

STREAMSIDE

Volume 27 Issue 1

Dame Juliana League

Spring /Summer 2022

Riffles and Runs

By Dick Moyer

As I sit down to collect my thoughts for this article, we recently completed our twenty-seventh Dame Juliana League Learn to Fly Fish Course. This event was another resounding success thanks in large measure to the exceptional efforts of Skip Krause, our Course Director. Skip led the charge in organizing, promoting and staging another full-day



Skip Krause Throwing Back A Brown Trout That Was Just Too Small !

intensive learning experience that was enjoyable and rewarding for both the participants and the many volunteers who enthusiastically supported this undertaking.

For the second year in a row the event was sold out many weeks before the course date and the number of volunteers providing instruction and logistical support nearly matched the number of registrants. Among the familiar faces were Fly Fishers International Certified Casting Instructors Diane Tidy and Mike Costello, who led the casting skills portion of the day. Diane made the long drive from her home in Maryland and Mike, despite an unfortunate travel snafu just three days earlier on his return trip from Florida, found a way to be present to again share his expertise. George Christian, Aquatic Entomologist, once again gave his fascinating presentation on the food trout eat, with

numerous samples of specimens he collected from the creek, and the flies commonly used to imitate them. Actual streamside fishing demonstrations focusing on techniques appropriate for streamer, nymph and dry-fly fishing were given by Bob Moser, Joe King and Emerson Cannon. The day also featured fly-tying demonstrations, basic knot instruction, and a comprehensive equipment overview; essentially, all the elements necessary to begin enjoyment of our sport.

One of the more noteworthy aspects of the day was Bob Moser's significant impact on the proceedings. In his role as Lead Instructor, Bob tackled a range of topics in his excellent presentations and his guiding presence could be felt throughout the day. Amazingly, Bob has assumed a principal role in each of the twenty-seven courses offerings

since inception. He is, in fact, one of the original architects of this program and his immeasurable contributions over this period of time are remarkable.

Sadly for us, Bob and his wife have relocated to Delaware making it impractical for him to continue in his leadership position. To mark the occasion of this transition, at the conclusion of the day we paid tribute to Bob for his extraordinary dedication and achievements. Past DJL President, Robert Molzahn, who worked with Bob to create the first course curriculum, was on hand to deliver a series of touching remarks, a framed letter of heart-felt thanks crafted by Emerson Cannon was read, and a fly fishing-themed sculpture was presented to Bob in recognition of his many contributions.

We are, nevertheless, very fortunate that the Learn to Fly Fish Course Lead Instructor role will transition into the capable hands of Charlie Griffin, a life-long fly fisher, licensed fly fishing guide and Pennsylvania Certified Fly Fishing Skills Instructor. Thanks to Charlie for stepping up in this manner.

Separately, another transition will take place with the publication of this edition of STREAMSIDE. Matt Seymour's term as Editor In Chief of STREAMSIDE comes to an end with this issue. His creativity and dedication have made this publication the informative and entertaining product that it is and I have eagerly looked forward to each quarterly release. Matt indicated to me that his work on this undertaking has been a labor of love that he very much enjoyed. We all certainly owe him our thanks.

The individuals who have volunteered their time and talents in support of the aforementioned activities of our club are many. Even so, there are new opportunities opening up in the coming months for members to join the ranks of our Board, or assume support roles in the activities that make our club the vibrant organization that it is. Many who have volunteered for such roles have found them to be enjoyable and fulfilling, and to engender closer friendships with people who share our common interest. Please consider making yourself available for one of these opportunities.



Richard R. Meyer

Writer's Cramp

By Matt Seymour

Ted Nawalinski and I took our turn at editing this STREAMSIDE newsletter in March, 2019. Before us, John Burgos did it and, before him, Bob Molzahn. Now after 14 issues Ted and I agree - it's someone else's turn.

This endeavor has been a labor of love. I confess we're not sure the way we did STREAMSIDE appealed much to our general membership. How would we know? If the acclaim we've received is the best indication of success we probably missed the mark with our readers. We say this unapologetically. Until recently (think: survey by Albert Wei and Mike Ferraro) we had no useful feedback on our STREAMSIDE approach.

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Ted and I were determined to establish a journal that was literary in style. We sought long prose that values author's word choice, sentence structure, figurative language, and sentence arrangement. Amazingly, for the vast majority of our authors (and with a little help from us), this was usually accomplished with a modest amount of pain.

We *weren't and aren't* oblivious to the common desire of "newsletter" readers to gulp quick, easily digestible bits of information. "Just the facts, Ma'am." Whoever takes up the task of writing the new and revised STREAMSIDE may wisely choose this course.

We went far and wide to solicit articles from writers who had both a literary bent and some special perspective about the subject matter. It was easier than you might imagine to enlist these contributors. Everyone has a story waiting to be told. Believe it.

We also insisted that articles be accompanied by good, evocative photos. Pictures often tell a story better than mountains of print.

We were blessed over the last three plus years to have members of DJL give us their best stuff: John Burgos, Brenna Dekorte, Bob Bonney, Pete Goodman, Dick Moyers, Skip Krause, Dave Capone, Emerson Cannon, Mike Ferraro, Bryan Fulop, Albert Wei, Eric Tschantre, Les Young, Bob Molzahn, Charles Boinske, Charlie Griffen, Bob Moser, and Joe King all contributed

articles. Some of them multiple times! Next time someone moans about not being able to get member involvement relook at the heavy hours these folks gave to this magazine.

The discontinuation of this responsibility will leave me with more time on my hands. (Ted may be too heavily involved in a dozen other tasks to feel much of a difference.) In my case, I will fish more, go deeper on some spiritual development and continue to enjoy my association with Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing. Wish me well.

Shosh R. S.

A Place To Rest

Photos By Seymour & Krause

Saturday, May 14, about 15 of us gathered at French Creek to pay our respects to Jack Mickievicz and his family. Jack was the founding president of the Dame Juliana League. He was much more to his friends. A bench in remembrance of Jack has been placed by us on a magic bend in the creek.

For those who would like to know a little more about Jack please take the time to read his obituary and a couple of short pieces; one by Jack and one written about him:

, http://www.djflyfishers.org/newsletters/2019_winter.pdf, pp 7-8; http://www.djflyfishers.org/newsletters/2021_spring_summer.pdf ; p1.



