

Hatches & Rises



November/December 2010

www.pwwtu.org

Volume 14 Number V



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Rock & Roll - Work Day a Success! *By Tom Walsh*

On Saturday, September 11, 2010 PWWTU held a stream improvement workday on Pine Creek in Hampton Township. The weather was perfect, and we had the best turnout in recent years with over 40 volunteers. Under the direction of **Mark Sausser** of the PA Fish & Boat Commission (and **Tom Walsh**, the Pine Creek Chairman), the volunteers installed three multi-log vane deflectors in the Bryant Road section of Pine Creek.

PWWTU members were aided by volunteers from the **Allison Park Sportsmen's Club**. All workers enjoyed a nice picnic lunch. A beautiful fly rod, **donated by Craig Caldwell**, was raffled off among the volunteers. The rod raffle was won by PWWTU member **Christian Shane**. (He is donating it back to PWWTU for *Cabin Fever!*) Thanks to all members who volunteered their time! Further thanks to the *Allegheny County Conservation District* and the *PA Fish & Boat Commission* for their financial help with this project.

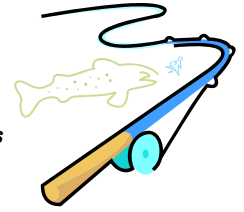


(Photos By
Christian Shane)



Holiday Rod Raffle ticket coupons inside (see page 3)

Membership Mend *By Rob Walters*



An easy way to help our chapter raise more money...

Did you know that signing up new Penns Woods West Trout Unlimited (PWWTU) members equals more money for our chapter? Trout Unlimited (TU) national has a *Special Introductory Membership* offer of \$17.50 to new members and \$15.00 goes directly to our chapter.

In an effort to raise more money for our chapter, I am asking that each one of you recruit a new member to the 042 – Penns Woods West Chapter. We currently have 1,078 PWWTU members. If each of you recruits a new member, we would raise over \$16,000 for the chapter.

But there is a catch (pun intended)! When they sign up they have to use this link www.tu.org/intro and select **042-Penns Woods West** as their chapter of choice.

We are one of the largest chapters in the country, and my goal is to make us the largest, but I need your help. We all meet people on the water or have fishing buddies who are not members of PWWTU, and it is the duty of each of you as PWWTU members to help in recruiting efforts. By recruiting new members you help secure more funding for our chapter to continue TU's mission of conserving, protecting, and restoring coldwater fisheries and watersheds in our region.

If you have any questions please feel free to contact me: Rob Walters 412-855-1132 or rob@ventureoutdoors.org.

Trout in the Classroom *By Christian Shane*



The Brook Trout are Coming! The Brook Trout are Coming!

By the time you receive this November issue of *H&R*, the Second Grade students of **McKnight Elementary** (North Allegheny School District) will have received their eyed eggs from the *Fish & Boat Commission* through our Trout in the Classroom project. We received over 400 eggs in an ice-packed container which will be tempered into our 55 gallon aquarium.

At the beginning of the project, the students place large Styrofoam pieces around the tank to keep it dark for the eggs and at a consistent 50 degrees. These eggs will lay in the hatching basket and in darkness for a few weeks in order to hatch into alevins. Students will “peek in” each day to see how the eggs are progressing in their life cycle and write their observations in their Trout Journals.



Look for an upcoming *TIC update* in the next issue of *H&R*. For more information on the project, visit the national TU's Trout in the Classroom website at www.troutintheclassroom.org.



President's Beat *by Walter Reineman*

As the Marcellus Shale gas boom has grown here in Pennsylvania, the PA State Council of TU has been looking for ways to both responsibly monitor drilling activities and educate our members to the risks and benefits of this economic opportunity. To that end, a paid professional position has been created to coordinate PATU's stance on the unique parameters of this type of resource extraction. **Dave Sewak**, a Pittsburgh resident, has been hired for the job. Though the job description is evolving, my understanding is that initial plans call for Dave to visit Chapters to educate the general membership and to recruit and train individuals to observe drilling in their local area. Ideally this would be done by the DEP or other government agencies, but realistically with a tight budget the State has nowhere near the capability to monitor the thousands of wells that are planned.



