

Hatch

The Newsletter of the Michigan Fly Fishing Club

March 2023

Midwest Fly Fishing Expo 2023

What a Wonderful Weekend!



A pair of fly anglers learn a new fly recipe at the 2023 Midwest Fly Fishing Expo.

That was some Expo!

On Saturday the crowds were so large that you had to navigate your way from one end of an aisle to the other, weaving around anglers carrying a new rod, families with kids, and MFFC volunteers on a mission.

The seminars were well attended, the cash registers were ringing, the guides were filling their driftboats for summer floats.

You could feel the energy for the upcoming trout season. And it was electrifying.

This issue of the Evening Hatch is devoted to the Midwest Fly Fishing Expo. On **page 5-6** is a photo spread of

all the excitement that is the Expo and on **pages 8-9** is another of the wooly bugger madness at the Kids' Korner and earlier at Outdoorama.

What's cuter than a young boy or girl struggling to tie their first fly?

On **page 7** Jim DuFresne writes about the casting ponds and why a Larry has always been in charge of them for the past 40 years. In her President's Message column on **page 2**, Sybil Hunter tells you why our show pins look so great this year.

Finally on **page 8**, we explore all the fine art that was on display, proof that our Expo is more than just dubbing wax and hare masks.

Michigan Fly Fishing Club Calendar

3/1/23 Activity Meeting
3/8/23 Board Meeting, Virtual
3/11-12/23 Midwest Fly Fishing Expo, Macomb Community College Expo Center
3/22/23 Speaker Meeting, Anthony Ruela, "South Carolina Fishing"

4/1/23 Trout Tune-up, Walled Lake Outdoor Education Center
4/5/23 Speaker Meeting, TBA
4/12/23 Board Meeting, Virtual
4/19/23 Activity Meeting
4/22/23 MFFC Member School, Four-Season Pavilion at Plymouth Township Park, 46640 Ann Arbor Trail, Plymouth
4/22/23 Scout School, Multi Lakes
4/29/23 Opening Day & Remembrance, Gates Au Sable Lodge

5/3/23 Activity Meeting
5/6/23 Youth Fly Fishing School
5/10/23 Board Meeting, Virtual
5/17/23 MFFC Banquet; speaker: Ron Weiss, Hook & Hackle Company, Italian American Banquet & Conference Center 39200 5 Mile Road, Livonia, MI
5/11-14/23 New Member Outing

6/14/23 Speaker Meeting, TBA

7/12/23 Speaker Meeting, Kelly Neuman

8/9/23 Panel Meeting, TBA

Meetings are held at Clarenceville Middle School, 20210 Middlebelt Rd, Livonia. The location of June through August meetings are to be determined.

*The President's Message...***Corey Thelan: MFFC's Very Talented Pinmaker**

Have you seen this year's Expo pins?

The Expo is over, but the excitement lives on! We had increased attendance from last year. Saturday was so crowded you had to navigate through the aisles to reach your favorite booths. The vendors never stopped telling Club members what a great show it was this spring.

And Spanky, the original French lure and model for Chris's poodle fly, made his official Expo debut, reeling in people and *booping* noses with show canines.

As each year passes, a new Expo pin and worker pin is commissioned and created. This year our own Corey Thel-

an, legacy member, Industrial Designer and fly fisher, designed the show pins. With a degree in Product Design from the College of Creative Studies, Corey took a modern twist on "old school enamel pins."

"I just drew that in a sketch and said, 'There that looks cool,'" said Corey while designing the show pin. "It has flow; is less static. It's kinda comin' at cha."

One of Corey's early mediums was wood carving – fish of course! In 2020, Corey created the MFFC's 50th Anniversary Pin.

Then in 2021, Corey was commissioned to paint the Grayling Fish Hatchery mural. Last summer he painted a Brook Trout on the bathroom



Sybil Hunter



Corey Thelan of Madison, Wis., is the MFFC member who designed the worker and show pins for this year's Midwest Fly Fishing Expo.

building storage closet door. He still has a Hatchery sign, and possibly another door awaiting his artistry.

