

SPRING 2016

# TROUT TIMES



**Vanguard  
Chapter**

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## MIDWEST EXPO REELS IN MUCH NEEDED REVENUE

By Joe Barker



WARREN— The Vanguard Chapter's booth at the Midwest Fly Fishing Expo at Macomb Community College in Warren on March 12 and 13 was a beehive of activity. Members both old and new either worked at the booth or stopped by to visit.

Volunteers selling raffle tickets and merchandise at the Chapter's booth this year included Joe Swantek, Frank

Penkala, Eli Stanesa, Renee Sullivan, with her father and son, John Sabina, Larry Butts, Jeff Gerwitz, Mary Rosenbusch, Nina Macri, Steve Mangas, Tom Quail, Randy Baker, and Larry and Sharon Walla.

The Chapter took a new approach to its raffle at the Expo this year. The raffle is the Chapter's major fundraising activity and featured three chances to win at \$5 a ticket. In the past, the

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Chapter has offered \$1 tickets for two raffle prizes.

All the prizes this year were donated to the Chapter. The first prize drawing was a weekend for two at Riverview Lodge & Cabins on the mainstream of the Au Sable River. Riverview has been an enthusiastic supporter of the Vanguard Chapter for several years and this year maintained its own booth at the Expo. The Chapter's Spring Outing will again be held at Riverview in May so many members are very familiar with the lodge's strategic location on the Au Sable and relaxing accommodations.

The lucky winner's raffle ticket for the Riverview weekend, Richard Welinski, was pulled on Sunday just before the Expo's closing. He will have the opportunity to enjoy some great fishing and fantastic scenery.

The second drawing was for a Simms Headwaters Hip Pack donated by the Old Au Sable Fly Shop located on

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**EXPO**

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Jeff Gerwitz and Larry Butts pose in front of the Vanguard booth display at the Expo.

the banks of the Au Sable River in downtown Grayling. The shop, formerly known as the Fly Factory, is a landmark and serves as a popular gathering place for fly fishing aficionados. Recent renovations have completely changed the layout of the shop and added not only more sales space, with a wealth of top-of-the-line rods and fly fishing equipment, but also a meeting room for fly fishing seminars and classes.

The winner of the hip pack was Matt Farney, giving him the opportunity to comfortably and conveniently transport all his gear during Opening Day.

The third prize drawing was a framed, matted print donated by artist Becca Schlaff. Becca specializes in trout art and abstract fish and fly fishing paintings. *MidCurrent*, an independent provider of fly fishing news, opined: "Becca Schlaff uses the remarkable beauty of fish to create abstract, bold, and elegant works of art. Her expressionistic style of painting brings the awe of the natural world to fishing enthusiasts and art collectors alike." A

full display of Becca's artwork can be found on her website, [www.becca-schlaff.com](http://www.becca-schlaff.com).

Don Booth has a head start on his collection of fine fly fishing art with the drawing of his lucky ticket on Sunday.

The new formula for the raffle worked out quite well. Total revenues for the weekend amounted to \$1,427. Of that amount, pre-sales of the raffle tickets contributed the most significant portion at \$567 thanks to some energetic sales efforts by Chapter members. On Saturday, \$555 was raised in raffle ticket sales as the Expo was well attended under sunny skies. Sunday sales declined, which is typical, despite a steady stream of attendees right up until closing time. Sales were \$260. In addition, a total of \$45 was raised during the weekend in the form of sales of DVDs, books, and stream maps that had been donated to the Chapter.

The Vanguard Chapter split the cost of the booth with Vanguard Fly Tying, and with the donation of all the raffle prizes and merchandize, the Chapter was able to realize a net profit of \$1,049, well above last year's amount and the second highest in the last eight years.

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**PRESIDENT'S  
CORNER**

By Larry Butts



As I write this, I was advised of the passing of Art Neumann, one of the founding fathers of Trout Unlimited. From its simple beginnings in 1959 along the Au Sable River, Trout Unlimited is a large part of the legacy of this man.