This is really a “call to arms” for private individuals to volunteer their time to help ensure that this industry acts in a manner responsible to our mission of maintaining healthy watersheds and cold water resources. Please think about this - *are you willing to become involved?* If done right, Marcellus drilling should be able to prosper and coexist without degrading our way of life. Dave will be speaking at our December meeting. Please be there. If you have any questions, as always, I am available at 412-999-8292. -Walter

2010/2011 Holiday Rod Raffle Tickets

Jim Hoey, proprietor of *Hoey's Fly Shop* in Perrysville, has generously provided a Redington rod/reel outfit for the PWWTU Holiday Raffle. The 4 piece, 4 weight, 8 1/2 ft. **Redington RS4 Rod** is matched by a moss-colored 3/4 **Rise Series Reel** and **Royal Wulff Triangle Taper 4 wt Fly Line**. The rod drawing will take place at our monthly meeting on **January 10, 2011**. **The winner need not be present at the meeting.** Tickets are 1 for \$3.00 or 6 for \$10.00. These tickets may be cut out and/or reproduced for multiple entries to win. Please send your tickets and a check payable to **PWWTU** to our Treasurer, **Stewart Stringer, 5409 Aylesboro Ave, Pgh, PA 15217**. Tickets can also be purchased at the November, December or January meetings. *Thanks to Jim for his generous donation!*

PENN'S WOODS 2010/2011 HOLIDAY RAFFLE
Hoey's Fly Shop - 8 1/2 ft. Redington RS4 4 weight
(w/ Rise Series 3/4 Reel and Triangle Taper Fly Line)

1 Ticket—\$3.00 6 Tickets—\$10.00
(Please print or use labels)

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE: _____ / _____ / _____

Make check payable to **P.W.W.T.U.**
Send tickets and check to:

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A Most Curious Hatch By Joe Kline

It happened early last spring. On a bright May Saturday morning, my dog Bo and I drove to my fishing camp in the mountains of central Pennsylvania to prepare the cabin for another season of trout fishing and to spend the weekend just idling around the place. We arrived around noon and I set about sweeping the floor, rehanging porch screens, stocking the pantry and doing all of the other things on my long list of things to do. Getting them finished took the rest of the day, but by evening everything was done and in good working order.

As is our custom, while sitting on the front porch in the evening, I talked things over with Bo. He always seems to listen and be agreeable to what I have to say. I told him we would sleep in tomorrow, then stroll down to Black Bear Pool on the stream below to see if there might be some hatch activity.

The next day, the warm rising sun quickly burned off the damp early morning mist. After a leisurely breakfast, Bo and I made our way down the path that led to the pool. The air was fresh and still. But as we approached the stream, I heard an unusual splashing sound unlike that of the familiar melodic murmur of the stream's gently flowing water. As we rounded the last turn to reach the pool, we were confronted with a most curious hatch. Indeed there was insect activity, but one I had never seen before. Swarms of flies were in the air fluttering to and fro, rising and falling over the water. In the bright morning sunlight there was a shimmering galaxy of sparkling bright red flashes like a dazzling Fourth of July fireworks show. Even Bo who has seen many heavy mayfly hatches in the past on Black Bear Pool seemed astonished at the magnitude of this one. Overwhelmed by the sight, he barked furiously at the amazing spectacle. And the fish in the pool were on a noisy, surface feeding frenzy.

By waving my hat through the swarming mass, I succeeded in capturing a few. However there was an oddity about them. Some had wings and tails of white duck quills and tails of white calf's tail hairs while others had wings of Golden Pheasant tippets. All had bright red floss abdomens with a few turns of peacock herl thoraxes. I assumed one must be female however I didn't know there could be no doubt that this heavy hatch of Royal Coachman flies. It is impossible to comprehend.

