

ALDER FORK JOURNAL



Newsletter of the Aldo Leopold Chapter of Trout Unlimited

Serving Columbia, Dodge and Sauk Counties since 1982

SUMMER 2019

WADING IN

By Mike Barniskis

President, Aldo Leopold Chapter



Summer is drawing to a close and the season's end is approaching. I haven't fished near as often as I wanted to, but when I have been able to hit the streams, the fishing has been fantastic. In the 20 odd years I have fished trout in Wisconsin, the amount of high-quality fishing spots has increased a lot. That increase has many midwives but without a doubt the members of TU have been the driving force in improving trout fishing in the State. We really have accomplished a lot together!

One opportunity to work together will be December 7th, when we plan to clear a bunch of willows and other woody brush from the north Fargen pasture on Bear Creek. We had scheduled this workday for last spring but nasty weather cancelled that day. The main willow area is pretty wet and soft so summer work is not ideal.

In December we should have frozen ground, most hunting seasons are over, and unless it is truly arctic, a bit of work on a Saturday in December should be brisk enough to keep you warmed. So dress in layers, grab a hot beverage, and head on over to Bear on December 7th, to arrive before 9:00 a.m.

The State Council banquet in February 2020 is a great opportunity to get together, celebrate volunteers and all we have accomplished, state-wide. One small thing you can do to help make the banquet successful is to volunteer to help put out the raffle prizes. We need a few people for a few hours the day of the banquet. Or rather, we need your arms and legs: the "brain work" of deciding what prizes go where, and keeping track of all the prizes, will be handled by Scott Allen. All you will need to do is to help put the prizes out on the tables, in their proper location. Easy work, but very, very helpful. If you can spare a couple hours before the banquet please contact me, or Scott Allen directly at jscottallen12@gmail.com.

This winter there will be a number of opportunities to get together as members of ALCTU. We will be hosting a series of fly-tying get-togethers we are calling "Bar Flies." Yes, tying flies in bars. These aren't classes, just an opportunity for a informal group of TU members getting together to share the crafts of tying, storytelling, fermentation, and distillation. There will be 9 nights, one each in the months of January, February, and March for each of our three counties, Columbia, Dodge, and Sauk. The current schedule of Bar Flies dates:

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IMPORTANT CHAPTER DATES TO REMEMBER

Wednesday, October 9, 2019 ALCTU's Chapter Meeting, 5:30 p.m. Suzy's Steakhouse, Portage, WI.

Saturday, December 7, 2019 ALCTU Debrushing Work Day on Bear Creek, 9:00 a.m.

January, February, March 2020 BAR FLIES nights in all three counties. More information coming soon.

Weekend of May 16, 2020, ALCTU fishing weekend get together in the Driftless. More information coming soon.

OFFICERS AND BOARD DIRECTORY

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Officers:

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TREASURER'S REPORT

Balance as of September 15, 2019

Checking	\$6,333.34
Savings	\$3,048.34
Total	\$9,381.68

Michael C. Stupich, Treasurer

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- Sauk County on 1/14, 2/11 & 3/10 starting at 6:30 p.m. Location to be determined.
- Dodge County will meet on 1/22, 2/19, and 3/18 starting at 6:30 p.m., at Ooga Brewing in downtown Beaver Dam.
- Columbia County starting at 6:30 p.m., dates and location to be determined.

Follow our Facebook page for additional details about "Bar Flies" as they develop, or if you are not on Facebook, feel free to reach out to the board members for updates on the events.

Fishing? Camping? Together? Sure! The weekend of May 16, 2020 we will have an ALCTU fishing weekend. Chapter members will gather together to fish and camp. Final location may change but for now the West Fork Sportsman's Club is the likely home base for this event. This isn't an official chapter outing so, you will be responsible for your own camping fees, food, and drink. We will have experienced members willing to take you out on the water, so if you have ever wanted to fish the driftless but aren't sure where or how, mark May 16 on your calendar. More details will be provided as the date gets closer.

