



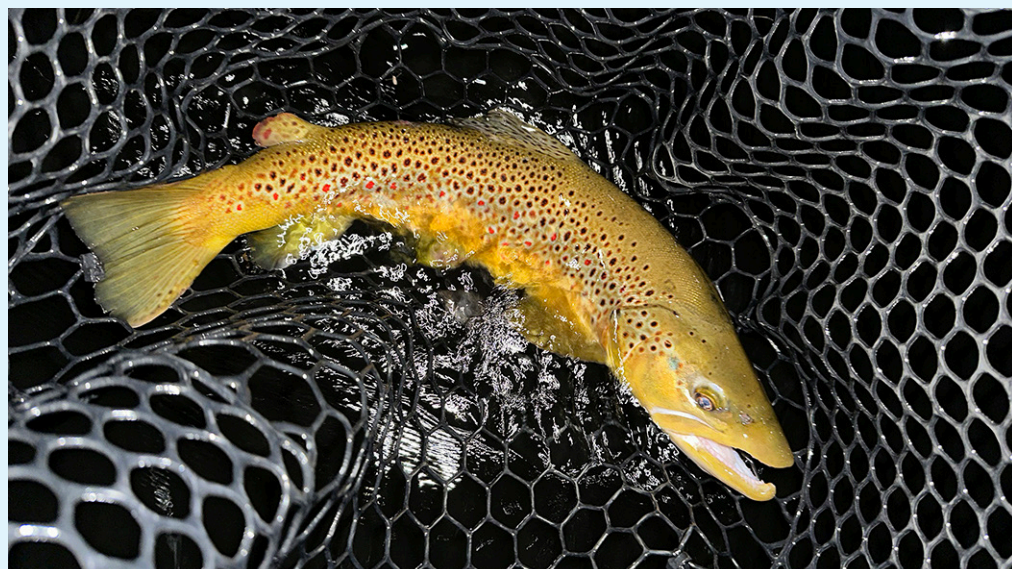
The Evening

Hatch

The Newsletter of the Michigan Fly Fishing Club

September 2023

Big Fish & Endless Summer Days



A 22-inch brown trout from the Manistee River this summer by a MFFC member.

We make no bones about it. Summer is for fishing, and this summer, MFFC members were out in force, casting, catching, and celebrating what they were netting. Along the way, they were teaching and helping others to do the same.

On **page 4** John Aukee holds the Blue Jack he caught with a Dan Walker fly he learned last winter. Of course, he had to go to Bora Bora in the South Pacific to catch it. What dedication!

On **page 7**, read about a pair of Club anglers who were able to battle and land 20-inch trout, the stuff dreams are made of.

Quality trout fishing in Metro Detroit? On **page 10-11** you can read about TU Chapters teaming up to turn

Paint Creek in Oakland County into a blue ribbon trout stream.

The MFFC Youth School, where instructors outnumber the students, was another huge success, and you can learn why on **page 5**. So was the annual Dick Schott New Member Outing at historic Wa Wa Sum Lodge on the Au Sable River, which we covered in a photo essay on **page 8**.

Finally, Hatch editor Jim DuFresne, who last year wrote a piece about taking his granddaughter fishing for the first time, did the same last month with his grandson, Yanni, and couldn't help but stick in a picture of the two-year-old proudly holding his trophy crayfish on **page 6**. Grandpa pride is how we get them started as lifelong fly anglers.

Michigan Fly Fishing Club Calendar

9/13/23 Board Meeting, Virtual
9/20/23 Activity Meeting, Todd Schotts featured tyer
9/27/23 DNR Hunting & Fishing Night at Comerica Park

10/4/23 Speaker Meeting, author Ann Miller, book signing
10/11/23 Board Meeting, Virtual
10/18/23 Activity Meeting

11/1/23 Speaker Meeting, TBA
11/8/23 Board Meeting, Virtual
11/15/23 Activity Meeting

12/6/23 Speaker Meeting, TBA
12/13/23 Board Meeting, Virtual
12/20/23 Club Garage Sale

1/10/24 Speaker Meeting, TBA
1/11-14/24 Ultimate Fishing Show Booth
1/17/24 Board Meeting, Virtual
1/24/24 Activity Meeting

2/7/24 Speaker Meeting, TBA
2/14/24 Board Meeting, Virtual
2/18-23/24 White River Trip, Cotter, AR
2/21/24 Activity Meeting
2/23-25/24 Outdoorama Booth

3/6/24 Activities Meeting, TBA
3/13/24 Board Meeting, Virtual
3/20/24 Speaker Meeting, TBA

4/3/24 Speaker Meeting, TBA
4/10/24 Board Meeting, Virtual
4/17/24 Activity Meeting

5/8-11/24 Dick Schott New Member's Outing, Wawa Sum Lodge, Grayling

Meetings are held at Clarenceville Middle School, 20210 Middlebelt, Livonia.