A Quiet Bend in The Creek - Jack's Bench



Peggy Barnes Adding Geranium Flourishes



Our Host Dick Allebach



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Jeff Nissle Offers A Few Words About Our Friend



In Remembrance



Bob Molzahn & Joe King



Jack's Gear



The Mickiewicz Family: Scott (Son), Cindy (Scott's Wife), Erin & Adam, (Jack's Grandchildren) & Carol (Jack's Wife)

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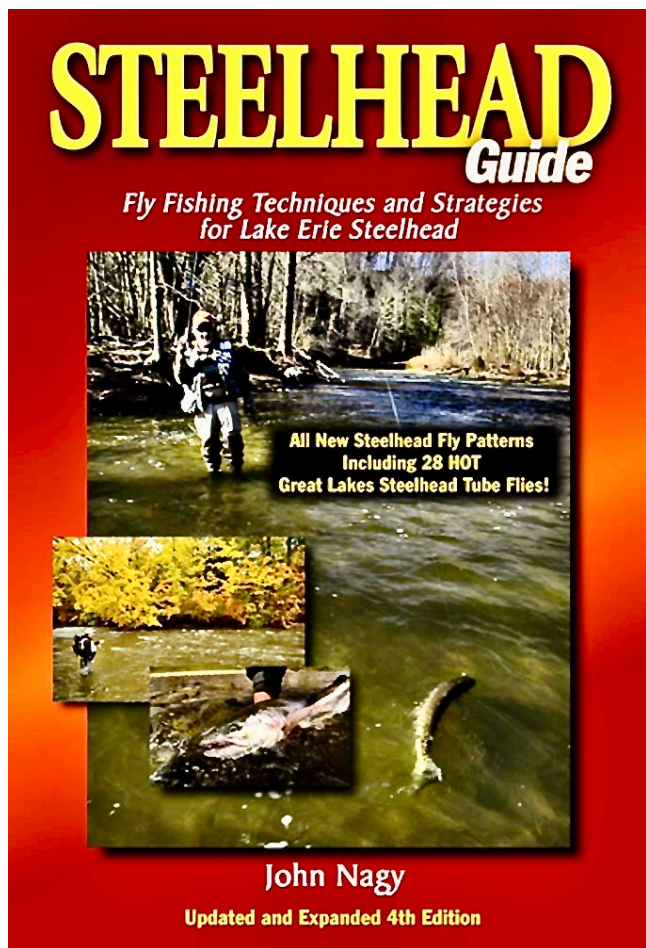
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2022 Quest for Erie Steel

By Charlie Griffen

In early November of 2015 I headed up to “dreary Erie” with my brother-in-law, Bill, and fishing buddy, Matt Lacey, in hopes of catching a steelhead. I had several unsuccessful steelhead trips to the legendary Salmon River in the early 1990s where the closest I came to landing a steelhead was a fish that I got to the bank, but was unable to land because I didn’t have a large enough net. My quest for catching a steelhead would then be put on hold for about 20 years while I devoted most of my free time to raising three kids, running an optometric practice and coaching baseball and track.



Prior to heading up to Erie again I did my homework. I got a copy of John Nagy’s “Steelhead Guide,” the ultimate primer to learning how to fly fish Lake Erie tributaries for steelhead. I poured over it, highlighting techniques, locations, flies and equipment to use in order to be successful.

I purchased a 10 ft, 7 w rod with matching reel and line, tied lots of salmon egg, sucker spawn and other steelhead flies, and, most importantly, bought a large enough net to land steelhead. We headed up in early November, which according to Nagy is the prime time to fish for steelhead. Perhaps even more important than having the right equipment is having a knowledgeable guide who knows where the steelhead are and how to catch them.

J.T. Davis was such a guide. He took us to a private stretch of Elk Creek, the biggest and most well known of the PA Erie steelhead streams. Under his tutelage I landed my first steelhead. Boy, was I hooked! In the ensuing years I managed to get back to Erie at least once, sometimes twice a year. Each trip I was able to hone my skills to the point that I started to consistently locate and catch steelhead on my own. I continued to hire J.T. for the first day of each trip in order to glean more of his vast knowledge of the Erie tribs and ways to catch steelhead. Sadly, J.T. had to give up guiding several years ago due to health problems.

Fast forward to early 2021. In January of that year, I decided to become a licensed PA fly fishing guide. I wanted to pass on some of the knowledge gained from over 50 years of fly fishing. I also hoped to get on several pro staffs in order to get discounts on fishing equipment. Additionally, I have a lot of experience organizing fishing trips and being a guide would enable me to

provide professional guidance to participants of future trips.

November 2022

I emailed several people I knew from Valley Forge Trout Unlimited and the Dame Juliana League about a steelhead trip I was planning for March of 2022. I decided to enlist Matt Lacey as co-host the trip, since he had joined me on all prior steelhead trips. Quicker than you can say “sold” we got four brave souls lined up for the trip: Matt Seymour, Skip Krause, Joe King and Phil ‘Philly boy’ Schwartz. Each participant received an autographed copy of John Nagy’s book, a baker’s dozen steelhead flies and detailed maps of the major PA Erie tributaries. In addition, Skip hosted a fly-tying session in February so we could all get acquainted.

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Co-Host and Scrapple Chef, Matt Lacey

As the trip approached, I scanned the Erie weather reports each day and checked the Elk and Walnut Creek stream flows. Conditions looked favorable, with some rain forecast for the drive up on Wednesday. The rest of the days showed some precipitation every day (normal for Erie) and steadily dropping temperatures. The day before our departure I got a call from Skip saying he had to fly down to Florida for a family matter and wouldn't be able to join us. We were all bummed that Skip, probably the most enthusiastic of the group, had to miss out on our adventure.



"Philly" Schwartz ... Going Deep!

Matt and I left at 7:00 AM Wednesday morning and had an uneventful drive up. We did encounter some rain during our drive, but by the time we arrived the sun was beginning to peek out and the temperature reached a balmy (for Erie in March) 55 degrees. We proceeded directly to the fly shop at Folly's campground on upper Elk to get the latest fishing report and to check out Elk Creek. The helpful owner/manager told us there were decent numbers of steelhead being caught throughout Elk Creek and other tributaries. A quick look at the pool behind the shop showed the water to be low and gin clear. Matt and I decided to string up our rods and give it a go.

First Day



Buttermilk Falls , Upper Walnut Creek

Matt headed upstream while I went downstream. I quickly found a few steelhead in the pool below the overpass where I've had success before. Due to the low, clear water the steelhead were skittish and not interested in my offerings. I steadily moved downstream fishing hard, without having much success. I eventually came upon a large pool and saw a young man tight to a good fish. I asked if he'd like me to net the fish since he didn't have a net. He gratefully accepted my offer and we soon got the fish in the net. He turned out to be a high school student and the pool he was fishing was on property that belonged to his grandfather. I asked if this water was private and he told me that his grandfather allowed fishing due to an easement with the state. I saw several steelhead in the upper end of the pool and managed to hook and land my first fish of the trip. On the way back to the shop I hooked two other

steelhead which managed to get away. Upon rendezvousing with Matt, I learned that he hooked and lost a nice fish as well. We both agreed the trip was off to a good start despite the tough conditions.

Day Two

We headed to the two-story house I rented in Erie for our group and were surprised to find everyone already there. We heated up Matt's delicious venison chili and my wife's homemade cornbread muffins, shared our thoughts on the day's fishing and made plans for the next morning.

Thursday morning was significantly cooler, as a cold front came in overnight. Matt Lacey and I each led a contingent to a different section of upper Elk. Arriving at the stream I was disheartened to see that Elk was significantly off color and higher due to an overnight rainstorm. Having streams go from low and clear to high and dirty in 24 hours is not all that unusual when fishing the Erie tributaries. Despite the tough conditions several members managed to land their first steelhead of the trip. Joe King, despite hooking up five times, had all five fish break off. I suggested he try a different spool of tippet, which proved to be ticket since he didn't break off any more steelhead after taking my advice.

After a hard day of fishing upper Elk, we headed over to the Brewerie at Union Station for some food and libations. There we met my friend, Mike Good, who traveled from Cleveland to stay and fish with us in place of Skip, who graciously offered his spot to Mike. I met Mike about seven years before on a trip to Rocky Mountain National Park that I organized for optometrists who fly fish; we have been good friends ever since.



