



Victory for the Pigeon River!

by Dr. Bryan Burroughs

Court sides with Michigan Trout Unlimited and Pigeon River Country Association in Golden Lotus Dam case motion. July, 25, 2011

A recent opinion from the courts just validated what we at TU already knew, that an agreement for a “dam removal” means the physical removal of all of the parts of the dam. It does not mean partial dam removal, dam modification, or dam drawdown as alleged by Golden Lotus and the State of Michigan! With the judge’s ruling today, Golden Lotus is required to completely remove all of its dam on the Pigeon River – the same dam that has caused three large fish kills in the past.

Michigan Trout Unlimited and the Pigeon River Country Association (PRCA) filed motions in the case earlier this year when the dam owners, Golden Lotus, Inc., put forward a plan for dam drawdown that would not remove all of the dam, and would continue blocking fish passage. They stated their responsibilities stopped there, despite the Court Ordered settlement calling for “dam removal” (these documents can be found and read at www.michigantutu.org). The State of Michigan (the Department of Natural Resources and the Department of Environmental Quality) represented by Attorney General Bill Schuette’s office surprisingly sided with Golden Lotus in their reinterpretation of the Court Order, and began processing a permit application for the project despite MITU and PRCA objections. Both Golden Lotus and the State argued that despite leaving the base and sides of the dam in the river and blocking fish passage, that the project should be considered “dam removal”.

In an Opinion and Order issued by the Honorable Judge Murphy of the Otsego County Circuit Court, on July 22, 2011, the Court sided in favor of Michigan Trout Unlimited and the Pigeon River Country Association. Judge Murphy stated “In other words, ‘dam removal’ means dam removal.” The court also found that “the meaning of ‘dam removal’

is clear and statutorily defined”, and “...the Interim Order is not ambiguous.”

“We are very pleased with the opinion and its affirmation of our understanding of the settlement agreement we signed onto and of Michigan law,” states Bryan Burroughs, Executive Director for Michigan Trout Unlimited. “This required significant resources for us compared with that of the State of Michigan and an insurance company-paid Golden Lotus defense. But we knew what was right, and what the Pigeon River deserved, and standing up for that at all costs is what we do and why we exist.”

“It’s frustrating that the dam removal was so seriously side-tracked during this dispute,” states Dave Smith, Chair of Michigan Trout Unlimited. “We’re anxious to get back into a productive planning mode to see this project is done and done right, and get the Pigeon River healing from over 100 years of this dam’s impacts to it.”

The parties will now have to work together to develop a new plan for completely removing the dam. ■

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Still Wanted

Immediate opening for Treasurer for OBTU.

Immediate opening for Treasurer for OBTU. Accounting or bookkeeping experience required. Working knowledge of Quickbooks a plus. Call Prez OBTU @ 630-986-1310 if interested.

Future Meetings and Events

Go to your 2011 calendar and mark down the following meeting and event dates:

September 10

Scout Merit Badge Class, Max McGraw Wildlife Foundation, Dundee, IL

September 13

NTU Online Training: Working with Land Trusts

September 14

OBTU Directors’ Meeting

September 14-18

National Trout Unlimited Annual Meeting, Bend, Oregon

September 17

SEWTU Workday, Van Slyke Creek, Abbey Springs Golf Course, Fontana, WI

September 21

Chapter Meeting, OBPD Rec Ctr, Speaker: Jay Anglin, swinging streamers for MI steelhead

September 27

NTU Online Training: Bulk E-mail Tools

October 1

Annual Financial Report available online

October 8-9

OBTU Outing in MI: Coldwater Creek Watershed Council Workday on Tyler Creek and fishing in SW MI

October 11

NTU Online Training: Chapter Communications Best Practices

October 12

OBTU Directors’ Meeting

October 19

Chapter Meeting, OBPD Rec Ctr; Ratification of Revised Chapter Bylaws; Speaker: Kristi Mills, UP Mining & Coasters

October 19

NTU Online Training: Chapter Annual Financial Reporting

Letter from the President

Dear Fellow OBTU Members,

September usually marks the beginning of a new school year, but for us TUers, it is the time for us to receive our final grades on what we have done in the TU fiscal year. Those grades will be reflected in our chapter's annual report to National Trout Unlimited compiled at September's end. We've accomplished much, but must ask ourselves, could we not improve ourselves even more, by expanding our effort to other areas?

