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TROUT TIMES



**Vanguard
Chapter**

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CHAPTER NEWS

NATIONAL TU INITIATES MEMBERSHIP CAMPAIGN

WASHINGTON, D.C.— Now is the time to talk to friends and relatives who have indicated a desire to join Trout Unlimited, but who haven't gotten around to it or who thought the membership fee was too high.

National TU has enlisted the aid of local chapters as part of its new strategic plan for 2004 to increase membership across the country.

To help the Vanguard Chapter recruit new members, TU has initiated a special introductory annual rate of \$17.50. This compares to the \$30 regular rate. Of significant benefit to Vanguard is that TU will return the entire first year's dues as a rebate--\$15 directly to the chapter and an end-of-year rebate of \$2.50/member (\$1 to chapters and \$1.50 to State councils).

Please see *NEW MEMBERS*, page 7.



Adding new members would benefit projects like that on the Clinton River where members of Joe Carnacchio's team are shown working on a stream inventory this past summer.

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Midwest Fly Fishing Expo Coming Soon to Macomb County

WARREN—If you don't know already, it's time you found out that this year's Midwest Fly Fishing Expo has moved from the Southfield Pavilion to Macomb Community College in Warren at 12 Mile and Hayes. The dates are Saturday and Sunday, March 13 and 14, 2004.

The Vanguard Chapter again plans on having a booth in the newly expanded show and hopes to sign up new members and raise money for its various projects by selling its "best buy" \$1 raffle tickets for a first class fly rod.

The event has been extremely successful for the Chapter in the past and is doubly important this year because of National TU's emphasis on enlisting new members. There is also a need for the Chapter to make up for lower revenues from this Fall's Vanguard Chapter banquet. Be sure to attend to show your support, and enjoy a bigger and better Expo!

President's Corner

By Todd Randall, Vanguard Chapter President

Tied any flies yet? It's been a great winter to stoke up the fire and settle in at the tying bench. I'm sure some hearty souls (yea, that's what we'll call them) are out there pursuing Winter Steelhead, but as I write this it's barely in the low teens outside and it's midday! The good news is that this cold season is going to break and before we know it spring will be here.

As you might have guessed, Vanguard TU has many great events and projects planned for the upcoming spring and summer seasons. Of course, you can stop by and chat with us at our booth during the upcoming Michigan Fly Fishing Exposition March 13th and 14th to find out what's planned. Just don't think of it as the "Southfield Show" anymore as it will be held at the Macomb Community College Expo Center in Warren. You'll also find our updated Vanguard Calendar of Events in this newsletter.

We're again looking to mobilize as many Vanguard Volunteers as possible to continue the valuable work started last year on the Clinton River Assessment, this time focusing on Paint Creek. Last year's efforts have already paid off by keeping local DNR Biologist Jim Francis off the streets this winter analyzing all of the data collected during 2003. Please see the article about the Clinton elsewhere in this newsletter.

The Clinton River Coldwater Conservation Project is having an impact also as the DNR has now planned increased trout stocking as well as a special stocking of some brood stock fish for the Clinton River. The DNR has acknowledged that without the efforts of groups like ours, they could not make the case for this increase in fishing opportunity in our home watershed.

Also planned for the upcoming season are projects aimed at improving riparian buffers by increasing vegetation along stream banks as well as some direct habitat installation in Auburn Hills. Please contact any Vanguard Officer or Director to get involved. We should have more details on those projects in the coming months.

Clinton River Project Enters New Phase

By Todd Randall

ROCHESTER HILLS--Once again this year the Vanguard Chapters has a large project planned to gather data within the Clinton River Watershed. This time the focus will shift to Paint Creek. Last year's project gathered so much valuable physical inventory data that our project steering committee has decided to repeat the project on this high quality trout stream. This will allow us to compare data with that collected on the Clinton and Galloway Creek.