Day Three

Friday was clear and colder still. We all decided to continue to fish upper Elk since there is ample access and not as many fishermen as in the lower sections. The water had come down a bit and was only slightly cloudy - perfect conditions. I knew this would be the day when those that hadn't landed a fish yet would have their best chance of doing so. When we got back together that evening, I was relieved to hear that Matt Seymour and Phil Schwartz had landed their first steelheads of the trip. In addition, my friend Mike also caught a couple of nice fish. We celebrated everyone's success with a pizza party at the house and watched some March Madness on the TV.

Further Proof ... You Don't Have To Be A
Rocket Scientist !

Last Day

Saturday arrived clear and cold. Half of the group went back to upper Elk, while Mike, Matt Lacey and I headed to lower Walnut to try our luck. Matt and I had our best day ever the year before on lower Walnut and were hoping for a repeat experience. Unfortunately, there were lots of other fishermen who beat us to the best spots. Undeterred, we headed further upstream and found a nice hole below a lowhead dam which had lots of steelhead and no other fishermen. We each landed at least one steelhead before heading back to the car for lunch. After a quick lunch break, we headed about ten miles upstream to fish upper Walnut Creek.

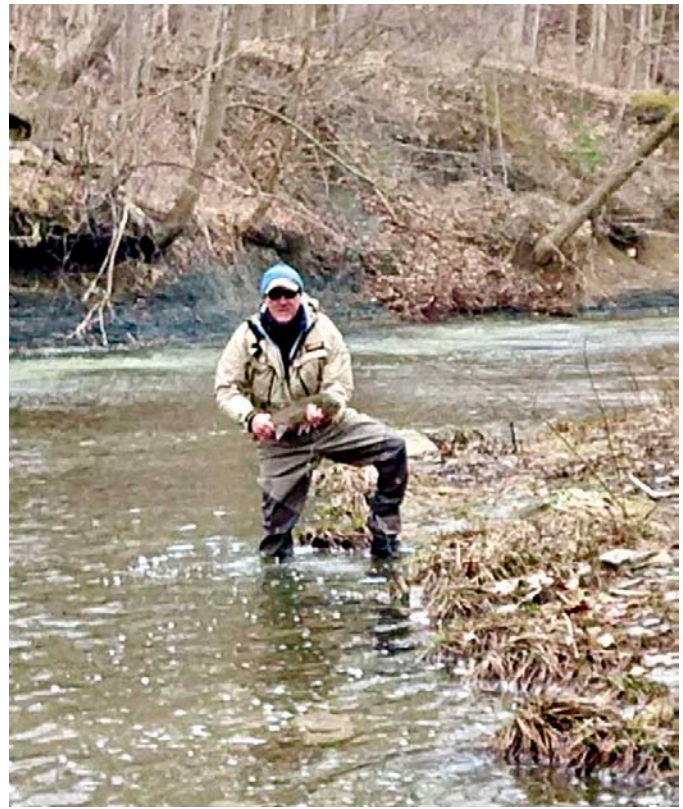
I had never fished this stretch before and was anxious to see if we could locate any steelhead. Matt was the first to get into a good fish in a hole we named "Lacey's" after we all landed at least one fish from it. I landed all five of the steelhead I hooked, - a considerable feat since I usually land about one of every three steelhead I hook. It was a fitting end to our steelhead fishing since the forecast for Sunday was for temperatures in the low 20s and up to 12" of

snow. The forecast proved accurate and everyone was anxious to head back home shortly after breakfast. Fortunately, everyone made it home safely despite some slipping and sliding.

The first 50 miles or so of the return trip sent us through a western PA blizzard. As the chief organizer of the trip, I was relieved that no one got hurt and everyone landed at least one steelhead.



One of Matt Lacey's Multiple Steelies.

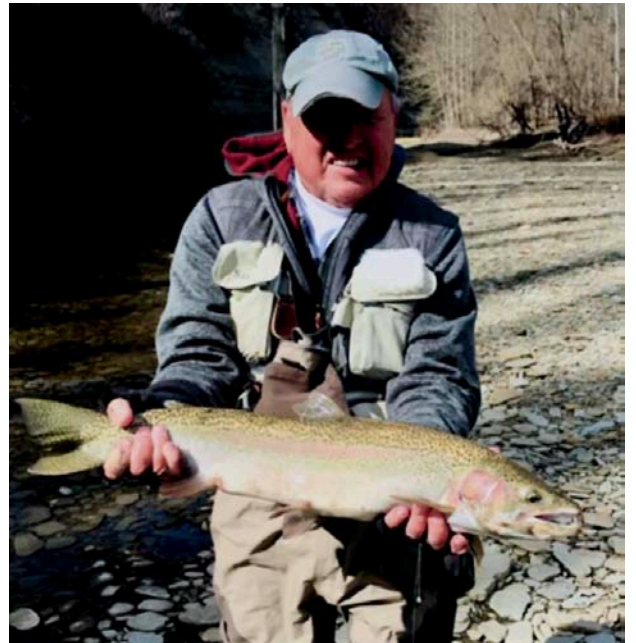


Mike Good Gets One On "Lacey's Pool"!

1. I suggested to Skip that he and Joe should consider going to Erie in April since there would still be good fishing for steelhead. Fortunately, they took my advice and had a great trip with many steelhead hookups and landings. I only wish I could have joined them. Perhaps next year!
2. Skip & Joe both went to Erie to earn their own merit badges a week after we went as a group. This is what happened:



Joe King



Skip Krause



BIO

Dr. Charles Griffen resides with his wife, Diana, in Exton, PA. He is a graduate of Villanova University and New England College of Optometry. His optometric practice is located in Malvern, PA. Charlie is a member of Dame Juliana League and is on the board of Valley Forge Trout Unlimited. He enjoys fishing for trout, smallmouth, shad and most anything that can be caught on a fly. He also enjoys hiking, biking and backpacking with his family. Most recently Charlie has become a licensed Pennsylvania Fish and Boat Commission guide. In 2023 he will also become the new Dame Juliana League Learn To Fly Fish Course Head Instructor!

Fly Fishing Demystified

By Eric Tschantre

On April 23, the 27th annual Dame Juliana League's *Learn To Fly Fish Course* was conducted at Warwick Park, Chester County, PA. The course was very well attended by both new members learning to fly fish and many club members helping and sharing their knowledge. As in the past, it did not disappoint. The Lead Instructor (Bob Moser) along with Certified Instructors and other experienced club members helped demystify the sport, using a methodical approach, holding everyone's attention throughout the day.



The instruction built the student's knowledge step by step, and included actual demonstrations with all the necessary fly fishing gear. Practicing with rope samples helped students learn the knots, which can often challenge new fishers. The instructors addressed questions from the students and members were close by helping where needed. Following lunch, the instruction continued with two alternating sessions for each half of the class: 1) Practicing casting in a wide open, grassy area with FFI Certified Instructors (and members again) providing one on one, hands on help; 2) Learning the entomology behind the "trout food" with the ingredients served up fresh, right out of the French Creek

Peggy and Brian; Pre-registration

Spring/Summer 2022



Family Check-In; Names On Tags & Books. A Personal Touch.



Morning Coffee/Anticipation



Bob Moser Demystifying Fly Fishing



BOB BONNEY (WCO CONSERVATION OFFICER) EXPLAINS REGULATIONS

A very informative perspective on conservation and fishing in PA was also provided by a Waterways Conservation Officer, Bob Bonney, to enlighten students (and remind everyone!) of the importance of following state regulations.



