

# Newscasts

October, 2001 Serving the Southern Wisconsin Chapter of Trout Unlimited

## Whither Fur and Feather?

Our guest speaker at the October 9th Chapter meeting is **Paul Mauer**, an extremely gifted fly tyer whose innovative use of synthetic materials is nothing short of revolutionary. Paul is from Madison and he'll be speaking on "Flyfishing Madison Lakes." Please join us for what fur and feather purists might call a controversial presentation. As usual, the meeting starts at 7:00pm at the Mapletree Restaurant on Highway 51 in McFarland. Come out earlier for dinner and compare notes on the recent trout season.

## Newsletter Editor Needed

Dan Wisniewski has been doing our chapter newsletter since October, 1993 and he told the board earlier this spring that he wanted to turn over these responsibilities to someone new at the end of this year. "I've enjoyed doing the newsletter tremendously," Dan said, "We've expanded it quite a bit over the years, including more news on relevant local coldwater issues. In the past ten years our chapter membership has more than doubled and the newsletter is the way we can stay in touch with all those folks." Dan attends most of the monthly board meetings and chapter meetings to gather information and says it takes him about four or five hours a month to write and edit the newsletter and get it to the printer. "Doing the newsletter is a great way to be involved in everything that's happening in the chapter and to be creative," Dan added. If you're interested in taking over as editor, call Bill Pielsticker at (608) 592-4718.

## If You're Renewing Your Membership.....

Our chapter gets a portion of your membership dues *if* you renew your TU membership through the chapter. To do so, send your check (made out to Trout Unlimited) to our membership chair, Bob Selk, 2642 Park Place, Madison, 53705.

## TUTV Opens a New Season

A new series of TUTV programs begins October 4 and runs through the end of the year. The programs air on ESPN2 on Thursdays at 11:30am and 5:30pm and Saturdays at 9:30am. Some great streams are featured, including Letort Spring Run (11/1 & 11/4), the South Platte (12/6 & 12/9) and our own Mekan (11/15 & 11/18).

## From the President.....

Our last chapter meeting was the evening of September 11. We went ahead with that meeting not out of disrespect to those injured or killed in New York, Washington, and Pennsylvania, but to offer some respite from the terrible news that day. Those who attended observed a few minutes of silence for the victims of the day's attacks, and all of us have found our own ways to honor the dead and to celebrate the survivors and their rescuers. While some of the joy has gone out of the world, I'm confident each of us will continue to celebrate life even as we try to improve the world in whatever small ways are available to us individually and collectively.

As a chapter one thing we do is offer opportunities for anglers to return something to the fisheries resource. In September, our focus was on Spring Creek in Lodi. More than a dozen volunteers came out on two lovely weekends to pitch big rocks and improve the habitat on one of the area's lesser known streams (*see article*). While our work is often unseen, we garnered three photos and a great article on the front of the "Local" section of the Wisconsin State Journal on Sunday, September 23. Kudos to those who turned out to make this project a success!

While on the subject of work days, our next ones are scheduled for **November 3** and **November 10** on Black Earth Creek in downtown Cross Plains (*see article for details*). The focus here is on removing debris and log jams left in the wake of the nine inch rainfall in early August. This happens to be one stretch of stream that still holds good numbers of trout. If you come on out and lend a hand, we'll share some ideas about how and where to fish this stretch of our "home water."

Your chapter board last month voted to send a check for \$1000 to the Coldwater Conservation Fund, a national TU program that funds stream improvement and conservation work throughout the country. Last year's projects include funding for research on whirling disease, instream flow protection and restoration in four western states, and the Catskill (NY) River Restoration Project. This fund also provided \$25,000 for coaster brook trout restoration in Michigan last year, and has essentially underwritten the Kickapoo River Watershed Restoration project for the last several years.

I'm proud to be part of an organization that can have a real impact locally, as well as at the national level. You should be proud of it, too. Because without you, there is no TU.

-----Bill Pielsticker

## Spring Creek Habitat Project

Any idea what 28 cubic yards of rock weigh? There are 17 SWTU chapter members and 9 other volunteers who can tell you! Over the course of two work days last month, 28 cubic yards of riprap was moved to and placed in Lodi's Spring Creek as part of a Trout Stamp habitat improvement project.

During the first 4-hour session, volunteers and DNR personnel constructed a fish passage below an 18" high log dam on the creek. Prior to the work, this was one of two dams in downtown Lodi that obstructed the movement of trout upstream. Now there is a natural-looking riffle below the pool created by the dam. Because of its location in downtown Lodi, the work could only be done by hand. Once the second dam receives similar treatment (using a backhoe), approximately six miles of stream will be opened up to migrating brown trout.

The second work session saw the volunteers place large riprap in the stream along the base of a retaining wall upstream of the dam. This rock should provide habitat for one- and two-year-old trout in a stretch of stream with limited cover. Similar treatment will be given to both sides of a walled-in stretch of stream that flows through Goeres Park in Lodi, two blocks north of downtown. DNR fisheries biologist Tim Larson, Poynette, reports counting 28 redds in the stretch of stream being worked on in a recent winter. Larson notes that a similar project on Rowan Creek in Poynette led to a tripling of 9-inch plus trout in the treated section within a few years.