Off and on, he works with Josh Greenberg at Gates AuSable Lodge to design coffee bags, shirts, and other projects. He has even painted a Blazer tire cover.

Corey has been part of the MFFC for about 14 years. When asked what he likes about the Club he answered without hesitation, "It's the people, you get to meet a lot of friendly people. They really share a lot about fishing and their different spots. They are happy to share what they know, and they take you in like a grandkid or something."

Now living near Madison, Corey is working to find new ways to share his knowledge and enjoyment of Wisconsin's Driftless area with Club members.

Before signing off, Corey had one last revelation to share.

"While helping to set up the Gates booth, I was sorting the waders when one of the guys dropped a reel. It bounced and Josh caught it."

The reel was fine. And thanks to Corey and all our wonderful MFFC volunteers, the Expo has bounced back too.

Tight wraps
and happy whip finishes,
Sybil

Michigan Fly Fishing Club **Business**

Michigan Fly Fishing Club Board of Directors Meeting

February 8, 2023

Roll Call

Meeting called to order 7:30 p.m.

Present: S. Hunter; K. Lipp; J. Deputat; B. Green; J. Aitken; J. Eriksson; J. Bada; K. Oehring; B. Strachan

Absent: J. Fischer

Visitors: C. Hunter, J. Aukee

Approval of Agenda – Agenda from 2/8/23 approved.

Approval of Minutes – Meeting-minutes for 1/18/23 approved.

Officer's Report

President: S. Hunter

- WaWaSum New Member Outing needs a chairperson. Discussion of needs for that weekend. Members are willing to assist a chairperson.
- Hatch is coming out after Board meeting.
- New Member School in May – Chris Hunter to chair.
- Received raffle licenses for Expo, banquet and picnic.

Vice President: K. Lipp

Nothing to report.

Treasurer: B. Green

Nothing to report.

Membership: J. Deputat

- Currently 360 paid members.
- 19 new members so far this year.
- Donations made to conservation, education, and operational expenses.

Corresp. Secretary: J. Fischer
Absent.

Events and Outings

- *Outdoorama* February 23 through February 26. There are 37 tying spots filled. There are still many open slots at the booth.
- The speaker for the MFFC banquet on May 17 is Ron Weiss. Tickets will be available at the next meeting for \$45 per person.
- Expo volunteering sign up is going well. Still need set up and tear down volunteers.

New Business

- A movie event was suggested by Jon Bada based on Michigan streams. Looking for members with video production equipment to film.

Old Business

- Estate sale next week at the activities meeting. Sale starts at 7pm, stops for meeting, then resumes.

Adjournment: 8:47 p.m.

2022 - 2023 Officers

President:
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Josh Sipes of Anadromous in Byron Center displaying the sharpest scissors at the Expo.

Michigan Fly Fishing Club News & Events

Back to School *MFFC School Helps New Members With Fly Fishing Skills*

By Chris Hunter

The MFFC Member School will take place Saturday, April 22, from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. at the Four-Season Pavilion at Plymouth Township Park (Formerly McClumpha Park) in Plymouth.

The school will have access to the pond from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m. and if you plan to fish you WILL need a valid 2023 All-Species Michigan fishing license.

The school will be limited to 40 members at the most, giving priority to our newest and most in-need beginners/intermediate members.

The event will be held rain or shine, and casting will be outside, so please make sure you have appropriate clothing. Because the Scout School will be using the Club rods, you will need to bring your own rod for casting.



Anglers work on their skills at the Midwest Fly Fishing Expo casting pond. MFFC members can do the same with an instructor at MFFC Member School on April 22.

MFFC Member School Sessions

- 10 a.m. to 10:15 a.m. For the entire group Entomology
- 11 a.m. to Noon
- Noon to 12:45 p.m. Lunch
- 1 p.m. to 2 p.m.
- 2 p.m. to 3 p.m.

After 3 p.m. the Pond is open to additional casting.