"Some had wings and tails of white calf tail hairs..."

white calf's tail hairs while others had wings of Golden Pheasant tippets. bordered front and back and thick brown hackled the male and the other the which was which. But was an extraordinarily beautiful to behold yet

On the way to the pool that morning, I neglected to bring along my fly fishing gear but that didn't matter. There were no Royal Coachmen in my fly box and hadn't been way I could have matched the hatch. match the hatch fanatic who looked with a distain upon attractor pat-



*Tied by Joe Kline
(Photo by C. Shane)*

(Look for Joe Kline's "Royal Coachman" pattern in the next issue of H&R)

Driving home that evening, I kept wondering about the hatch and concluded that since the word "royal" appears in its name, the pattern's genesis must have something to do with English royalty. I resolved to call my good friend Nigel Rollcaster to inquire about its origin. Roger is a retired London barrister who I met several years earlier when for three days we shared a beat on one of England's most prestigious trout streams. Both of us dutifully practiced stream etiquette and were careful not to interfere with each others casts and drifts. Then every evening over several rounds of single malt scotch, we had a jovial and lively debate comparing the differences between English and American preferences for fly fishing gear, fishing techniques and fly patterns. I discovered that Nigel was somewhat of an expert on all things fly fishing. We became and remain close friends.

I called Nigel the next day and after initial pleasantries I told him about the Royal Coachman hatch Bo and I had encountered. He assured me that Royal Coachman hatches while quite rare are known to occur especially in the Northern Highlands of Scotland. "You are indeed a fortunate fellow to have seen one. In fact," he continued, "in all my years of fishing in the U.K., I have seen a Royal Coachman hatch only thrice."

Now when I tell my fly fishing friends about the sighting, I am greeted with mixed reactions. Some will put on a wry smile that suggests it's just another of my many fish stories, but one told well. Others however move off and sadly shake their heads in the belief that the old boy is finally starting to loose it.

To those who doubt my story, I refer them to my long time fishing companion who was with me that morning and who witnessed the Royal Coachman hatch. "Just ask Bo," I tell them.

Casting for Recovery Retreat Held By Bob Bukk



"The Ladies of CFR"



"The River Helpers"

Photos by Christian Shane

There was no reason for me to be in a pissy mood on the morning of Tuesday, September Twenty eighth. Was it the fact that the clatter in the cabin woke me up at 6 am – an hour before I wanted? That there was no water in the creek we were going to fish? Or, the fact that there isn't a Starbuck's within hydrogen bomb range of the Beaver Creek Angler's Club? To top things off, there's no cell service in the little valley and with there being a message on my phone, a walk to the top of the hill on this cool, damp morning was in order to get into tower range.

As I walked, a car approached requiring me to step to the side to let it pass. The driver turned and waved; a broad smile across this beautiful face that I would later learn belonged to my fishing partner for the day - Nancy. Car after car went by with drivers and passengers smiling and waving. These cars contained the thirteen participants and staff of the second Casting for Recovery Western Pa Retreat held at Nemaocolin Woodlands and Beaver Creek. My mood immediately changed. That happens when you stare into the eyes of courage, and are reminded that you are blessed to be here on this day. Your sleep and the creek, the morning joe and the phone are concerns that just don't matter anymore.

After being welcomed by the CFR Staff, each of the river helpers were assigned to act as a guide for one of retreat participants all who are breast cancer survivors. Because Nancy was suffering from a bout of sciatica, like me, my friend Briget, paired us. We needed to take a chair for the morning of fishing so that she could take a break periodically to rest her back. (There were two 1 minute periodic breaks in our three hours together.)

Low water conditions made it possible for us to see some big fish swimming by in our pool. Just like she learned in her class sessions, Nancy strung the line through her rod guides and then made the loop-to loop connection with the leader to the fly line. We then tied on a chunk of tippet material using the Surgeon's knot "that surgeon's don't use," I told her. Next came the fly and we were ready to fish.