The Boy Scout Merit Badge programs at the McGraw Foundation this year proceeded full bore under Marvin Strauch, who succeeded Phil Young in leading this effort. There were full classes at the McGraw Foundation near Elgin from May through August. Each Scout who attended receives a TU membership, thus growing our ranks. We will close out this month of September with another full class. Contact Marvin Strauch to help out.

Trout 101/201, the partnership between Orvis Yorktown and OBTU, exceeded all expectation, 320 newbie's to fly fishing having matriculated, giving Orvis Yorktown the rank of fifth in the nation and raising their sales 50% over last year. Nationwide the program attracted 8,857 men, women and children. Our membership swelled over 60 new members. Good for Orvis and good for OBTU. On October 6th, from 6 to 8 PM Orvis Yorktown is holding a VIP night. All OBTU members are invited for an evening of food and drink and will receive an in store discount on any purchases that evening.

This year's Illinois Youth Conservation and Fly Fishing Camp, despite great expectations for a full camp, attrited to just 6 kids. Recruiting kids for this dynamite program should be easy, but is growing to be the camp's enigma. The Illinois chapters seem lukewarm in their support of the camp, and recruitment has been left to a couple of people, when instead TU members statewide should be alert to prospective kids for the camp. This year we had 2 underprivileged kids from Michigan and four kids from Illinois. The camp was staffed by Fred Hodge, Laura Andersen, Marvin Strauch and me from OBTU and Darwin Adams from GBTU. Professor Steve Kohler, Director of Western Michigan's Environmental Studies Program, once again taught hydrology and aquatic entomology. Professor Dan Hayes from MSU performed the dissection of a white sucker and gave his marvelous talk about the extirpation of the Grayling, which turned quite philosophical on questions from some very young minds. We toured the old growth forest at Hartwick Pines and the logging museum, which pictures the devastation clear cutting had on the Au Sable watershed. Steve Sendek, the senior fisheries biologist in Grayling, with the fish shocking survey opened all eyes with some particularly large browns out of the wood. We also saw young of

the year brookies so tight to the bank they probably could have used some legs. The camp project proved to be exceptionally sweaty and grimy, pulling loosestrife down by Penrod's. The Grayling Pond and Rain Gardens were visited to illustrate solutions to Au Sable thermal pollution. Carl Hueter opened up his Old River House and exposed the kids to some of the best water on North Branch. At the Lovell's Museum, the kids quite unexpectedly were moved by an old film showing Yonnie Volker fly fishing the UP in what appeared to be the 50s. Best of all, the kids experienced some great Trico hatches and all of them caught trout, mostly on size 24s.

Conservation continues to be our Achilles heel. The issue is whether an urban chapter should try to roll rocks with the best of them or simply raise a lot of money for the rock rollers. The choice is ours, but right now we're really not doing either well. Stan Zarnowiecki has largely become our ambassador to Wisconsin restoration work, seemingly traveling every week-end to a different work project. Although Stan has been showing the flag over the cheddar curtain, none of our troops have been following him. We need to decide which of the courses of action are right for OBTU and act positively. Having said that, OBTU has for several years been a member of the Coldwater River Watershed Council in Michigan and our project this year will be on Tyler Creek over this coming Columbus Day week-end. Contact Marvin Strauch if you can make it. Stan also says don't miss the September 17th SEWTU work day on Van Slyke Creek at Fontana, Wisconsin. This small trib of Lake Geneva flows through the Abbey Springs Golf Course, which fetes the work crew with a legendary gourmet lunch. Don't miss it!

Your Board of Directors, having burnt some late night oil, have revised our OBTU Chapter Bylaws, bringing them in compliance with National TU's Model Chapter Bylaws. The revision has been submitted to National for their review and we expect the revision soon will be published on our website, www.obtu.org, for everyone's viewing before being put to our OBTU membership for ratification, most likely at our October meeting.