Our next board meeting is October 9th, at Suzy's Steakhouse in Portage. All are welcome to join us for dinner starting around 5:30 p.m.



THANK YOU!

TO ALL OF THE CHAPTER MEMBERS AND FRIENDS WHO CONTRIBUTED TO OUR FUND-RAISING DRIVE OR PICNIC EVENT:

Scott Allen, Ron Benisch, Edward Brockner, Clint Byrnes, Mike Carron, Ron Fargen, Sally Gawle, Tom Gawle, Peter Grimm, Tim Hood, Jeffrey Jonson, Richard Kekula, John Moore, Bob Moss. David Murphy, Jim Peters, Bill Pielsticker, Jack Saunders, James Schommer, Mike Stapleton, Mike Stupich, Bob Wyman,

A special "thank you" to all the auction bidders, raffle purchasers, workers, demonstrators, chefs and clean-up crew who made our annual picnic one of the best in our chapter's history!

AUGUST 7, QUARTERLY MEETING MINUTES

ALCTU Board Meeting,
August 7, 2019, Suzy's Steakhouse, Portage.
Meeting called to order at 5:40 p.m.

Attendance: Mike Stapleton, Scott Allen, Sally Gawle, Tom Gawle, Jim Peters, Mike Barniskis, Dan Endres, Bob Moss, Scott Stewart, Mike Stupich, Eric Lorenzen. (Secretary's note: Board met one month later than scheduled due to lack of board member availability in July, due to personal commitments.)

1. Minutes from 4/17/19 meeting: One change request, date of meeting was April 17, not March 17. The Secretary recorded this change. The minutes were so approved by a motion by Sally Gawle and a second by Mike Stapleton. All were in favor.

2. Treasurer's report: Treasurer Mike Stupich reported—
a. Checking \$6333.34
b. Savings \$3048.21

Treasurer, Mike Stupich reported that the agreed to donation of \$2000 from the ALCTU account was sent to Jeff Hastings for the Driftless Area Habitat Maintenance Program Fund for 2019.

Mike also reported that we received approximately \$1100 in revenue from the June Picnic fund-raiser but we had approximately \$650 in picnic expenses. The fund-raising letter accrued \$1400 in revenue, which he reported was a new high.

Sally Gawle informed the board that Jim and Robyn Klingbeil were at the picnic and asked if they could receive our quarterly Alder Fork newsletter. Tom Gawle will take care of getting them on the mailing list. Their info is with Tom.

3. State Council Recap: Scott Allen, Vice-chair for Wisconsin TU will take the path to Chair following the current Chair, Mike Kuhr. Congratulations to Scott, and good luck. Scott also asked for volunteers to organize and distribute the prizes for the day of the annual State TU banquet, held in February. Any volunteers should contact Scott Allen directly.

Staff members of the Vernon County Land and Water Conservation Department are proactively moving term

fishing easements to "in-perpetuity" contracts. This is good news coming from the situation that occurred earlier this year when a landowner opted out of his easement at the end of the term contract.

4. ALCTU's State Council 2020 Banquet Donation: Mike Barniskis, the winner of the very high-tech camp stove at our recent summer picnic has put it to use recently and reports that it works well for cooking, in addition to charging his smart devices. Mike Stapleton suggested that we might consider this item as our banquet donation. Tom Gawle asked if the packaging explained the details of the product. Eric Lorenzen suggested we might have to make up an information sheet to help explain its features. Scott Allen restated that the chain saw that we donated last year brought more than the retail value of the saw, a good thing for sure.

