

The Flyline

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From Randy's Desk

Since we haven't done a lot of stream work since we finished up on Benscreek last year, it may seem that the chapter has been rather inactive. Nothing could be further from the truth. First of all, we have been actively seeking a permit for work on Potter Creek. Though the process has been a long and frustrating one, we should have the permit very soon. This will allow us to begin on time in 2005. We have not been sitting idly by in other areas either. We completed two cleanups on Yellow Creek, we stocked fish on Quemahoning Creek, we held a cleanup at the Quemahoning Dam, we did road work on Shade Creek (see later article), we helped with Hooversville trout rodeo for kids, we helped mentally impaired citizens at Duman's Dam, we helped out with the Turkey Federation's Youth Field Day at Goldenrod Sportsmen's Club, we helped out SCRIP at the Boswell "Fun Raiser", and we appeared at Westsylvania Adventures at the Summers Best Two Weeks complex at the Quemahoning Reservoir. We taught fly tying at Pitt and gave demonstrations at area merchants. As you can see, we have been busy, and we plan to continue non-stop.

We are constantly gaining new members and need more of you to get involved. Chapter elections begin in September with the opening of nominations. They culminate in November with the actual election. How about coming to a meeting and expressing your opinion. By letting us know what you think, you can help us work into areas that interest you. You are Trout Unlimited, but only if you participate!

Catch One

Randy

Natural Thoughts

Several weeks ago the Johnstown Tribune Democrat ran an article touting the fact that numerous species of fish are being caught in the Stonycreek River in downtown Johnstown. Sadly the article failed to mention that this is true because of work which was originally started by Mountain Laurel Chapter and carried on by Len Lichvar and SCRIP. Since then, many others have gotten on the bandwagon and the work continues. It sometimes amazes me that the media can ignore the obvious. The results are there. The Stonycreek lives. Most of us thought we would never see fish in that river in our lifetimes, at least in the parts near Johnstown. Mining and industry had destroyed the river. Well, that is not what happened.

This just goes to prove that if Mother Nature is given a little help, it is absolutely amazing what she can do to restore what man has ruined. Oh sure we still have many problems to solve on the Stonycreek, and the Little Conemaugh needs a bunch of help. Yet we persevere! We cannot be satisfied or cease our efforts. We also need help, both governmental and financial. Working together with other organizations, the state government, local governments, and the federal government, Trout Unlimited will continue to be a leader in the fight to preserve cold-water environments and to restore those already degraded.

Clear Shade Area Gets MLTU Help

By Gary Cooper

On Saturday, June 5, 2004, Volunteers from MLTU met to continue improvements to sections of the road on the fly fishing only section of Clear Shade Creek. Previous work had been done just before Easter of 2003. The road has many holes and is hard to navigate. Twenty-three tons of limestone was applied to various areas of the road at a cost to the chapter of \$303. The effort was spearheaded by Bob Wardrop, longtime MLTU volunteer. Assisting Bob on that day were President Randy Buchanan, Rick Buchanan, Don Buchanan, and Mark Lee. John Ribarich used a loader supplied by SR & G (Thanks for the help to SR & G). Also pitching in were chapter members Rich Rogel, Bill Nemeth, Dick Stevenson, Dave Wright, Ed Burgess, Mark Symon, and Pete Buriani. As always, a letter of thanks was sent to the Windber Area Sewer and Water Authority for their cooperation in allowing us to stock and to fix the roadway. Great Job guys!

On Saturday June 19, 2004 MLTU volunteers cleaned the roadway from New Ashtola to the Iron Bridge on Clear Shade Creek. Six volunteers cleaned the entire stretch. They included Bob Wardrop, Bob Feath, Randy Buchanan, Dave Wright, and Mark and Sue Lee. A bunch of trash was collected, and the area will now be more pleasant for visiting Fishermen and nature lovers. Richland Lanes graciously allowed us the use of their dumpster to dispose of the trash. Again, thanks fellows for your time, effort, and dedication.

Johnstown Sportsmen's Club Assists New Day Youth

By Tom Murray

On Saturday, August 14, Children attending the New Day summer school enjoyed a day in the country. Twenty boys and girls between the ages of six and sixteen went fishing.

Aided by MLTU members Tony Mirilovich (person of the week) and Tom Murray many of these kids caught their first fish. Some of the boys and girls caught up to seven bluegills and bass.

Before the fishing Tony explained the gear necessary to be a successful angler and Tom demonstrated the proper way to cast the Zebcos. Several members of the Johnstown Sportsmen's club assisted with baiting the hooks and releasing the fish.

As a sidelight, Shawn Harshaw and Mike Nardecchia of the Pa. Game Commission sedated a 200 pound black bear. The bear was then tagged on the ear, tattooed on the lip, and had a small tooth extracted. Shawn answered many of the children's questions and allowed pictures to be taken beside the tranquil bruin. Mr. Harshaw also had an immature red-tailed hawk on display. (He explained that the hawk would be released after it was rehabilitated.)

An excellent lunch was supplied by the Sportsmen, along with a beautifully decorated cake for dessert. All participants were presented with ball caps and two won spinning rods donated by Rick's Tackle located on Ohio Street in Lorain Borough. The children thanked their instructors with a couple of gospel songs.

Buy Your Tickets Now!