At the same time, one of the best things we can do to protect this rare urban resource is to fully understand its current

condition and what care it needs. The important point to be made is that once again, **we need you!** If you volunteered last year for the Physical Habitat Survey or for the Macro Invertebrate Surveys, thank you. But, we truly need you again this year.

Believe it or not, Paint Creek from Lake Orion to Rochester is just about as long as the sections of the Clinton and Galloway that were surveyed last year and admittedly that was a lot of work for our volunteers. The good news is that a smaller stream like Paint Creek is

Please see *CLINTON RIVER*, page 7.

Barothy Spring Outing Still Has Openings

BALDWIN—As of press time in mid-February, there are still openings for the annual Michigan Council of TU's Spring Outing on April 2-4 at Barothy Lodge on the Pere Marquette River. If you are new to TU this is a great way to get acquainted with other members and enjoy the beautiful surroundings of the Barothy property.

This year's theme is the Queen's Ball in honor of Vanguard's own Belinda Burkett, who is finishing off her reign as Kalkaska's Trout Queen. As usual, Belinda will also be the event's chief gourmet chef for Saturday night's festivities, which not only includes a sumptuous meal but also raffles and live auctions.

Upon arrival on Friday evening, members grill their own New York strip steaks on the outdoor barbeque with an endless choice of seasonings and sauces.

As many as 150 TU members from various chapters across the State attend the outing. The Vanguard Chapter itself ordinarily fills at least one of the large lodges, which accommodates up to 16 people.

Officers from various Chapters attend to business on Saturday afternoon as part of the Michigan Council's quarterly meeting, which can be attended by members. Even that event is spiced by a chili-cooking contest for lunch.

Hardy and ambitious members try their luck in the icy waters of the Pere Marquette fly-fishing for elusive Steelhead. More sensible members stay indoors when the wind howls and the snow flies enjoying the hot tubs and dry saunas.

Each evening is usually spent fireside swapping fish stories from days gone by, tying flies in anticipation of the coming season, or shooting pool at the tables provided in each lodge.

Please contact Belinda Burkett at (248) 463-5516 to reserve space. This event has a way of selling out so don't delay.

Vanguard Co-Sponsors "First Cast" Program

SOUTHFIELD—Vanguard Chapter members Belinda Burkett and Joe Swantek represented the Vanguard Chapter in its co-sponsorship of a youth fishing education program with the Paul H. Young Chapter of Trout Unlimited and the Michigan Fly Fishing Club.

The first annual half-day program was held at the Southfield library where kids from 8 to 14 years old were taught fly-fishing basics such as casting and fly tying. The kids also learned about aquatic insects and the effect of pollution on watersheds in Southeast Michigan.

Belinda Burkett put the program together and volunteered to do the entomology part of the program. Other sessions were held for the kids on such things as equipment selection, fly tying, knot tying, a video on reading a stream, and fly casting.

To make things interesting, kids were awarded prizes and other giveaways throughout the day. In between sessions lunch and snacks were provided.

The original program was cancelled in August because of the power outage, but was rescheduled for October 2003.

On the morning of the program, Joe collected a sampling of aquatic insects from the Clinton River. The squiggly bugs were a particularly big hit.

Also a big hit, literally, were Mexican piñatas fashioned by Belinda in fish forms and filled with plenty of candy. The kids swung for the fence and scattered little fishy treats throughout.

Because of the success of the program this year, which was originally initiated by the Paul Young Chapter, Vanguard members hope to continue their participation in the future, hopefully with more volunteers from the Chapter.



The Swantek brothers take a break along the trail on Yellowstone Park, with the outfitter/guide on the right, on a trip to the upper reaches of Pebble Creek.

HOW FAR WOULD YOU RIDE A HORSE FOR GOOD FISHING?

By Joe Barker

YELLOWSTONE PARK—The answer to this question for many people is zero distance. We used to feel the same way for a long time. That changed a couple years back after an outfitters hauled the six of us 12 miles up the Wind Mountains in Wyoming.

