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The Evening

Hatch

The newsletter of the Michigan Fly Fishing Club September 2011

Steelhead, salmon and sturgeon, oh my! August speakers took us into their world

The Beatles sang of an octopus's garden, but August speakers Kathy Johnson and Greg Lashbrook of Gregory A.D. took club members to the world of steelhead, salmon and sturgeon.

Gregory A.D. -- the A.D. stands for Absolute Diving -- holds a large collection of underwater footage of freshwater species, mostly in the Great Lakes Basin.

Feeling at home among a crowd of "fishies," the divers' slang for sport anglers, Johnson said she and partner Lashbrook along with fisheries researchers routinely seek out "fishies" when they're searching for fish populations. "The sport anglers know where the fish are," she explained.

Johnson screened footage of her hand-feeding steelhead. "Remember, the smaller the fish, the more aggressive the fish," she said, as club members watched smaller fish zip past larger, warier specimens. What was the entree du jour? Shrimp! (Editor's note: Memo to self -- Sounds like an idea for an unorthodox fly for the upcoming season.)

Club members were also treated to views of being in the middle of salmon stacked up behind a weir on the Little Manistee, being underneath the flow from the fish stocking truck and going eye-to-eye with a musky and several sturgeon.



Kathy Johnson of Gregory A.D. narrates a visit below a weir on the Little Manistee.

UPCOMING EVENTS



September 14 (2nd Wed.)

Speaker: Mike Schultz
Topic: Rigging, Gear & Techniques for Warm-Water Fly Fishing
Clarenceville Middle School
Livonia, 7:30 p.m.

September 21

Board meeting
Clarenceville Middle School
Room 106, Livonia, 7:30 p.m.

September 28

Activity meeting
Clarenceville Middle School
Livonia, 7:30 p.m.

October 5

Speaker: TBA
Topic: TBA
Clarenceville Middle School
Livonia, 7:30 p.m.



Light our fire!

Vice President Mike "Cookie" Duchin, center, and Randy Park (left) stoke the barbecue at the Multi-Lakes Conservation Association in preparation for the return of the MFFC's Summer Picnic. Dozens of club members and family members turned out for the event. Roasted pig and turkey and a small mountain of grilled corn accented by pot-luck contributions from attendees ensured an ample supply of eats. See inside for more photos.



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Editor: Mike Matuszewski
editor@mffc.org
248-646-4768

Michigan Fly Fishing Club
P.O. Box 530861
Livonia, MI 48153
2011 – 2012 Officers

President:
Bruce Kramer
president@mffc.org
248-672-9056

Vice President:
Mike Duchin
vp@mffc.org
734-326-2868

Corresponding Secretary:
Dan Finstad
248-650-0172

Recording Secretary:
Terry Drinkwine
248-506-1898

Treasurer:
Jim Telinda
treasurer@mffc.org
248-426-8926

Membership:
Dave Nowicki
dn44213@gmail.com
membership@mffc.org
734-981-3396

Immediate Past President:
Pat Brazzil
248-344-7470

At-Large Directors:
A.L. Bulszewicz
734-954-9994

Eric Center
248-363-3861

Bruce Strachan
248-661-2508

Great Lakes Council FFF announces Switch Spey Weekend (Oct. 28-30)

Most of the time, two heads are better than one even with fly fishing. And there are times when two hands can be better than one and even more fun with a fly rod.

Welcome to the world of double-handed fly-casting or what is more commonly referred to as Spey casting. Spey casting, named after the river Spey in Scotland where it first began, can also be accomplished with single-handed rods, thus the name Switch Rods. More and more anglers are taking up this style of casting just for the fun factor alone. The two-handed Spey technique allows more powerful, longer casts and avoids obstacles on the shore by keeping most of the line in front of the angler.

The Spey cast is a dynamic roll cast that enables the angler to easily change direction. Movement of the fly line across the water with its aerodynamic loops and rolls is not only visually compelling, but provides a great deal of self satisfaction, especially with that special tug at the end.

