

SUMMER 2018

TROUT TIMES



**Vanguard
Chapter**

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Reel Women Connect at *Lady Anglers in Action* Symposium

By Judy Lindstrom



ROCHESTER HILLS— If you ever wanted to learn the art of fly fishing including casting, fly tying and knots, terminology, and the “crank of the reel,” this hands-on symposium presented by the Vanguard Chapter of Trout Unlimited is ready made for you.

According to the most recent study by the Recreational Boating & Fishing Foundation, women are now the fastest growing demographic in fly-

fishing, which is one of the most male-dominated outdoor sports.

Movies like *A River Runs Through It* is often cited as the only exposure most of us have had with fly fishing. The *Lady Anglers in Action* will expose you to the true art of fly fishing.

Nina Macri, co-chair of Lady

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CHAPTER PLANS TWO CONSERVATION PROJECTS FOR PAINT CREEK

By Eli Stanesa

ROCHESTER HILLS—In 2016 Michigan TU evaluated the entire Paint Creek in-stream habitat through its River Stewards Program. This assessment was the basis of a written report which identified several deficiencies and priorities for the health of the stream. One principal need being that Paint Creek has a limited amount of in-stream woody habitat, especially in the 2.3-mile section between Tienken Road and the Clinton River.

Another priority identified in the Report was creation of a long-term protection program to monitor sediment in the bedform of the stream. In response to these specific recommendations, the Vanguard Chapter decided to undertake two projects.

Please see **PROJECTS**, next page.



PROJECT

Continued from prior page.

First, the Chapter started the Paint Creek In-Stream Fish Habitat Restoration Project. The principal goals of this project are to improve fish habitat in the stream and improve the management of the large woody debris within the stream.

This year's efforts will focus on the section of the stream behind Dinosaur Hill Nature Preserve and will consist of large woody debris remediation using "clean and open methods" and the installation of about 16 log habitat structures in the deficient sections of the stream.

The Chapter is working with Streamside Environmental Services, a qualified and experienced environmental consultant, and Kristin Thomas, Michigan TU's Aquatic Biologist. Application for the necessary DEQ permit has been submitted. After the permit is issued, Chapter members and other volunteers will be trained in the planning, construction, and maintenance of in-stream fish habitat restoration methods.

Thereafter, the goal is to finish all the work in this phase in three sessions in July, August, and September. In April the Michigan Fly Fishing Club generously awarded the Chapter \$2,500 towards the project cost, which is expected to be \$3,800 for this phase of the work. The Chapter is currently seeking a grant from TU National to continue this work in other sections of the stream in 2019 and 2020.

The second project established by the Chapter is a long-term sediment monitoring program for Paint Creek. The goal of this project is protection of the stream from sediment by early detection of this pollutant.

The program will start with the selection of four permanent monitoring sites along the entire length of the stream. The sites will be established in accordance with the Michigan TU protocol, and will be permanently marked and recorded for future use. On an annual or biannual basis, the sediment in the stream at each site will be sampled using a systematic pebble count method.

Data collected will be forwarded to Michigan TU for analysis to identify areas where sediment degradation may be occurring. Site selection and marking

is planned for early July and training is set for 1:00 pm on July 15 at Dinosaur Hill Nature Preserve. Kristin Thomas will lead the training. The sampling will be done at the same time each year.

Members who are interested in participating in either of these projects in any capacity should contact either Jeff Gerwitz, President, at 248.520.4608 or jgerwitz321@gmail.com, or Eli Stanesa, Conservation Chairperson, at 248.709.7949 at ejstanesa@comcast.net.

REEL WOMEN

Continued from prior page.

Anglers in Action said, "Fly fishing is something you can do forever. The beauty of this symposium is that it is all there for you to participate in all while meeting other women interested in this wonderful sport."

The all-day hands on symposium will be held on Saturday, July 14 in Rochester Hills at the Van Hoosen Farm at 1005 Van Hoosen Road from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. Tickets cost \$25 and include lunch, a fashion show, and a chance to put your new skills to practice in Stoney Creek (a fishing license is required and can be purchased online at Michigan DNR or at a local Ace hardware for \$26).

"Fly fishing takes patience, and the more you do it, the better you get. There is a real sense of peace and love for this sport. I'm thrilled that more women are discovering it," said co-chair and fellow angler Mary Rosenbusch.