A commitment to the Kalamazoo Valley TU Youth Camp precluded my attendance at our annual OBTU picnic at the Vanerka's, but upon my return, I could hear nothing but rave reviews about the evening. It looks like shore lunch may become a tradition for our annual picnic. Hats off, especially to the cooks, Bob Bresnahan and Dan Cekander. Although I was too far away at the time to waif the sizzling pans, I could almost hear the faint banjo pickin and sonorous violin on them ole Au Sable seeps.

It seems we are also in the making of another OBTU tradition. The Cane Cast and Compare night brought out a bevy of new faces. It was

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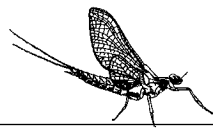
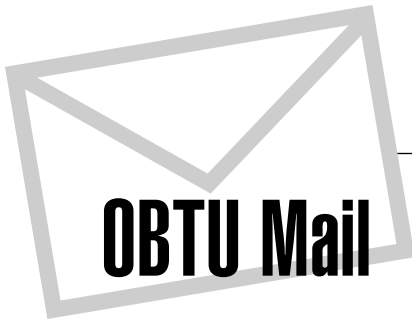
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like a full moon bringing on the call of the cane wolf. Stan's skewers of chicken and shrimp brought howls to that moon, which was really slightly waning gibbous. We were privileged to cast cane from master builders Dennis Higham, Ron Barch and Eric Heckman. Eric at Corens will now be building the rod for our annual raffle. Ron Barch came from Hasting, MI, bringing a sampling of his Alder Creek rods and many a book prize and more for our raffle. When night fell we were treated to show by Ron of fishin' in Michigan. A great evening was had by all. Neither our picnic nor the Cane night would have been possible without the most gracious hospitality of our hosts, Doug and Dottie Vanerka. The setting for the evening was idyllic.

At the end of the evening Stan said to me, "It could not have been more perfect; it was better than I dreamed." We all owe Doug and Dottie heartfelt thanks for making these two evenings possible.

Our September and October meetings will be back at the Oak Brook Recreation Center. First, Jay Anglin will come to talk about swinging streamers for steelhead in Michigan, followed by Kristi Mills in October, who will update us on the UP mining problems and the fate of the Coaster Brook Trout.

Greg

OBTU Mail

Dear fellow fishermen,

I would like to take a moment to thank you for the fishing experience. I have been fishing for 12 years but I never went fly fishing before that. It was amazing and a great experience. Stan showed me a lot, and I would like to personally thank him for the great weekend. I was kinda nervous when I first came to the camp, only because I didn't know how to cast. Greg worked out and flaws I had in my cast and had me casting like a pro within 20 minutes. I'm so glad you experienced fishermen can show us how to fly fish.

Joey Duffy

Dear Trout Unlimited,

First off I want to Thank you for giving me the experience of a life time. You've opened my eyes to a whole different side of fishing that I never thought I would ever enjoy. But now I'm planning to get more into it and go on some trout fishing trips. The information you also helped me understand the fish more and how they feed. I'm planning to use some of that knowledge with my river fishing here. Also learning the structure and ecology of the streams makes me want to take part in keeping them healthy and keep the fishing the best it can be. I just want to thank you again for giving me the exposure of a whole different side of fishing.

Sincerely,

Alex Nenadovic

Dear Trout Unlimited,

On behalf of the Fishing Club I would like to take the chance to thank you and the

Organization of Trout Unlimited for the well-planned week in Dubuque, Iowa. I would like to say as president that we appreciated the time and effort that was put into last weekend.

The minute the school van left I knew that we were in for a great weekend.

I thought to myself that this was not only going to be a good weekend, but also an educational and informative weekend. Being my first time fly-fishing, I would also like to thank the gentlemen who took the time and patience to show me the proper technique of this sport. I felt as though this was one of those "once in a lifetime opportunities".

I would like to end by saying thank you to the locals who came out to help the fishing club. In doing so I look forward to going again next year along with more fishing club members to learn more about fly-fishing and fish even more!

