike at mikey69q@sbcglobal.net or call 269-209-6003.



MEETING UP ONCE MORE

It was a happy day when we were able to resume in-person meetings last October. Though we were able to bring in many excellent speakers via Zoom throughout the Covid restriction months, chapter members were clearly glad to gather again. (After all, those little screens just don't cut it when you're bragging about your latest monster trout ...).

For October's Conservation Night, we heard an informative talk from Dr. Lucas Nathan, aquatic invasive species coordinator for MDNR's Fisheries Division.

In November, chapter members Paul Tulgetske, Jim Shotwell, and Pete Mathews gave us demos on tying and rod building while we mingled and munched.

January was Michigan Guide Night, and Dustan Harley of Ripple Guide Service showed us the wide variety of species and experiences to be had in "A Year on the St. Joe."



In February and April, we were finally able to bring two guides from out of state after first booking them back in 2019. Pat Dorsey of Blue Quill Anglers in Colorado presented "Tailwaters: Top to Bottom" in February, along with a tying demonstration. In April, Ed Engle from Colorado did a tying class and then talked about "Catching Difficult Trout."





FLY FISHING 101 CLASS

KVCTU will be partnering with the Wolf Lake Fish Hatchery July 22-23 to host a Fly Fishing 101 class.

Friday's class, from 4-9 pm, will cover knots, casting, fly tying, and include dinner. On Saturday, we'll start in the morning with stream etiquette, catch and release, stream dynamics, macroinvertebrates, reading the water, and presentation. Later in the afternoon we'll head to local waters to bring it all together and catch some fish.

Cost is expected to be \$50. It includes two meals, flies and a few tools, and a TU membership.

The course is open to all ages, though anyone under age 13 must be accompanied by an adult. Loaner gear will be available.

Space for this event is limited to 20 students. More details and registration should be available early June.

In the meantime, Jon Chizmadia is looking for instructors, assistants, and fishing mentors. Should be fun! Contact jonchizmadia@kvctu.org.

We all joined TU for a reason. Maybe a love of fly fishing. Maybe a concern for our state's wonderful resources. Maybe because it's such a great group of like minded folks. Whatever your reason, share it with someone new!

DAMSELS TO FLY AGAIN



KVCTU plans to once again offer Damsels Fly—a one-day fly fishing course for women—at Wolf Lake State Fish Hatchery on Saturday, July 30.

Ladies who had registered for the 2020 class, which had to be cancelled due to Covid restrictions, will be notified in the next

few weeks and given the first option to sign up. Any remaining slots will be posted via Wolf Lake and KVCTU media sites.

If you can help out in any way, drop an email to conniemorse@kvctu.org.



PORTAGE FAMILY FISHING

Portage Parks & Recreation is Scaln' Up for Summer - combining its annual Family Fishing Fair with a Reptile Roundup for a whole new adventure and experience.

KVCTU will be there so kids can explore the fun of fishing, participate in aquatic conservation, and learn lure making, bugs, knots, and casting.

The event will be June 11 from 10-1 pm at Celery Flats, 7335 Garden Lane, Portage. It's always a fun day for families, but it's a blast for volunteers too.

Contact jonchizmadia@kvctu.org or emilygundlach@kvctu.org to sign up!

HAPPY HOUR HATCHES

Looking for a fun way to hang out, swap stories, tie flies, and/or learn something new?

Join us for Happy Hour Hatches on the 3rd Tuesday of each month from 6-8 pm.

The event location will vary so we can offer it throughout the KVCTU area.

No experience necessary. Bring your own materials or bring your love of learning. Watch your email for the next month's location.



HIGHWAY CLEANUP

KVCTU volunteers picked up a record 27 bags during our spring highway cleanup along M89 near Richland. The best find was a \$10 bill and the most abundant littered items were 2-ounce liquor bottles.

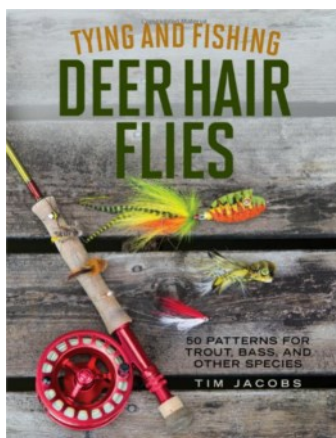
There was an overall feeling of accomplishment along with a sugar rush from the donuts.