It's rather amazing that any of us agreed to ever ride horses again after that experience. My horse, appropriately named Joe, developed colic and during the trip back down the mountain repeatedly insisted on lying down on the trail. To my horror, he chose to engage in these antics at the most inopportune time—like while I was on his back! Once it was even while he stood in a lake drinking water.

Not being an experienced horseman, it was most unnerving. But at least I was dumb enough not to appreciate the potential disaster that lurked had Joe decided to play dead on one of the steep switchback trails leading down the mountain.

Others in the party complained of sore thighs and buttocks, ill-fitting sad

dles, and temperamental horses. And at least I forget, there was the heavy dust and grit that took several showers to remove once we returned to civilization.

Nonetheless, we did it once again this past year. Why? The fishing of course. In Wyoming it had been Cutthroats, Browns, and Rainbows in an alpine lake, and aggressive Brook trout in a small creek.

In Yellowstone Park it was Cutthroats, Cutthroats, and more Cutthroats. By why put ourselves through the misery if you can oftentimes catch these same fish a few steps from your car door?

Part of it is the sense of adventure in going someplace remote where fishermen are fewer. The bigger reason is that fewer fishermen also means more, bigger, and dumber fish. A perfect triple-header combination.

As advertised, the Cutthroats in the upper reaches of Slough Creek were big

Please see *HORSEBACK*, page 7.

FISHING ADVENTURES

Canadian Fishing Adventure: Conquering the Albany River

By Werner Keckhut

MAKOKIBATAN LODGE, Ontario—For the avid freshwater angler, the legendary Albany River is as good as it gets. This watershed combining large open lakes with dozens of fast moving tributaries is renowned for being among Canada's best fishing waters. The Albany's strong current and its rocky bottom give Walleye ideal conditions. Healthy bait-fish populations produce trophy Northern Pike.

Fourteen motley characters were determined to fish the Albany River in Northern Ontario. We left Thursday, August 18, 2003 with a two-day drive ahead. After an overnight in Sault Ste. Marie, we drove to Nakina, Ontario. Early Saturday morning we flew into the Liddle's Fishing Adventures camp for four days of fishing and camaraderie at the Makokibatan Lodge. The accommodations were Class A for being so far from civilization.

The Albany combines large lakes plus many fast-running tributaries. Its strong current and rocky bottom produce Walleye up to 32" and Northern Pike up

to 45". To reach the most productive fishing spots, we motored 8-10 miles upstream, then floated back. Shore lunches of fresh Walleye were most memorable.

Speckled Trout were sighted, but none caught. It was not unusual for each person to catch 15-20 Walleye or Pike per day. A very successful lure was a bright colored jig with a twister tail, second only to Ray Doyscher's lure fabricated from a rusty hook with a twister tail of black electrical tape. His "bait" barely hit the water's surface when it hooked a 40" Northern Pike.

A particular highlight was taking a day trip with a guide known as Grandpa Eli, an 80-year old Native American, on the Albany River. His year-round home is an isolated cabin on the river. Eli is the dean of the Albany River—he knows it better than anyone.

The raging rapids slammed the sides of the boat and Eli maneuvered ever so perfectly between the rapids and the

Please see *ALBANY RIVER*, page 6.

LAKE ST. CLAIR FISHERY ALIVE AND WELL

MT. CLEMENS—According to Bob Haas, a fisheries biologist from the DNR office in Mt. Clemens, the Lake St. Clair fish community, which also includes the St. Clair and Detroit Rivers, is very healthy and sustaining good populations of game fish.

Bob was the feature speaker at the Vanguard Chapter's membership meeting in December 2003, and has studied the St. Clair fishery for several years. The importance of the system as a sports fishery is indicated by the fact that the system accounts for only 1% of the Michigan freshwater, but it receives 43% of the sport fishing effort.

Rather interestingly, the flow of water through Lake St. Clair is equal to that of the Mississippi River, even though the lake itself is relatively shallow. It also has one of the most unique freshwater river delta systems in the country.

