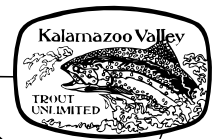




Slacklines



The official publication of the Kalamazoo Valley Chapter of Trout Unlimited • Winter 2009

KVCTU Calendar of Events

December 18, 2008

Chapter Meeting

Annual Show and Tell

**The Fountains, 535 S. Riverview Dr.,
Parchment. Starts at 6pm**

RSVP to Terry Wittorp at (269) 424-5138 or email terryflyfish@hotmail.com

January 8, 2009

Board Meeting

7pm, Gander Mountain, Kalamazoo

January 22, 2009

**Ray Schmidt,
Schmidt Outfitters**

**The Fountains, 535 S. Riverview Dr.,
Parchment. Starts at 6pm**

RSVP to Terry Wittorp at (269) 424-5138 or email terryflyfish@hotmail.com

February 12, 2009

Board Meeting

7pm, Gander Mountain, Kalamazoo

February 19, 2009

**Kevin Feenstra,
Feenstra Guide Service**

**The Fountains, 535 S. Riverview Dr.,
Parchment. Starts at 6pm**

RSVP to Terry Wittorp at (269) 424-5138 or email terryflyfish@hotmail.com

March 14, 2009

**3rd Annual Tie-A-Thon for
Projects Healing Waters**

**Elkhart Conservation Club, 55515
Riviera Dr., Elkhart, IN 46514**

All the flies from the Tie-A-Thon will be distributed to Project Healing Waters. PHW is dedicated to the physical and emotional rehabilitation of disabled active duty military personnel and

veterans through fly fishing and fly tying education and outings. Contact either: Tim Scott at timelsscott@yahoo.com, (574) 276-0689 cell or (574) 289-6392 home or Terry Wittorp at (269) 424-5138 or terryflyfish@hotmail.com

March 21, 2009

KVCTU Annual Banquet

**Niko's Landing, 5822 Kings Highway,
Comstock, MI**

Watch your mail box for your invitation. See article on page 6.

April 9, 2009

Board Meeting

7pm, Gander Mountain, Kalamazoo

April 16, 2009

**Member Meeting
Speaker TBA**

**The Fountains, 535 S. Riverview Dr.,
Parchment. Starts at 6pm**

RSVP to Terry Wittorp at (269) 424-5138 or email terryflyfish@hotmail.com

April 18, 2009

Adopt-A-Highway

Contact Dick Chamberlin to volunteer at 269/671-4507 or rhchambe@tds.net.

May 15-17, 2009

**Spring Outing at
Schmidt Outfitters**

Details to come. Watch our Website.

June 28-July 2, 2009

**Michigan Youth
Trout Camp**

**Ralph A. MacMullan Conference
Center on Higgins Lake**

Volunteers needed please contact Ken

Nuorala at (269) 731-5137 or email kenbighorn@earthlink.net

July 9-12, 2009

Wa-Wa-Sum Outing

This will be an extra special outing at the Wa-Wa-Sum Lodge as KVCTU celebrates TU's 50th anniversary. See page 7 for details.

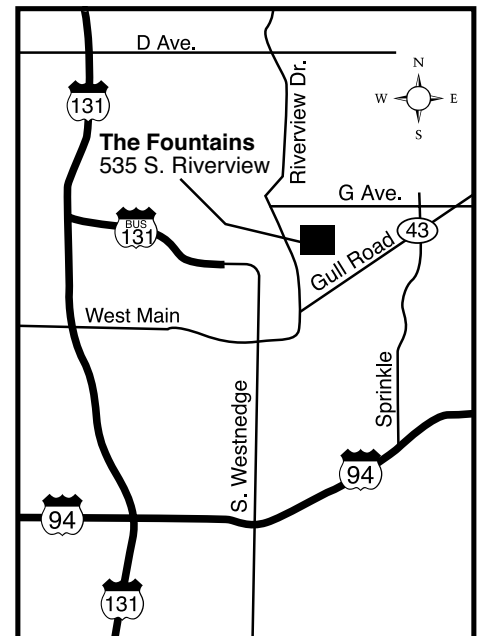
August 17-22, 2009

**TU National Meeting
Traverse City, MI**

Save the dates. Details to follow.