Nancy was focused. She would cast, bend at the waist and intently watch the fly float toward us. "Ok, I would instruct her, throw it out there again." Her excitement would rise as one of the trout would come up and inspect the offering, but unfortunately, nobody was buying. She would speak to her other river helper, her husband Ernie, saying "Honey, I know you're proud of me today and that you're up there watching. Could you please help us catch a fish?" Ernie loved to fish and Nancy lost him several years ago. At one point, when I squatted down – to fake taking pressure off of my own back – a gentle hand was placed on my shoulder. "You're praying, too, aren't you?" Nancy said. "Yeah, I said, you caught me." I was talking to Ernie and his Landlord, too!

We missed three fish during our time together. One lunker came out of nowhere and just slammed the fly. Nancy lifted the rod as she was taught and felt the weight of the fish. Unfortunately, he got off. Soon after our miss, the signal came telling us that it was time for lunch. As we broke down the equipment, Nancy said to no one in particular that she was blessed in so many ways and that catching a fish could be one of those blessings for another day.

After the awards and the hugs and the countless "thanks", the ladies went to their cars to leave. Watching Nancy drive away, waving good-bye with her casting arm, my day spent with her would be a memory that needs to be referenced every day of my life to reinforce how insignificant my lack of sleep, low water, no morning coffee and no cell service are in the scheme of things.

Special thanks are extended to ***the River Helpers: Steve Alber, Dennis Brown, Nick Gazda, Ryan Gehrke, Jim Hostal, John Mahn, Tony Ripepi, Kevin Rush, Christian Shane and Peter Ten Eyck.***

Also, the ***CFR WPA Retreat Planning Team of Anne Caffee, Gretchen Fay, Beth Gazda, Heather Gehrke, Betsy Giufre, Mellisa Goda, Cecelia Hard, Lorry Perkins and Briget Shields*** would like to extend sincerest thanks to PWWTU for partnering in this very worthwhile cause.

The Dusty Bookshelf Review by Jim Hoey

“Fishless Days, Angling Nights” by Sparse Grey Hackle

...Or “Sparse” to his friends. Alfred W. Miller’s book is considered a classic of fly fishing literature. Its pages are filled with reading enjoyment - even for those not particularly addicted to the sport.

The chapter titled, “*The Quest for Theodore Gordon*” is nothing short of fascinating to anyone with an interest in the sport’s history - especially the early practice of dry fly fishing in America. Theodore Gordon, who brings to mind sylvan days on the streams of the Catskills, actually had his beginnings some distance from the Neversink and other streams of this fabled range. Almost everyone is surprised to learn of the local connection, but Gordon was born in Pittsburgh in 1854. A few months after his birth, his family moved to the South, where his father had lived previously for his health. Theodore, Sr. died there from malaria at age 30, and in 1860 his widow returned to Pittsburgh to live with relatives, the Spencers.

Here, the six-year old Theodore begins what Sparse Grey Hackle describes as “the happiest years of his life.” From his local base, the young man was able to spend time at the Spencer’s summer home in Carlisle, Pennsylvania. Theodore, with his cousins Charlie and Bob roamed the woods and fields from dawn to dark; in those years he gained the knowledge of fishing and the great love of nature that remained with him throughout his life.

“In those years, he gained knowledge of fishing and the great love of nature.”

“*Fishing Days, Angling Nights*” is the perfect companion to take on a fishing trip - or any vacation. In fact, one of the stories, “*Rain on the Brodhead*,” describes a trip where the unrelenting rain made fishing impossible. Back at the lodge, Sparse

and friends spent the afternoon each with a book reading about fishing. A good lunch, roaring fire, plus martinis added to the enjoyment of the experience.

Miller’s book is brimming with classic tales, many of which are widely considered among the finest fly fishing literature has to offer. Especially good is “*The Magic Carpet*” with its description of George Washington Sears, the famed Nessmuk of numerous “North Woods” adventures. The chapter also describes (in the days before the Federal Trade Commission regulations on advertising), how some manufacturers touted the great benefits of their “African Steel Vine” rods. Actually made from cheaper Calcutta cane, the product had very little backbone but was greatly in demand because of the spurious advertising. Also included in the story is the classic essay “*Night Fishing*.” Often, it is reviewed as one of the finest pieces of American trout fishing literature.