Recent fish surveys in the system have found 74 different species, and 21 of the original 22 species in Lake St. Clair. The only missing species is the Lake Herring. The system remains the safe haven to several endangered species, including several darter species. Lake Sturgeon are found in the system in rather significant numbers, with estimates ranging from 24,000 to 86,000.

Several exotic species have been introduced into the system, the most notable being the Round Goby and the Zebra Mussel. Rather interestingly, the Zebra Mussel population has already peaked and is on the decline, partly because of predation by the Round Goby. The Round Goby in turn has become a significant food source of many of the sport fish of the St. Clair fishery.

Rock bass remain the most prominent

Please see *LAKE ST. CLAIR*, page 7.



After a tasty shore lunch, the Canadian adventurers prepare to shove off for an afternoon of fishing on the Albany River in Ontario.

Spey Fishing the Muskegon with Kevin Feenstra

By Geoff Kowalczyk



STERLING HEIGHTS—On January 14, 2004, the biggest winter storm of the year happened. On this day traffic was horrible and people left work early to make the trip back home safely.

That same day was our first membership meeting of the year with guest speaker Kevin Feenstra. Early that morning Kevin left Newago expecting a three-hour drive. Instead, his ride was an eight-hour adventure.

My lovely wife Jacklynn, who lives with a steelheader, said that I should not expect bad weather to deter Kevin. And he did not disappoint, for which the Vanguard is deeply appreciative. So if you were unable to make the meeting, you missed a good one.

Kevin is a full-time fly-fishing purist and guide on the Muskegon River. Kevin showed the attendees the four seasons of the Muskegon from Spey fishing for Steelhead with big flies, some over seven inches long, to midge fishing for trophy Browns.

Kevin began by reviewing the change to the river caused by the zebra mussel, which impacted the ecology of the river and the insect populations. The Muskegon no longer has the major caddis hatches it once had and now midges are a large portion of the fishes' diet.

Kevin starts the year in the Spring for Steelhead. Kevin likes to swing flies and Spey fish. After the Steelhead in May, he switches to stripping streamers for Browns using a Salmon smolt pattern or dead-drifting midge nymphs.

As the river warms, Kevin targets Small Mouth Bass and catches the occasional Pike. After it cools in the Fall, it is Salmon time. Following the Salmon runs, it is back to swinging flies for Steelhead.

Kevin made me feel I was part of the fishing experience shown in his slide presentation. He has a roomy Fish Rite High Plains drift boat and is available for Trout or Steelhead trips at (231) 652-3528 or e-mail skulpin@earthlink.com.

Michigan Council Plans Legislative Reception April 1st

Last year representatives from Vanguard participated in a legislative reception at the State Capitol. The event was the first of its kind for Michigan and TU.

This year our State Council is planning another event to give TU leaders the chance to discuss policy issues important to us with State Legislative leaders.

It is hoped that Legislators from those areas affected by the Vanguard Chapter's stream conservation projects will be in attendance so that we can enlist their support.

Trout Times will report on the outcome of that meeting in our next issue.

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ALBANY RIVER

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rocks. The fantastic fishing was only a bonus in comparison to the unbelievable scenery and beauty.

Oh yes, the memorable shore lunches need to be mentioned. After a morning of fishing, everyone gathered for a fish fry. If only walleye could taste that good at home.

We left for home on August 24 leaving footprints in the new-fallen snow and wishing Eli and his crew good luck in their hunt for the moose they had sighted.

For more information visit www.liddles.com or call 1-800-AND-FISH (1-800-263-3474).

CHAPTER OUTING PLANNED FOR HEX HATCH

GRAYLING—It's none too soon to mark your calendars for the last weekend in June for this year's Vanguard Chapter Outing. Like last year, the event will be held on the Upper Manistee River and will be hosted by Joe Barker at his cabin on Pine Bend, just south of the County Road 612 Bridge.