About the meetings

All meetings are at The Fountains and open to the public. 6pm Wetlines/Cocktails, 7pm Dinner and 8pm Program. No smoking at all meetings.



PLEASE NOTE: All meetings are held at The Fountains, 535 S. Riverview in Parchment

Weber Applications Due February 15

Applications for the Weber Special Projects Funds are due February 15, 2009. Applications and guidelines can be found on our website. Last year we were able to sponsor projects on Connor's Creek in Marquette, Cedar Creek in the Muskegon Conservation District, and the Little Manistee River

Due to market conditions the fund has not grown this year, however, we feel it is important to accept applications and the committee is committed to find ways to help the organizations continue to succeed in their projects.

Applications should follow the guidelines listed on the Website and be sent to Ed Hoover, 2595 5th Street, Shelbyville, MI 49344.

Thank You Gander Mountain!

A special "Thank You" to Portage Gander Mountain for allowing us to use their meeting and classroom for KVCTU's meetings. They are always hospitable and we appreciate their generosity.
Sincerely, KVCTU Board

The KVCTU newsletter, *Slacklines*, is published three times a year (Winter, Spring and Fall). Postcard reminders will be sent out as needed.

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www.kvctu.org**

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From the President

by Greg Potter

Recent events have conspired to put a clear focus on the need to re-address the fundamentals of our organization. Long discussions with members of our chapter, Michigan TU State Council members, and MDNR fishery biologists demand a discussion on where we as Trout Unlimited and anglers are and where we need to head.

I truly believe that the founders of our organization had the right idea for their time. Our state had become too dependent on hatcheries to supplement our fisheries, the need to begin taking better care of the streams was all too obvious and a new direction in fisheries management was called for.

Our Michigan and Great Lakes fisheries do not fit Trout Unlimited's current national model. TU's emphasis on restoring native fish to their original range, while admirable, does not fit with our modern day fisheries in Michigan and should only be considered as an important part of an overall management strategy. While many are not naturally occurring, our state's wild trout and salmon fisheries are some of the healthiest in the world.

Michigan and the Great Lakes are no longer isolated from the rest of the world. Global markets have exposed us to an increasing number of exotic species. When I was a teenager my family owned a cottage on the Lake Huron shore. Every summer dead and dying alewives would cover our little beach. This exotic species had no effective predator in our waters until the introduction of pacific salmon. With an unlimited supply of food these salmon grew to ocean fish size. Now, with a better predator/prey balance the salmon population may be settling to a more sustainable number and more appropriate growth rate. With the alewife population in check, native fish species are coming back to Lake Huron. It is great to manage for native species and that should be a high priority. However, we cannot ignore the value of well thought out introductions as a way to maintain sustainable and healthy aquatic ecosystems in the face of global markets.

Conserving and rehabilitating our coldwater streams and their watersheds is important, but the ability for the public to access and fish these streams is equally important to the success of Trout Unlimited's stated mission and our efforts to sustain these fine fisheries.

Trout Unlimited's mission is: "To conserve, protect and restore North America's coldwater fisheries and their watersheds."

The vision statement motivating this mission is: "By the next generation, Trout Unlimited will ensure that robust populations of native and wild coldwater fish once again thrive within their North American range, so that our children can enjoy healthy fisheries in their home waters."

Other than the reference to our children enjoying healthy fisheries, there is no indication that TU is, in fact, an organization of people who are fishermen as well as conservationists. When a group of fishermen founded TU 50 years ago, the distinction may have been superfluous. The philosophy was that if we take care of the fish, the fishing will take of itself. However, recent developments indicate the need to re-address the fundamentals of our organization. Today, many kids grow up without ever playing in a field or by a stream. They are being raised by parents who never played in a field or by a stream. Their grandparents and all of their relatives and friends probably live in the city. It is far from evident that the fishing

can "take care of itself." On the contrary, two developments in particular indicate that the sport is in trouble: (1) Declining license sales show that there is decreasing participation in all hunting and fishing sports. (2) The animal rights movement is becoming increasingly strident and effective in pushing its anti-field sports agenda — it is not just an anti-fur coat issue anymore; partisans see catch-and-release fishing as particularly unconscionable. These new realities suggest that it is time for TU to make explicit its connection with, and support of, fishing. Further, it would be helpful to reconsider TU's emphasis on native trout, which makes the organization closer to Trout Limited than Trout Unlimited.