Plymouth Township Park is at 46640 Ann Arbor Trail, Plymouth, on the north side, halfway between Beck and Sheldon Road, a mile South of M-14.

MFFC Members Welcome New Members

Welcome New Members!

Please reach out to them and tell them where to go to catch a trout or a bluegill. Contact information is available on the current membership roster, or from Jerry Deputat at membership@mffc.org.

Joining us since January, 2023:

Austin Storm, *Allegan*

David Dumont, *Livonia*

Nathan Hoffman, *Grand Haven*

Bruce Maquire, *Lansing*

Corydon Golden, *Traverse City*

James Cole, *Lenexa, KS*

Kevin Klaeren, *Grand Blanc*

Brad Siefert, *Westland*

Tommi Viita, *Detroit*

Luke Langenderfer, *Rochester Hills*

Mark Langenderfer, *Rochester Hills*

John Keeley, *Berkley*

Michael Hetzler, *Auburn Hills*

Bill Yaw, *Ann Arbor*

Jeff Edwards, *Rochester Hills*

Jeffrey Bigelman, *Brighton*

Brandon Webber, *Lake Orion*

John Robe, *Ray*

Time to Tune Up for the Trout Season

MFFC will stage its annual Trout Tune-Up from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. on Saturday, April 1 at the Walled Lake Outdoor Education Center, 3577 Sleeth Ct, Commerce Twp.

Members and visitors are welcome to this early-season event to fine-tune their equipment and skills on the Huron River in Proud Lake Recreation Area. Thousands of large hatchery

rainbows and brown trout are planted by the Michigan DNR for a preseason catch-and-release fishery.

MFFC will be on hand to provide coffee, soft drinks, donuts and tips on how to catch a trout at the Walled Lake Outdoor Education Center Yurt adjacent to the Huron River. A valid 2023 All-Species Michigan fishing license is required to fish.



The riverside Yurt at the Walled Lake Outdoor Education Center.



A Fly Fishing Success! *Anglers, Kids & Vendors Pack 2023 Expo*



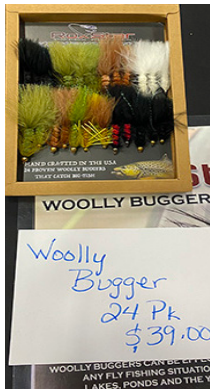
Above: Landon Mayer, a Colorado guide and author, giving casting tips to a crowd at the seminar pond.



Above Right: The Kid's Korner, where they learn to tie flies and paint t-shirts featuring fish and frogs, is always a popular area of the Expo.



Left: There was a lot of candy for fly anglers at the Expo, including these beautiful Bauer Fly Reels.



Below Left: Tim Flagler leads his audience through a seminar on nymphs and how to tie flies to imitate them. The popular fly tyer from New Jersey was one of the Expo's headline speakers.

Right: Eric Naguski, a guide and author from Cumberland Valley, Pennsylvania, spending some time at the author's table.



Below Right: Brad from Hog Creek Furred Leaders explains how he constructs his leaders and why they're so effective.



From Fly Tyers to a Scotsman; Everybody was at the MFFC Expo



Above left: Jake Villwock, author and guide for trout, smallmouth, and steelhead in Pennsylvania and New York, ties one of his bass flies for a packed crowd at the Expo. Left: Terry Herron gives a young man some helpful instructions at the casting pond. Above: Carl Hueter of Wanigas Rod Company pitches a bamboo fly rod to a very interested customer.

Stop the Music! Jackets are 15% off at Gates

For the past six years, Don Mills has officially opened the Midwest Fly Fishing Expo and welcomed anglers with a different musical selection on his bagpipes. Not only is Mills a competitive piper, but he is also an MFFC member, a fly fisher, and somebody with an eye for a good deal.

While strolling past vendors' booths playing his bagpipe Saturday morning, Mills saw that Gates AuSable Lodge had jackets on sale for 15 percent off. So, he started shopping. Who could pass that up? Certainly not a Scotsman.