Camp Grayling: What Others Are Saying . . .

"I believe the DNR, for some reason, felt compelled to make a compromise with the National Guard even though the National Guard has yet to prove a legitimate required, or validated, need for the expansion.

Many that are in opposition seem to feel, based on what is currently happening at Camp Grayling, that this expansion is just for displaced soldiers because much of Camp Grayling is being used by for-profit companies for equipment, weapons testing, research & evaluation - even though the army has many proving grounds and testing centers already being utilize.

It seems they want to do it on the cheap with little to no oversight on our State public lands.

The Guard was granted 52,000 acres with few rules and regulations; the map of the proposed granted area is not legible, nonspecific, and nondefinitive.

Many, many questions have been asked of the DNR and the Michigan Army National Guard with little to no response. No definitions can be provided. No quality map. No explanation."

Mike MacNamara, lifelong Grayling resident, avid fly fisher, snowmobiler, and public land enthusiast.



The South Access Gate for Camp Grayling along South Military Road.

Anglers of the Au Sable

"Anglers of the Au Sable is continuing to closely watch the situation.

We are gathering, or I should say attempting to gather, through the Freedom of Information Act, all relevant information pertaining to the MOU. That information will dictate what next steps we will take in continuing to pro-

tect this special river.

We also will continue to monitor the situation involving the proposed air expansion by the National Guard, yet another threat to the river that is unfolding."

Joe Hemmings, President, Anglers of the Au Sable

"It is not a win for our citizens or our Pure Michigan environment. The press release was very misleading. Michigan is being used as a proving grounds. The environmental consequences of such activities can be catastrophic. None of that is addressed in the MOU.

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU)...has potential to put citizens, wildlife and our environment at risk.

Citizens were told there would be full transparency. Instead, there were closed door meetings. The purpose of these meetings was to try to grant access to State public land to the military for weapons testing, against citizens wishes and statutes that prevent the leasing. The DNR couldn't legally lease the land to the National Guard based on current statutes."

Martha Duby, Lovells activist

Editor's Note: For Martha Duby's entire statement scan the adjacent QR code to download a 17-minute video.

Camp Grayling in the News



Bridge Magazine
Michigan rejects Camp Grayling expansion, offers annual use permits



TV 9 & 10 News
Video (2:55) DNR Rejects Proposed Camp Grayling Expansion



Detroit Free Press
DNR rejects adding 162,000 state acres to Camp Grayling



TV 9 & 10 News
Video (1:16) State Rep. introduces resolution to reject Camp Grayling



WJRT ABC 12
Video (0:25) DNR rejects expansion of Camp Grayling



Martha Duby
Locals produce a video opposing the Memorandum of Understanding

What a Great Summer It Was For MFFC

Looking back at a great summer, the submitted fishing reports were numerous and glorious.

MFFC newbies flourished at Glen Easterbrook's New Member Outing. Now an Old Member Outing is scheduled next year for seasoned members and returnees alike!

After being resoundingly endorsed at our July meeting, Chris and I served as "models" for Northville's promotional video encouraging people to "Explore the charm of Northville Township." Scan the QR code for the minute-long video but watch it carefully or you'll miss our brief on-the-water appearance.

A good portion of our Club went to Montana this summer. New Members attended, the Bourbon Brothers took a few under their wing. Those of us left behind migrated to Grayling.

Project Northern Strike began with a big bang. The proposed Camp Grayling expansion for commercial weapons testing was capped, although the boundaries of that deal are vague:

Under the new agreement, which was signed April 21, the National Guard can apply for state permits for "limited narrowly tailored use" of state land for training exercises. The land must remain open to the public even "during any military training exercises." The guard would have to pay for use of the land under regular general public fees.

No military training can happen within protective or sensitive habitat areas or within 3,000 feet of inland lakes or certain designated trout streams.

There was summer casting practice for a number of us. (I personally caught a leaf, a tree and a dog.) Chris caught



Sybil Hunter

a FFI Bronze certification working with our Certified Instructor Bill Mangan.

For fishing connections, the Club started an encrypted WhatsApp account for members to connect, finding other fishers and other waters. Contact me or Gil to sign up.