Rapt Attention To Presenters



DIANE TIDY & MIKE COSTELLO EXPLAIN THE FINER POINTS OF CASTING



Friends Helping Friends Tie a Perfection Loop



Surgeon's Knot - "Knot" A Problem



Thriving Caddis Fly Larva Fresh From The Stream



GEORGE CHRISTIAN, AQUATIC ENTOMOLOGIST CHALLENGES STUDENTS TO ID LIVING LARVA FRESH FROM THE STREAM



Bob Moser & Bob Molzahn Celebrate 27 Years of DJL's Fly Fishing Course



DICK MOYER HELPS STUDENT WITH THAT PERFECT CAST



Skip Krause & Steve Basson

A special thanks goes out to Bob Moser, Lead Instructor. This was his last time leading the instruction and he will be succeeded by Charlie Griffen in 2023. Likewise, event organizer, Skip Krause, is transferring his event responsibilities to Eric. (See bio.)



Happy Graduates!



BIO

Eric Tschantre is a newly retired nuclear energy professional with a background in engineering. Eric and his wife Barbara live in East Coventry township and have two adult children and grandchildren living in Detroit and Brooklyn. Eric has had a lifelong interest in engineering, math and sciences and now, with more time, is learning and expanding other lifelong interests; Fly Fishing (of course), woodworking, gardening and visiting kids. He throws in some plain old relaxing, when time allows!

This time, the learning is translating into catching fish, and the reward he looks forward to will be helping other anglers feel the success. (Eric says: "I have to get better first, but I am on my way!")

Eric took the DJL LTFFC course in 2019 and thought it was excellent. With many others, he helped Skip Krause prepare the 2022 course. This coming year Eric accepts the Event Organizer responsibilities from Skip.

He'll need plenty of folks to help, so stand by!

Penns Creek Reflections:

Part Two - Lost In The Dark

By Frank Ehrenfeld III

Preface:

Our relationships in life, for good or bad, help mold our perspective of the world and condition our responses to our immediate environment. Whether family, academic, occupational, community, or recreational relationships – those direct connections shape our views and reactions.

In Part 1 (*Fall 2021*) I touched upon the experiences with my father and his friends at Penns Creek. Those early impressions and four decades of annual pilgrimages back to Penns shaped at least some of my outlook. My faith in humanity is strengthened by the connections with companions and lifelong friends - whom I sometimes only see in waders and around a campfire.

As a scientist, I look for more evidence-based factors – numbers, not feelings and emotions. So, after 60 years on the planet with Penns Creek trips over 40 of those years, in all manner of weather, seeing abundant and sometimes sparse hatches and rises, finding joy in the ‘hunt’ as much as the catch and release, and reveling in end-of-the-day cabin dinners and conversation, I could supply lots of data. My colleague and fellow Penns Creek Angler’s Society member Craig A. Liska has kept stream flow, temperature, hatch, and catch data for over twenty of those years. That said, the emotive score resides in those relationships, while the actual "catch - to miss" ratio still wildly favors the Penns Creek trout!

Part II

Penns Creek Anglers Society:

After a decade of fishing many east coast mountain streams I decided to share my love for Penns Creek with some friends. The Penns Creek Angler’s Society (PCAS) was born after our first trip in 1990 with informal bylaws, dues/ fees, and mission statement. Most of it very tongue in cheek.

Part three of this series will detail the Camp Pawnee cabin at the corner of Swift Run and Penns Creek that became our headquarters and ‘annual board meeting’ venue. The initial board members included me as self-proclaimed president as well as longtime friends, Jeff Davis (a USAF pilot before joining Delta Airlines), my locally born father (see previous Part 1), the cabin lease holder Ray Rager, Jeff’s father, Bob Davis, who years later would hold the title of president. We were joined regularly by Carl Laughlin (cook, poet, bagpipe master, artist, and purveyor/ distiller? of fine single malt scotch), the aforementioned Craig Liska, east coast wet fly fishing legend, some Lehigh University colleagues, and off and on over the years another dozen souls – including Matt Seymour (the retiring editor of this publication).

Though many a ‘fall supplemental meeting’ was arranged, the official annual board meeting was always scheduled the entire week before the Memorial Day weekend in May. Most members came/went throughout the week but stayed on for the acclaimed Friday evening steak night. Some years it felt like early spring with chills in the air and steady feeding of the large wood stove and campfire, while other years, tee shirts, open windows, and fresh ice in the



beverage coolers were in order. We've seen numerous early Green Drake hatches but always good solid hatches daily - clouds of duns and spinners of sulfur, march browns, caddis, and under every rock - stoneflies and other aquatic fauna. Every morning the streamside pools swirled pools of dead splayed-winged spinners. Penns Creek trout are perhaps the best fed of any population east of the Appalachians.

Somehow the food, beverages, local wildlife sightings (and encounters), and accommodations were superb when one considers that the cabin had no electricity, no cell signal, and no running water. Sounds rough – but it was glorious.

Decades of annual meeting 'minutes' became the accumulated stories from every member for every week spent at Penns over the years. There were the average 'one-that-got-away' tales, the ever expanding 'this long' exaggerations, and an abundance of data kept by our Secretary Craig Liska on daily weather and stream conditions (temperature, flow rates), hatches, and the fly patterns in specific sizes (ranging from size 8 to 20) that caught those well fed finicky trout. I came to realize years later that a unit expressing a measurement constant in tantalizing trout that tease but escape capture could be defined. "Trout 197: Frank 1; I had a 0.51% Penns today", might have been uttered and kept in more scientific journals to record the failure rate that this stream often produced.

The highlights of these stories were collected and published over the first dozen or so years in bound newsletters sent to all members by US Mail. The 'annual report' looked back at the previous year and announced plans for the next annual meeting. Part III of this series will include some of those newsletter

excerpts complete with unique poems and photos.

Lost in the Dark:



I don't why the older members of our troop limited their evening fishing to just the very beginning of the evening hatch. While many of the younger and more adventurous would rest in the early afternoon and then head back to the water from sunset until about 10PM, the older/wiser fellows were back at the cabin enjoying some early, well-earned beverages and tales. They knew that an earlier stream arrival and departure meant there was still ambient light to see fly changes, to navigate the stream, and to clearly see the path while hiking back to the cabin. Being downstream a mile or more from the cabin might mean an arduous hike along streamside twists and root-tripping paths. An easier path, but a hard to find, was deep into the woods along the southern banks of Penns where there existed an old logging path overgrown but still paved with grass that led to the cabin – if you could find the trail in pitch black. This was true whether you had a handheld flashlight or headlamp. In fact, the latter might reflect pairs of eyes looking back at you, eliciting a primal response that helped pick-up your pace.

There could be lots of darkness associated with Penns trips you could encounter a dark Poe Valley when clouds including the famous abandoned train tunnel



near Poe Paddy State Park. Coming out of the tunnel at dusk obscured stars and moon. My first tunnel experience was at six years old walking to the downstream section with my father. Talk about dark and cold... add in some bats and my imagination was off the charts. "No trains, right?" "I'm sure no bears are in here." "Does this tunnel ever end?" Dad held my hand with the glow from his Marlboro as our only source of light through the middle interior curve of the tunnel. There was light at the other end.