Want to learn more? Then sign up for the GLC Switch Spey Weekend October 28-30 at Schmidt Outfitters in Wellston.

The program will start Friday evening and run into Sunday afternoon. Group size is limited to 12. On Friday, Ray Schmidt will tell us about fishing gear but for this event, rods and reels are provided as needed. On Saturday, everything will happen at Schmidt's with two sessions for 6 each in the morning and with a group change, the same two sessions in the afternoon: Tying Spey Flies in the Board Room and Casting Spey Rods at the Pond. The tying session will be presented by Tom Allerton who will teach us how to tie traditional Spey flies. Bob Braendle, an FFF Master Casting Instructor, along with Terry Tatarchuk and Rich Knoles, both FFF Fly Casting Instructors, will provide the casting instruction. On Sunday, you will put what you've learned to use fishing for steelhead on the Manistee with additional tutoring provided by Terry and Rich.

The \$275 fee includes two nights lodging (double occupancy), three meals Saturday, breakfast and lunch on Sunday, use of fishing gear, adult refreshments and a really fun time. There will be an auction/raffle Saturday but word has it that Terry will also give instruction on how to tie tube flies. For more information, please contact Don Sawyer: dsesi@aol.com or by phone at 517-349-0454.

Founding member seeks help getting to club meetings

One of the MFFC's founding members, Will Foreman, is looking for help in getting to club meetings.

Long absent from the club, Foreman lives in Garden City and is hoping a nearby club member will help him get to club meetings. He can be reached at 313-444-6040.

According to another founding member, John Pinto, Foreman played an instrumental role in the club's earliest days.

Pinto recounted the club's founding: "The initial meeting of the MFFC was in Livonia in a church called by Bill Zirblis, head of Clarenceville's Department of Parks & Recreation, in the winter of 1970. Bill ran an advertisement in the newspaper simply asking for interested people to attend to form a fly fishing club. About 60 people showed up, including Doug Swisher who was in Detroit on business. A second meeting was called for one month later and people interested in shaping the club were asked to step forward. Four of us did. Carl Glotzhofer, Dick Enger, Will Foreman and myself. Will was very vocal and a 'take-charge guy.' Elections were set up for officers although no formal constitution had been written at this time. Will was elected the club's first president, Carl was vice-president, Dick was elected secretary and I became the club's first treasurer. Will remained president for two years while Carl, Dick and I rotated positions.

"Will and I are the last remaining members of the initial steering committee as Carl and Dick have both rounded that last bend in the river," Pinto said.

Picnic ... Picnic ... Picnic ... 2011's picnic attracts a crowd



Current Vice President Mike Duchin (top left) shows off some of the day's fare. Former Vice President Chris Hunter (above left) showed up in a kilt, fresh from attending the St. Andrew's Society Highland Games in nearby Livonia. (Top right) Baked Bean Cook-Off Judges current President Bruce Kramer, Chris Hunter, former President Mike Matuszewski, and Duchin prepare to sample the entries. Former President Kevin Lipp (not pictured) rounded out the judging panel. Picnic Chair Mike Doyle (right), showed off grandson Eli.

Above: Linda Bocks, pictured here accepting a prize from President Bruce Kramer at the August 10 meeting, won the baked bean cook-off. She also won the chili cook-off at the Members School in February.

Otsego County Circuit Court sides with MI TU; upholds "dam removal"

A recent opinion by the Otsego County Circuit Court concerning the future of a privately owned dam that had failed causing a massive fish kill on Pigeon River. The Court declared that "dam removal" means the physical removal of all of the parts of the dam.

"It does not mean partial dam removal, dam modification, or dam drawdown as alleged by Golden Lotus and the State of Michigan," Said Bryan Burroughs, executive director of Michigan TU. "With the judge's ruling, Golden Lotus is required to completely remove all of its dam on the Pigeon River, the same dam that has caused three large fish kills in the past."