After putting away his pipes, Mills returned to the Expo floor and continued the quest for a good deal. Maybe even bargaining a bit because what vendor could say no to a fly fisherman wearing a kilt?



Larry The III

With a Name Like That, The Casting Pond Job Is Yours

By Jim DuFresne

Larry The Cable Guy has nothing on the MFFC. We have Larry The Casting Pond Guy.

Last week at the Midwest Fly Fishing Expo, hundreds of anglers, company reps, FFI instructors and children happily flicked a fly line into one of the show's two casting ponds. And for that, they should all thank Larry Webb.

The ponds are one of the most popular and unique features of the Expo and Webb has been involved in setting them up or dismantling them for more than a decade. But he's been in charge of that operation since 2019.

"It's not that I was uniquely qualified for this," said Webb. "I just happen to be the dummy who didn't step backwards when they asked for a volunteer."

Actually, Webb, an engineer by profession, has the most important qualification. His name is Larry. He follows Larry Prieur and Larry Balash to wear MFFC's most coveted name tag - *Pond Scum*. Balash was the original Pond Scum, having set up the first casting pond at the Southfield Civic Center.

"I got the job because I was a Larry, and the guy before me was a Larry, and the guy before him was a Larry," said Webb. "That's 40 years of Larrys putting these casting ponds together."

Setting up the ponds is a two-day effort. On Thursday, they transport PVC pipes, a pump, and other equipment from a storage shed to the Macomb Community College Sports & Expo Center. Then they connect the plastic pipes to form two frames, one for a pond 100 feet long and 25 feet wide while the other measures 100 by 10 feet.

They finish the day waiting for two large rolls of



Jim DuFresne



Larry Webb, The Casting Pond Guy, for MFFC.

heavy-duty plastic to arrive because they use new plastic for every show. Lord, help us if there is a biblical flood during the Expo.

The closest Webb came to that was last spring. The new rolls of plastic sat in the storage shed for a year due to a pandemic-canceled Expo. When they unrolled them, Webb didn't see any holes or tears, but there were a lot of stretched blemishes.

The ponds held up for two days, but more water was on the floor than usual when they pulled up the plastic.

"You can't get the plastic dry after the show," said Webb. "Do you really want to put it in storage wet for a year? I don't want to know what that would smell like a year later."

On Friday, a pond team of almost a dozen volunteers is recruited to unroll two plastic sheets over the frames. They stretch and shift the plastic liners from all sides of the ponds before Webb kicks off his shoes and gently walks across them, making final adjustments. He then cuts each plastic bed to size and tucks it under the PVC pipes.

The final step takes three to four hours;



Larry Webb checks the first plastic pond sheet before he begins trimming it.

Continued on page 12

Fine Art *Expo Is More Than Just Dubbing Wax & Belly Boats*



Above: The Midwest Fly Fishing Expo featured a number of artists, recreating fish and river scenes in oils, pastels, and watercolors. Above right: Bob Batchik of Sunfish Woodworks of Sylvan Lake produces hand-carved fish including bluegills larger than you'll ever catch.



Far Right: Stacy Troilo at the Cognito booth that features sun-protective graphic hoodies, fish print patterned leggings, and other trout and saltwater fishing clothing and artwork. Center: Landon Mayer wears his art on his arms; his collection of trout tattoos. Below Left: Fish cribbage boards by Jeff McEldery of Three Trails Custom Woodworking.



Alger with one of her paintings at the Expo.

Ashley is Everywhere

Ashley Agler never stops moving. As the first registered woman-owned and operated outfitter - Mindful Trout - she offers guide service, drift boat trips and casting instruction on the Pere Marquette River and in the Upper Peninsula during the summer. She is the host of the *Loop To Loop* podcast and writes a blog.

She is also an artist. When does she get time to paint? Scan the QR code to check out her podcast, blogs or guided trips.



Not all fine art at the Expo was created by adults.



Kidding Around *MFFC Turns Kids into Future Fly Anglers*



Above: Dave Oakley and his prize student display the wooly buggers she tied at the MFFC fly tying booth at Outdoorama.