Unpredictable weather the last couple years prompted this year's outing being scheduled later in the season, which will coincide with the phenomenal Hex hatch on this section of the river.

Big Browns in the 20-inch plus range follow the hatch into this section of the river and can be tempted to swat a fly after nightfall as the spinner fall and emergence takes place.

During the daytime, Brookies can be caught or a trip to Wakely Lake can yield hefty Bluegills and Bass on flies.

Stay tuned for more details.

Brotherhood of the Jungle Cock/MI, Inc

By John Sabina

Many Vanguard members have heard me mention the Brotherhood of the Jungle Cock. The unusual name may have you wondering about this group. The Brotherhood of the Jungle Cock/MI is a group dedicated to teaching boys and girls to fly fish. The Michigan Chapter is a Federation of Fly Fishers (FFF) group affiliated with the Great Lakes Council. The name comes from a bird, the Jungle Cock, whose neck feathers feature a distinctive "eye" pattern that is used in many exotic fly-tying patterns. The origins of the organization date back to the state of Maryland in 1940.

A number of sportsman and sports writers met at a fishing lodge in the mountains near Camp David, Maryland, each April for their annual opening weekend of trout season ritual. In 1940, they were snowed in with a late season storm and spent more time talking than fishing. Talk turned to how they could ensure that future generations would continue the tradition of fly-fishing and appreciate natural resources and conservation as they all did.

From that conversation, the Brotherhood was born. They adopted a unique one-on-one approach to teaching fly-fishing. The group gathers for one Campfire weekend each year, strictly to teach boys to fly fish. Each adult who attends must either bring or sponsor a child. The intensive program requires six years to complete and includes introduction to tackle, knot tying, fly tying, fly-casting, entomology, sportsmanship, conservation, tackle crafting, and fishing. The Maryland Chapter (termed "national") holds its annual campfire each May and limits participation to the first 475 boys registered.

The Michigan Chapter was founded in Grayling in 1982. Similar Chapters have been formed in New York, Pennsylvania, and Ohio. All were patterned after the "national" chapter. Michigan recognized the need to include girls as well as boys and has included both women and

girls since the mid-nineties. The Michigan Chapter currently holds its annual campfire every September at the Clear Lake Camp in Dowling, MI. The camp is owned by the Battle Creek school district and is located southwest of Lansing. Michigan campfires include 60 to 70 boys and girls. Youth must be eight years old to start the program.

My granddaughter, Brittany, has completed four years of instruction and is eagerly waiting for this year. Last winter Brittany (age 10 at the time) won the Paul H. Young Sporting Flies casting competition in the under 14 division. Last September she built her own fly rod at the campfire, an eight and a half foot, six weight featuring purple and periwinkle wraps. This September my oldest grandson, Noah will join Brittany and I.

The entire program is designed around the kids. Each campfire includes a featured guest speaker with slide show, a huge kid's door prize table, a day and a half of instruction, room and board, a formal campfire awards ceremony, and plenty of fun. The kids get vests, patches, and pins as well as door prizes. The campfire registration fee is a very reasonable \$100 for both sponsor and child. The Brotherhood holds a fund raising outing each March at Barothy Lodge. This year we are also raffling an 11-foot Hyde Sportsman Drifter with trailer as another fund raising effort. In fact, the Brotherhood will have the booth next to Vanguard's booth at the Midwest Fly-Fishing Expo. Stop by to get drift boat tickets and to learn more.

Technically, membership is by invitation only, a vestige of our origins. In fact, I have never seen any applicant rejected for any reason. So if you have kids, or grandkids, or even just friends eight to sixteen years old who want to learn to fly-fish, you should seriously consider joining. It is a six-year commitment but is well worth the effort.

LAKE ST. CLAIR

Continued from page 4.

species in the St. Clair system, accounting for 59% of those fish netted in surveys. By comparison, Yellow Perch account for 5% and Small Mouth Bass 8%.

However, Walleye are the most important game fishing species in the St. Clair fishery, although fishing effort has shifted from the St. Clair River to the Detroit River.