Just as when the founders gathered on the banks of the Au Sable fifty years ago it would have been hard for them to imagine that someday kids wouldn't naturally be interested in fishing, they wouldn't have dreamed that someday their stream would be relegated to second class status because it is home to browns, rainbows, and brookies rather than its native grayling. While no one denies that the support of native trout populations is a wonderful thing, the focus on that goal to the exclusion of streams such as Michigan's Au Sable, as well as all of the country's glorious but totally artificial tailwater fisheries, is unnecessarily jeopardizing the future of both the fishers and the fisher-

Continued on page 6

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Smart Approaches for New Fly Anglers

By John Zielke

Memories that Teach

As a kid growing up in Battle Creek, Michigan, I didn't have the luxury of fishing with my parents. Fishing just wasn't in their deck of cards and I knew it. I had to settle, at least early on, for getting up early on Saturday mornings to watch fishing legends like Virgil Ward and Bill Dance. At least I could *watch* them catch fish. As I grew older, the fly fishing stars aligned and my luck changed. I grew close to a few mentors who possessed a true passion for fishing. And fly fishing can be contagious. My new neighbor, Otto Mark, and my brother-in-law, Denny Malcolm gladly shared what they knew. These magical moments planted some seeds. These two fellows stood for the real deal when it came to fishing. Otto, a tall and lanky man from Denmark, knew more about river fly fishing than most. After Otto moved to Michigan, he settled right in on cold, narrow and brushy streams that hold secretive and skittish trout. He'd say, "John, if you can trick trout in Michigan, then you can get 'em anywhere." He was right. With Otto, we would practice fly casting on the grass. I jumped on these chances like a wired hound to a treed raccoon. Otto would take an old top from a rusty coffee can and toss it under a shrub or beneath a low tree limb. "Don't think about it too much," he would say. "Ease up on the forward cast ... Not so hard ... Just use your eyes and aim for that lid." I soon realized that good casting would require a lot of practice. My piece of orange yarn, tied to the leader, would either sail into the bushes or land five feet from the target, or both! Otto smiled and watched and took another long drag from his cigarette. He knew exactly what he was doing. When my frustration boiled over, he finally let the cat out of his big bag of old tricks. He said "watch this side arm cast John" and then he would cast the fly line, with workman precision, closer to the ground on a horizontal plane, as he pitched the yarn under the bush near the old top. Oh, and Denny, let me tell you, he knew lake fishing and he could find fish. And we did. Denny was patient



Get me to the river!

and willing to include me in his fishing. We chased scrappy smallmouth bass on shallow Lake Michigan bays and found chunky trout in small, cold Wyoming spring creeks. Often, the beauty of our surroundings became the reason why we fished.

Hidden Opportunities

The sport of fly fishing offers many challenges for the beginner. Some are not so obvious. I like to view them as opportunities to grow. Let's take a closer look at some interesting perspectives on fly fishing that may clear the fog and launch you forward as a new angler. By navigating and growing through these "bends" in the stream, you'll soon begin to find and hook fish.

What's Underneath That Water?

One of the best, but often frustrating, challenges is being able to find fish in rivers. You get to the water and then think "where do I go now?" Have you been there? The old saying that "10 percent of the river holds 90 percent of the fish" really fits here. In order to catch fish, you first need to recognize the areas of a stream that are most likely to hold fish. We call this "reading the water." It does take some practice. All river game fish prefer to face into the

current. They hold or feed in locations that offer a place to rest, protection from predators and easy access to food. They like their soft chairs and feed bags just like we do and that's how they survive in harsh riverine environments. This applies to trout, smallmouth bass, steelhead, pike and salmon. A cluster of large submerged boulders, a drop-off into slightly deeper water or an outcropping of bank are good examples. There are many other structures that we look for. These structures deflect the current and fish will park near them, in slower current, as they rest or wait to ambush prey. The current is the conveyor belt for drifting food. The fish will move from their easy chair to the table, i.e. faster current, and back, to eat. The goal is to cast your fly pattern near these "easy chairs" or "tables" to trigger a rapping strike from a carnivorous fish. These structures exist, in one form or another, in most all rivers and they repeat over and over from one stream to the next.