Over the summer, the MFFC has increased its

CAN still purchase tickets until a week before. Contact me at president@mffc.org for tickets

Go Tigers! Go MFFC!!
Tight wraps and happy whip finishes,
Sybil Hunter



Sybil at the Plymouth District Library with the largest trout she's ever held.

visibility by participating in various programs. New member Bill Yaw accompanied me to teach fifth graders at the Oakland University Clinton River Water Festival in a gameshow format. Equipment was manhandled, and we were mobbed by children whose favorite question was how far away from the river one should pee.

Then in August MFFC assembled a team for the Plymouth District Library Makers Fair in a joint venture with Huron River Fishing Association. The lead librarian was impressed, commending us for providing such a good time for all attendees. (See me and the giant trout above.) You can read about the event on page 9.

I look forward to seeing you at the Detroit Tiger's DNR Night on Sept. 27 against the Kansas City Royals. You

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Scan the QR Code to watch the Northville Township promotional video featuring Chris and Sybil Hunter (sort of).



MFFC Books Riverview Lodge for Trout Opening Weekend

The January 26, 2024 deadline to register for the Riverview Lodge Trout Opening Weekend 2024 event is a mere five months away. For \$255 per person, you can stay in the Riverview Lodge with other Club members. There are also cabins available.

For more information or to register, contact Bruce Strachan at 248-346-6391 or email brucedso402@gmail.com.



John Aukee caught this Blue Jack, also called a Rainbow Jack, in Bora Bora on a Dan Walker fly (above) they tied at an MFFC meeting this year. He then used it during a trip to French Polynesia and Leeward Islands, west of Tahiti.

"We flew from LA to Papeete, Tahiti, then took a small plane to Raiatea," Aukee said in an email. "We picked up the Catamaran (and) spent 10 days sailing. It was a trip of a lifetime."

MFFC Surpasses 400 Members

By Jerry Deputat
MFFC Membership Chair

Just a friendly reminder to all, membership renewal dues are upon us. Renew on-line or by mail.

If mailing, checks should be made out to MFFC and sent to Jerry Deputat, Membership Chair, at 9250 N. Rushton Rd, South Lyon, MI 48178.

Please participate in the member survey included, so we can better serve you, our membership. Results will be shared at a fall meeting.

We are entering the new fiscal year with 407 members, an increase of 11% from last year! We owe this growth to the exposure at events such as The Ultimate Fishing Show, Outdoorama, and, of course, the EXPO last March, not to mention the many youth events our Club offers and staffs.

Events as these, allow our members to showcase the benefits of club membership.

Its proven again that the best of marketing efforts are made possible by each of YOU, as most new members are recruited from within.

When asked how they heard of MFFC, a current member's name is most times noted!

So continue to spread the word, Clarenceville can add a few more tables, welcome and include new members for there will always be enough coffee and cookies to go around!

Contact information is available on the current membership roster, or from Jerry Deputat at membership@mffc.org.

Updated new members since April edition of *The Evening Hatch*:

Joe Hemming, *Beverly Hills*

Robert Sobie, *Chesterfield*

Go Tigers & Help The DNR Get Outdoors

Come join fellow MFFC members at Comerica Park for this year's DNR Hunting & Fishing Night on Sept. 27 at 6:40 p.m. for game two of a three-game series against the Kansas City Royals. This a game the Tigers should win!

The DNR is proud to partner with the Tigers and two nonprofit organizations that help connect Michiganders with hunting and fishing – Michigan Sportsmen Against Hunger and We Fixin to Fish.

The deadline for tickets was technically Sept. 1 BUT people CAN still purchase tickets until a week before the outing. Seats are along the first baseline.

Tickets are \$54 and include a collectible hunting and fishing-themed Carhart beanie and a donation to one of the DNR Get-Outdoors charities.

For tickets contact Sybil Hunter at president@mffc.org.

**HUNTING
& FISHING
NIGHT**



WEDNESDAY,
SEPTEMBER 27





MFFC Mentors Our Future Fly Anglers

By Mary Dixon

If someone were to ask you if there was something better than a perfect-weather day, wading in clean waters, and catching LOTS of fish with a friend or two, what would you say?

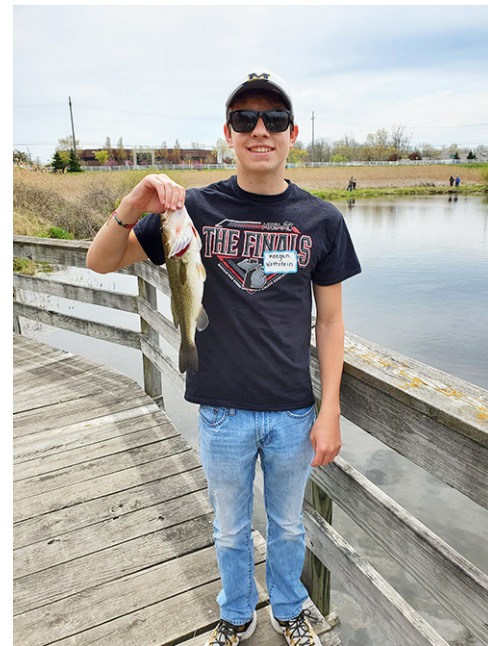
For 13 of your MFFC club members, the answer is, "YES, there is something better." That something is passing along knowledge, skills and the love of fly fishing to the next generation.