It makes me think of what my legacy will be. Upon receiving a lifetime achievement award for his work in children's television, Fred Rogers asked that everyone in the audience close their eyes for 30 seconds. Being Mr. Rogers, he assured everyone that he would keep track of the time for them.

With their eyes closed, he asked everyone to think of the person in their life that had the most impact on them. When they opened their eyes he said, "My prayer is that in 30 years when someone asks this question of their children, you are the person they think of."

So it is with this thought of legacies and a reminder of how short our lives truly are that I challenge you to make a difference with the time you have.





## CONNECTIVITY: Every Drop Counts

By Larry Butts

Connectivity is the current “buzz word.” Your cell phone connects with your car, laptop, and even some of the things you wear. The laptop connects to your tablet and soon your appliances and the lock on your front door. This is the current definition of *connectivity*.

Another example of connectivity, and one that appears to have been forgotten, is water. Coldwater springs feed the streams. Streams in turn feed the rivers that flow into our inland lakes and the oceans. Water evaporates and falls as rain completing and repeating the cycle.

Water can be diverted to power mills and turbines that generate electricity. It is also diverted into our municipal water systems so that we can drink and bathe in the comfort of our homes. Although most of us will admire a sunset or sunrise at the lake or the scenic beauty of a flowing river, few connect this water with the water flowing through our pipes into our taps and disposable bottles.

Out of sight and mind these pipes cease to exist in our consciousness, so we disconnect one from the other. As long as there is water in the tap and no investigative reporter is telling us otherwise, we’re good! We trust that this water, from unseen sources, is clean, pure, and free of harmful elements. As we have recently learned from events in Flint, sometimes our trust is misplaced.

In Flint, the government failed to ensure that the water was properly treated to account for the acid content of the Flint River. In another example, the state of Michigan is allowing a small hatchery near Grayling to expand its output from 30,000 fish to 300,000 fish annually. An additional footnote to this example is that where the old hatchery released the hatchlings when they are

## IF YOU MISSED THE EXPO, YOU MISSED OUT ON THIS

By Tom Quail

WARREN— As always, I printed off the Saturday and Sunday seminar schedule for the Expo and strategically mapped out all the seminars and clinics I planned to attend this year. It basically included a jam packed schedule running from first thing in the morning on Saturday, all the way through Sunday afternoon. Well, just like every past Expo, “the best laid schemes o’ mice an’ men” (“To a Mouse,” by Robert Burns) didn’t exactly turn out that way.

I didn’t go to any of my chosen seminars on Saturday, BUT I was bound and determined to go to something on Sunday. I was successful in that I attend three seminars, three very good seminars. The first was *Streamer Fishing for Migratory Steelhead & Lake Run Brown Trout* by Kevin Feenstra. Kevin’s seminars are great. They have beautiful photography and great information on how to improve your fishing. This seminar included equipment set-up, presentation, reading water and fly selection. It was well worth attending.



Kevin Feenstra with a nice brown trout.

The second seminar I took in was *Improving Your Fishing Photography* by Jeff Currier. I guess I watched this so I could take better pictures of all the big trout my friends caught??? Actually, this was a very good seminar that touched on framing good pictures using the “rule of thirds” (Google it)—exposure, lighting, and using automatic digital cameras. I’ve always enjoyed photography, so this, hopefully, will enhance my picture taking, even if it is other people’s big catches.

My final seminar was actually a demonstration by Pete Humphries on common two-handed casting mistakes called *Cast Killers—Common Mistakes When Learning to Spey Cast*. Pete is a world famous spey caster. Watching him demonstrate so many of my mistakes and how to correct them was very beneficial. What’s really amazing is how easily many of these mistakes can be fixed and how so many of them are rooted in overpowering the casting stroke and where I point the rod tip. I’m anxious to try out my new knowledge and see if I can actually replicate it to my casting stroke on the river. We shall see.

