

# The Flyline

Mountain Laurel Chapter  
*Trout Unlimited*

Attn: Gary Cooper, *Editor*  
Rear 704 Scalp Avenue  
Johnstown, PA 15904

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# The Flyline

VOLUME 18 ISSUE 32

WINTER 2014



# TROUT UNLIMITED

OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF  
MOUNTAIN LAUREL CHAPTER  
TROUT UNLIMITED

# *From Randy's Desk . . .*

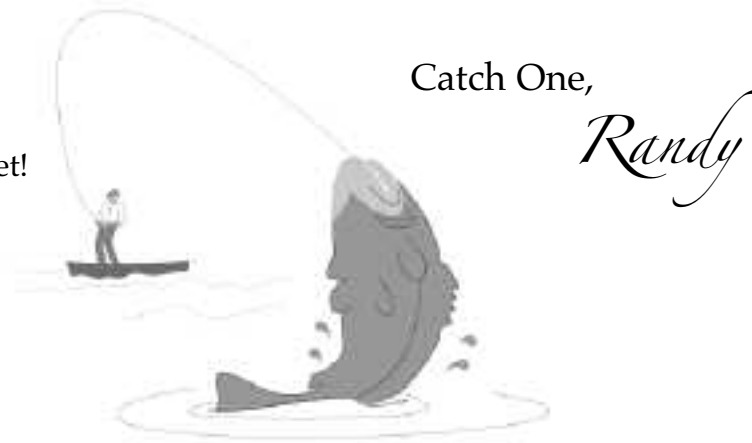
I hope everyone had a happy holiday season and are now looking forward to an exciting new year. In the past years that I have been president, I've been fortunate to have a great group of officers and board members to guide me.

We as a chapter have been confronted by new challenges and always someone has come up with a good idea. Chapter members have always stepped up to the occasion for our stream improvement projects, cold water monitoring program, trout in the classroom, as well as for local sportsmen programs and shows.

The above mentioned programs will continue as long as we are successful in raising funds. Our spring banquet is our largest fund raiser for the year. The challenges that the banquet committee has had to overcome, specifically the small games of chance, is no small matter.

Raising the funds for the chapter is no small job nor is it just the responsibility of the banquet committee. From where I sit at the meetings, I see it as the responsibility of each and every member of the chapter in order to move the chapter forward. When I talk with other chapter presidents I know that we have a good chapter, but, I am still left wondering what if? With a membership of over 300 what if more members came to our meetings? What if more than half of the membership would come to the banquet?

P.S. See you at the banquet!



## **Final Cast**

On June 27, 2013, Jerry Stercho passed away. Jerry was a native Johnstownner who moved on to bigger and better things. During his lifetime he was a fisheries biologist,

And then he was the co-founder and co publisher / editor of *Mid Atlantic Fly Fishing Guide* magazine. He retired to New York state where he lived with his wife Mary Ann.

I've known Jerry since I was four or five years old. His grandmother lived next door to me, and Jerry would come to visit in the summer. I graduated from high school with Jerry's wife, Mary Ann. We remained friends though we didn't get to see each other much. Jerry guided me through some of the growing pains of my early fly fishing experiences. I haven't seen him much in recent years, but I will miss him. Tight Lines, Jerry.

Gary Cooper

## **Mountain Laurel Chapter Trout Unlimited 2014 OFFICERS**

<i>President</i> <b>Randy Buchanan</b> 1745 Regal Drive Johnstown, PA 15904	<i>Vice-President</i> <b>Gary Cooper</b> Rear 704 Scalp Avenue Johnstown, PA 15904
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<i>Secretary</i> <b>Dave Maher</b> 417 Old Farm Lane Johnstown, PA 15904	<i>Treasurer</i> <b>Pat Buchanan</b> 1745 Regal Drive Johnstown, PA 15904
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## **DIRECTORS**

Mark Lee David Wright Butch Kerchenske	Jassim Hassan Len Lichvar Andy Fresch
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Mountain Laurel Chapter, Trout Unlimited meetings are held on the second Tuesday of each month at the Gander Mountain Store in the old Wal-Mart store building beside the Galleria Mall at 7:00 PM unless otherwise noted in this newsletter. Board of Directors meetings are held at 6:30 PM on the same day as the regular meeting at the Gander Mountain Store.