Of course, some members, who shall remain nameless, would drive down to the Weikert section or upstream to Cherry Run and then, nearly every year, get lost driving. The ersatz return to camp wound through the old logging roads back to the Havice Valley, Ingleby, and Coburn Roads, along with Siglerville-Millheim Pike, etc. These meanderings eventually led to our cabin along Swift Run. Perhaps the wanderers enjoyed their tour of the Mifflin/Centre County line, but they would routinely arrive well past our already late dinner.

Through the dark of night, catching the flicker of a campfire through the trees, or light streaming through the cabin windows, was always a welcome sight.



Bath Time with Brother Matt:

Our esteemed member Mathew Seymour was a great addition to our company. He brought a sense of maturity (okay, he was older) and could have both serious and lighthearted conversations with the personalities at each gathering on a range of subjects. In particular, his faith journey and family-centric character was refreshing. Matt was not unique when it came to daily hygiene – well, more specifically his seemingly regular ‘bath’ into Penns after losing his balance and slipping and sliding into the cold flowing stream. Many times, this was more like a full Baptist immersion with his drenched cherubic face popping out of the water surface a few yards downstream.

We worried about all our fellows, but Matt always had a fishing buddy with him – at the very least we felt obliged to retrieve his gear and notify next of kin. Fortunately, Matt, like others in our midst was, shall we say, extra buoyant. After some toweling off and assessing a bruise or two – he was no worse for wear. A top of the line Orvis retractable telescoping wading staff was in order. No worries there as Matt always was bedecked in the latest from Orvis and other top shelf outfitters. Matt worked part time at Orvis at the time and was a walking advertisement for the latest in their catalog

One spring Matt, appeared in full gear ready to do battle with the stream and with the trout, armored in the best waders, boots, staff, reel, line, etc. and a shiny brand new 9 foot 5 weight rod. The Orvis product designed by ex-NASA or JPL engineers looked like a Porsche next to my 20 year-old-fiberglass rod. The reel, with the latest gears and shiny precise metals of titanium and steel alloy gleamed in the sun. Matt was like Sir Arthur with Excalibur ready to do battle.

Yet, I recall that Excalibur was delivered to the mysterious Lady of the Lake. Matt, true to form succumbed to the sometimes treacherous flow and slick angled stone bottom of Penns and took his daily ‘bath.’ It was a few yards until he popped up wet but fine except that Excalibur was missing – the new shiny rod was not to be found. Not even found after he and others trudged through the stream exploring the banks for evidence of the mighty rod and reel. Matt was somewhat deflated (who wouldn’t be) and announced a reward for the missing weapon. But that day, and yet another, brought no news from our party.

On the third evening with its hope of recovery now generally out of mind, our member Brian Dreibelbis (a young buck just out of college) and I wandered far downstream into the lower half of the broadheads section. The water is wider and slower there. It was dark as clouds covered the slice of moon and stars overhead. It was also late but the rises (even those we could not see) tempted our continued casting – being rewarded periodically by blindly catching some small browns hitting sulfurs. We finally decided to exit and try to find the interior logging path back to the cabin.

And then, as we slowly waded across a stiller section of water the clouds parted. Suddenly, not more than 20 feet away, at least a foot below the surface, was a gleam of something reflecting the moon’s glow. As we approached the rippling surface and reached down a wet arm into the cold water – Excalibur was lifted in all its former glory - looking intact and after some stream slime was wiped away - no worse for wear. We were elated!

The trip back through the dark was fun thinking about how Matt would react and how we should best surprise him – heck, we hoped that he’d still be awake, but the Bushmills Irish Whiskey had not yet been distributed when we arrived. Brian and I knelt like Galahad and Lancelot presenting the rod and reel as we pledged fealty to the sword’s rightful owner. Not expecting to be knighted but eager for his reaction, it was like Christmas morning for Matt seeing the reclaimed ‘sword.’ We declined any reward, but Matt insisted. A fantastic dinner weeks later at the Victory Brew Pub in Downingtown, PA was used as a means for reliving every minute of that trip.

Matthew Seymour



If you are fortunate enough to know Matt, even for a short while, you are changed. All of us have stories about Matt Seymour. Fishing stories, stories of his faith, stories of his heritage, and examples of how we all can relate to each other for a short time on this planet. His better half, the wonderful Pam, and Matt celebrated 47 years of blessings and marriage recently. Matt is a faithful caring leader, a storyteller, a husband, a grandfather of five, exceptionally hard working, infinitely fair-minded, and most importantly, a fierce, fierce friend.

So, let me lift a glass to the King Arthur of the Penns Creek Anglers Society – an informal version of the Dame Juliana League Fly Fishers – to a man coming out of the dark into the light, a fellow traveller lost somewhere on a remote back road near the Penns Creek watershed, to a poor soul surviving another soaking in a local stream, and to smiling and laughing with us always – for the blessings of friendship. Here’s to you, Matt!

Part III – Pawnee Cabin on Swift Run
Part IV – Next Chapter



Bio

Frank Ehrenfeld III resides in Bucks County Pennsylvania. Frank is the proud father of three grown children. He is a women's fast, pitch softball coach and college recruiting director, active in elected leadership positions in his church and community, a musician with his brass quintet and drummer for a few different groups, a Master of Ceremonies, a gardener, a cook, an avid reader, and a Philadelphia sports fan. Frank loves playing Santa Claus and savoring single malt scotch after a day of fly fishing.

The New Way To Taxiderm Fish

By Daniel Miller

Taxidermy is a skill that I learned apprenticing for a professional taxidermist in Halifax, Pa. Prior to fly fishing, fly tying and all other angling exploits that I love, I painted fish for customers at the shop. In the following photos I will demonstrate the process to complete a mounted brook trout after a mold has been made.

I'll focus on the challenges of assuring the fish being preserved is lifelike. However, this is after the steps I'm sharing, a fascinating process of crating a fish mold. I urge you to watch this short video to see what happens first in the process of molding: https://youtu.be/c_-ReNuMQ



For this way of taxiderming the most critical tools are a good airbrush, properly selected paints, and very good reference photos.



Most modern taxidermized fish are not skin mounted, as previously done. Although I started by learning to skin mount, I much prefer to start with a resin form.

The best forms produce the most realistic and life like fish. For this demonstration I had an old trout form in my basement that my son had become fond of.

The first step after molding is to use resin and epoxy to affix the fins.

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After the fins are mounted, the fish can be locked into a stationary position ideal for airbrushing. In my opinion the paint job is the most important part of the fish; it will make it a believable sculpture or a poor copy. You can see the epoxy on the fins are shaped to appear like a fleshy part of the fish. The epoxy molding is also an important aspect.



The first colors to be painted onto the fish is an undercoat of silver, then the belly is painted in white. The fish is then coated with a yellow pigment and a brown coat above the lateral line.

Airbrushing is more like watercoloring than other painting media since it requires a layering of pigments.



The first step in painting a trout is to apply a base coat of yellow pigment to the ventricles and spots. This is followed by hand painting fine blue and red dots on the lateral line. The fins are finished with white and black stripes, characteristic of a brook trout.

Once the painting is complete, the fish is moved to the next step. If the painter is not satisfied with the results, the paint can be stripped and repainted.



To complete the painting portion, I overcoat the ventricles and spots in a yellow pigment. I then hand paint the fine blue and red dots on the lateral line and finish the fins with the white and black stripes of a brook trout.