The number and importance of Small Mouth Bass to the St. Clair fishery continues to increase due in part to more forage fish and better habitat as a result of more aquatic weed growth. Bob estimated that it takes a 17"-21" Bass from 8-12 years to reach that size.

The Muskie population has also shown a dramatic increase in recent years, with both the number and size of the fish growing. The average number of hours spent to catch a Muskie has decreased from 30 to less than 8 hours.

Cormorants, which have wrecked havoc in other fisheries, do not appear to be a significant problem in Lake St. Clair. There are few nesting areas of cormorants and an abundant population of small fish.

The DNR offers opportunities for the public to accompany them on fish netting surveys in the lake during the summer, which might be of particular interest in August when Sturgeon have been known to congregate in a specific area of the lake. Sturgeons have been seen leaping out of the water during these times.



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Joe Barker, Editor
Todd Randall, President

NEW MEMBERS

Continued from front page.

In a letter to Vanguard President Todd Randall, Director of Volunteer Operations for Trout Unlimited, Duncan Blair, stated "a key part of this plan is to combine our strengths in the critical area of membership growth, expanding TU's reach and depth."

In addition to increased efforts in acquiring members through direct mail, TUTV, and its website, TU hopes Chapters can acquire members by direct solicitation. Vanguard regularly rents a booth at the Midwest Fly Fishing Expo in March to sign up new members, and this may make it easier.

According to Blair, "Chapter-acquired members renew at a higher rate than other members and are more likely to become active members—attending chapter meetings, coming to workdays and even serving as chapter officers."

The new program will hopefully not only bring in more members to Vanguard, but also increase the amount of operating funds for the chapter. Based on Vanguard's recruitment history and size, TU hopes the chapter will be able to recruit 20 new members in the upcoming year, which is an ambitious number.

If Vanguard achieved this goal, it would receive a total rebate of \$320 for use in its stream conservation projects, not to mention the additional manpower new members would provide for its projects.

So do your part to sign up new members at work or play. Applications can be found at the TU website, www.tu.org, by asking any Vanguard Board member, or by attending the Midwest Fly Fishing Expo on March 13 & 14 at Macomb Community College in Warren.

Don't forget to tell them to designate the Vanguard Chapter on the application form as the chapter they want to join. Our chapter number is 378. If a new member doesn't designate Vanguard, they will be assigned a chapter based on zip code.

HORSEBACK

Continued from page 3.

and plentiful. But it was the unadvertised side-trip up Pebble Creek that was just as memorable. The fish were not as big, but they made up for it in volume and gullibility.

A small fly of almost any variety, preferably in shades of yellow, such as a humpy, stimulator, or caddis, resulted in slashing takes from every fishy looking spot behind a boulder, under a log, or along a small run. The typical 6-8 inch Cutthroat was sometimes super-sized to a 12-14 incher, which would have been a disappointment on Slough Creek but on Pebble Creek gave the 3 and 4 weight rods all they could handle in these tight quarters.

In a half day of fishing, everyone released 30-60 fish. Almost too easy, and it certainly spoiled us when we later fishing the Big Horn River where low water and a fish die-off made any fish a successful day.

From the campground at the trailhead where Pebble Creek crossed the road, the stream shared none of its fishing secrets. Fly fishermen generally report only a few small fish after a couple hours of flogging the water, which is why that two hour ride, up a 1,000 feet of elevation, and six miles of trial makes one more horse trip worth the ride.

Oh, and don't forget the horseflies or no horse trip would be complete. I figure the payback on enduring horseflies has to be at least extra 10 fish.

CLINTON RIVER

Continued from page 2.

easier to inventory and we shouldn't run into any significant access issues.

For this effort we estimate eight teams will be needed to do the physical inventory work and several new macro invertebrate teams will be needed to expand upon the work begun last year. The steering committee is also expanding the temperature-monitoring plan for this year as well. We plan to add six more channels of monitoring to the project.