Michigan Trout Unlimited is devoted to the conservation, protection, and restoration of Michigan's coldwater fish and their watersheds. Michigan is the birthplace of Trout Unlimited and Michigan TU continues that proud heritage with its work today.

Space is limited, and only a few spots remain so visit www.vanguardtu.org for program and ticket information.

PRESIDENT'S CORNER

By Jeff Gerwitz



Finally we are past spring and well into summer. It feels good to be fishing without freezing and actually seeing some bugs on the water. We will be taking a break from the monthly membership meetings and fly tying meetings (until September) and getting into our conservation projects. The woody habitat and sediment monitoring projects will be kicking off shortly so keep an eye on your email.

For those of you who missed it, the Riverview outing was another great success. The fishing was slow and the rivers were fast but all in all everyone had a good time. If you are looking to book a float trip or need a place to stay keep the Au Sable Riverview Resort in mind. They have been good friends to us and we need to reciprocate.

June's meeting was the casting clinic at Rochester Park with Dave Leonhard. As usual Dave showed us all how easy it is to cast a fly rod. Dave has been doing this for several years now so if you are in the Traverse City area this summer, stop into Streamside Orvis shop to say thanks and let him know how much we appreciate his efforts.

Lastly, when you are fishing this summer, keep safety in mind. Recently, while fishing in the Adirondacks I was in a hurry to get into position to cast to a nice fish that I saw rising. The

streambeds in the Adirondack's are littered with bowling ball size rocks and I tripped over one of them. Like an idiot, I had a staff but was in too much of a hurry to use it. I not only went in, I went under – twice. Even though the water was only 3' deep, it took quite an effort to get my feet back under me. I ended up completely soaked and jammed a finger bad enough that it took a couple of weeks to heal. So use your head, keep your wits about you, and **USE THAT STAFF.**

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Jeff Gerwitz, Chapter
President

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CASTING CLINIC AT ROCHESTER PARK

By Jeff Gerwitz



This year's casting clinic was fantastic and enlightening as usual. About 25 members and their families showed up for a nice picnic with great brats, dogs, and salads. During the clinic Dave Leonhard spent time reviewing the basics of casting a fly rod and working one-on-one with all of us.

It is interesting how many of the basics I had forgotten. One of the things that Dave spent quite a bit of time on was trajectory. This is something that I rarely read or hear about when it comes to casting, but is really critical when you are trying to throw your fly to a specific spot. If you missed this year's clinic, put next year's June meeting on your calendar. It's well worth your time.



Riverview Outing Shines Despite Rain

By Joe Barker

GRAYLING—It didn't matter that raindrops were falling on our heads for a good part of Saturday. Although a few of the 26 members didn't show up or stay for the entire weekend, either because of the weather or for other reasons, those who stayed around nevertheless enjoyed some great food and camaraderie.

Things started out on Friday with a fish fry for those already at Au Sable Riverview Resort from the day before, which offered a reduced rate for early arrivals, and for those who trickled in that evening. A big breakfast greeted members on Saturday morning, but the highlight culinary-wise was the anticipated steak dinner that evening.

It was hard to beat the flies and lies that were exchanged during the weekend.

The appetites had to be huge to match the size of the steaks, which each member grilled to their individual tastes. Ron Deaton served up baked potatoes and salad to round out the meal, which

was topped off with various pies, all of which were delicious.

Fishing wasn't particularly impressive, mostly because of the weather. Although plenty of bugs were reported on the mainstream of the Au Sable, and the North and South Branches, only a few fish of modest size were reportedly caught.

I can vouch for the tough fishing, even though I spent most of Saturday afternoon tying flies in the main lodge rather than dodging the raindrops in the river. During sporadic intervals of sunshine and clouds that chased the rain away, albeit only momentarily, the Au Sable River below Mio, which is usually the best bet to catch early season fish, proved to be just as difficult as everywhere else.

Still, it was hard to beat the flies and lies that were exchanged during the weekend. New acquaintances were made as there were some new members and guests in attendance. See you there next year.