Above right: Sybil Hunter's youngest fly tyer of the day proudly showing off her wooly bugger fly.

Below: Jim Aitken works with a young fly tyer at the children's booth. Jim was instrumental in organizing the booth for MFFC and recruiting enough club volunteers to teach children how to tie all four days of the popular outdoor show.

Below right: Spence Vanderhoof admires his student's intensity as he ties his first fly, the all-time fly angler's favorite wooly bugger.



By Jim Aitken

This year's Outdoorama kid's tying booth was a success! **A 5-year-old tyer...**

We had one young five-year-old fellow who watched how to tie a wooly bigger and then proceeded to tie one entirely by himself. He told his parents he wants to fly fish, and this was the start. Turns out he has been spin-casting since two!

Why we do this...

We spoke to a mom and her 20-year-old challenged son. He began tying at Outdoorama about 10 years ago. Since that first effort, he has been tying flies on his own following books and other sources. Mom said his room walls are covered with his efforts!

And the smiles and high fives...

Four kids of various ages, along with their mom, stopped at the booth because the ten-year-old wanted to tie. An older brother had tied with Spence at a prior show, so the young boy waited about twenty minutes for Spence to be available. In the meantime, none of the other three kids wanted to tie, but by the time Spence finished with the young boy, the others had also tied -- they all are planning to be at the Expo!

I estimate we tied with about 150 kids at Outdoorama and distributed around 900 expo flyers. There are also around six to ten new members as well.

Thanks to the volunteers that make this event possible.



Wooly Buggers by the Hundreds at the Expo & Outdoorama



Above left: MFFC members gave up a Saturday morning teaching children how to tie flies at Outdoorama. Above right: A table full of feathers chenille and thread for wooly buggers at Outdoorama.



Left: MFFC member Bob Gordon helps a young man tie his first fly at the Midwest Fly Fishing Expo. Now go catch a fish with it! Below left: Art Mikkola teaches the techniques of tying a wooly bugger to a young tyer in the Kids' Korner at the Expo as Dad looks on.

Below right: He couldn't be more pleased with himself at Outdoorama. Maybe someday he'll join MFFC.



Camp Grayling

Anglers of the Au Sable: Not One More Acre

Editor's Note: The following is a letter the Anglers of the AuSable sent to the Michigan DNR and other branches of the state government.

Anglers of the Au Sable today urged the Michigan Department of Natural Resources to reject the Michigan's National Guard's proposal to add 250 square miles of public land to Camp Grayling and not engage with the Guard on any compromise regarding the current proposal.

In recent comments to a legislative committee, Acting DNR Director Shannon Lott said the Guard had failed to show it had any need for an expansive long-term property lease, but indicated she was working with Gov. Gretchen Whitmer's office toward a compromise that would be revealed later.

The apparent consideration of the DNR for a much smaller expansion, limited in time, demonstrates that the massive initial proposal was illegitimate. Anglers calls on the DNR to totally reject the current Guard proposal immediately. The Guard has not shown, or even attempted to show, that it cannot use Camp Grayling's existing footprint for electromagnetic warfare training and testing.

Anglers' board of directors considers any DNR-driven compromise or workaround to this proposal to be outside the mission of the DNR, as well as a misuse of state lands and state resources. It would also disregard the enormous outpouring of anti-expansion sentiment from local citizens and communities. We join more than 45 local government units, including Crawford, Roscommon, Otsego, Cheboygan and Kalkaska counties, in opposing the Guard's expansion, along with a long list of conservation groups.

The local communities have noted that the Guard has failed to live up to agreements on how it would use the current Camp Grayling properties. The Gaylord office of the state Department of Environment, Great Lakes and Energy formally opposed the expansion due to Camp Grayling's failure for five years to adequately react to the PFAS pollution it has caused.

Anglers also has serious concerns about suggestions that the DNR would give the Guard a more limited "special use permit" for access to additional land. We question whether use permits are any more valid for military training and research purposes than a lease, which the DNR has now acknowledged it cannot legally use.