Those are three seminars that I found to be very helpful. I would encourage you to take in some seminars in future Expos, possibly even these three if they are offered again.

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## CONNECTIVITY

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only a few inches long, the “fish farm” operation will raise them to maturity.

This being a flow-through hatchery, water is diverted from the Au Sable River and allowed to flow through the channels of the hatchery and allowed to return to the river downstream. Throughout this flow through the hatchery, it is exposed to uneaten food pellets, antibiotics, and fish poop before being flushed into the river. A common misconception is that this effluent is diluted to a safe level by the additional water in the river. They fail to understand that nitrogen from the poop and uneaten pellets can cause algae blooms downstream.

They also fail to make the connection that this same river is a source for a municipal water system, as is the lake that it flows into. Although treated for many things, municipal sewage systems do not remove any of the drugs that are flushed down the toilets before beginning returned to the rivers and lakes, so trace amounts may be in your tap water.

In order to know if we are safe, we need to be aware of our surroundings. This is true in forest, urban, and suburban environments. Although largely unseen, our infrastructure needs to be maintained in order to be safe. Toward that end we need to challenge our elected and appointed officials to do their jobs and consider the needs of the community over the needs of entrepreneurs that want to utilize public lands and facilities for their profit.

I urge you to read the information available on “fish farming” using net pens and flow-through operations and decide for yourself where you stand. Elected officials respond to pressure, whether in the form of money from perceived economic growth or in the form of angry constituents in fear for their safety.

# Chapter Fly Tying Sessions in Full Swing

By Jeff Gerwitz

ROCHESTER HILLS—Our theme this year is to tie flies that are simple and that catch fish. The following is what we have done so far this year.

The fly for January’s fly tying session was The Usual. Developed by legendary Upstate New York fly tier and fly designer Francis Betters, The Usual is an exceptionally easy pattern to tie and incredibly effective at drawing trout to the surface when fished. A perennial favorite in New England and the Adirondacks, it’s sure to work wherever fast flowing waters and rising trout are found.



*The Usual*

The fly is made entirely from the fur of the foot of the snowshoe rabbit which has a water repellent quality to it. The dubbing formed from the fur is translucent, allowing the color of the thread to color the body of the fly.

This fly has everything you love about a good fly; an impressionistic profile and simple construction. All it takes is a snowshoe rabbit foot and some thread. Tie this fly on #14 and #16 short shanked hooks. The shorter hook keeps the fly small, but provides the wider gap

of a size larger hook. I tie this fly with fire orange thread. Fish it on the dead drift as any other dry or tug it under at the end of a drift and retrieve it—both are effective ways to fish this fly. I definitely recommend having some of these in your box come summer and when your buddies ask you what you are catching fish on you can reply “the usual.”

The fly for February’s Fly Tying session was the Walt’s Worm and Walt’s Sexy Worm.

Walt’s Worm is a venerable Pennsylvania standby nymph. It was invented by Walt Young, an editor of Pennsylvania Outdoor Times magazine. The Walt’s Worm is a basic, nondescript fly pattern (like the Pheasant Tail and Hare’s Ear) that doesn’t really imitate anything exactly. But it looks close enough to several important trout foods for fish to regularly eat it.

The fly is traditionally tied cigar-shaped with tan or grey dubbing (olive and green work well too), creating an excellent crane fly larva imitation. But if you taper the pattern from the hook bend



*Walt’s Worm*

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## FLY TYING

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to the eye, it looks like a caddis larva. Or tie one on a scud hook and brush out some of the fibers on the fly's underside to form a great sow bug imitation. If you're fishing high, off-colored water and want the fly to have some fish-attracting flash, put a bead on it. But during bright, sunny days, or during low water periods, use a little lead wired as an underbody to help the fly sink.

The dubbing used to tie a Walt's Worm is very important. A Walt's Worm works best if Hare's Ear Plus dubbing is used (a Hareline product) for its body. Hare's Ear Plus dubbing is simply a mixture of dyed rabbit fur and ground Antron. The Antron gives some subtle flash to the fly and makes it come alive in the water.