JOINT VANGUARD/ CLINTON VALLEY BANQUET IS BIG SUCCESS

By Jeff Gerwitz

ROCHESTER HILLS—The Vanguard Chapter participated again with the Clinton Valley Chapter during their 2018 Spring Banquet in March. With the help and support from the Vanguard members that attended, CVTU was able to achieve their fundraising goals for 2018, which far exceeded the past banquets and made 2018 their most successful banquet ever.

Vanguard had 24 members and guests attend, and besides having a great time and more than a few going home with prizes, the Vanguard Chapter was able to make \$1,524. This event, which we participated in for the first time last year, has become our second largest fundraiser of the year, second only to the Expo.

If you missed this year's banquet, watch our calendar early next year. It's always the middle of March and besides being a great banquet, it's close to home and has a wealth of raffle prizes. Hope to see you there next year.



RELEASE DAY FOR SALMON IN THE CLASSROOM

By Jeff Gerwitz

ROCHESTER HILLS—Ron Elzerman, Mary Rosenbusch, and I participated in Walton Middle School's salmon release and stream monitoring at Yates Park on May 2, 2018.

Teacher Jon Gray brought about 100 eighth grade students to the park to release about 200 Chinook salmon into the Clinton River. Volunteers from the Clinton River Watershed Council and General Motors helped with macroinvertebrate identification and testing, and we helped by teaching the students to cast a fly rod.

Jon was telling us that the tank the Vanguard Chapter donated is now getting double use. Last year they participated in the SLIME program which focuses on sea lamprey. They had two lampreys in the tank after the salmon were released. The kids really enjoyed them and it was a nice addition to raising salmon.

The students have also had a lake sturgeon each of the past few years, although they use a different tank for him. We will probably do this again next year, so if you are interested watch the calendar.



Big Winners at Spring Expo

By Joe Barker

WARREN—In March, a huge crowd of hundreds of fly fishing enthusiasts descended on the Macomb Community College Sports and Expo Center for one of the largest fly fishing events in the country. Rod and boat manufacturers, fly shops, outfitters, and an array of other fly fishing related businesses filled the center from one wall to another. A fly casting pond allowed potential customers to try out fly rods of all shapes and sizes, and numerous fly tyers, both well-known and lesser known, showed off their creations.

The Vanguard Chapter shared a booth with Vanguard Fly Tying to sell raffle tickets as part of one of the Chapter's major fundraising activities for the year. The efforts of member volunteers in hawking the \$5 tickets both before the Expo and in the aisles during the Expo paid off big time. The Chapter realized gross revenues of \$2,521, with expenses of only \$379, thanks to the donation of the three raffle prizes, making for a nice net profit of \$2,142. That will be money used to support the Chapter's conservation projects and to allow contributions to the Michigan Council of Trout Unlimited and other TU

Chapters and conservation groups to support their activities.

Three lucky purchasers of raffle tickets were rewarded with the grand prize of a weekend at Au Sable Riverview Resort, a second prize of an Au Sable River guided trip with well-known, expert fishing guide Kelly Neuman, and a third prize of a handmade fly rod by Chapter member Jim Weiser.

Vanguard members used the Expo as an opportunity to not only volunteer at the Chapter booth, but to get together with other members to socialize and exchange fishing stories from the past year and make plans for the coming year. There were plenty of bargains on fly tying material, rods, and fishing trips to be taken advantage of. It is hard to match the extent and variety of items available under a single roof. Various seminars on fly fishing destinations, techniques, and fly tying provided constant entertainment and information for trout aficionados both new and experienced.

Don't miss out on the opportunity to attend next year's Expo.



Vanguard Chapter Treasurer Joe Swantek hawks raffle tickets at the Expo.

VANGUARD PARTICIPATES IN EARTH DAY AT CHRYSLER TECH CENTER

By Jeff Gerwitz

AUBURN HILLS— Ron Elzerman, Mary Rosenbusch, Nina Macri, Ron Deaton, and I participated in the Earth Day Event on Wednesday, April 18th at the Chrysler Tech Center in Auburn Hills.

The Auburn Hills Complex auditorium was turned into a small zoo, as well as an exhibition center of displays and information booths to celebrate Earth Day. Among the animals on display that could have filled a small ark were a sloth, a variety of bats, a skunk, flying squirrels, bald eagle, owls, hawks, a kestrel, turtles, star fish, sea lamprey, and a boa constrictor.

