

From Randy's Desk

January brings a new year. It also brings many varied moods. The dead of winter often numbs the mind as well as the body. A blanket of snow covers the ground. Icy trees glisten in the rare peaks of sun. Gusting winds cause whiteouts and sting the skin. Short, gray days are followed by dark, gloomy nights. Sometimes January teases us with a glimpse of spring. Warm winds journey northward, precipitating the January thaw. The snow begins to melt, and we feel more alive for a day or two. Winter, however soon returns to dampen our mood. In January nature rests, and we must bide our time waiting for the more active times of year. So what should we do?

Take advantage of the time to do many of the things that you put off during other times of the year. Read some good books. Do inside projects around the house. Tie Flies. Do some winter grouse hunting. Fish when the weather permits. Teach or attend a fly tying class. Cheer your favorite team on to the Super Bowl. Enjoy your family and friends.

I hope you and your loved ones have a happy and healthy new year. Come out and help MLTU at our winter activities. Make your plans now to attend our march 14, 2009 Fund-Raising Banquet at the Holiday Inn in downtown Johnstown. I know that the economy has been very bad and that prices are high. MLTU still needs to raise the funds to operate. Our prices have remained the same, so save some money, and come out to support our conservation efforts. I hope to see you there.

Catch One,

Randy

Natural Thoughts

Have you ever noticed how nature copies itself again and again. The hackle you take from a rooster to float your dry flies has a match in the slender fronds of a tiny fern. The gauzy wings of a mayfly glisten like the shimmering strands of a spider web. A clump of buck tail from the deer you shot this fall when applied to a hook mimics the slender body of a baitfish. Just as the wildflowers appear magically overnight, the mayflies pop through the surface of the water magically to fly away. Their colors mimic the beauty of the flowers. Look for beauty in everything you see, and look for counter points in nature.

We use many furs and feathers in fly tying. Take the time to look at them. Look at the way they are. Look at the slant of the feathers and their textures. Check out the varieties of furs. Notice how some are fine and soft, while others are spiky and rough. You can learn a lot about materials and how to use them by examining them. Gary Borger's book, *Designing Trout Flies* contains an excellent section on selecting feathers based on the many subtle colors available in nature. Work and study, and you will improve as a tier in so many ways. Take advantage of the wonders of nature.

State News and Notes

Pa. Council is selling “Back the Brookie” license plates to support brook trout projects around the state. Our chapter will order twenty plates. We will have them available for our Fund-Raising Banquet.

Dave Rothrock has taken over as president of PA TROUT. We, at MLTU, wish Dave nothing but success in his new office. A big thanks to Ken Undercoffer for his service as president.

PA TROUT has concerns over siltation and the disruption of springs and wetlands in many areas from the development of windmill complexes in many areas. It has adopted a wind generation policy to clarify our position on this matter.

PA TROUT also has concerns about the development of roads associated with oil and gas drilling leases. There are other environmental concerns associated with these leases. PA TROUT will continue to make it’s feelings known to the appropriate agencies and legislative bodies about this issue.

PA TROUT continues to move ahead in helping chapters with the issue of stream access.

Fly tying Classes

This year the chapter will offer two beginner’s fly tying courses. The first class will be held beginning on Monday, January 26th . It will run for five weeks. The dates for the other four sessions are February 2nd , February 16th , February 23rd , and March 2nd . The classes will be held at Gander Mountain Lodge from 6 to 8:30 p.m. The course will cost \$20.00 per student, payable at the first session. The second class will be held beginning on Saturday, February 14th , February 21st , February 28th , March 7th , and March 21st . Classes will be held at Gander Mountain Lodge from 9-12:00 a.m. The course will cost \$20.00 per student, payable at the first session. Interested persons should sign up at the front desk at Gander Mountain prior to the beginning of each course. The reason that dates are not consecutive is because of availability of the lodge or the date of our banquet.

Students who are forced to miss a session, may make up that session on a Saturday or a Monday, opposite of the normal night. Check with the instructor to see when that week’s lesson will be taught. Materials and tools will be provided, although if students have their own tools, they are encouraged to bring them.

Trout in the Classroom Takes Off

A few years ago MLTU sponsored a Trout in the Classroom project at North Star East Elementary School. Since then interest in our area has grown greatly. The next year we added a class at Berlin Brothers Valley. This year we are adding projects at Shade-Central City and Forest Hills. Melissa Reckner serves as coordinator of these programs. Chapter members help out by providing fly tying lessons to the students. The students raise trout fry from eggs and then release the fry into area streams in the spring. The program teaches students about the life cycle of trout, aquatic insects, water quality, and other things. MLTU has also constructed an access area on the Stonycreek River for students at North Star East to stock trout safely. Trout in the Classroom is a worthwhile program that teaches young people about trout, water, and trout fishing. MLTU is happy to help educate our youngsters.

Upcoming Chapter Events

Monthly Chapter Meetings

Tuesday, January 13, 2009
Tuesday, February 10, 2009
Tuesday, March 10, 2009

Meetings are held at the Gander Mountain lodge at 7:00 p.m. Board Meetings are at 6:30 p.m.

Banquet Committee Meetings

Wednesday, January 21, 2009
Wednesday, February 18, 2009
Wednesday, March 11, 2009

Meetings are held at the home of Randy and Pat Buchanan at 7:00 p.m.

Chapter Fund-Raising Banquet

Saturday, March 14, 2009

Holiday Inn - Downtown Johnstown. Doors open at 5:00 p.m. Tickets - \$30.00 - Call 266-4763 to reserve tickets.