## **The Flyline**

Official Publication of  
Mountain Laurel Chapter, Trout Unlimited

This newsletter is published quarterly; winter, spring, summer and fall by MLTU. All articles are due on the 20th day of the first month of each quarter.

## **The Flyline**

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## **Membership Application and Renewals**

If you are already a member of the chapter, you will receive a renewal notice in the mail. You may renew by check, credit card, or online at [www.tu.org](http://www.tu.org). If you are not a member, Go to [www.tu.org](http://www.tu.org) to apply. We will not have application forms any more. New memberships will be handled at the national website.

**Regular Membership .....\$35**

**Family Membership .....\$50**

All other types of memberships will be listed on the TU website.



## Natural Thoughts . . .



With the Holiday season just having passed, our thoughts now turn to the coming year.

We hope you had a very merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. What will the new year bring? Who knows? Will we have heavy snows and cold, limiting the time to spend outdoors? Or will we have a warm winter like a couple of years ago? Will you get "Cabin Fever?" I don't know the answer.

I do have a couple of wishes for you though. I wish you good fishing. May the flies hatch, and the fish rise. May you catch a big one. May you discover more of the intricacies of nature as you fish. Enjoy the birds, the wildflowers, and the animals that you encounter. Watch the herons, if you want to learn more about how to fish. Study the stream insects more closely if you want to tie better imitations. Notice what hatches you see when certain flowers are blooming. Let the trout tell you what they are eating. Be observant. As a famous writer once said, "There's more to fishing than the fish."

Look around. Pick up trash when you see it. Don't make any trash yourself. Help out with stockings and projects. Be kind to others who are learning. Stop and talk to them, and share your knowledge. Don't think you know everything. Learn from others.

Be respectful of landowners. Ask permission to fish. Leave their land better than you found it. Be respectful of the trout. Handle them gently if at all. Release them quickly.

If you do these things, you will get more out of fishing than just fishing. Have a great year.

## Plan Now for MLTU's Spring Banquet

**Attention!** This is the only newsletter notification you will receive. Mountain Laurel Chapter's annual, spring, fund-raising banquet will take place on March 22, 2014 at the Holiday Inn in downtown Johnstown.

If you have attended our banquet before, Then you know what to expect. For those of you who have not attended a banquet, the doors open at 5:00 p.m. You will have about an hour to view raffle prizes, silent auction prizes, women's prizes and special items. You may also purchase tickets at that time or sign up for a silent auction item. A few special prizes will be chanced off during this time. Dinner is at about 6:30 followed by a brief chapter awards ceremony. After that, we will commence with the raffles, etc.

We will have a nice selection of fishing gear, silent auction prizes, and ladies items.

We take cash and VISA or Mastercard. Checks are also acceptable. The food is generally very good. This year's selections are hanger steak or baked cod.

This is the primary fund-raiser for our chapter. We depend upon the monies raised to continue our primary mission to conserve, protect, and enhance the coldwater resources in our area. That is where you come in. If you have attended in the past, please join us again. **If you have not attended before, please come and support our chapter. Give us a try. You will not regret your choice. You will also learn more about our chapter.**

Tickets for the banquet cost \$30.00 per ticket. Many of you will have received tickets in the mail. If you need extra tickets, simply call me at 814-266-4763 and I will send the tickets right out. When you get your tickets, fill out the address stubs and return them to me by March 12, 2014. Please check your meal choice on each stub. Make your check out to MLTU, not to Gary Cooper. Please bring a friend or friends, a spouse, or a significant other. We need your support.

I'm looking forward to seeing many old and new faces at this year's event. See you there!

Gary L. Cooper  
Banquet Chairman

## Beaverdam Run Study Complete

In early 2012, the Kiski-Conemaugh Stream Team, a program of the Conemaugh Valley Conservancy, received a grant from the Coldwater Heritage Partnership to create a conservation plan for the Beaverdam Run Watershed near Central City, PA. The purposes of this project were to document the value of and threats to this high-quality stream and to jump-start projects to maintain or enhance this waterway.

The Kiski-Conemaugh Stream Team worked with the California University of PA, PA Fish and Boat Commission, PA Department of Environmental Protection, Shade Creek Watershed Association, and others to study the current state of Beaverdam Run and its tributaries and compare results to historical data.