Vanguard teamed up with more than 40 local organizations and businesses that set up displays and booths to share information about their environmental and conservation efforts.

A couple of thousand employees and contractors filtered through the auditorium, as well as two levels of the Education Center atrium. Organizations distributed literature about their environmental efforts, answered questions from employees and contractors, and gave away an assortment of swag that included ink pens, beverage can insulators, buttons, and badges.

“The event’s goal was to educate employees about the need to protect and preserve the earth and to get outside and enjoy it,” event coordinator Dave Jump

from Environmental Health and Safety said.

This year, Jump said, the event added more participating organizations, more live exhibits, including cooking demonstration with sustainable foods, and students from Auburn Hills Avondale High School with their carbon dioxide (CO2) reduction projects.

Representatives from DTE Energy showed employees things they could do to reduce energy usage and a new program coming to let consumers choose how much of their energy comes from renewable resources.

“I think this is really great,” Marie McCormick, executive director of the Friends of the Rouge (River) said. “I was pleasantly surprised at the turnout and the amount of engagement I got from employees.”

Friends of the Rouge is dedicated to restoring the Rouge River and its watershed that encompasses a vast amount of the metro Detroit area. Similar

organizations at the event included the Great Lakes Fishery Commission, Clinton River Watershed Council, Six Rivers Land Conservancy, North Oakland Headwaters Land Conservancy, and the National Wildlife Habitat Council.

The animals were a big hit at the event, particularly the sloth, bald eagle, and great horned owl. The Howell Nature Center, the Leslie Science and Nature Center (Ann Arbor), and the

Organization for Bat Conservation brought most of the animals on display.

The Sea Life Michigan Aquarium (Auburn Hills) had a hands-on exhibit of star fish and other sea creatures, while the representative from the Great Lakes Fishery Commission let folks touch a sea lamprey—an invasive eel-like animal that does great harm to the Great Lakes fishery.

Representatives of Cass Community Social Services in Detroit showed employees how their group transforms discarded tires into shoes, door mats, and flower pot holders. Outside, the Information Communications Technology organization conducted an electronics recycling event, collecting approximately 12,000 pounds of equipment, in the parking lot of the former Walter P. Chrysler Museum.



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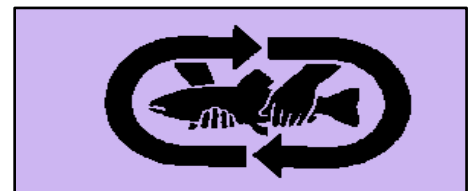
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WATER: IT SHOULDN'T BE FREE FOR THE TAKING

By Mark Karaba, The Fly Factor

The Michigan Department of Environmental Quality has recently handed down a decision that implies that Pure Michigan water has little value to this great state. The state has decided to give away 200 million gallons of water a year to the Nestle Corporation for a paltry sum of \$200 per year! We can thank MDEQ Director Heidi Grether for this decision that she defends by following the letter of the law, which, under the Great Lakes Compact, states that as long as water is packaged under 5.7 gallons, there is no limit on withdrawal of water on the Great Lakes Basin. Chew on that for a minute or two.

More puzzling is that during the public hearing process 80,000 people objected to the proposal while apparently less than 100 people were for the permit (who are these 100 people and who do they work for?) At this time, consider the fish hatchery issue in Grayling and you begin to understand that you do NOT understand at all how the 'tail wagging the dog' policies still permeate the decision-making process, especially when it comes to conservation and environmental issues that reveal we have not progressed or learned much from our past travesties on the land and water.

Some people have suggested a boycott of Nestle products and it appears that there is some movement in that direction. However, I don't believe a boycott will have any effect on a major corporation that is so diverse in product exposure worldwide. People outside Michigan or the Great Lakes Region may or may not engage in protest with the same passion. For example, fly fishermen I have spoken to outside the state do not know about the million gallons of crude oil that spilled into the Kalamazoo River in Marshall, Michigan, seven years ago, the largest inland oil spill in fresh water ever.

This is a policy issue that has to be addressed at the state and federal level. We must insist that agencies with appointed leadership roles and that are responsible for the stewardship of natural resources, be held accountable, with consequences if they fail to do so.