Warmest Regards

Ralph Ruiz

President of the Fishing Club

Riverside Brookfield Township High School



Euro Nymphing the Holy Water

This was my 29th annual NIFTY (Northern Illinois Fly Tyers) Club Trip. It was my 24th club trip to Gates Lodge on the AuSable River, six miles East of Grayling, near the top of Michigan's Lower Peninsula. I didn't make last year's club trip due to a heart problem.

NIFTY was founded in 1968 and is the oldest 100% FFF member club. I've been the NIFTY auction chairman for 17 years and was treasurer for 3 years before that. For the first 10 years while auction chairman, I was also secretary and newsletter editor. I'm also a 29 year member of Oak Brook TU, a long time member of DRIFT (the DuPage River Fly Tyers), The Illinois Smallmouth Alliance (ISA) and the Anglers of the AuSable.

The Holy Water is the Main Stream of the AuSable River from Burton's Landing, for eight river miles to Wakeley Bridge. This section is designated flies only, catch and release.

Gates Lodge is on the banks of the AuSable in the middle of the Holy Water section. The guest rooms are in several small buildings. There is a very good restaurant and a fine fly shop which also offers guide service and information on which flies are working best currently.

Euro Nymphing is a term that covers a group of techniques that are being used to win fly fishing contests in Europe and now in the United States.

Oak Brook TU had a great Euro Nymphing presentation by Jason Hearle, Manager of the fishing department at the Yorktown Mall Orvis store. Jason has fished competitively in the U.S. and told us how he fishes. There are four general types of Euro Nymphing:

1. **Czech Nymphing** - Close Range Method
2. **Polish Nymphing** - Close Range Method
3. **French Nymphing** - Medium/Long Range Method Directly Upstream
4. **Spanish Nymphing** - Long Range Method - Up and Across

Detailed methods of the four types of Euro Nymphing are described in various online web sites if you wish to learn more so I won't cover them here.

Ten years ago I took a Euro Nymphing course at the FFF Conclave in West Yellowstone. Charles Jardine, an Englishman who fished competitively on the British national team, gave a remarkable demonstration of the Czech style of Euro Nymphing. Mr. Jardine entered a long riffle on the Madison River. There were a dozen fishermen in the 100 yard riffle and nobody had caught anything. In 15 minutes Jardine caught five fish and that got my attention. I was planning to try this on the NIFTY club trip and had already read a book on Czech Nymphing, ordered a rod and bought a lot of Euro Nymphing flies. Jason's TU presentation helped me understand a lot of the intricacies of Euro Nymphing.

Fishing was just OK for me and a little better for the other NIFTY members, who mostly fished dry flies. The weather was increasingly nice each day and evening. The NIFTY camaraderie was, as always, the highlight of my trip.

Wading was difficult because the water level was high. The level dropped increasingly lower each day. On Sunday it was up to the top of the logs at the foot of the canoe landing just downstream from Gates. By Tuesday it was five inches lower and just an inch from the bottom of the logs. This was still a couple of inches above usual for mid June.

I didn't fish during the daytime so I could save my energy to fish the fast water each evening from twilight until dark. During the day you catch mostly brookies but the AuSable browns are mostly on the night shift. During the day I reconnoitered various public access spots on the Main Stream and North Branch. The South Branch is normally deep and with the high water I felt it would be mostly too high and fast to wade.

I reconnoitered the North Branch Lower Access, sometimes called Jackson Hole because a nearby street is named Jackson Hole. A lone fisherman said he had caught a couple. The water looked dark and very fast so I left.

There were 6 cars at the Dam No. 4 Access on the North Branch. Two fishermen said they had each caught a couple of fish. One fished a Blue Wing Olive and a Borcher's and the other fished a streamer. Six cars seemed too crowded so I left.

There was no one at the Sheep Ranch Access on the North Branch but there were a couple of cars downstream at Twin Bridge. I like to fish from the Sheep Ranch to the bridge because it's easy wading, old man's water, and I can usually drum up a few 6" brookies on dry's during the day. But, this was to be a Euro Nymphing trip so I didn't stay and play with the brookies.