The Stream Team found that over the years, the water quality of Beaverdam Run has fluctuated ever so slightly, but enough to change the dynamics of the fishery. In the 1990s, the upper reach of Beaverdam Run was classified as a Class A Wild Trout Water by the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC). Wild brook and brown trout were found in abundance; however, a drop in trout biomass in the late 1990s and early 2000s, prompted the PFBC to lower this section of Beaverdam Run to a Class B stream in July 2006. It seems a drop in alkalinity – the ability of water to neutralize or buffer an acid – impeded the natural cycle of trout. While a healthy fish population exists in the upper portion of Beaverdam Run and the PFBC and local trout cooperative stock the lower portion, the Stream Team feels the fishery could be enhanced by careful additions of an alkaline material, like limestone, which would counteract the effects of acidic precipitation and naturally acidic geology. In cooperation with state agencies, the Shade Creek Watershed Association has been adding crushed limestone to select stream segments throughout the Shade Creek Watershed. The Stream Team will work with them to expand this work.

Partners were excited to find two wild tiger trout fingerlings in Beaverdam Run. Tiger trout are a cross between brook and brown trout, which typically do not crossbreed in the wild. Additionally, they were surprised to find a blue crayfish – (*Cambarus monongalensis*) – a rare find as it is a burrower, most active at night, and at the very edge of its range in the Beaverdam Run Watershed.

The Beaverdam Run Coldwater Conservation Plan may be downloaded on the Conemaugh Valley Conservancy's website, under the Conservation, then Projects  
<http://www.conemaughvalleyconservancy.org/conservation/projects.html>

## Trout in the Classroom Update

MLTU and the Kiski-Conemaugh Stream Team continue to provide support for ten Trout in the Classroom (TIC) projects at the following schools in Cambria and Somerset Counties: Berlin-Brothersvalley High, Bishop McCort, Cambria Heights Middle, Conemaugh Township Middle, Forest Hills Middle, North Star East Elementary, Penn Cambria Middle, Saint Benedict (Johnstown), and Shade-Central City High.

On Election Day, schools received a shipment of 200-300 fertilized brook trout eggs from the PA Fish and Boat Commission and PA Council of Trout Unlimited, and they've already begun to hatch! During the course of the school year, students will care for the trout, maintain the aquarium system, study the life cycle of trout, learn the importance of coldwater ecosystems, and be encouraged to become good stewards of our resources. At the end of the school year, schools will release their trout into state approved bodies of water. Most will then participate in a day of Outdoor Discovery Workshops coordinated by the Stream Team. TIC is not meant to be a stocking program, but rather one that makes students aware of the threats to our trout streams and educates them on ways they can help reduce these threats.

There are costs involved with the maintenance and management of this program. If you would like to support TIC in our schools, please consider making a donation to MLTU or the Stream Team. Additionally, you can help MLTU and the Stream Team earn "points" for our participating schools that will apply to PATU for a mini-grant to help offset field trip and materials costs. PATU will give us credit for participation in their fundraiser, which includes the sale of TIC t-shirts and raffle tickets. Contact Melissa Reckner at [mreckner@kcstreamteam.org](mailto:mreckner@kcstreamteam.org) for details or complete the form below. Thank you.

## Trout in the Classroom T-shirt Order Form

The PA TIC t-shirt is on sale for \$15 per shirt (\$2 extra for 2XL and 3XL). All shirts are green with the PATIC logo (pictured) in white ink on the front and back. The next t-shirt order submission deadline is Nov. 22nd. Shirts will be ordered in December and should be shipped at the start of the New Year. After this order round, t-shirts will cost \$20 each (\$2 extra for 2XL and 3XL).

If interested in ordering a shirt, please make check payable to "PA Trout", complete this order form, and send

*Continued on Page 4*

both to PA Council of Trout Unlimited, PO Box 5148, Bellefonte, PA 16823

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City/State/Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_

Shirt size and quantity (\$15 per shirt, \*additional \$2 charge for 2XL and 3XL).

Adult sizes: Youth sizes:

\_\_\_\_ Small \_\_\_\_ Medium \_\_\_\_ Large \_\_\_\_ Medium \_\_\_\_ X-Large \_\_\_\_ 2XL\* \_\_\_\_ 3XL\* \_\_\_\_ Large

Total Amount Enclosed: \_\_\_\_\_

TIC organization you represent or support: MLTU and K-C Stream Team

All proceeds from the fundraiser go directly to supporting the TIC program.