What's For Dinner?

There's no doubt that predator fish prefer live food over man-made or natural materials lashed to a steel hook (a.k.a. artificial fly patterns). Fish have great vision and a sense of smell to help

them detect the live-like features of the real thing. Fish can even detect when their prey is nervous and wanting to escape their hopeless demise. And yes, predator fish do eat their younger and smaller brothers, sisters and cousins. Our Michigan game fish are true carnivores! Most fly patterns, unless they are exact imitations, do not match all the features of aquatic insects, smaller fish, crayfish, worms, or fish eggs, for example. But that's OK! No worries here. Understand that fish respond to the general size, shape, color and movement of the pattern. The challenge is to get close on these aspects of the fly and to fish the fly in a way that triggers a strike. Fish can be selective about what they eat. They will key in on specific bugs, like mayflies or caddis flies for a short period of time, for example. But predator fish will also smash ridiculous looking flies, when you least expect it, that don't resemble anything in nature!

Equipment – What's My Line?

If you plan to buy equipment, then start by selecting the right fly line for the type of fly fishing you do. Pay attention to the fly line weight, type and taper for your needs. Your rod and reel choice will be easier after you make this decision. The sizes of target fish and the sizes and weights of the flies

you will cast are all determined by the fly line weight you select. In fly fishing, you are casting the line and the fly is along for the ride. This fact is just the opposite of how other fishing lines and rods work. Specifically, the lure weight dictates what line weight and rod strength you should cast and fish. All fly lines are weight-rated from the lightest "1 weight" lines to the heaviest "15 weight" lines. Given this, fly lines are also matched to fly rods to allow the rod to handle the weight of the line.

So, the general approach on line weight is as follows: lighter weight lines and rods for smaller fish and lighter flies / heavier weight lines and rods for larger fish and heavier flies

To be more specific, the 3, 4 or 5 weight lines are good for pan fish and small trout. The 6 and 7 weight lines are versatile and effective for bass and larger trout. The 8 and 9 weight lines work well for large bass, steelhead, small salmon, pike and light salt water fish.

Fly lines are also designed to float or sink. The floating lines are versatile and are best for dry fly fishing where we're fishing flies that float on the surface. The floating lines can also be used with wet flies or streamers that are fished under the water.

All lines have a shape or "taper." For floating lines, the double taper (DT)

lines are tapered to a smaller diameter at both ends and have a larger diameter middle section. These lines are good for shorter casting distances (less than 30 to 40 feet) and for beginner casters. The weight forward (WF) lines have a larger diameter "head" closest to the fly. The head then tapers back to a thinner diameter running line that connects to your backing line and reel. These lines are good for casting larger flies that catch wind, for casting in windy conditions and for more distance.

The sinking fly lines are more specialized and are designed to get flies deep. These lines have various sink rates in inches per second. The sinking lines are often fished with streamer style flies that represent swimming fish. These lines are generally more challenging to cast and handle than are the floating lines.

Casting versus Fishing the Fly

Good casting is a game of timing, positioning and technique. You don't need to be a triathlete to be a good caster. The best casters have a relaxed, smooth stroke. When we try to

Continued on page 6

10 tips on getting started in fly fishing:

1. Connect with knowledgeable people or reputable fly shops.
2. If possible, borrow equipment from a friend and try some fishing before purchasing.
3. Always cast a rod, with the right line, before buying. Have your sales person evaluate your cast while you are casting. You cannot buy the right rod by flipping it in the shop.
4. Good equipment is more affordable today. You don't need to spend more than \$200 for a rod or more than \$125 for a reel. Make sure the product has a good warranty.
5. Take starter programs on fly fishing and casting from anglers with practical experiences in teaching and guiding.
6. Do hike and wade on-the-water instruction sessions to learn basic fly fishing techniques.
7. Pick one river or one lake and learn it. You'll be miles ahead of most anglers.
8. Learn the **important few** types of insects and other food forms where you fish. Then buy or tie the **basic patterns** that represent them.
9. Try ponds or lakes before rivers or streams. Avoid starting out on small, brushy streams!
10. Fish with a partner and respect moving water. Always wade with a wading belt. Never wade in high water.