Consider that the MDEQ approved a permit last fall that would allow the Michigan Potash Company to withdraw 1.98 million gallons of water per day from the same watershed that Nestle is tapped into. Look at those numbers again—almost two million gallons per day. Interestingly, as of the first of March, a permit supervisor said that there had been very little public input on injection wells; "only a handful of comments" were received, less than six, and most were in support of the wells. Why is this not bigger news than the bottled water fiasco?

What about the plastic water bottle itself? There has been talk of a deposit being implemented. According to a report by National Public Radio, last year Americans bought more than four billion gallons of water in individual portion bottles. Many people who live in the country in Northern Michigan, for example, who have a well with the best drinking water on the planet, are part of that four billion. The same report states that only about 23 percent of bottles, including soda, are recycled. Most are being made with a non-renewable resource: polyethylene terephthalate, or PET. For those following the "trade wars," the same NPR report states that China apparently is the number one consumer of material buying 40 percent of the bottles Americans recycle.

What have we learned about ourselves from the past? Do we care more than we used to about cold water and stewardship? Do fewer people

become engaged in environmental issues in spite of overwhelming media and information exchanges? Do our children and grandchildren bear the burden of our never-ending environmental blunders and suffer the consequences of our apathy and ignorance? Apparently, our collective insistence of making sure that history does, in fact, repeat itself may someday lead us to ask ourselves the question of what has true value in our lives, what is convenient for now, and leave it to someone else to fix when it is their turn at the wheel.



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Any questions or to book your trip – just email
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The Littlest Catch

By David Batchelor, Member Mason-Griffith Founders Chapter & Anglers of the Au Sable

Hard to believe it is the third week in May and I have just started fishing the South Branch. Usually by this time I have been on the Mason Tract for a month, some years more. In the last five days it has dropped to a “comfortable” wading level for those familiar with the river. For others it is still somewhere between sketchy and dangerous in many places.

There is something special about the tannin stained water, polished gravel, cedar sweeps, and tamarack unique to the Au Sable, especially the South Branch. After chasing Great Lakes steel it was great to be back on my homewater.



The two cars in the parking area signaled the hatch of a different kind, one that brings many like-minded souls to our sacred stream. When we met at the river I asked if they would mind me wading down to fish the bend below. They kindly accepted the inquiry and I quietly waded downstream and picked out a place to sit on the bank to see what the evening would bring.

Two nights earlier the forest rest offered up a beautiful 14” brown. A larger one escaped with my fly and I was hoping for a rematch. It is a deceptively difficult place to get a natural drift and the fish would not even look at a fly on a tippet bigger than 5X.

Clouds of light-colored caddis were swept past by the breeze blowing upstream. Wave after wave created a strobe-like effect against the dark green backdrop of cedars on the opposite bank. It was a wind dance driven by eons of evolution and the relentless instinct to mate. The beauty of these tiny creatures on their final journey was spellbinding.

Looking down at the river between my legs was like a picture only better because it was alive and moving. Blades of grass and small Marsh Marigolds along the edge waved gently in the current over small gravel stones illuminated by the sunlight and immersed in the tea colored water.

Two small fish were swimming in the pocket water between my legs and

the bank. I looked for an adipose fin to confirm they were trout but it was impossible to see with all the movement. Their behavior foretold how they would act later in life. They hugged my legs and vegetation where the current required little effort to hold their position. They darted for deeper water and cover at any swift movement from the side or above. When a small water flea went by one charged out to take it, then nestled back in the cover.

I decided to see if I could catch one. Very slowly I cupped and moved one hand underneath the closest fish from behind where it was holding. In a similar fashion I moved the other hand under in front of the fish. Slowly the gap was closed and my hands were raised from the water. After two attempts it was swimming in my cupped hands.

This little creature was less than two inches long with dark spots or bars on the sides. Its fins were transparent and slightly amber in color. The adipose fin confirmed that it was a trout although not if it was a brook or brown.

Either way it was the littlest trout I have ever caught. Holding it made me realize that we literally hold the future of these wild trout and the river they call home in our hands. We have the power to destroy their fragile world through development, forestry, and land use changes. Just one bad decision can have irreversible or irreparable impacts on their environment.

Will we have the wisdom, will and wherewithal to make decisions that protect and conserve it? Thinking about the things that are going on lately makes me doubtful and grateful to live during a time when wild trout still swim in my homewaters.



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