Each evening there were good drakes and caddis and a few mahoganies, sulphur's, stoneflies and other flies, down from Stephan's bridge on the Gates section of the Holy water. The Gate's shop employees said there were Isonychia's after dark but I didn't want to wade that late in fast water by myself. The drakes were mating in the air and flying off to the bushes. But not many flies were on the water in front of Gates.

The first day I exhausted myself pushing upstream in heavy current from the canoe landing to Gates. It was extremely difficult to Euro Nymph that evening. By the time I got up to the bush line on the far side I was exhausted and it was difficult to maintain my footing while casting in the heavy current so the evening was wasted.

The next few evenings I turned and lob-cast upstream and to the side while wading down and let my fly's roll downstream. I could feel my heavy tungsten bead point fly rolling on the bottom.

There were occasional rises nearby and I would have done OK fishing a dry fly. But I wanted to learn Euro Nymphing. Each evening this required wading slowly and planting my staff at every shuffle step to keep upright in the heavy current.

My rod was an Echo Shadow, 10 foot, 3 weight, soft tip, stiff butt, 4 piece, Euro Nymphing rod. The rod has a dull finished blank with dark single foot guides. Echo also makes 10' 6" 3-wt. and 11' 4-wt. Shadow Euro Nymphing rods. My line was an old double taper and the reel was an old Cortland Graphite LTD disc drag. The reel could

have been a tad heavier as it balanced at two inches up from the grip. I also brought along a Winston 3, Sage 4 and Loomis 5, but never used them.

My C&F fly box held over 60 Euro Nymphs and another swing-leaf C&F box held several hundred nymphs. I also carried a C&F box with several hundred caddis dry flies but never used them. Another 6 C&F boxes and several other DeWitt fly boxes stayed in my bag for the entire trip.

I fished a hair's ear nymph with a heavy silver tungsten bead on the end of a 9', 5x fluorocarbon Rio leader. The first two nights I fished a small tungsten bead caddis on a 6" 5x Rio dropper, 20" up from the heavy tungsten bead point fly. The last night I switched the dropper fly to a Chicago Leach but never got a fish on either dropper. I should have tied the dropper flies with a loop knot for a little more action. Rockford, MI fly fishing guru Carl Richards said the Chicago Leach was the best wet fly he ever fished. I wrote a fly tying article on this Uni Mohair fly for the current Illinois Smallmouth Alliance newsletter.

I used the Czech method of Nymphing and made a 14" Sighter (strike indicator) out of yellow backing with black stripes between the line and the leader and fished mostly with only the Sighter out of the rod tip. Occasionally I let out one to three yards of fly line if there was a good seam just out of reach. To make the Sighter, I wound the backing tightly on a bamboo skewer and colored one fourth across each coil with a "Rub-A-Dub" permanent ink laundry marker from Office Max. In European contests they do not allow the use of a standard strike indicator and this is a way around the rule.

The second evening I caught a couple of 6" browns against a dock across from the tip of the island. The third evening I caught a couple of 10" and 12" browns downstream from the island at the end of Gates Lodge lawn and along and past the end of the bush line where it starts to widen. All fish were caught on the large tungsten bottom fly and I felt every one hit.

The third night I saw a big fish make a heavy splash against the weed line across and half way up from the canoe landing to the narrows and I passed another nice fish rising in a corner brush pocket on the near shore. It was too brushy to cast a nymph close to the bank in both spots. If I'd been fishing a dry fly I would have tried for them both.

Because of dense roots I really couldn't cast too close to the far bank bush line which had been my original game plan. I've caught many fish there over the years on dries, my best being a nice 17" brown. I knew from past experience where there were several lunker structures and I also carefully cast in front of, in back and along side of them.

There are a lot of rainbows below the Mio dam but the narrows below Gates is the only place I've ever caught a Rainbow above Mio. There are some big rocks in the narrows at the end of the bush line but it was difficult to work them sufficiently and keep my footing in the heavy current. One NIFTY member once tripped on a big rock in the narrows and banged up a knee pretty badly.

I stupidly didn't put on any mosquito spritz and didn't wear gloves. My left, staff hand, has over fifty mosquito bites and my right, rod

hand, has over forty itching mosquito bites. My head got a lot of mosquito bites also, right thru my hat.