When I'm pleased with the results I move onto the next step. If not, the paint can still be stripped and repainted.





The spot pattern and vermiculations are the most difficult part of a brook trout; they very rarely come out looking as fine as a wild fish. (This also is why a brook trout is my favorite fish in nature.)

We apply white first in the desired pattern which allows the over-coated yellow to shine more vibrantly.



Then a three coats of glossy clear lacquer are applied to give a wet appearance.



In this case I had prepared a base for the mount, using a piece of driftwood from the Susquehanna River and created river rocks.



Then I affix the fish with a hard wire to give a swimming appearance. I cleaned the eyes of the fish at this point.

Finishing Touches



Lastly, as a finishing touch, I put a fly in the fish's mouth to give the appearance that it is fighting the hook and line. I get a thrill when the final model is lifelike! However the most rewarding aspect to taxidermy is returning the mount to the client knowing that their memories and dreams will live on in my craftsmanship!



Bio

Daniel Miller is an ARMY/ARMY NATIONAL GUARD veteran that discovered fly fishing through the instruction and mentorship of Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing (PHWFF). Daniel and his wife, Abby, are four-time contributors to this newsletter: "How Fly Fishing Saved My Marriage" 8/19; "Letort Spring Run Introductions" 11/19; "Brooding at the Bench," 4/20 and "The New Way To Taxiderm Fish" over its last 14 issues. He writes well and is a gifted fly tyer and fly fisher. He also is the Assistant Program Lead for the incredibly active Project Healing Waters Program in Harrisburg , Pa.

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Fly Fishing Course - Eric Tschantre

Member dues per calendar year are \$20 Individual, \$25 Family.
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Company On The River

By Matt Seymour

Knee-deep in a good-sized river I am usually absorbed by the water, the critters (especially the flying ones), fly box choices and everything else associated with trying to pluck a fish out of its home. I'm the age where this requires all of my attention. Some days I can give it.

This kind of focus temporarily orders my messy mind. You know the clutter stuff: from the distractions that follow us around the house or even to church. Mostly trivial stuff. It's the stuff that sticks like flypaper on my otherwise *tabula rasa*.

I bet these short respites helped me avoid a stroke or heart attack - particularly in the years I was in the advertising business. I was the maddest of "mad men" in those days. Like you working stiffs, my job's to-do list dragged along like the links in Marley's chain. Add to that a list of difficult clients and their unmet expectations.

But that baggage rarely got into my waders with me. Once I started pondering what fly to put on and how to approach the stream, those thoughts drifted away. All that bothersome flotsam and jetsam mercifully stayed put until I took my last cast of the day. (Then they followed me home in the backseat.)

Psychologists (I've known a few) call this particular kind of mental respite "mindfulness." This forced focus - all the stuff fly fishing demands to be productive - actually gives the mind a rest from what tasks and unpleasant memories may be stalking you. Unfortunately this break doesn't eradicate them, but it does send them to a "timeout." The time I've spent with veterans over the last nine years can testify to the predictable relief it provides from their post combat PTSD. And you don't have to suffer from depression to understand this phenomena.

Then When Everything Is So Serene ...

But here's the paradox: why would a man so needful of this bliss ever risk having a companion to fish with? Company on the water opens multiple possibilities for frustration. A few come to mind:

- The friend who insists on helping you net your fish ... with predictably misfortunate results;
- A partner who is drawn to rising fish near you, rumbles upstream entranced by the rises, but is not aware of your imminent presence;
- Uninvited advice about how to improve your mend, your cast, your gear, your fly selection, etc. At my age, it is what is.

However, to be candid, sometimes it's a great relief to know some strapping guy (or gal) is downstream in case a slippery rock casts me into the current. I haven't been dragged to safety by a lady yet, but I'd be completely willing. And before you advise me - I fall even with a good hiking staff and cleated boots.

To Be Avoided At All Costs:

- **Fish counters;** (probably because I rarely catch more than a few) I detest people who sound like the primary pleasure of their fishing day is how many fish they catch. My grandson does this because he's eight years old.
- **People who disregard agreements on how long we'll fish and at what time we'll rendezvous;** for old fogies like me, when someone begins to be over a half hour late, I imagine (hope?) horrible things have happened to them. This particular fault is usually accompanied by an inability (or unwillingness) to answer their cell phone once zero hour has passed. Their tardiness may interrupt my planned nap or lunch.
- **People who insist I have to listen to their music when I'm driving the car;** I'll make exceptions in the case of blues, bluegrass, opera and Mongolian throat singing.
- **Folks who ignore the hatch chart and need my flies to match the hatch.**
- **Boat partners who cannot conceive of anyone standing in the trajectory of their backcast.**

Old Faithfuls

I have a couple of particular favorite companions on the water. Thankfully, their patience and forbearance have preserved their willingness to join me fishing from time to time. As you've read, my list of disqualifying character flaws is a long one. This would have been embarrassing to share 20years ago - but at 70+ I have entered firmly into the inflexible zone.

Craig

One fellow in particular has been my most frequent fishing companion for about 14 years now. He is the brother of a favorite business client. Craig is a member of Valley Forge Trout Unlimited. His key gift is the ability to patiently endure my fishing and character flaws.

This guy has fished with me in several states and all seasons for freshwater salmonids. We even took a whack at fishing together in the wilds of Labrador - twice! We are, for the most part, a study in opposites: He's a gifted fly tyer; I'm not. He remembers every fish he's ever caught in the last ten years and exactly where they were caught. I



Craig Riding Up The Atikonak River In Labrador

remember a few fish (mostly because of a picture I took)) but not many. With few exceptions I get confused about what stream I'm on, where I've been and how to get there. I'm totally GPS dependent; my buddy distrusts technology and carries a Delorme Gazetteer wherever he goes.

His fly casting is impeccable; me - not so much. He likes to fish all day. If we don't take a second car I spend a few hours midday napping wherever I can roll up my raincoat for a pillow. He records every catch (fly, fish size, a photo, water temperature), I simply don't care. I prefer to keep a mental note of my exaggerative memories.

He lives in New Jersey and has to travel a couple of hours just to join me for a trip. Two hours is about a full day of driving for me!

We can discuss religion, politics and food without coming to blows. And his advice on how to make a fly behave in the stream's current far exceeds my ability to mimic his direction. He drinks IPAs and I forgive him.

We had to stop rooming together a number of years ago because my hardening arteries had begun to disallow anything that jangled certain personal routines. Think sharing the bathroom, snoring, room temperature, lights-on lights-off, wet towels, etc. I'm not proud of these eccentricities, but I own them and my friend is kind enough to bunk elsewhere.