Walt's Sexy Worm is the same fly, with some flash and wire added and creating a "hot spot" with fluorescent thread.



Walt's Sexy Worm

One of nymph fishing's greatest tenants is that you must fish your flies on the stream bottom if you want to consistently catch fish. And if you heed that rule, you're going to lose a lot of flies to subsurface rocks and debris. So why not use a fly that is quick, easy, and cheap to tie, and one that the fish love? Tie and fish some Walt's Worms and you'll quickly learn to love them too.

The fly for March's Fly Tying session was the Partridge and Green Soft Hackle.

This is a very old style that is still very popular with anglers. This deadly little fly is a cross between a nymph and a simple hackled wet fly and is quick and easy to tie. The key to its success is the soft, highly mobile collar hackle.

The feather used for this style fly is normally a small game bird feather, such as partridge. The plumage has a subtle brown and tan mottling that makes it ideal for representing the legs of a small nymph or a drowned adult insect.

When tying hackles from game bird feathers, always tie the feather in by its tip, which is much finer than the thick base, and wind only one or two turns of the feather to keep the effect very sparse. This fly is also tied with an orange, yellow, or chartreuse body. You can also add a bead head or a tail.

Soft hackles are fished with confidence during the spring, summer, and fall seasons. In general, soft hackle wet flies work best for stream and river fishing for trout in fast shallow riffles, for which they are ideally suited. However, they also work well on tailwaters across the country when fished during the day either before, during, or after a hatch of mayfly or caddis flies.

In addition, soft hackles work well on ponds with a very slow retrieve designed to cause the hackles to pulsate and the fly to hover and then slowly sink. Trout will often strike the soft hackle in between strips.

Soft hackles may be fished both upstream and downstream, and both methods of fly fishing with this type of fly will work provided that you fish the fly in a drag free manner by casting slack into the line. I recommend that you fish a soft hackle using a light sensitive rod with a floating line and a long fine leader just under the surface.

I also suggest that you fish this type of fly by casting upstream a little, while moving the rod tip toward the bank to keep the line tight to signal a strike, then moving the rod tip toward the other bank as the line and the fly pass your

Please see *FLY TYING*, next page.



Nestled on the scenic Au Sable River, the lodge is over 3,000 square feet with 7 bedrooms & 3.5 baths accommodating over 12 guests comfortably. Also, six cabins each with a kitchen, full bathroom, porch, television, and gas grill.

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See my website at: [www.vanguardflytying.com](http://www.vanguardflytying.com)

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*Partridge & Green*

level in their downstream phase of the trip. To lengthen the amount of drift, when the cast is spent, let out line, the amount governed by the current.

Soft hackles may be fished as a single fly or in tandem with another similar pattern, usually in another size and color in order to provide the trout a choice and to shorten the learning curve as to what fly will work best on any given day.

If you have not been to one of our fly tying sessions, they are held on the third Thursday of each month at Avery's Tavern @ 7:30PM. Stop by and tie, or just talk fishing and enjoy a cold beer. Our fly for April will be the Shop Vac. This is a small nymph that I used with great success on the Madison River last summer and I don't see why it won't work on Paint Creek.

Avery's Tavern is located in the shopping center at the northwest corner of Crooks Road and M-59. All materials are provided. Bring your vise and tools if you have them. Our chapter has several sets of tying equipment that can be used by participants. Experienced tyers, total beginners and all experience levels in between are welcome at these sessions. Please stop by and join in the fun!

# Michigan Trout Unlimited Council Has Full Agenda

By Tom Quail

LANSING—It's never a dull moment at the Council level of Michigan Trout Unlimited. Here are some updates.