I would not have been able to wade in the heavy water without my Folstaff wading staff. I brought my inflatable vest, never put it on and later realized it was a bad decision not to wear it.

My conclusion is that Euro Nymphing is interesting, fun and intense, just the ticket for a fly fisherman with an aggressive Type-A Personality, but I'm more of a contemplative fly fisherman. Euro Nymphing may be better suited to a younger, stronger wader, especially in heavy water. I did catch a few and so I'll try it again under the right conditions and in the right type of water. ■

September Speaker

Jay Anglin Streamer swings for Steelhead



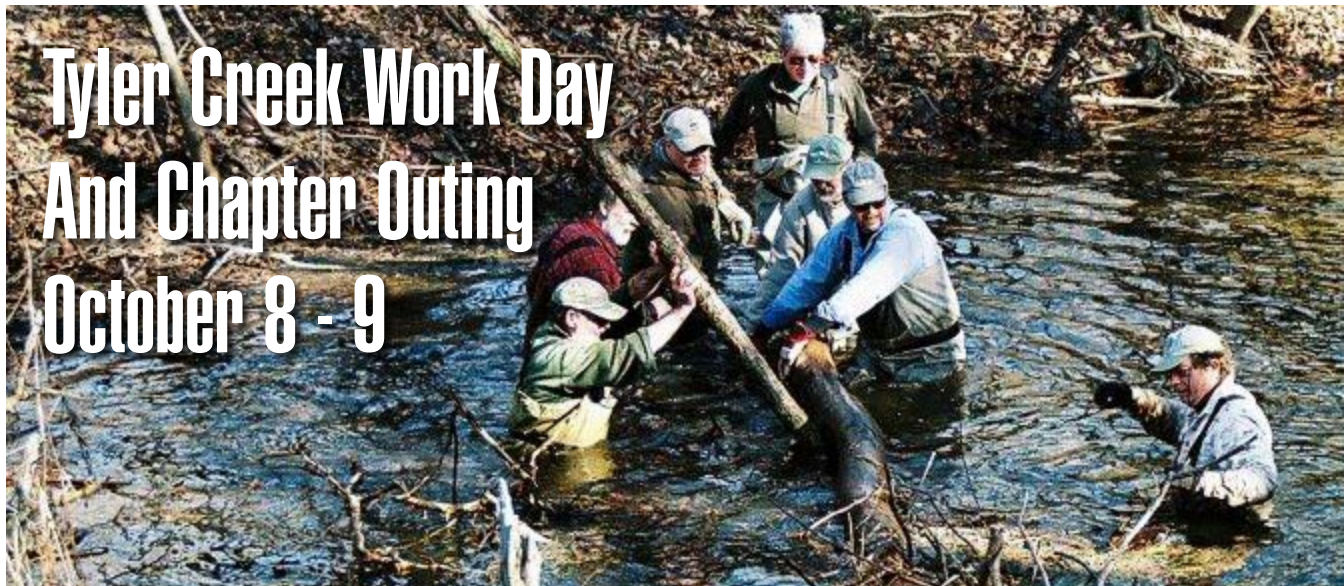
Jay has been a long time friend of Oak Brook Trout Unlimited, making many appearances at our monthly meetings throughout the years. He fishes water in Indiana and Michigan and is probably the closest steelhead guide to our area. Jay has been fly fishing and tying flies for 30 years. He is well versed in all aspects of fly fishing and conventional tackle techniques and can be found on the water year round fishing for trout, steelhead, salmon,

bass and musky as an angler and as a guide for his company Anglin Outdoors (www.anglinoutdoors.com). His scientific approach to guiding is built upon his lifelong love for nature and his experience in the field. He holds a biology degree from Northern Michigan University.