5. Report on the status of the Driftless Habitat Maintenance Crew: Per Mike Stapleton, who has been sitting in on the monthly tele-meetings, our check of \$2000 has been received by Jeff Hastings. Jerry Sapp is acting chairman of the steering committee and reports that the crew is currently working. He reported that one of the LTE workers was re-routed to a different area. To Mike Stapleton it is unclear if this permanent or if a replacement is coming. It was discussed and generally agreed to that ALCTU should ask for a progress report/audit to learn how well this project proceeded with the crew. Being that this is the project's first year, an evaluation would be most telling of success and possible change needed. Trout and Big Spring are the two creeks currently receiving the work. The project did not receive an applied-for Cabela's grant.

As a side note to this discussion, it was agreed by the ALCTU board members that in the future the dam at the headwaters of the West Fork Kickapoo should not be rebuilt.

6. The board agreed to publishing and planning for a workday on Bear Creek (Fargen North) to remove willows of December 7, 2019.

Eric Lorenzen and Dave Murphy have volunteered to rebuild four benches honoring Steve Hill. We will consider having a workday to install the new benches. Tom Gawle and Mike Stapleton informed Eric and Dave that the current benches

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are anchored with two driven fence posts per bench and they could probably be reused as anchors, if the benches had similar dimensions.

Dave Murphy brought up for discussion that there is a landowner contact near Elroy (Monroe County?) who is interested in stream improvements/restoration. Dave was asking for insights as to where to start. Discussion continued with suggestions he contact the Monroe County Land and Water Conservation Department, Duke Welter and/or the DNR (they ultimately would issue the easement contract).

7. Projects in cooperation with other chapters: The board is all in favor of pursuing this idea, as we have in the past. Tom Gawle stated we will have to evaluate the monetary cost of each proposed project individually.

8. New/Other Business: Eric Lorenzen suggested that we should reinstate a chapter fishing trip/camp-out/clinic/gathering. Discussion was positive in nature with some suggestions that we have a central location that everyone gathers and then disperses as pairs, mentors, etc.

Scott Stewart emphasized that we tie in a mentoring program with this idea in order to bring new fishers into the chapter with a welcoming message.

ENTER OUR CAPTION CONTEST!

We are posting this picture on our Facebook page and here in the newsletter. We are offering one dozen hand-tied Pink Squirrel flies to the person who comes up with the best (in our opinion) caption for this picture. You can send in your caption(s) with your name and address through our Facebook page or by e-mail to: Dan Endres (dtendres9@gmail.com).

The winning caption will be selected at our October 9, 2019 meeting at Suzy's Steak House, Portage. The judges will be all who are in attendance for the meeting. The flies will be sent to the winner shortly after the meeting.

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It was suggested that down the road we pick a mid-May 2020 date for this event. We have to find an accommodating location as well. More to come on this.

Scott Stewart and Eric both also suggested that we try a three-month "Drinking with Scissors" type event in each of the chapter's counties, Dodge, Columbia, Sauk during January, February and March. This will be published in the printed newsletter and on our social media sources. The idea is to offer a location for members to stop by in the evening once a month, tie some flies, have some frosties, and talk with like-minded individuals. The Board agreed we would hold nine sessions, three each month in each of the three counties.

Gawles and Barniskis will manage Dodge. Lorenzen and Murphy will handle Sauk and Mike Stapleton will manage Columbia.