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“muscle” a cast, we cause more problems like ugly tailing loops and nasty shock waves in the line. These casting faults chew into accuracy and into your ability to lay the fly line on the water without causing too much noise or disturbance to a fish. On the stream, you’ll hit many fish within 40 feet or less. The “long bomb” casts are more likely to fly over good fish and to spook them. Game, set and match over!

But we must also “fish the fly,” after the fly hits the water, as we try to trick a fish into striking the fly. Like casting, this takes a lot of practice on the water. Some flies need to be drifted naturally in the current to draw attention. With other flies, we make them nervous with movement, like a jittery rabbit crossing the road, to trigger a jolting strike. We fish the fly with the right rod and line movements for the conditions at hand.

“Heron Like” Stealth

Watch any heron in the water and you’ll notice how slow and deliberate it can be. These sneaky birds will hide in the shadows, blend in with their surroundings, get low to the water, and do everything possible to make sure that they are not spotted by a wary fish. Slowing down is the name of the game. The best fly anglers mimic herons. They avoid crashing through the bank brush sending every fish within 50 feet rushing to the bomb shelter at the bottom of a deep pool. Instead, they might creep, on land, around some fishy bank cover and then slowly come back upstream or down to approach a possible good lie. You get the picture.

Looking back, fly anglers 500 years ago shaped crude rods from sticks and wove fly lines from animal hairs. They used strange looking flies and they caught fish! I sometimes wonder if fly anglers today are any better. At least we don’t need to hook fish to survive. Or do we? Catching fish with fly gear will test your wits and patience. The real opportunity may be your ability to juggle some of the challenges we’ve discussed. Whether it’s the Agulowak River in Alaska or a quiet lake near Battle Creek, you’ll need to be smarter than your opponent to win the prize!

ies. Once the fishermen are gone, can support for the fisheries — whether of natives or transplants — be far behind? It is inconceivable that the founders would interpret a vision of ensuring “robust populations of native and wild coldwater fish” to mean that deserving fish must be both native and wild and that our conservation activities should be limited to waters that are capable of being restored to their native fishes. However, that is the direction that TU has appeared to have taken.

The following revision of the TU Mission Statement is suggested: “To conserve, protect and restore North America’s coldwater fisheries and their watersheds, and to support sport fishing in those waters.”

The following revision of the TU Vision Statement is suggested: “Trout Unlimited will ensure that robust populations of coldwater fish — where possible, native or wild — thrive in all North American waters capable of supporting them, so that present and future generations can enjoy healthy fisheries in their home waters.”

I believe these changes would bring TU’s mission and vision into harmony with the majority of its current and potential membership. They allow for the full range of fisheries management techniques and fishing regulations.

The 50th anniversary of Trout Unlimited in Michigan offers a marker to take a new compass reading and correct our course. Who is better qualified to propose that our mission be updated than members from the state that gave birth to the organization? What better occasion is there to make such a change than the 50th anniversary of the organization?

This is not a manifesto, but an invitation for you to join the conversation. We want to hear from you. All the board members’ contact information is listed in this newsletter. Give us a call or send us an e-mail.

— Greg Potter

The Top Ten Reasons to attend the Annual KVCTU Conservation Banquet

By Dennis Martin

10) We will be holding this event at a new venue, Nikos Landing in Comstock, overlooking the Kalamazoo River! (Did someone say casting contest?)

9) It’s a family-friendly atmosphere so you can bring your spouse and friends! (There will be prizes geared for guys and gals...anglers, non-anglers alike.)

8) The return of Jack Spenner and Dennis Martin as your guest emcees. (They are bound to come with some new jokes by now!)

7) Lots of great raffle, silent auction and live auction prizes! (Come see the goodies we’ve gathered this year...It will be spectacular.)

6) Did we mention great food and your favorite adult beverage? (Buffet style mean you can go up for seconds.)

5) Catch up with your fishing friends’ tall tales after a long, cold winter. (Some stories may be true but the names have been changed to protect the innocent.)