"Swinging streamers for steelhead has been the preferred method for many seasoned anglers for decades. While this technique has always been standard operating procedure for the Pacific Northwest crowd, in recent years the popularity of swinging has taken hold in the Great Lakes region. Conventional wisdom and equipment is often geared towards larger rivers but swinging is also very effective in smaller streams and even creeks. Doing it requires special tactics and techniques including rods, lines, leaders and flies but also casting options. I will discuss the basics and finer points and answer your questions. "

Jay writes a weekly column for the LaPorte, Indiana Herald Argus called "*Jay Anglin Outdoors*". He lives in LaPorte, Indiana with his wife, their five children and his Black Lab "Deuce". You can contact Jay by email jay@anglinoutdoors.com or by phone 574-210-2844.

Please plan on joining the chapter for this fun and informative evening meeting. Go to www.obtu.org for directions to the Oak Brook Recreation center, our meeting location. ■



Tyler Creek Work Day And Chapter Outing October 8 - 9

by Marvin Strauch

Things are looking up for the Coldwater River watershed. Ron Barch spoke at our August meeting, and told us that a recent fish survey near the Dolan Preserve had found that the brown trout population had increased from an estimated 800 per stream mile to over 1300 per stream mile.

In July, the Coldwater River Watershed Council — of which Oak Brook Chapter Trout Unlimited is a member — secured a grant in the amount of \$260,000 for projects designed to reduce e. coli contamination to Tyler Creek. Tyler Creek is a main tributary of the Coldwater River.

Further to this ongoing effort, OBTU members will have a work day on upper Tyler Creek on Saturday morning, October 8th. The work project will be to remove obstructions from the stream.

Tyler Creek Country Club (also a CRWC member), as many of you know, has available campsites and a cabin. They will provide facilities to OBTU volunteers free of charge. As well, there are a number of motels on the south side of Grand Rapids — a mere 15 miles away.

The work day is planned for the Columbus Day weekend, and should make it a bit easier for members to get a way for a weekend. This is a great time of the year to fish in Western Michigan. Although the season on Tyler Creek will be closed, many other area streams and rivers are available. The Coldwater River usually gets a good caddis hatch in October. The Rogue River is just 5 — 10 miles north of Grand Rapids, and has fine late season fishing for stream trout as well as some salmon that migrate up as far as the Rockford dam. The Muskegon River also has fine late season trout fishing. River levels are usually low in the fall, and that opens a lot of wadeable water. Salmon may well be in on the Muskegon. So you have the mixed bag there as well.

Oak Brook Chapter Trout Unlimited has been a participant in the ongoing work on Tyler Creek and the Coldwater River. Here is a spring-fed trout stream only about 3 hours from many of our members. Come join us over Columbus Day weekend, and pitch in on the work!

Please contact Marvin Strauch at 708-638-1318 or write to youthed@obtu.org if you plan to attend, or need more information. ■

Eric Heckman of Coren's Rod & Reel This Year's OBTU Custom Rod Maker

by Marvin Strauch

In each issue of the much-missed “Midwest Fly Fishing” magazine the ad copy read: “Hidden away at East Circle and Nina is Chicago’s best-kept secret. Coren’s craftsmen have 40 years or experience cleaning, repairing, restoring tackle — and helping customers choose quality fishing equipment”. No pictures, no fancy graphics, but I can’t imagine two sentences that could better arouse the curiosity of an angler or tackle builder.

Some of us have known of Coren’s Rod & Reel for years, maybe decades. Clyde Coren and his family started a rod & reel repair business on far north Clark Street in the 1970’s. It also was about the only place in the Chicago area to buy rod building components. Eric Heckman bought the business from the Coren family in 1985 and moved it to its current location. This is not your usual fishing tackle business location. Nina & East Circle are not far from Northwest Hwy, not far from Harlem Ave. But there is a school across the street, and the shop is in a mostly residential neighborhood. No parking lots, no mall, you won’t find a bush-plane hanging from the ceiling, no models of next season’s latest outdoorsy fashions. But you will find just about everything you need as an angler

This is the shop for anglers who like to do things themselves, or learn how. Here you can find rod blanks, grips, handles, reel seats, guides, ferrules, thread and finishes for the rod builder. But there are also fly tying materials and hooks, as well as components for spinners and plugs. In 2000, Eric began offering a bamboo rod making

class each spring. The class typically has 6 students, who start with a raw 12 foot culm of bamboo, and a few weeks later, finish with a completed bamboo fly rod.

