

# The Flyline



*A publication of Mountain Laurel Trout Unlimited*

July 2023

Volume 61, Issue 66

## President's Message

*by Dave Maher*

Greetings. I hope everyone has been out fishing. The chapter has been busy with the TIC program, stocking streams, and road and stream cleanups. Thank you to everyone that participated in those events. Our spring banquet was the most successful ever. Thank you to everyone that attended and for your financial support.

Now, it's summer, and we have much to do. Please consider getting involved. We have a work project on Stewart's Run planned for August 19, 2023, and we can use your help! Come to a meeting at the Richland Municipal Building on the first Thursday of each month at 7:00 p.m. and find out what you can do.

Tight lines,

*Dave*



Pat Buchanan, center, accepts the Joseph Arcuri Jr. Award on behalf of her late husband, Randy Buchanan, from MLTU Vice President Shane Rudnik, left, and MLTU President Dave Maher, right. The award is presented by MLTU for life-time contributions to the enhancement and protection of the coldwater resource.

Photo by Len Lichvar.

# Stewart Run Grant Award

*by Butch Kerchenske*

In the last newsletter, it was reported that the Chapter was the recipient of a \$3,500 mini grant administered through the Western Pennsylvania Conservancy and funded by Berkshire Hathaway Energy Gas Transmission and Storage (BHE-GT&E). This money will be used to help fund phase two of the Stewart Run project.



*Butch Kerchenske accepts the grant award from Jennifer Hazen McCloskey, a BHE-GT&E representative. Submitted photo.*

The awards ceremony and presentation was held on Wednesday, April 19 at Chestnut Ridge Conference Center in Blairsville. I accepted the award on behalf of the Chapter, and Phil Thomas gave a brief PowerPoint presentation outlining phase one and two of the project. Fifteen grants were awarded to various groups throughout western Pennsylvania.

Working with the contractor, Saturday, August 19 has been set for the workday and August 26 as an alternate. Please plan to attend if possible. Most of the work will be done by machinery, but we always welcome participation. The work site is located on State Game Lands #79. The parking lot where we will meet can be accessed off Route 22, 2.1 miles west of the 219 interchange. We will have the grill on site for a cookout lunch.



Conemaugh Township Somerset County Supervisor, Steve Buncich, center, accepts the MLTU President's Award from MLTU Vice President Shane Rudnik, left, and MLTU President Dave Maher, right.

The award was presented to the Conemaugh Township Supervisors for their cooperation, assistance, and involvement in coldwater and natural resource conservation initiatives and projects. Photo by Len Lichvar.

## MLTU Board Members

**President:** Dave Maher

**Vice President:** Shane Rudnik

**Treasurer:** Pat Buchanan

**Secretary:** Eric Fabrizio

Jeff Baird

Gary Cooper

Adam Cotchen

Butch Kerchenske

Melissa Reckner

Dave Wright

A stream habitat improvement field tour was held on June 1 at Prince Gallitzen State Park. This event was presented by Scott Koser, Phil Thomas, and J.J. Zielinski - all full-time T.U. staff working with Pennsylvania's coldwater habitat program. They assist with design work and finding and securing funding sources for similar projects.

There was a PowerPoint presentation followed by a walking tour of the completed work on nearby Killbuck Run, which drains into the lake. Phil and J.J. are both stream restoration specialists. The work had begun in 2017 and had just recently been completed. County conservation districts from Indiana, Cambria, Blair, and Bedford counties attended with 23 people present. Three M.L.T.U. representatives were the only non-professionals in attendance.

The walking tour was very informative; use of root wads, traditional deflectors, mudsills, diverters, and cross vanes were examined. Also, the importance of adding large wood to the streambed, floodplain, and side channels was examined and explained in detail.

The term "chop and drop" and how it works to hold back sediment and to trap leafy debris, as well as the benefits of this method, were explained. It was evident that the entire system was working as intended.

Additionally, Tim Yeager, Assistant Park Manager, gave a tour of the lake bank where sawtooth deflectors and stone has been positioned to illustrate efforts being made to eliminate erosion from wave effects on the lake itself.



*Sue Konvolinka took this photo of the MLTU spring banquet hall.*

*A report of the banquet, as well as next year's date, will be included in the next newsletter.*

Chapter members have had an active spring. Litter pick-ups occurred along:

- ◆ Bens Creek / Route 985
- ◆ Yellow Creek Gap / Route 36
- ◆ Higgins Run / Slagle Hill Road
- ◆ Little Paint Creek / Berwick Road & SR160, and
- ◆ Clear Shade Creek / Crumb Road.