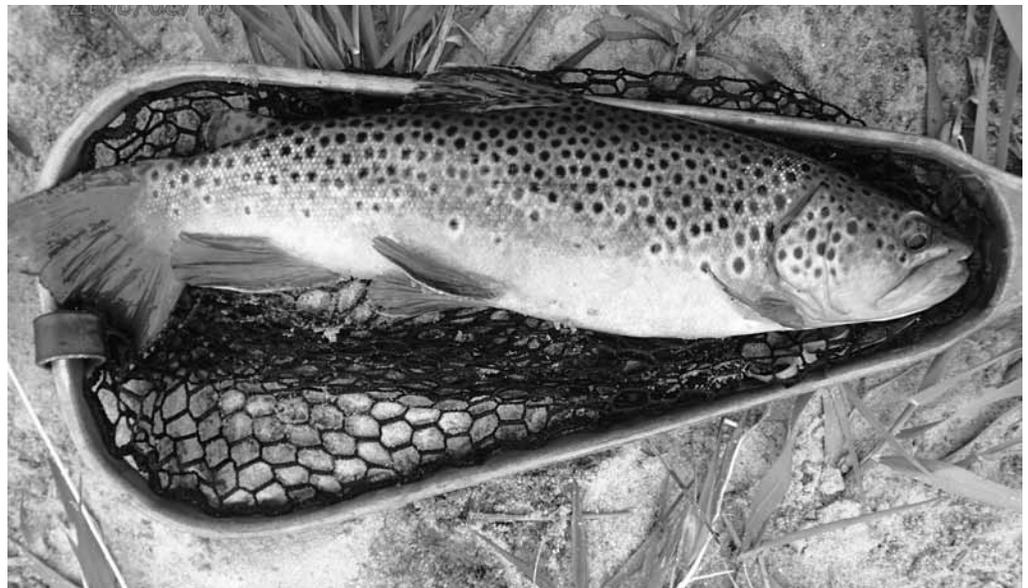
Dan Endres gave a social media update. On Facebook we have about 148 users and this is reaching some good numbers, so far. Engagement is somewhat low. We need a strong reference to our social media links in the newsletter. Board members should continue to send in content (pictures and captions) to Dan.

The meeting was adjourned at 7:37 p.m.

Minutes prepared by Tom Gawle, Secretary.

ALDO LEOPOLD CHAPTER MISSION STATEMENT

The Aldo Leopold Chapter's mission is to conserve, protect, restore and enhance trout and salmonid fisheries, watersheds, the groundwater that sustains them, and the doctrine of public trust that defends them, in Columbia, Dodge and Sauk Counties. We do this through education, cooperation, rehabilitation and advocacy using an extensive and dedicated volunteer network.



DRIFTLESS HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECT UPDATE

By Mike Stapleton

TU-DARE has partnered with the Department of Natural Resources to put a two-person crew in the field for the summer months, working on a variety of habitat, angler access and invasive species control issues. Earlier this year ALCTU contributed \$2,000 toward this effort.

The scheduled work areas for 2019, according to information we received earlier in the year, were to be concentrated in Grant, Iowa, Lafayette and Richland Counties. To date we have received some limited information on brushing work done on Trout Creek, Iowa County, Elk Creek, Richland County, and invasive species control work on Big Spring Branch in Iowa and Grant Counties. Since this crew is using college students, by the time you read this they should be done for the season and work planned for the above four counties should have been completed.

DNR project supervisor Dave Rowe has told TU-DARE that an accounting of expenditures and work accomplished for this year will be provided.

Columbia, Dane and Sauk counties will be the beneficiaries of similar work in 2020, which we look forward to with great interest since streams that are much more accessible to our members will be the focus of the habitat crew's efforts. We look forward to being able to report to you on those locations next year.



(Above) Heavy ragweed and other plants made it extremely difficult for fisherman access Big Springs Creek. The only way to fish this area was to wade through it. (Below) After mowing was completed, access to the creek now is easily accessible from the shore's edge.



— IMPORTANT NOTICE —

At the July 2015 board of directors meeting held in Portage, a vote passed unanimously to have regular chapter meetings, to be held quarterly on the second Wednesday of January, April, July, and October of each year. The chapter newsletter will follow each meeting a few weeks later. All chapter members are invited to attend these meetings. Details will appear in the "Important Dates" section.

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FLY FISHING SEASON IS COMING TO A CLOSE ...

Make sure you get out at least one last time before October 15th, and when you do, every once in a while, stop staring at your line, or your dry, or your hopper, or your indicator, and look up and enjoy your surroundings that come with that cold-water creek you are standing next to. Good luck!



<http://aldoleopold.tu.org/>

ALCTU Newsletter
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