Phil

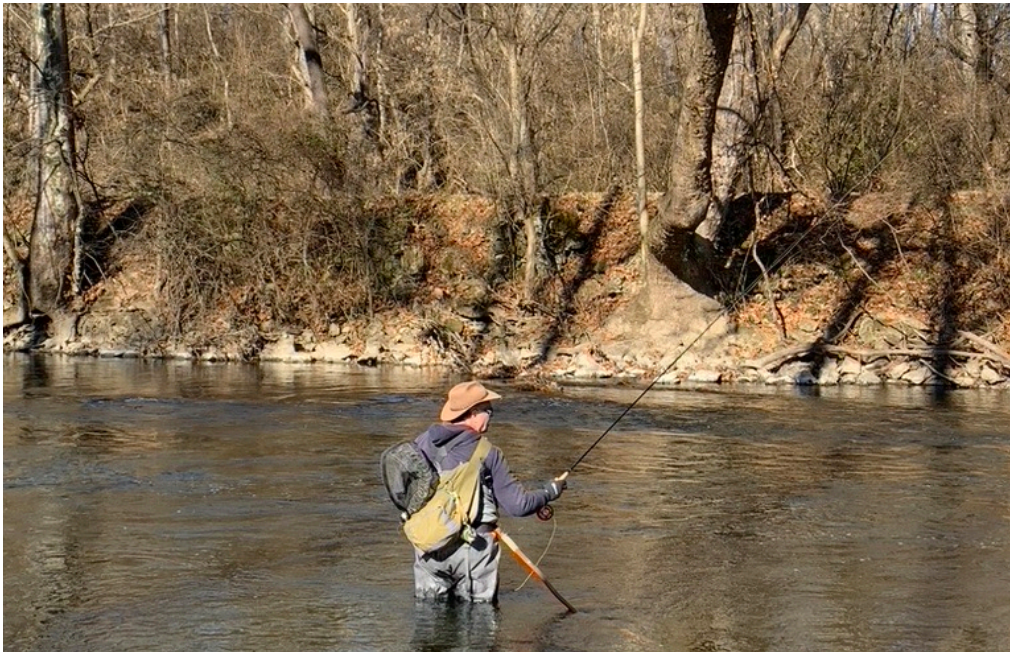
I also have a fellow that lives near me who has re-stoked my desire in getting out to fly fish on a regular basis.

Phil took on the thankless assignment of teaching me euro nymphing about 18 months ago. With my flagging powers of attention, he has patiently fished many hours near me, helping improve my odds of detecting a feeding fish. It ain't easy. But he hasn't given up - yet.

Phil has many of the qualities that make Craig's companionship a gift. But in teaching style if Craig is the Dalai Lama Phil is South Philly. Let's just say Phil is blunt. And he really doesn't show any signs of caring about what I think of his instruction style, his political opinions or what constitutes a good beer for lunch.

In writing this article I've been reacquainted with the good fortune I have in having a few good friends that can tolerate my peculiarities. Bless them all.

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Phil Who Seems To Know What's Doable For Me On A River



BIO

Matt Seymour and his wife Pam are residents of Coatesville, PA. Fortuitously, he lives about two miles from The Coatesville VA Medical Center where he's been a volunteer from Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing for nine years. The time he and his colleagues have spent with the vets who have PTSD and addiction issues has been life saving - for us.

My favorite spots to fish are the Little Juniata, the Tulpehocken and the Farmington River near Avon, Connecticut.

Periodicity

By Matt Marran

pe-ri-o-dic-i-ty

/ˌpɪrɪəˈdɪsədē/ noun: technical noun: periodicity

the quality or character of being periodic; the tendency to recur at intervals.

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Learning to fly fish is the closest thing I can think of to reading the owner's manual to life on Earth. We start out with the basics – gravity, friction, physical properties of wind & water; the biology and the lay of the land. We meet other outdoorsy types. Then we add techniques, we get picky about where we go. We get a vocabulary to go with our tricks and at this point, many of us start to wonder what fly fishing for different fish in a different place would be like and we almost get to start all over. The learning curve stays steep if you select a big change of scenery. When you do this a while you'll know something about groundwater, weather patterns, climate change, laws about land ownership and water rights. Soon you're going to start caring about what's upstream - both physically and metaphorically.

All of that stuff can bog you down in minutiae that's not even close to what got you into fly fishing. To be sure, all this acquired knowledge doesn't even get you invited to more cocktail parties.

A fringe benefit of being a fly fisher is having a sense of *periodicity*. No matter what day of the year it is, you know what you're doing the second week of May next year, right?

We fly anglers are pretty good at having an idea of what bugs are hatching by mentally overlaying hatch charts onto our calendar. With a little sense of seasonal periodicity you don't need to pay much attention to the calendar. You'll be looking for cues elsewhere. Instead of looking for the blue quill around Tax Day, you'll look for it when the forsythias bloom. Every fly shop in Pennsylvania has a customer who will make pronouncements like, "When the oak leaves are the size of a squirrel's ear is when the March browns will be coming off." Fly fishing gets us back to that. The amount of anxiety relieved by having a guess about what's next on the script may be the Greatest Good of fly fishing.

As you addicts know, even though fishing season is situated on calendars by the state powers-that-be, it's really there because of biology. The timing of things that interest the fly angler are largely biologic. I don't know much about other sports, but is there an intrinsic reason why baseball is played mostly in the spring and summer and football in the fall?

When Viral Biology Affects Sales

Marketing pros know this predictable change of seasons well. State fish & game authorities do too.

The pandemic caused a few costly ripples in the commercial outdoors world. In 2020 most states saw a welcomed bump in fishing and hunting license sales to cash-strapped state agencies after a multi-decade decline. In Pennsylvania, *the interest grew to about 249,000 more licenses and permits than the previous year*. According to the commission's website, in 2020 Pennsylvania sold 911,575 general licenses plus 501,584 trout stamps, 26,373 Lake Erie permits, and 84,842 combo permits for a total of 1,524,374 licenses and permits.

If it just has to get done by Friday, do I really have to wait until the weekend to fish? It seems to me that post 2021 many fly fisherman have started fishing all year round. Tuesdays on the Tulpehocken in May are jammed. Saturdays with nice weather can be nearly empty. It's possible a lot of people got some new found flexibility in their Covid lives and] started asking themselves: If I could do this anywhere, would I do it here?

For a while the outdoors industry thought it could get away with fly fishing skipping a generation or two thanks to *A River Runs Through It*. It came out just two years after Pennsylvania hit its peak of license sales. Generally speaking, fly shops and other businesses of the outdoors world had a great Year One of the Pandemic. Well, they did if they were able to offset losses due to the Pandemic starting right in the beginning of spring. The last public event I attended in 2020 was stocking the West Branch of the Octoraro. The next thing you know, people started wearing

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buffs everywhere and it became a little more difficult to tell who was a fisherman and it was about then the phrase 'supply chain' became common parlance.

Outdoors marketing has a pretty good idea of who becomes a fly angler. What used to be a pseudo - hereditary determinant diminished when the self-imposed solitude placed upon all families, *increased* demand for escape, but vied with limited public access, suburban sprawl, and long-second-home ownership to *decrease* fishing opportunities. But the uptick in license sales doesn't lie.

Some Things Stay The Same

Most of us have eavesdropped a conversation that goes something like this: a prospective fly angler will ask an experienced one why it would be a good idea to get into fly fishing. There's often a pause followed by some hemming and hawing. Sometimes the seasoned fisherman will say, "Oh, to be out there on a day when they're taking dry flies with enthusiasm!" or "It's a great way to relieve stress and get a little exercise." Sometimes there's even talk of the traditions of fly fishing.

Fly fishing and the compulsion of measuring our lives in the periodicity of fly-fishing biology will always be marked by the experience I saw acted out at a boat ramp on the Roaring Fork a couple of years ago. Some local kids cruising around on bikes had some knowledge of spin fishing for trout. They were picking the brain of a guide after he just wrapped up a full-day float. The boys, checking out his gear, and asked all the right questions. For a time the guide obliged, but did nothing to persuade these teens to take up fly fishing. "Fellas, I have sunburn, a rusty truck, and if I'm lucky, my third wife will still be there with a beer when I get home."