Though not quite a one-man show; Jeff Fox assists in reel repairs, and Brian Smith assists with the bamboo class, Coren's Rod & Reel exists due to the skill and craftsmanship of Eric Heckman. He is an expert in building custom fishing rods – from ultra light spinning rods to muskie casting rods. He is an accomplished restorer of tackle. I have seen his work on rods well over 100 years old, with replacement parts fabricated to match the original, and authentically finished. His bamboo fly rods are each a thing of beauty.

Each trip to Coren's can be an adventure, and half of the fun can be seeing all the other customers who stop in. While I may be there to pick up a nickel silver winding check to finish off the grip on a bamboo rod in progress (which Eric has figured out how to reshape to a hexagon from a circle. . .), someone else is stopping in with a reel that needs repair, or a dear old fishing rod that needs a few guides replaced. Maybe a customer needs a new cork grip for their fly rod, which they can have turned by Eric on his lathe. Each job, each customer request is thought out and solved. Eric and Jeff are always quick to offer any new tip that they may have learned on how to apply a finish, how to sharpen a plane, or which bass bug really worked last weekend.

Well, all of this has been by way of introduction of Eric Heckman as this year's custom rod maker for the Oak Brook Chapter Trout Unlimited Annual Rod Raffle. For many years, Clyde Alho has volunteered his time and talents to produce the rod, and in most years, to run the raffle. He has now stepped back from that responsibility. We thank him sincerely for all he has given the chapter over the years. Now Eric has accepted the task of making the raffle winner's rod. As in the past, OBTU contributes \$350 in material cost, and Eric provides the time and skill to complete the rod.

So an OBTU fundraiser and annual tradition continues. Things change, but things also stay the same. We hope you will all support the rod raffle, and purchase the tickets you receive soon. I also hope that you make time to head up to Coren's Rod & Reel and then spread the word. ■



October Speaker

Kristi Mills

The Dangers of Sulfide Mining and Uranium Exploration in the Great Lakes Region

Kristi Mills lives in Marquette, Michigan and she is the director of "Save the Wild UP", whose mission is to protect Michigan's Upper Peninsula unique way of life, wildlife, landscape, and freshwater resources. Through public awareness and education they strive to protect the area from unsustainable development, degradation and dangerous contamination. The organization was started in response to the overwhelming deluge of new mineral exploration across the UP through the loss of thousands of acres of private and public mineral right ownership and the potential loss of open recreation lands to industrial development. Find out more about this organization at www.savethewildup.org. Also check out this link for an informative video on sulfide mining in the Yellow Dog plains <http://barbara-spring.blogspot.com/2010/01/sulfide-mining-in-michigans-upper.html>.

Kristi's power point presentation will include information about Coaster Brook trout threats, Eagle mine developments, attempts and procedures to try and stop further mining activity in the U.P. She will hand out materials and give you links to other groups that are working in the great lakes region.

Please mark your calendar for Wednesday, October 19th and plan on joining us for this informative presentation about an area that is so close to home.

Go to www.obtu.org for directions to Oak Brook Recreation center, our meeting location. ■

**OBTU Needs You.
Volunteer Today.**





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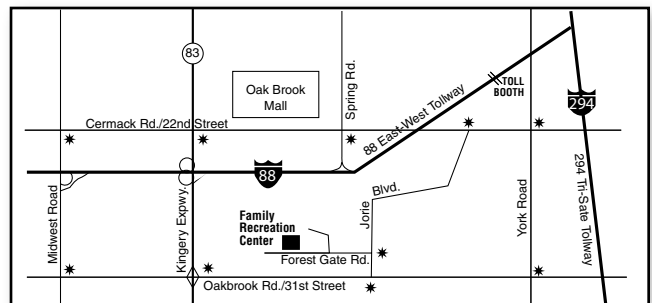
Oak Brook Chapter of Trout Unlimited

Annual Holiday Dinner

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From Jorie Blvd. Turn west at Forest Gate Rd. (first stop light north of 31st Street). Follow Forest Gate straight into the Recreation Center parking lot. We meet in Meeting Room 2/3.

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