Sparse Grey Hackle was a newspaper reporter and a writer of numerous articles, but “*Fishless Days, Angling Nights*” was his only book. It’s one that comes highly recommended for inclusion in anyone’s personal library. It is no longer in print, but is available to purchase online.



PWWTU Meetings & Greetings

Penn’s Woods West Trout Unlimited meets the **second Monday** of each month September through May at **Brentwood VFW Post 810**, 3801 Clairton Blvd., 3.5 miles south of the Liberty Tubes, on the corner of Rt. 51 and Marlea Street (near McGinnis Sisters). **Meetings begin at 7:00 pm.** All are welcome to attend.

Hatches & Rises is published 5 times yearly: Jan/Feb, Mar/Apr, May/June, Sep/Oct, & Nov/Dec by Penn’s Woods West Trout Unlimited to enhance communication among members & share information with the public. H&R is supported by tax-deductible underwriting, reader donations and the group’s general fund. Views, opinions and advice contained herein do not necessarily reflect the position of PWWTU or its Board of Directors.



Thanks to our H&R Sponsors



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November/December Meetings By Peter Ten Eyck

November 8th - Joe Rossi

We have a real live TV celebrity as our guest speaker in November! Joe Rossi, host of FSN Pittsburgh's, "*Joe's Wildside Adventures*", will speak to us about his TV show and several exciting fishing destinations. Joe, who lives in the Pittsburgh area, travels the world filming fly fishing action in beautiful locations. (Tough job, but somebody's got to do it.) This month, Joe is in British Columbia filming a show about fly fishing there for steelhead and salmon. You can catch "Joe's Wildside Adventures" every Sunday morning at 9:00 AM on FSN Pittsburgh. Come to the November PWWTU chapter meeting where you'll meet Joe Rossi and hear about his wild adventures! It should be a fun evening. And be sure and check out his website at www.joeswildsideadventures.com.



December 13th - Dave Sewak

Marcellus Shale drilling is perhaps the single biggest threat to our coldwater fisheries and drinking water supplies in Pennsylvania during our lifetimes. At our December chapter meeting, National TU representative, Dave Sewak, will discuss the MS issue specifically as it pertains to SW Pennsylvania. Dave will explain why our water resources in SW PA are particularly vulnerable to the environmental impact of MS drilling. Come and hear about meaningful actions that our Penns Woods West TU Chapter members can take to help reduce the risk to our water resources.

To get a better understanding of PA TU's official position on the MS issue, you should read the "Marcellus Shale Gas Extraction White Paper" which is available on the PA TU Council website www.patrou.org. The white paper and other articles about Marcellus Shale drilling in PA are listed under the "Resources" tab on the PA TU website.



(Mark your Calendar for the January 10th, 2011 Meeting)



At the January meeting, PWWTU will have the **Great January Fly Sale** accompanied by the **Holiday Rod Raffle**. Any fly donations can be brought to the November or December meetings. If you can't attend a meeting, call **Joe Kline (412) 761-9762** or **Christian Shane (412) 916-2979** for shipping instructions. Thanks for your time and efforts!



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Fur & Feathers Wanted - Donate your flies to the Great Fly Sale in January!

“Notions”

By Jim Hoey

Sundry notions come to mind
 Of fur and feathers and things I find
 A little from here - a trifle from there
 Of fox or fowl or rabbit's hair



What is that sparkle that I see
 Do you think it's worth a look
 Some bead or wire or piece of fuzz
 Perhaps some tidbit for my hook

A magic potion - a trout to foil
 But sans the cauldron; sans the boil
 A piece of this - a tad of that
 A feather from Bernice's hat
 Notions of fish - Notions of flies
 A fitting tie to take the prize



Notions. Notions. Fill my dreams
 My waking hours too - or so it seems

Inside this issue:

Pine Creek Work Day	1
Membership Mend	2
Trout in the Classroom	2
President's Beat	2
Holiday Rod Raffle Ticket Page	3
A Most Curious Hatch	4
Casting For Recovery Event	5
The Dusty Bookshelf: Book Review	6
Nov/Dec Meeting Information	7