Youth School 2023 (the first held since 2019 due to Covid) was held on Saturday, May 6 at the MSU Tollgate Education Conference Center.

There were seven eager and interested youth in attendance, along with 13 MFFC club members who served as instructors and mentors, enthusiastically teaching and guiding these youth through the day.

The day began with an introduction to fly fishing, "what fish eat" (entomology), followed by beginner and experienced fly tying. Lunch, provided by the Club, was shared while telling fishing stories and enjoying good eats together.

After lunch, the group learned about basic fly-fishing equipment, knots (how to tie and how to use), safety on and off the water, rod/reel assembly, and casting. When the teaching, learning, and



Two happy students with their bass on flies they tied at the MFFC Youth School.

sharing of knowledge was done, it was time for the most exciting part of the day – actual fishing with the mentors.

The pond at Tollgate did not disappoint. EVERY youth caught fish, and in some cases, lots of fish. A few of the mentors/instructors may have cast their line and caught a fish or two, as well.

Each youth went home with a fly fishing book and a fly box containing the flies they tied that day, as well as many flies tied and donated by MFFC members.

They also went home with the desire to continue learning and fly fishing. THANK YOU, THANK YOU, THANK

YOU to the Club members who spent their Saturday at the Youth School 2023. This event could not have happened without you.

The weather was perfect, the instructors/mentors ready, willing, and able to pass along their love of fly fishing, and the youth were attentive and eager to learn.

This is a highly successful MFFC event. Does it sound interesting to you? Mark your calendar for next year and consider volunteering as a mentor/instructor/helper for the day. MFFC Youth School 2024 is tentatively planned for Saturday, May 4, 2024.



Above: The graduates - all of them caught fish - at the MFFC Youth School staged at at the MSU Tollgate Education Conference Center last May. Left: Norm Tabaka and a student fishing for bass.

MFFC Youth School: A Dedicated Instructor For Every Student



Above: MFFC instructors begin a casting lesson with their Youth School students at the MSU Tollgate Education Conference Center in May. Below Left: Len Dixon demonstrates the proper fish kissing technique for catching the first fish of the day. Below Right: Terry Herron (left) and Mike Matuszewski (right) work with students in the fly tying segment of the class.



Youth School 2023 Fish Count

Accuracy based on student credibility.

Keegan Wettstein: 2 Bass; 12 Bluegill; 6 Crappie

Sammy Queen: 2 Bass; 4 Bluegill; 1 Crappie

MaKenna Cox: 1 Bluegill; 1 Bass

Carter Cox: 7 Bluegill (the first one kissed in proper ceremony)

Marissa Cox: 3 in a row (mother of MaKenna and Carter, who challenged their mom to step up)

Lilly Isgrigg: 1 Bass; 1 Bluegill; 2 Crappie

Jack Isgrigg: 2 panfish; 2 Crappie; 1 Bass

Josh Socha: 4 Largemouth Bass; 4 Bluegill; 3 Crappie



Summer Fishing

The Young & the Old Catch Big & Small



Left: Participating in the MFFC Scout School, Seth Adams of Troop 765 of



Midland completes fly fishing merit badge after catching a bass on a fly he tied. Center: Last year Jim DuFresne teamed up with his granddaughter to catch a crayfish. This summer it was his two-year-old grandson, Yanni, catching and proudly holding his trophy. Mom: Give that boy a MFFC membership!



Right: Club members Bill Yaw, Dave DuMont, Glen Easterbrook and Glen's neighbor Wally brought back their spoils from a Platte River area fishing trip in mid-August. They caught a king salmon and four lake trout on a Lake Michigan charter.

Twenty-inch Trout *The Stuff That Dreams Are Made Of*

By **Jim DuFresne**

Slurp!

Spence Vanderhoof never saw the trout rising along the bank of the Manistee River. Nobody in the driftboat did.

How could we? It was almost 11 p.m. on a moonless, pitch-black night. But we heard it.

Ed McCoy of Mangled Fly Guide Service heard it first and anchored the boat. Then the three of us sat there and listened



to the trout feed repeatedly, large slurps in a stretch of river beyond our vision.