By Gary Cooper

Every fall MLTU sells five dollar tickets to raise funds to buy prizes for the spring banquet. This year's tickets will be on sale during September, October and November. The tickets go off during the first twelve days of December and are called the twelve days of Christmas tickets. The prize is one hundred dollars for each of the twelve days. Tickets may be secured by calling Randy Buchanan at 467-4034 or Gary Cooper at 266-4763. Many chapter members will also have tickets for sale. Please do your share and help us to sell those tickets.

Creeks and Runs Update

By Len Lichvar

The abandoned mine drainage (AMD) pollution of the South Fork of the Bens Creek upstream of the Greater Ferndale Sportsmen's Club in Somerset County has been essentially eliminated after three years. The AMD Passive Treatment system located near Route 985 has been able to lower the mine pool below the elevation of the outbreak. The continued abatement of the source of AMD, however, is contingent on the continued operation of that system. On Saturday, August 14, the system, because of human error, spilled untold thousands of gallons of iron contaminated water into the Bens Creek for hours. The problem was corrected and there was no fish kill from the alkaline discharge and no staining of the streambed. However, the incident demonstrates the need for continued funding and proper operation of the system in order to ensure that the Bens Creek's AMD problems do not suddenly reappear.

The Pennsylvania Department of Environmental Protection (PADEP) still has not released its hydrologic report on the Higgins Run Stonebridge borehole AMD outbreak. The borehole has returned to its former water quality and the Solar 7 mine pool has been lowered to the point below the outbreak that caused the initial AMD pollution on the stream. However, the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission has confirmed that the Class A Wild Trout population has been severely impaired and the stream bottom is heavily coated with precipitate. Funding is being sought to continue the MLTU sponsored assessment on the stream. In the meantime, MLTU's aquatic biologist, Gene Macri, continues to assess the stream as a donated service to the chapter and the resource.

The last best chance for the long term water quality improvements in Lamberts Run in Somerset County and the protection of the Stonycreek River may be at hand. An alliance of conservation organizations, including MLTU, as well as PBS Coals, is working on assimilating a watershed assessment, and AMD abatement concept and design for treatment. This effort is in its early stages but could begin to take shape very fast and hopefully very soon.

The long awaited Boswell Passive Treatment System final phase that will eliminate the single largest AMD source in the watershed will begin construction in mid September. The completion of this treatment system should allow the already reestablished fishery to be moved downstream all the way to the Quemahoning Reservoir.

Maturing at 50!

By Bruce A. Tomaselli

The signposts that mark time aren't always apparent.

The passing of time is a peculiar thing. It really doesn't make much of a difference to you until you hit about 30. Before that you try to look older and act older. Your past is measured in seconds.

I'm thinking more along the lines of the human indicators of time --- characteristics of one's life that become apparent only because you've bummed around enough years.

I turned 50 years old this year and it wasn't a big deal. It means I probably won't live another 50 which is okay. A fair number of people will be happy about that.

When you're 50 you start to look back on your life, mainly because back is all you have.

One unseasonable hot Sunday I took my nephew, Luke, fishing on our home waters, as people like to say. We sat on some rocks as we readied our leaders.

My universe seemed normal, probably not the same normal as most people, but it's one I'm comfortable with and have embraced over the years.

As I sat there I realized my life had taken a sudden, dramatic turn, and I wasn't sure I was liking it.

My 16 year old nephew is now 6'2" tall. (I'm always going to hold that against him.) When we got to the stream I was covered with sweat, and his breathing seemed unlabored. "Gee," I thought to myself, "That just ain't right!" I was always the kid with endless energy.

I directed him to a spot in the stream I knew would be holding fish. I sat there just watching him. It wasn't long before the green drake wiggle nymph fooled a nice, fat rainbow.

"Hey, Uncle Bruce," he yelled. I looked up to see his fly rod arc toward the stream. I replied, "Good job, what a pretty rainbow." I couldn't help but feel a sense of pride as I watched him bring another to hand.

Then it happened.

I never even saw it coming.

As we walked to another part of the creek I said to him, "What a beautiful day.

You know, Luke, it's not all about catching fish!"

"Who said that?" I thought to myself in a panic. "Of course it's about catching fish --- why else would I be here?" I had a bitter taste in my mouth. You know, the kind you get when the other guy gets the girl, or when your Mom calls you honey in front of the rest of the guys on your little league team.

Could I be maturing?

As a man and I'd like to think I'm pretty much like all men. I've spent my entire life toying with the idea of maturity, but never really buying into it.

This is going to take some getting used to.

Upcoming Chapter Events

Monthly Chapter Meetings

Tuesday, September 14, 2004
Tuesday, October 12, 2004
Wednesday, November 10, 2004
Tuesday, December 14, 2004

All meetings are held at the Richland Fire Hall on Scalp Ave. at 7:00 p.m.

Board of Director s Meetings

Thursday, September 9, 2004
Thursday, October 7, 2004
Thursday, November 4, 2004
Thursday, December 9, 2004

All meetings are held at the Richland Fire Hall on Scalp Ave. at 7:00 p.m.

Banquet Committee Meetings

Wednesday, September 22, 2004
Wednesday, October 20, 2004
Wednesday, November 17, 2004
Wednesday, December 15, 2004

All meetings are held at Santo s Pizza on Goucher St. at 7:00 p.m.

Chapter Banquet - 2005

Saturday, March 19, 2005

Holiday Inn, downtown Johnstown.

Chapter Elections

September 14, 2004 Nominations begin.
October 12, 2004 Nominations continue.
November 9, 2004 Nominations end. Election takes place.