This is too long a story to tell to a kid, too esoteric to tell a coworker, and too blunt to explain to folks you might be trying to avoid when you fish. So now when someone asks me why I fly fish I give them an innocuous but polite answer like, "I just like standing in the creek." Or, "Fish are just amazing creatures when you get up close." It is a reply that doesn't open any paths for a longer soliloquy. If the person I'm talking to has done some fly fishing they'll slap me on the back and say, "Yeah, it's just great being out there!" And if the person has been at it a long while, they already know the whole story anyway. We share a half-smile and a nod, and move on.

Bio:



Matthew Marran is a teacher and fly fishing guide based in Chester County. In the outdoors he has done subsistence hunting & fishing in Alaska, shuttled boats in Colorado, worked at a fly shop and has been guiding in Pennsylvania since 2010. You can generally find him between Coburn and Delaware County or at wildeastoutfitters.com.

Mr. Marran has taught middle and high school social studies for over twenty years.

French Creek Gets A Little Help From Her Friends

By Beth Intoccia

We all want clean water and trails, right? But wait, isn't it someone else's job? Nope!

The Litter Lifters of West Vincent Township, Green Valleys Watershed Association (<https://greenvalleys.org>), and the Dame Juliana League Fly Fishers (<http://www.djlflyfishers.org/membership.html>) joined forces to remove litter along French Creek in Phoenixville. This is a big task! The banks are steep, the waters can run swift and high, and the terrain has thick woods near the water's edge. Despite the challenges, the volunteers prevailed!

After some water safety counsel from Bob Bonney, Conservation Officer for the Fish and Boat Commission, we successfully executed 2 litter clean ups: the first where 34 volunteers removed 100 bags of litter and 15 tires on September 11, 2021; the most recent cleanup was May 21, 2022, where 31 volunteers removed 75 bags of litter and five tires.



Bob Bonney and Brock Benson
Conservation Officers for the Fish and
Boat Commission



The Canoe Crew (Plus Joe Christopher) From the Dame
Juliana League of Fly Fishers



Keep Pennsylvania Beautiful Banner For Cars on Main St
and Schuylkill River Trail Walkers To See Our Good Work!



Emerson Cannon, President of Dame Juliana Fly Fishers, Shares Why Fly Fishers Are Devoted to Clean Water



"Jim and Lynne May Stayed In The Water And Were Cool Under Pressure To Find Litter!"



Alex Runde, Watershed Educator at Green Valleys Watershed



Once the Litter Was Removed It Was Peaceful And Beautiful Under the Train Tracks. This Where the French Creek Joins the Schuylkill River.

In the 1800s iron and steel factories lined the creek. The railroad industry came in and industrialization was in full swing. That's all gone. There was a Lenni Lenape settlement in this area in the 1600s. A tremendous amount of debris was in the water before our two clean-ups. It's stunning now!

We are extremely grateful for our core Litter Lifters of West Vincent, The Mears Group (<https://www.mears.net/about-mears/history/>), Dame Juliana League Fly Fishers, and Green Valley Watershed Association. By working together we can accomplish great things!



Mears Group, Inc. Saw The Event On Facebook and Jumped on Board!



Retrieving More Rubber!



One of Three Piles - We Are Hot Litter Lifters!



Bio

Beth Intoccia grew up in northern Michigan. Her parents taught her to respect nature and water. She moved to Pennsylvania at age 15. A graduate of Penn State in 1983, she spent 11 years in sales and then started a family with her husband Tom, raising two daughters. She has spent the last 27 years volunteering, including Girl Scouts, and in the Owen J. Roberts School District when her daughters were students. Beth is the driving force behind Litter Lifters of West Vincent.

If you'd like to join Beth's Litter Lifters of West Vincent drop her a note at:

litterliftersofwestvincent@gmail.com

Last Cast

By Dick Moyer

Among the valuable lessons I've learned through years of participation in various sporting activities is the fact that the better you know your opponent, the better is your chance of success. I have often found myself contemplating how I might apply that lesson to the sport of fly fishing. The highly-prized, cold-blooded aquatic-dwelling vertebrates that we so ardently pursue are in a sense our opponents and we attempt, through guile, acquired knowledge and deception, to impose our will on them, just as we would any other opponent. Accordingly, I have invested countless hours attempting to learn their habits, fears, behavioral drivers and predilections in an attempt to gain any available advantage over them. Subjects as diverse as reading water, seasonal factors and weather patterns have captured my interest at various stages of my ongoing knowledge pursuit. The influences of sun and moon phases entered the equation as evidenced by my penchant to schedule significant angling forays according to the dictates of published Solunar Tables.

It was an easy leap, then, to expand my obsession to include a focus on employing the perfect fly with which to deceive my opponent. Consequently, I found myself consumed with Gary LaFontaine's writings on caddisflies and his innovative sparkle pupa. Al Caucci and Bob Nastasi's Hatches II, an excellent guide to fishing the hatches of North American trout streams, found its way into my library and my consciousness. Drunk on the knowledge acquired in these and other collected works, I eventually embarked on a new undertaking; to tie my own flies, albeit somewhat late in my life. This new activity, I reasoned, gave me a controllable variable to factor into my quest for dominion over my wily spotted opponent.

My initial efforts to tie serviceable flies were met with disappointment. To characterize the resulting patterns as ugly and unrealistic would be charitable. Thankfully, many subsequent hours of painstaking efforts eventually began to yield minimally acceptable imitations which, somewhat surprisingly, even began to attract the attention of some fish.

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In recent years I have on occasion tied a tippet to one of my pathetic early creations and ended up with a trout in my net, with both of us looking equally bewildered. On such occasions the words “show them something they haven’t seen before” echoed in my head as I could only attribute my unexpected good fortune to the fact that my confused catch could never before have seen something as unsightly as the clutter I was removing from its lip. Then this strange occurrence happened again, and yet again. How could it be that, after years of practice, my painstaking, highly-evolved efforts to tie the perfect fly yielded results only marginally better than my pitiful early handiwork? Surely trout must be able to distinguish between the real-life hatches that permeate their feeding lanes and my woefully deficient imitations.

These unexplained experiences caused me to wonder just how important it is to create precise imitations of the beautiful illustrations in Caucci and Nastasi’s Hatches II. My fly boxes are, after all, permeated with patterns that are not intended to mimic any particular insect at all. We typically call these things attractors, stimulators or searching patterns. The primary attribute of a perdigon nymph, for example, is its ability sink fast rather than impersonate anything actually found in a stream.

Faced with this body of information, it would be reasonable to abandon all attempts at fly-tying exactitude in favor of more practical pursuits. Casting and presentation precision come to mind as worthy of serious consideration. Nevertheless, while I will not ignore these and other important building blocks in my efforts to become more adept at my beloved avocation, neither will I stop trying to achieve a higher level of competence in my fly tying. Despite the fact that, at least through the lens of a fish, the difference between mediocre and excellence doesn’t seem to make much difference, the process of tying has become a labor of love for me, and an indispensable element in my enjoyment of the sport. Tight lines!



Richard R Meyer

Friends of The Dame Juliana League



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