"Take a shot at it Spence," said McCoy.

Vanderhoof's first cast into the night was fruitless. But the trout kept feeding so Spence kept casting. On his fifth there was an explosion of water, igniting 15 minutes of trout mayhem.

Twice the fish went under the boat and Vanderhoof had to take his rod and



Above: Sanderhoof with his 22-inch brown trout. Left: Ed McCoy of Mangled Fly (mangledfly.com; 231-631-5701) nets a trout earlier in the evening for Vanderhoof on the Manistee River.

line around the bow to the other side. With so much adrenaline and excitement following, I was amazed Spence didn't fall in the Manistee the way he was stumbling into the night.

McCoy calmly guided Vanderhoof through the fight and then picked up the net and scooped up the fish.

A 22-inch brown trout, the stuff that dreams are made of.

You Don't Have to Freeze In February To Catch a 20-inch Rainbow

By **Jim Aitken**

Last year, I fished with three friends on the White River in Arkansas just before Memorial Day. We fished four days, had a lot of fun and caught some nice fish, even a few 20 inchers. We picked late May for the Caddis or Sulfur hatch and the opportunity to dry fly fish. It turns out we were between hatches, but some of our group had success with hoppers.

There were six of us total. We cooked our own meals,



Jim Aitken with his 24-inch rainbow from the White River.

stayed in the same place and had the same guides as the MFFC White River, Arkansas February trip. Our advantage? 80° F, shorts, flip flops and sunscreen.

Most of the fishing was indicator nymphing on 6X tippet with varied flies, mostly 16 and 18 midges...Zebras in black, red and root beer. We frequently fished near the dam. As expected, the flows were fairly high with four to six generators running, so up to 20000 FPS of flow later in the day. Big fish like the dam as the flow through the generators provides the fish below with a nice bit of chum!

That is a 24-inch rainbow in my photo – his belly looked like a bowling ball! I also caught an 18" Cutthroat and had a large Brown that broke off unexpectedly. My total was five Rainbows (20 inches or more), around 15 fish in the 17-inch range, and a few more -- none less than 12 inches. Our overall catch for this trip was about 150 fish, with many big ones.

The fishing is very high quality. We stayed on the White River and did not fish the Norfolk because it had no generators running, so the float was questionable. Maybe next year, as the Norfolk is known for 50-fish days of 12 to 15 inchers.

This is a great fishery which I highly recommend. We had four days of guided fishing, all meals, gas, and lodging for under \$1500. Our guides Jeremy, Lisa and Clint stayed at the White River Trout Lodge with us. Get a couple of friends together and book a trip. It is economical compared to many other locations and the potential for big fish is super!



Learning to Fish On the Banks of the Au Sable

In May, the MFFC stages its annual Dick Schott New Member Outing at historic Wa Wa Sum Lodge on the high banks of the Au Sable River.

What a place to learn to fish!

Built between 1898 and 1933 on 250 logged-over acres for a group of Toledo businessmen, Wa Wa Sum is Michigan's best example of a 19th century summer fishing camp. The camp name means "Plain View" in Chipewewa due to the unobstructed view to the south that existed before reforestation.

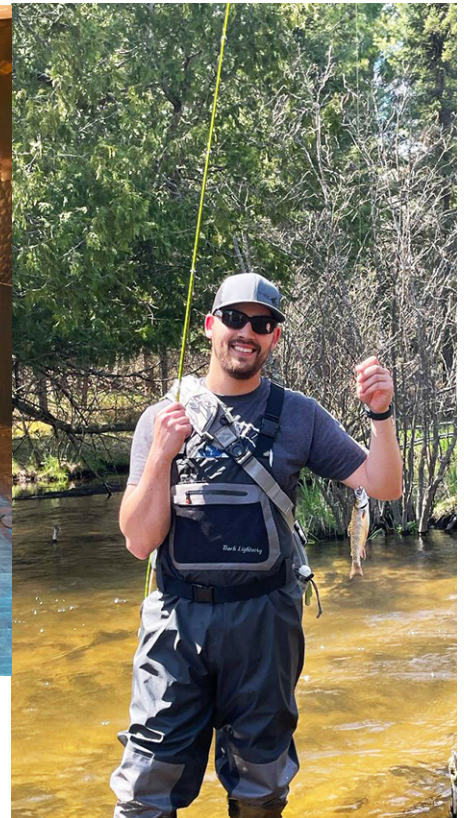
Left: Jerry Deputat, the event cook, scored rave reviews with dishes ranging from chicken piccata, and Normandy blend vegetables to his famous cabbage rolls and cherry and apple pies, topped with ice cream of course. "He never leaves the kitchen. Please marry me!!" new member Bill Yaw wrote when asked about the food.