Michigan TU and the Pigeon River Country Association (PRCA) filed motions in the case earlier this year when the dam owners, Golden Lotus,

Inc., proposed a plan for dam drawdown that would not remove all of the dam and would continue blocking fish passage, Burroughs explained. "They stated their responsibilities stopped there, despite the Court Order settlement calling for 'dam removal.'" (These documents can be found and read at www.michigantu.org).

The State of Michigan (the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Environmental Quality) represented by Attorney General Bill Schuette's office sided with Golden Lotus in the reinterpretation of the Court Order and began processing a permit application for the project despite MITU and PRCA objections.

Both Golden Lotus and the State argued that despite leaving the base and sides of the dam in the river and blocking fish passage, that the project should be considered "dam removal."

According to the July 22 Court ruling, 'dam removal' means dam removal." The court also found that "the meaning

of 'dam removal' is clear and statutorily defined," further stating that "the Interim Order is not ambiguous."

"We are very pleased with the opinion and its affirmation of our understanding of the settlement agreement we signed onto and of Michigan law," Burroughs said. "This required significant resources for us compared with that of the State of Michigan and an insurance company-paid Golden Lotus defense. But we knew what was right, and what the Pigeon River deserved, and standing up for that at all costs is what we do and why we exist."

"It's frustrating that the dam removal was so seriously sidetracked during this dispute," states MI TU Chairman Dave Smith. "We're anxious to get back into a productive planning mode to see this project is done and done right, and get the Pigeon River healing from over 100 years of this dam's impacts to it."

A Golden Lotus appeal is pending.

Jim Sorenson, Hartman's Fly Shop: Up North and our sport loses another one of the good guys

by Dan Finstad

It is with great sadness that we report that Jim Sorenson, 68, passed away on June 21. Jim was the proprietor of Hartman's Fly Shop located on the north end of Lovells, just minutes from the North Branch of the Au Sable River.

He had owned the store since 2003. The funeral was Saturday June 25, with a packed church full of friends and family. A much-loved man in the Au Sable River valley, he will be remembered by all of us who enjoyed his pleasant demeanor, fly selection counsel and his sincere love of all things related to fly fishing. Good-bye, Jim. You will be missed.

The Sorenson family has been very generous in its merchandise sales to the MFFC. Our future raffles, banquet and Expo will benefit from the family's generosity.

Hartman's Fly Shop will be closing its doors for the last time after Labor Day. There are currently inventory reduction sales going on as Jim's sons are selling all merchandise at attractive prices. There remains significant fly fishing and tying inventory in the store. Club members who are Up North should be sure to stop in and buy a piece of memorabilia from Jim's sons who are overseeing the final sales. Store hours are Friday, Saturday and Sunday 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.



Au Sable Clean-Up on tap for September 10

It's gotten to be a September tradition. The passing of Labor Day means it's time for a fall cleaning ... the cleaning of the Au Sable, that is.

The Anglers of the Au Sable and the Au Sable Big Water Preservation Association (ASBWPA) again are teaming up to keep the Au Sable Michigan's cleanest river.

The Anglers' crews will fan out over a network of 33 beats on the mainstream, South Branch and North Branch. The ASBWPA crews will tackle the river from McKinley to 4001 Landing.

MFCA members interested in joining the Anglers' clean-up efforts should register for the event by contacting Josh Greenberg at 989-348-8462 or via email at: josh@gateslodge.com. Members interested in assisting the ASBWPA should check out www.asbwpa.org and click the "Clean Update" tab or call 989-745-4957.

Anglers' clean up volunteers should meet at Gates Lodge at 10 a.m. ASBWPA volunteers should meet at Comins Flats at 9 a.m..

Barbecues at Gates Lodge and Comins Flats will greet the volunteers after they finish wading their beats.