Those who turned out for this project received lunch and fishing tips on both days. After finishing early on the second day, the volunteers were also treated to a fish-shocking demonstration by the DNR's Larson. Surprisingly, several young of the year were found in the same water volunteers had just finished pitching rocks into, and a nice number of fish were seen, including several over 12 inches.

Chapter volunteers included: **Tim Cleveland, Gene Edwards, Bill Porter, Mark Maffit, Joel Vizek, Fran Vizek, Matt Smith, Larry Meicher, Ray Venn, Jack Way, John Schweiger, Bill Pielsticker, Mike Philipps and his son, Jim, Tom Ehlert, and Mark Rhinerson.** Other volunteers were **Jim Capper, Don Thistle, Jim Korlesky, Cliff Theel, and Kevin Hinckley.** Along with **Tim Larson**, two other DNR personnel pitched in: **Scott Harpold and Nick Schaff.** A big tip-of-the-hat to you all!

## Tom Thrall Now On Board

Board member **Rick Shull** has resigned in preparation for a move to Minnesota. We wish Rick well and hope the move works to his advantage. By the way, Rick, send us some fishing reports from time to time, will you?

At its meeting in September, the SWTU board voted in favor of **Tom Thrall** to fill the vacant board position which runs to March, 2003. Tom is a long-time chapter member, and served one term on the board about ten years ago. He's an avid angler, recently returning from Montana with slides and stories he will share with us at an upcoming chapter meeting. Thrall is also a biologist with the USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service, working in the agency's state office here in Madison.

## Garfoot Creek Wetland Purchased

One year ago, the *Dane County Natural Heritage Foundation* asked the SWTU board for support in its efforts to purchase 60 acres of farmed wetland along Garfoot Creek, a high-quality tributary of Black Earth Creek. Late this summer, the DCNHF closed the deal on the property. The purchase was made possible by a combination of money from the federal Wetland Reserve Program (USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service), the Stewardship Fund (DNR), and a modest match from non-profit groups.

As part of the non-profit matching funds, the SWTU board pledged to raise \$6000 for the purchase. Following the closing on the land, the board solicited and received \$2000 from the Friends of Wisconsin Trout Unlimited. The board then added \$1500 from the chapter treasury, and has sent a check for \$3500 to the Natural Heritage Foundation. Board members will be asking other TU chapters in Wisconsin and Illinois to contribute to this effort, hoping to raise the remaining \$2500 by the end of the year. For information on contributing to this project, contact **Bill Pielsticker** at (608) 592-4718.

The Dane County Natural Heritage Foundation was the lead organization for the Token Creek dam removal and brook trout restoration project. This land purchase is their first in the Black Earth Creek watershed. Initially, the Foundation planned to carry out some wetland restoration and turn the property over to the DNR to manage. However, a new proposal recently was made to return the creek to its "original" meandering path through the parcel, and fill in the channel it has been in since the 1930's. More on this as things develop.

*The Friends of Wisconsin Trout* is an arm of the TU State Council. Wisconsin TU members are solicited once a year to contribute \$100 to the Friends of Wisconsin Trout. Chapters can apply for grants from the fund to assist in land acquisition, habitat improvement, and other activities which benefit trout streams in this state. The Friends is a state-level equivalent to the Embrace-a-Stream fund managed by the national TU organization.

## **SWTU Strategic Planning Meeting**

On **Sunday, October 21** our chapter will be conducting a follow-up meeting to last spring's strategic planning session. The purpose of this session is to develop action plans for the chapter to address the key issues/opportunities that were raised last spring concerning future planning for the chapter. Topic areas to be discussed include development of youth related programs, new member assimilation, and better understanding of our chapter's role as a land manager. Any chapter members who would be interested in helping plan the future of the chapter are welcome to attend.

**WHEN:** Sunday, October 21st from noon to 3:00 p.m.

**WHERE:** Morels Restaurant, 4635 Chalet, off Airport Rd. in Middleton ----  
5 miles west of Hwy. 12.

For more information, call **Paul Banas** at 231-3014.

## **Black Earth Creek Needs Work**

Work is needed to remove a substantial amount of brush and some deadfalls from Black Earth Creek within the City of Cross Plains. Two work sessions are scheduled: **Saturday, November 3** and **Saturday, November 10**. This is one stretch of stream that was not affected by the fish kill in June, and it needs some TLC. Volunteers who turn out will receive expert advice on how to fish this section of stream. We will also provide lunch both days, which will feature venison chili courtesy of Larry Meicher and Tom Ehlert.

**WHEN:** Saturday, Nov. 3, and Saturday, Nov. 10, from 9:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

**WHERE:** Black Earth Creek, downtown Cross Plains. Meet in the parking lot behind Johnson's True Value Hardware.

**EQUIPMENT:** Bring gloves, waders, bow saws, pruners. We need several volunteers with chain saws and appropriate safety equipment.

For more information, contact **John Serunian**, Project Chair, at 277-9295

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