Dr. Bryan Burroughs, MITU Executive Director, provided expert testimony to the State of Michigan Quality of Life Agencies (composed of the MDNR, MDEQ & MDARD) regarding commercial net-pen aquaculture in the Great Lakes. The agencies recommended to not pursue commercial net-pen aquaculture in the Great Lakes at this time. Their recommendation noted "net-pen aquaculture would pose significant risks to fishery management and other types of recreation and tourism." Other reasons for not supporting net-pen aquaculture were noted as not being fiscally viable and lack of regulatory resources by State agencies.

MITU is monitoring the lawsuit brought by Anglers of the Au Sable regarding the Grayling fish hatchery/farm. In order to win this fight, Anglers needs "to show that operation of the fish farm under the permit issued by the Department of Environmental Quality (DEQ) will cause unacceptable impairment of the waters of the Au Sable East Branch and Mainstream." This is currently in the hands of an administrative law judge and a decision is eminent.

A new Michigan Trout Unlimited chapter has been formed, the Pere Marquette Chapter #933. Its president is former Vanguard member Tom McGraw. The chapter will be based in Baldwin and will service the Pere Marquette River watershed. The formation of the Pere Marquette Chapter for this resource was sorely needed as the Pere Marquette River has some difficult issues pertaining to erosion, fisheries, and invasive species control with both sea lamprey and newly

discovered New Zealand Mud Snails. Your support, financially, and wader/boat washing in this resource, is greatly appreciated.

River and stream monitoring will quickly be upon us so contacting MITU Aquatic Ecologist Kristin Thomas for help in training, resources, and project prioritization is in order.

The MITU Development Committee is working hard to procure funding for conservation activities. This is a \$370,000 effort that the Vanguard Chapter supports through its chapter contributions. You can also support MITU directly with your individual contributions, including joining the Tributary Club with a minimum donation of \$250 or the Aquifer Club with a minimum donation of \$1000. Membership to both clubs includes a really expensive, but cool, hat. ;)

Yours truly will most likely be the next MITU Chairperson beginning October 1, 2016. Leadership positions are being filled from chairpersons to committee members. If you're interested in serving, please go to the MITU website, get a feel for the different committees, and contact me.

Although the next MITU quarterly meeting scheduled for April 2 at the RAM Conference Center in Roscommon was cancelled, please consider attending future meetings.

Finally, the Trout Opener is Saturday, April 30<sup>th</sup>. Now's the time to be checking your fly fishing equipment and getting ready for the new season. Get out there and FISH!

Thanks for your attention and enjoy 2016.

--Tom Quail, Vice Chairperson, MITU

## Vanguard Chapter Trout Unlimited - Riverview Lodge & Cabins

2016 Annual Funraiser Outing  
 May 20 Fri., 21 Sat. & 22 Sun. of 2016  
 (Bonus Day May 19 Thurs.)



Includes:

- Two (or 3) nights accommodations at Riverview Lodge & Cabins
- **\*Bonus\*** The property is open to those who would like to arrive on Thursday at no additional cost\*  
 No meals until Friday night\*
- Friday night fish fry, get acquainted
- Saturday morning Breakfast
- Saturday Lunch for the river
- Saturday night dinner
- Sunday morning Breakfast

Note: \*\*\* Bring your own liquid refreshments \*\*\*

\*\*\* All participants to assist with meal prep and clean-up and accommodations clean-up \*\*\*

### Still Only \$150 per person

**Arrive early on Thursday or Friday and stay until mid-afternoon on Sunday.**

Right on the banks of the Au Sable River at McMasters Bridge, just minutes away from the entire Au Sable watershed- Main, North and South Branch Au Sable, Manistee, Black, Pigeon, Sturgeon, Jordan and Boardman Rivers.

Full payment of \$150 confirms your space. Make checks out to: Vanguard Chapter T.U. Send to: Scott Hummon – 1334 N. Fairview – Rochester Hills, MI 48306.

Call Scott @ (248) 318-3770 or E-mail [SHummon@vanguardtu.org](mailto:SHummon@vanguardtu.org) for availability.

Sorry, NO REFUNDS. Space is Limited.

Payment confirms your spot. First come, first served.