Above: The New Member Outing crew was Alan Amendt, Jerry Deputat (cook), Dave Dumont, Glen Easterbrook (event chair), Charles Elmer, Charles Gregory, Rick Gosiewski (guide), Jordan Graham, Gilbert Herman, Terry Herron (guide), Mike Hetzler, Dale Manor, Dan McKeon, Art Mikkola (guide) John O'Brien, John Schoch, Eric Schuldt, Steve Sickelsteel and Bill Yaw.



Left: Noted fly tyer Jerry Regan stopped by at Wa Wa Sum for a tying session. Right: The brook trout new member Jordan Graham caught in the Au Sable.



Al Haxton Honored With Geller Award as Volunteer of the Year

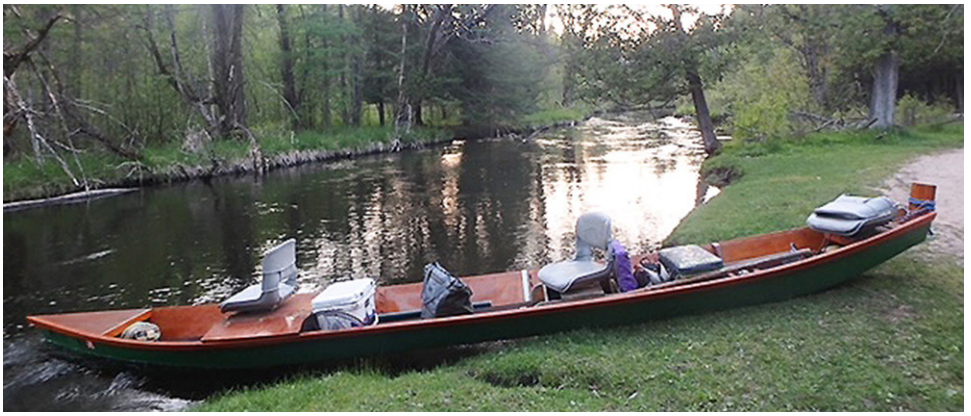
By Mike Matuszewski

Always a highlight of the Michigan Fly Fishing Club's annual banquet, the presentation of the Howard Geller Volunteer of the Year Award did not disappoint.

In announcing the award recipient, Committee Chair Mike Matuszewski said, "This year, we are pleased to present the award to a long-time member who embodies the very spirit of this club. Someone who brings an easy smile; a warm and welcoming demeanor and an unmatched love of our sport to every encounter and endeavor."

Al Haxton has served the MFFC over the years in a wide array of activities:

- As a Board member and officer as well president.
- As an instructor at various schools.
- As one of the individuals who partners with Expo headline speakers, ensuring that they are where they need to be and experience the best that our Club has to offer.
- As the organizer of the Club's annual Opening Day breakfast, helping to welcome a new trout season, recalling the members we've lost and helping us in remembering them with great affection.



Above: Not another fly rod for Al Haxton. As the 2023 Howard Geller Volunteer of the Year Award winner, Haxton received a day of brook trout fishing with Josh Greenberg of Gates Au Sable Lodge. Josh's long boat was originally Cal Gates and then Rusty Gates' boat at the lodge, making the float very special for Al. Below left: Josh Greenberg and Al Haxton pause along the Au Sable River for some lunch and conversation.

- As the long-time organizer of the Club's annual adventure to Yellowstone National Park and Montana.

Upon receiving the award, Haxton said, "This is one really, really great organization and I know all of you know that. But I just want to tell you from my heart what a wonderful group this is."

Recalling the late Howard Geller, whose name the award carries, Haxton said, "I can tell you he really was a very good gentleman and I learned a lot (from him). I still remember Howard and some of our conversations. To be the recipient of an award with his name on it is really very wonderful."

The 2023 Geller Committee was comprised of the surviving prior recipients: Matuszewski, Joe Sprys, Al Bulsiewicz, Terry Herron, Todd Schotts, Bill Shannon, Peter Albertson, Kathy Oehring, Dave Nowicki, Kevin Lipp and 2022 honoree Sybil Hunter. Deceased award honorees are Howard Geller, recipient of the inaugural Volunteer of the Year Award; Mike Doyle, Jim Telinda and Joe Sattler



MFFC Tyers Ask at Maker Fest 'Want to Make Some Wooly Buggers?'

MFFC was a hit at Plymouth District Library's Maker Fest. Especially Dave Oakley's giant rainbow trout.