The DNR, by its own mission, is meant to be "committed to the conservation, protection, management, use and enjoy-



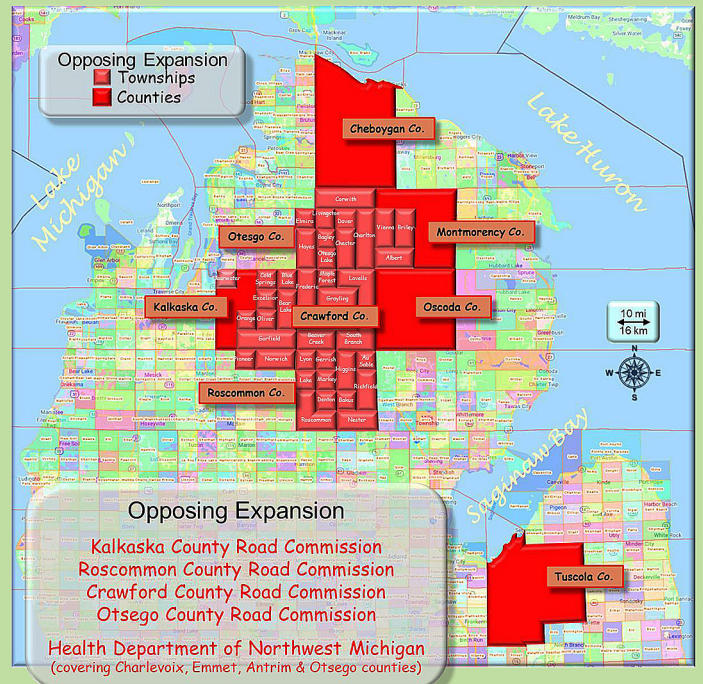
If the Camp Grayling Expansion is approved, 96% of all land in Crawford County will be controlled by the National Guard.

ment of the state's natural and cultural resources for current and future generations." The DNR is not duty-bound to the Michigan National Guard, or Camp Grayling, for the lease or permit to use any state land. There should be no workaround or "olive branch" offered by the DNR toward the Guard.

We call on all branches of state government to reject this proposed expansion, immediately.

Counties, townships, and other agencies that have passed resolutions opposing the expansion of Camp Grayling.

Data as of 17 March 2023



More than 50 local governments and counting.

Map prepared by the Au Sable River Property Owners Association



Angler of the AuSable Release Camp Grayling Video

Scan the adjacent QR code with a smart phone or mobile device to watch the new video by the Anglers of the AuSable about the proposed Camp Grayling Expansion.

Who Is Setting Up the Casting Pond? Who Else but Larry

Continued from page 7

filling them up with a garden hose.

"I make those ponds as shallow as I can, I just want to cover up the wrinkles," said Webb. "If I can get that done with three-quarters of an inch of water, that's all I put in."

The ponds were one of the main reasons MFFC moved the Expo from the Southfield Civic Center to Macomb Community College. At Southfield, there was room for only one small casting pond, five feet wide and 30-feet long.

There was enough room at the MCC Sports & Expo Center to make that seminar pond 100 feet long and add a second one. When they did vendors immediately reported selling a lot more rods that year.

Some of the volunteers will tell you with pride that these are the longest

indoor casting ponds in the country. Headline speaker and author Landon Mayer said he's never seen a longer one at any other show he has worked.

"The seminar casters can easily go the length of the pool, especially in a place like this with no wind," said Webb. "I remember Joe Humphreys casting in them. He the best I ever saw casting in our pond."

The pond volunteers have had fun with the Expo's crown jewels. One year they put some fake fish in them. Another they stuck fish decals on the plastic liners. "We're just lucky we haven't had a water fight in one of them," said Webb.

But there is one thing Webb is serious about, keeping an eye out for a volunteer named Larry.

"I'm always looking for the next Larry," said Webb. "I pity the poor bastard if he ever shows up."



A bare-footed Larry Webb at an earlier Midwest Fly Fishing Expo.



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