4) One word...Montana Raffle Table. (Actually it’s 3 words. But one \$5 ticket wins the entire table with a fly rod, reel, flies and many other cool goodies.)

3) It’s Trout Unlimited’s 50th Anniversary. (Come help us celebrate!)

2) The return of Glen Blackwood as auctioneer. (Our chapter is blessed to have Glen as a friend and supporter.)

1) What a great cause! (Proceeds will benefit the KVCTU’s stream improvement projects, youth camp and our many other activities.)

Mark your spring calendar today for Saturday, March 21 at Niko’s Landing in Comstock. Our annual Conservation Banquet will be bigger and better than ever before. Tell your friends and fill a table for a fun evening of dinner, a few drinks, raffles and auction. You’ll be helping one of the most active Trout Unlimited chapters continue with it’s many projects. We are always looking for donations of prizes from your business, or your friend’s business, or your home-made creations. For more information contact Chapter Vice President and banquet Chairman Doug Gerow at 660-9612 or doug.gerow@gmail.com.

KVCTU Stimulus Plan *continued*

will certainly have a “different” twist this year, with more focus on gathering data instead of improving structure. Don't get me wrong — stream improvement projects are still needed and will be performed, but are not presently as critical as vital stream data.

Like always, our request for assistance goes out to ALL KVCTU volunteers. With over 500 chapter members, we encourage as many volunteers to get involved in our upcoming stream projects. KVCTU Resources will announce the dates of our spring/summer stream projects throughout the winter season. Look for announcements through e-mail, our Website (www.kvctu.org), and advertisements distributed during chapter meetings. If you have any questions or comments related to our upcoming season, you can contact me through the contact information reported in this publication.

Something 50ish Art Neumann inducted to Hall of Fame

Art Neumann, one of the founding fathers of TU who attended that initial meeting at the Barbless Hook in 1959, was recently inducted into the Catskill (N.Y.) Fly Fishing Center and Museum Hall of Fame at the age of 92. Neumann, of Saginaw, was the first vice president of Trout Unlimited. He became the executive director of TU in 1962.

Neumann remains active in his local chapter of Trout Unlimited, advises the MCTU and is looking forward to attending the 50th anniversary in 2009.

The editor wishes to thank Margaret Jackson for bring this to our attention.

MEMORIAL

KVCTU would like to extend a special “Thank You” to Janet Knudsen for donating her late husband William Knudsen's fly tying supplies to support KVCTU's winter fly tying event and the summer youth program.

KVCTU to Celebrate TU's 50th at Wa-Wa-Sum

by Ed Hoover

July, 15, 1959 several forward thinking fishermen gathered at the Barbless Hook on the main branch of the Au Sable River. Dedicated to the sport they loved, these conservationists wanted to form an organization similar to Duck's Unlimited that would conserve, protect and restore the coldwater fisheries in which their beloved trout lived.

Almost fifty years later KVCTU is planning to return to the rustic screened-in porch at the Wa-Wa-Sum Lodge along the main stream of the Au Sable River to pay tribute to our forefathers of conservation, celebrate our sport and enjoy our friendships. Come join us Thursday, July 9, 2009 to Sunday, July 12, for a weekend of catching brookies on all the major branches of the Au Sable and the Upper Manistee. Possibly catching the tail end of the Hex hatch as we found last year or an early morning Trico hatch with hopper fishing during the day. If you want a break from fishing our caretaker Kevin can set you up with a canoe trip where you could end up stopping at the dock in front of the Barbless Hook to see the memorial plaque honoring Trout Unlimited.

The Wa-Wa-Sum lodge was constructed in the early 1900s by Rube Babbitt and has proven to be one of our highlights over the years. In the past we have had wonderful times sharing stories on the porch, listening to music played by your colleagues, maybe even seeing the northern lights. However, we can not shoot water balloons during the silver hatch as was done in the late 80s.

The Lodge will be open Thursday, July 9 in the afternoon for you to drop your gear in and either relax on the porch or fish. Friday, we will have a buffet dinner set out for you to grab a sandwich and snacks so you can fish on the main branch of the Au Sable or travel a short distance to some of the best fishing in the Midwest. Breakfast and sack lunches will be available for both Saturday and Sunday. Saturday evening will feature the Johnny D. Memorial Cocktail Hour with a specially prepared steak dinner. After fishing you can spend the evening in relaxed fellowship on the porch overlooking the Au Sable.