All of the pick-ups were well attended with many new participants, so each of the sites were completed in just a few hours.

Under the radar, M.L.T.U. assisted with fish stockings on area streams and float-stocked the remote sections of Clear Shade and Little Mahoning Creeks.

Chapter members assisted with Trout in the Classroom Release Days with Blacklick Valley, Shanksville-Stonycreek, Shade-Central City, and Divine Mercy schools. Fly tying, fly rod casting, and macroinvertebrate sampling, along with many other activities and conservation groups were exposed to the students. A new generation introduced to the message of cold-water conservation!

We once again participated at the Windber Sportsman's Kids fishing rodeo where 199 kids registered. We demonstrated fly tying and had a sampling of macroinvertebrates and explained to the kids that you start with clean, cold water to support a food base of "bugs" that the fish then eat and then, as fly fishers, we tie flies that imitate the natural insects to fool and catch the fish.

For the Rodeo, we had collected a large crayfish which was very popular with the kids as they challenged each other to pick it up. Another boy "borrowed" our sculpin but, predictively, never returned it. Many parents and grandparents thanked us for being there. The Chapter has committed to participate in a similar event in the Turkeyfoot Valley area in mid-June.

Work days are being planned on Bens Creek, Stewart Run, Potter Creek, and Clear Shade Creek. We started staging the onsite materials for the projects.

Thank you to all that participated in each of these important activities.



*At left, Mark and Sue Lee smile at Dave Maher's antics during a recent litter cleanup. Photo by Dave Wright.*

This was the first spring since the pandemic that MLTU and Penguin Court could host Trout in the Classroom (TIC) Release Day field trips for schools participating in this program. It was great to be back, engaging students in outdoor learning through a number of hands-on activities that could spark the next conservation professional!

As Dave mentioned in “Busy Spring” on the previous page, this year, MLTU worked with Blacklick Valley High School, Divine Mercy Catholic Academy East and West campuses, Shade-Central City High School, and Shanksville-Stonycreek Elementary School. The teachers at Conemaugh Township and Forest Hills Middle Schools took the year off and decided not to continue the program in the 2023-2024 school year, so we have added Richland Elementary School to our TIC roster, and I thank Adam Cotchen and Rick Buchanan for stepping up as additional TIC Coordinators for the chapter.

I want to also thank those who helped with this year’s Release Days. The field trips wouldn’t be the memorable and fun days they are without you! Representatives of Blue Knob State Park, Gallitzin State Forest, MLTU, Penguin Court, Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission, Pennsylvania Master Naturalist, Prince Gallitzin State Park, Stonycreek-Conemaugh River Improvement Project, Shade Creek Watershed Association, Somerset Conservation District, and Western Pennsylvania Conservancy all made these days possible, as did the Greater Ferndale and Shade Sportsmen’s Clubs, which let us use their grounds at no cost.

I have no doubts that students will remember “that time” they raised fish in a classroom!



*Above, Dave Wright shows a Blacklick Valley student how to fly cast in the rain.  
Photo by Melissa Reckner.*



*Below, Adam Cotchen leads the macroinvertebrate session for Shade-Central City students.  
Photo by Melissa Reckner.*

## Mountain Laurel Trout Unlimited

1745 Regal Drive  
Johnstown, PA 15904



Presorted Standard  
U.S. Postage  
PAID  
Permit #19  
Johnstown, PA

We're on the web!  
[www.mltu.org](http://www.mltu.org)

or current resident

## Save the Dates!

- ◆ July 6 — MLTU Meeting @ Richland Municipal Bldg., Board 6:30 PM; Membership 7 PM
- ◆ August 3 — MLTU Meeting @ Richland Municipal Bldg., Board 6:30 PM; Membership 7 PM
- ◆ August 19 — Stewart Run Work Day
- ◆ August 26 — Stewart Run Work Day \*Rain Date
- ◆ Sept. 7 — MLTU Meeting @ Richland Municipal Bldg., Board 6:30 PM; Membership 7 PM
- ◆ Sept. 12 — MLTU newsletter submission deadline, 4 PM. Submit materials to Missy. Newsletter covers October 1 - December 31, 2023.



*Rick Buchanan proved there were trout for Shade-Central City students to catch at a recent Release Day. Photo by Melissa Reckner.*