To put it simply – Pennsylvania House of Representatives Bill (HB) 1576 is the worst single piece of legislation I have ever seen proposed. HB 1576 recently passed the House Game and Fisheries Committee by a 16 to 8 vote and may reach the House floor for a vote soon.

HB 1576 will severely limit the ability of the Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission (PFBC) and the Pennsylvania Game Commission (PGC) to list threatened and endangered species as well as designate wild trout streams in order to protect the species and their habitats. If passed the bill would require the Independent Regulatory Review Commission (IRRC) and a legislative committee to make a final determination as to listings and to decide if scientific methods were employed to determine if a species should be listed or a wild trout stream is protected.

Supporters of the bill have questioned many times as to what is wrong with more transparency and oversight? Well, here is the answer they do not want you to hear. The IRRC has no scientific advisors or scientifically trained members or any expertise in the field and neither do the individual legislators. Both the PFBC and the PGC do have the scientific expertise and conduct rigorous and extremely transparent processes for designating the species or in designating wild trout water. The process includes peer reviews and lengthy public input opportunities with agency review and response. The current process keeps the science in and the politics out. The supporters of the bill want the reverse.

The PFBC and the PGC have not abused their discretion. In reality in the last five years the PFBC has added 13 species and de-listed 11, so the scientific driven pendulum swings both ways. The PGC has added three in the last ten years.

The current framework has not cost jobs or deprived any business or industry from pursuing their objectives. The few examples touted by the bill's supporters, that the current process has stymied economic progress, in reality had no connection to this current listing process and nothing in this proposed legislation would address or have changed those issues they continue to expound upon.

On the contrary both the PFBC and the PGC consistently cooperatively work with business and industry to find ways to protect our species and in the case of wild trout streams, actually protect our best water quality, while at the same time allowing development to proceed within agreed upon frameworks.

It is always better to be for something than against something and those who believe this is a very bad bill are the ones who are in favor of striking the correct balance with the historical documentation to back it up. Those in support of the bill actually are the extremists who oppose a middle ground common sense approach that has and is already in place and works to the benefit of all the citizens of the Commonwealth.

Currently agency staff is working with legislators to mediate the differences of approach and potentially eliminate the need for further consideration of this bill.

However, if this legislation passes in its current form, our precious supply of clean water will dwindle, recreational activities and sportsmen opportunities will be reduced and the strong economic engines they support will be compromised.

Len Lichvar

Len Lichvar, of Boswell, is the Stream Improvement Chairman and a Board member of MLTU and the District 4 Commissioner for the PA Fish and Boat Commission. Commissioners, just like MLTU members, are unpaid volunteers.

## Upcoming Chapter Events

### Regular Monthly Meetings

Tuesday, January 14, 2014

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Monthly Chapter Meetings are held in the Gander Mountain Lodge inside the Gander Mountain Store at 7:00 p.m.

### Board of Director's Meetings

Tuesday, January 14, 2014

Tuesday, February 11, 2014

Tuesday, March 11, 2014

Board of Directors Meetings are held in the Gander Lodge inside the Gander Mountain Store at 6:30 p.m. on the same day as the regular meeting.

### Chapter Fundraising Banquet

Saturday, March 22, 2014

Holiday Inn - Downtown Johnstown. Doors open at 5:00 p.m. Tickets cost \$30.00 per ticket. For extra tickets call 266-4763.

### Banquet Committee Meetings

Wednesday, January 15, 2014

Wednesday, February 19, 2014

Wednesday, March 19, 2014

Other meetings as necessary

Meetings are held at the Buchanan Residence at 7:00 p.m. Any member is welcome.

### Winter Fly Tying Courses

Monday, January 6, 2014

Monday, January 13, 2014

Monday, January 20, 2014

Monday, January 27, 2014

Monday, February 3, 2014

Monday, February 10, 2014

Monday classes will be held from 6:00 to 8:30 at the Gander Mountain Lodge. Interested persons should sign up at the front desk at the Gander Mountain Store by January 2, 2014. The cost is \$25.00 payable on the first night of the course.

Saturday, January 11, 2014

Saturday, January 18, 2014

Saturday, January 25, 2014

Saturday, February 1, 2014

Saturday, February 8, 2014

Saturday classes will be held from 9:00 to 12:00 at the Gander Mountain Lodge. Interested persons should sign up at the front desk at the Gander Mountain Store by January 2, 2014. The cost is \$25.00 payable on the first day of the course.