A big thanks to everyone who came out to help.



“Fish the edges. The edges of banks. The edges of seams. The edges of deep to shallow. The edges of warm to cold. The edges of day to night. The edges of seasons. The edges of your life. It all happens at the edges.”

- - Mike Sepelak *Trout Tips* (2017, Trout Unlimited)



A GOOD BOOK

Many of us know Tim Jacobs, not just because of his reputation as a tyer, guide, casting instructor, and expert angler, but because he travels from his Colorado home every summer to teach at our Michigan Youth Conservation and Trout Camp.

Tim is a great teacher and a favorite among campers (counselors too).

His book, *Tying and Fishing Deer Hair Flies: 50 Patterns for Trout, Bass, and Other Species*, is a complete guide to selecting, handling, and tying deer hair, with notes on using other hairs as well. It covers patterns for trout, bass, musky, and other species as well as important fishing techniques.

It's getting rave reviews! Check it out at [Amazon](https://www.amazon.com/dp/1603584000) and many fly shops.



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MARK YOUR CALENDARS!

May 24 6-8 pm —Happy Hour Hatches.
Fly tying fun at Louie's Trophy House,
629Walbridge St, Kalamazoo
(jonchizmadia@kvctu.org or
emilygundlach@kvctu.org)

June 11 10-1 pm—Family Fishing Fair.
Celery Flats, 7335 Garden Lane, Portage.
Help teach casting, knots, bugs, lure
making, stream demos.
(jonchizmadia@kvctu.org)

June 19-23 — Michigan Youth
Conservation & Trout Camp Jon
Chizmadia (jonchizmadia@kvctu.org)

July 9-12 — Wa Wa Sum Summer Outing
(Our annual summer outing on the banks
of the Au Sable in Grayling). Al Henderson
(firemanalfie@hotmail.com)

July 16 — Fly One Kazoo A one-fly, no-
prize-except-bragging-rights
“tournament” on the Kalamazoo River
between Marshall and Battle Creek. John
Keagle (jkeag@tds.net)

July 22-23 — Fly Fishing 101 A full day of
learning at Wolf Lake Fish Hatchery; the
next half-day will be on the water. Jon
Chizmadia (jonchizmadia@kvctu.org) or
Greg Potter (gpotter@michigantu.org)

July 30 — Damsels Fly A one-day fishing
class for women, to be held at Wolf Lake
State Fish Hatchery in Mattawan. Connie
Morse (conniemorse@kvctu.org)

1st & 3rd Mondays 6-8 pm — Project
Healing Waters Fly Fishing at VA Medical
Center in Battle Creek. Mike Quigley
(mike.quigley@projecthealingwaters.org)

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gundlach.emily@gmail.com

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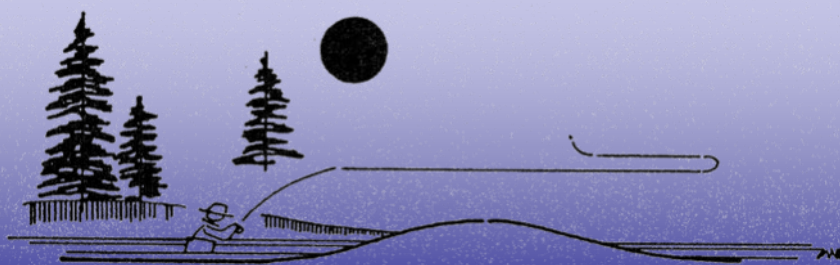
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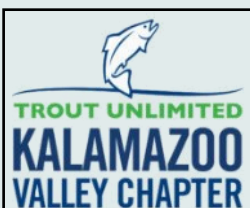
Slacklines

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Happy spring!



Contributing to this issue of *Slacklines*: Jim Bour, Jon Chizmadia, Emily Gundlach, Pete Mathews.
Please send your feedback and suggestions to Editor ConnieMorse@kvctu.org