Staged in mid-August, Maker Fest was a jam-packed day of making things. Parents, teens, and children enjoyed hands-on activities and demonstrations by local makers, including Club members who arrived with vices, hackle, fly-tying tools, and handouts on tying knots needed for fly fishing.



Along with Oakley, Todd Schotts, Gordon Robert, Paul Conklin, Dan Walker, John and Susan Eriksson, and Paul Tockstein of the Huron River Fishing Assoc. participated.

"In a last-minute decision, Norm Tabaka showed up

to teach knots, which went over very well," said Sybil Hunter, who also was on hand helping.

"Thank you to the MFFC for all that you did to make our Maker Fest a rousing success," said Heather Pacheco, Community Relations Specialist for the Plymouth

District Library. "Your big stuffed fish (see photo on page 3) was an ice-breaking wonder, not to mention the welcoming kindness of your members."



Above: Dave Oakley and students at the Maker Fest. Left: Dan Walker, the MFFC pro fly tyer at the Plymouth Library event.

Suburban Trout *TU Chapters Team Up to Save Paint Creek Trout*

By Drew YoungeDyke

"It's hard to believe there's a trout stream 10 feet from this road," remarked Joe Bruce, conservation committee chair for the Vanguard Chapter of Trout Unlimited. "It's pretty unique."

We stood at a crosswalk waiting for heavy traffic crossing a bridge over Paint Creek in the middle of Rochester Hills, Michigan – a northern suburb of Detroit in heavily-populated Oakland County – with Michigan Trout Unlimited aquatic ecologist Kristin Thomas, Clinton River Watershed Council (CRWC) executive director Jennifer Hill, and CRWC watershed ecologist Mikela Dean.

We'd just toured the results of the chapter's Paint Creek restoration project, which the chapter, contractors and volunteers finished early after a little over a week of installing in-stream habitat to transform relatively flat, featureless stream stretches into riffle-pool-cover habitat. This work also helped reduce bank erosion threatening to undercut the Paint Creek Trail, a gravel rail-to-trail that parallels the stream.

"I live five minutes from the creek,



One side of Paint Creek is paralleled by the Paint Creek Trail which provides easy access to most of the trout stream.



A crew prepares to dismantle logjams and anchor the logs into the substrate of Paint Creek with sledgehammers and steel rods to improve trout habitat.

so I can go right after dinner to wet wade and fly fish for trout, and sometimes I'll have as good of luck as when I'm up on the Au Sable," Bruce said. "It's a blast on a three weight. You're not getting those long casts, but in the spring, you fish wooly buggers, then you match the hatch, then it's hopper-dropper time – it has it all."

Paint Creek is not like the iconic trout streams of northern Michigan: places like the Au Sable, Pere Marquette or Pigeon River. However, it is the most accessible trout stream to a majority of Michigan's population and one of the very few in southeast Michigan. The Michigan DNR annually stocks brown trout, but natural reproduction occurs, too. It's a small stream with heavy streamside vegetation that likes to steal flies from errant backcasts, where short, accurate roll-casts rule the day.

"Paint Creek is really a hidden gem," said Hill. "It's a place where people can recreate close to home and not have to drive somewhere else for that experience."

The Vanguard Chapter of Trout

Unlimited considers Paint Creek their home water. In 2016, Michigan Trout Unlimited's executive director Bryan Burroughs and aquatic ecologist Kristin Thomas conducted an evaluation of the 17-mile cold-transitional stream to assess its habitat potential and deficiencies. The Vanguard Chapter took that report and ran with it.

"We call it habitat mapping," Thomas said. "We have reports like that for streams throughout Michigan and what happens is that my team will float the entire section of the stream or river and coarsely map habitat features in it."

Eli Stanesa, then conservation committee chair for Vanguard TU, brought the report to the committee and the chapter used it as a roadmap for improving the habitat in Paint Creek. They did this by focusing on the flat, slow, wide sections lacking many trout habitat features and adding vanes to channel current, divert sediment and create structure and riffle-pool sections, while simultaneously reducing stream-bank erosion creeping toward the rail-

Continued on page 11

Paint Creek highlights chapter partnership potential in metro Detroit

Continued from page 10
trail above.

Working with Thomas and Michigan TU, they hired Aaron Snell, owner of Streamside Ecological Services and a member of the Schrems West Michigan Chapter of Trout Unlimited, to lead the design and installation of log vanes, angled at 20-30 degrees upstream, over two phases completed in 2019 and 2021, as well as this third phase.