The cost for the entire weekend Friday through Sunday is only \$100 a person. If you want to stay Thursday thru Sunday the cost is \$140. To reserve your spot send your payment to Ed Hoover at 2595 5th Street, Shelbyville, MI 49344, any questions call 616/262-4566 days or 269/792-0582 nights.

We are looking forward to seeing old friends return, current friends show up again, or first time visitors. Once you have stayed at the Lodge you are always friends. So, lettuce, turnip and fish.

KVCTU Past Presidents, Members of the Year, Emergers and Volunteers

Past Presidents: Ed Sutton, Bob Jackson, Dan Crockett, Max Tittle, Mick Kolassa, Tom White, Mark Freeman, Dennis Martin, Mahlon Lantz, Paul Tulgetske, Merrill Katz, Ed Hoover, David Gunnell, Barney Naylor, Ken Nuorala and Terry Wittorp

Past Members of the Year: Mick Kolassa (86), Tom White and Lou Kollar (98), Mark Freeman, Charles Maltby (93), Marshall and Sharon Champion, Jared Arnold, Patrick Connelly (83), Herb Spencer (84), Merrill Katz (89), Ellen Beyerlein, Mahlon Lantz, Rick Schmitt, Tom Krol (85), Ed Hoover, Paul Tulgetske, Dennis Martin (88), Richard Chamberlin (99), Barney Naylor (01), Dave Gunnell (03), Greg Potter (02), Ken Nuorala (04), Terry Wittorp (00), Mike Lagowski (05), Pat Moskalik (06) and Steve Birman (07)

Past Emergers: L. Page Graves, Doug Potter, Dwayne Patrick, Pat Moskalik (04), Brad Parlato (05), Tim Kellum (03), Don Squires (02), Dave Gunnell, Deb Dunsford (00), Steve Birman (05), Gordon Lanker (06) and Steve Schullery (07).

Volunteers of the Year: Arron and Lauren Wittorp, Andy Tulgetske, Becky Nuorala, Jennifer Moskalik and Jennifer Birman.

KVCTU Stimulus Plan

By Bradley G. Parlato, PE

Here we are, another trout angling season behind us. I hope everyone was able to spend time on their favorite stretch of water. I myself didn't get out as much as I usually do, but each opportunity was indeed rewarding. For those of you that participated in our stream projects this past year, Spring Brook Brushing, Sand Creek Phase II, and MEANDRS, I am sure you can relate with me how rewarding those projects were — especially because those projects survived a significant hydrological storm event that should have destroyed our work!

There are not too many streams in SW Michigan that KVCTU has not assisted. Our work is fairly obvious to the wading angler, whether it be half-logs anchored to the stream floor, stone cross veins located within gravelly riffles,

or reinforced stream banks that harbor protected trout. I, like most other anglers, am impressed and thankful for the work KVCTU has provided to our local trout streams. However, there are other “not so noticeable” benefits that KVCTU has provided to certain watersheds in the past. Besides ongoing consultation to many local agencies, we have also provided thermal data loggers to the MDNR to monitor temperature effects of certain streams, and have also assisted with surveying and measuring data collection for an ongoing evaluation of Silver Creek.

Stream data collection and evaluations are not something new. However like most current issues, our needs take a back seat to other real important stuff — like stimulus packages and buyout plans for failing

businesses. Unfortunately, we don't have the luxury of waiting for our streams to fail...or others to fail. Yes, our local streams are in fairly good shape structurally, but we are lacking an adequate amount of stream data such as temperature, macroinvertebrate populations, and other water quality indicators. This information is vital to determining the health of our trout streams and watersheds. KVCTU Resources in cooperation with Ms. Kristin Nelson, Michigan Council of TU, would like to increase our involvement in stream data collection. Ms. Nelson is willing to educate our chapter about data collection and reporting techniques, so we can begin collecting data throughout the spring/summer season. Our stream projects

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Slacklines

The official publication of
Kalamazoo Valley Chapter Trout Unlimited
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Kalamazoo, MI 49008
www.kvctu.org

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