"When we did the first project, we weren't sure it was going to have a significant impact," Thomas said. "That wasn't the case at all. It worked really well, both in terms of river health, habitat diversity and for the volunteers empowered and invested in their waters."

The results of the first two phases were apparent; as new streambank built up on the trail side where vanes were anchored, riffles emanated from them, and channels and pools formed in the meandering stream sections. The third phase continued this work on a single stretch of stream longer than the first two combined, about 1,800 linear feet.

The third phase consisted of 61 logs, cut streamside or dismantled from logjams and anchored in place into the substrate with sledgehammers and steel rods. The physical installation took place over two weeks, but significant planning and fundraising across multiple project partners occurred over the months beforehand, building upon the success of the first two phases of the restoration initiative.

While one side of Paint Creek is paralleled by the public Paint Creek Trail and most falls within the former railroad easement, the other side is occupied primarily by single family homes.



Aaron Snell, owner of Streamside Ecological Services and a member of the Schrems West Michigan Chapter of Trout Unlimited, lead the design and installation of log vanes, that were angled at 20-30 degrees upstream.

Joe Bruce worked with the landowners to secure permission to access their side of the creek and, critically, local support for the project.

"I saw some of the work they were doing downstream, and part of what I like is that it benefits me because they're reducing some of the erosion problems and making the stream contain better habitat for trout," said Jeff VanHoorne, one of the riparian landowners. "That's all good."

Multiple TU chapters chipped in to help with the cost of the approximately \$20,000 project, including the Clinton Valley Chapter of TU and the Challenge Chapter of TU. Michigan TU and the CRWC, headquartered locally in Rochester, supplied staff members to help with the labor.

Finally, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service provided funding through its Partners for Fish and Wildlife program, which leverages Farm Bill programs to provide funding and technical assistance to landowners and NGOs for fish and wildlife habitat improvements.

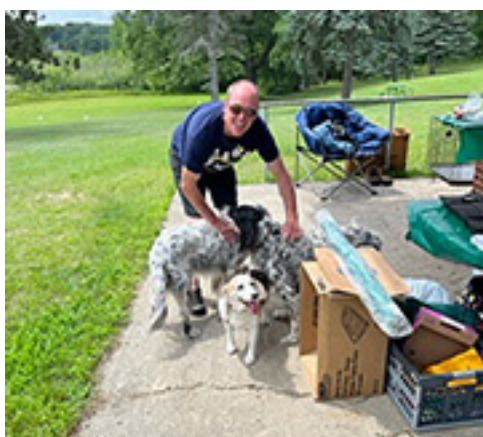
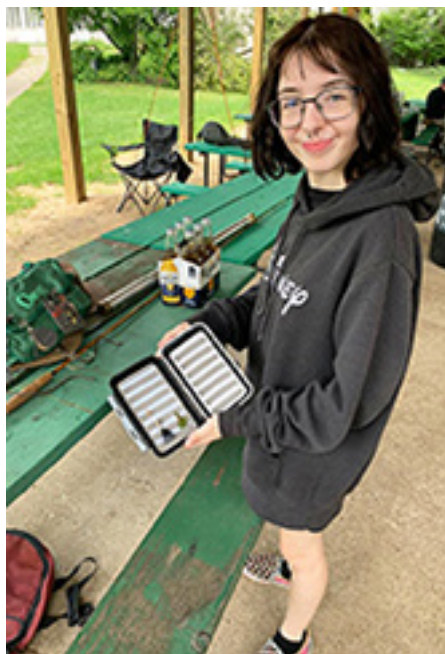
"The impact is pretty significant on a stream of this size," Bruce said. "There's an opportunity in projects like this for chapters to work together using simple techniques with manageable budgets and make a big difference for local habitat."

Drew YoungeDyke is the national communications director for Trout Unlimited, a fly angler and an outdoor writer. A graduate from Michigan State University, he lives in Michigan. His article appeared in the August newsletter of Trout Unlimited.

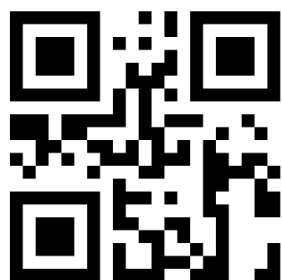


Vanes channelling current on Paint Creek, a trout stream in Oakland County.

A MFFC Potluck *A Lot of Fun, Lot of Eating & Little Snoozzzzzing*



Below left: It was a dog's life at the annual MFFC Picnic at Multi Lakes Conservation Association. Above left: Barry Green supervises the bean bag bucket toss at the Club picnic while above Sammy Queen admires the fly box she received for winning. Carolyn Bennet and Cindy Center socialize while Don Oehring snoozes after the grand potluck.



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