



“TROUT LINES” October 2007

The Newsletter for the Kanawha Valley Chapter of Trout Unlimited

Editor: Randy Augustine
augustine@suddenlink.net
Newsletter Committee: Alvan Gale, Homer Sweeney, Bruce Kessel and Marc Kramer

Meet Jeff Hansbarger and Learn How to Find and Catch Brook Trout on October 9, 2007

The speaker for the October 9 2007 KVCTU meeting will be one our own members, Jeff Hansbarger, who is a fisheries biologist with WVDNR stationed in Pt Pleasant. Jeff's topic will focus on the brook trout habitat in the Upper Shavers Fork watershed. This was part of Jeff's master thesis while at WVU. He will also be presenting this topic later in October at the 61st meeting of the Southeastern Association of Fish and Wildlife agencies here in Charleston. Jeff will discuss the upcoming meeting's topics which may be of interest to our members.

Dale Battles tells the story of turkey hunting with Hansbarger about a mile downstream of Camp Splinter. Turkey calling produced zero response and they noticed a murder of crows over head. Hansbarger got out his crow caw and started talking to them. “Here we were,” Battles recalls, “in the middle of the Mongahela National Forest trying to be quiet. And what does Hansbarger do but start a fight with some crows with his crow caw. The crows were right above us now, about 20 of them. And they were getting angrier by the minute, and Jeff was egging them on. I was thinking of the Alfred Hitchcock movie, ‘The Birds’ and Hanbarger had those crows so riled up, I thought they were going to get me and poke my eyes out! Trust me, I had my 12 gauge ready.”

“Lucky for us, we were dressed as trees and leaves and the crows couldn't find us,” TU member Dale Battles recalls.

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Upcoming Events 2007

9 October: TU Meeting South Charleston Library 7:00 PM

Program: Brook Trout Research Project with Jeff Hansbarger

- Reminder to bring a fly for the Door Fly Drawing and to Bring a Guest.
- Election of Officers and Board Members. The election will be held during this meeting.
- Reminder to all members to start tying flies or spinners to donate for us to sell at the Hunt Show.

October 1 thru December 31: City of Charleston Archery Urban Deer Hunt Opens

October 18 or thereabouts: WV Brown Trout Start Their Yearly Dating Ritual so leave them alone and don't fish over spawning fish.



Diesel Spill Closes Rt. 52 by Ernie Nester

A tractor trailer crashed near Powhattan in McDowell County on Wednesday, 9-5-07, and created a large-scale diesel spill that threatened aquatic life in Elkhorn Creek. The tractor trailer crashed on Route 52 at 1:15 a.m. after approaching a curve and overturning on its side. The tanker on the tractor-trailer was ruptured in several places which resulted in an estimated 7,500 gallons of diesel fuel

The driver of the tractor-trailer was transported to Bluefield Regional Medical Center following the crash, and only sustained minor injuries. The driver will be cited with a failure to maintain control. There were no homes in the immediate vicinity of the accident, and no evacuations were ordered.

On September 7 Mark Scott counted the dead fish on six 100 yard sections of Elkhorn Creek from just below the spill site above North Fork down to Landgraff. Mark said that most of the dead fish were in the first section below the spill site. He found 79 trout, 1 sucker, and 50 minnows. The dead browns ranged from 5" to 24" and the rainbows ranged from 5" to 19".

Mark saw dead crayfish and a lot of dead aquatic worms just below the spill site. The estimated total trout kill was about 1,270.

Nominating Committee Slate by Chair Steve Young

- President** Homer Sweeney
- VP Programs** Jeff Nelsen
- VP Environmental** Alvan Gale
- VP Membership** Tom Moody
- Treasurer** Travis Wilson
- Board** Steve Sattler
- Board** Jeff Shafer
- Board** Dave Strom

Another strong slate of nominees has been submitted to the Kanawha Valley Chapter Board of Directors for the official election which will be held at the general membership meeting on October 9th at the South Charleston Public Library at 7:00 PM on Tuesday night.

Heading the list for the nomination for President is Homer Sweeney who has been a driving force on the board of directors for five years. He has been involved as newsletter editor for three years and still contributes time and ideas as a member of the newsletter committee. Also, he has played a strong role over the past four years in monitoring state legislation which impacts trout streams in West Virginia.

Mr. Homer Sweeney is very involved in all chapter activities, attends most, if not all of our work projects, and understands the key role of cold water fisheries in public policy.

Book Review by Larry Orr

"Trophies I Can't Hang on the Wall" is a book about outdoor experiences by Jay Banks. Jay was born in Raleigh, West Virginia and is a member of Trout Unlimited. He is a WVU graduate and also received a MD from the University of Arkansas. He practiced medicine in West Virginia, Virginia, and Maryland for 53 years.

This book is not about how to hunt or fish, but is a compilation of interesting and humorous experiences in the great outdoors. The author relates personal outdoor experiences mainly in WV, but also takes you to Alaska, Lapland, Virginia, Arkansas and Maryland.

Much of the book is about trout fishing in WV and includes stories about the Cranberry River, Tea Creek, Williams River, Glade Creek and Piney Creek. The stories relate experiences about various wildlife, including trout, sturgeon, salmon, shad, turkeys, grouse, pigs, snakes and dogs. It is an interesting and humorous light reading, and I highly recommend it, especially to those who have fished in the above mentioned streams.



Joe Crowder Wins 2007 Sportsman of the Year

West Virginia DNR Director Frank Jezioro presented the DNR Sportsman of the Year Award at the WV Outdoor Days Celebration on September 23 at Stonewall Jackson State Park.

Joseph R. Crowder (Joe), a native West Virginian, has worked to improve hunting and fishing in West Virginia for his entire adult life. Currently, Joe is Stocking Coordinator for the Kanawha Valley Chapter of Trout Unlimited (KVCTU); head of the chapter's Stream Chemistry program; active in the chapter's outreach activities (especially involving children), Save-Our-Streams (SOS) program, and other activities. Joe is involved in everything! He also belongs to and works hard for three watershed associations: Elk Headwaters, Buckhannon River, and Little Sandy Creek. He is also an active member of Friends of the Elk.

Joe planned, supervised and participated in stocking over 80,000 brown trout fingerlings in 18 streams, in nine counties in the past year. Three of those streams were devoid of trout until last year. Joe contributes two tanks, batteries, electrical kits, and other gear at his own expense. He refurbishes all the chapter's equipment at no cost. He drove that old blue Dodge over 7,800 miles last year in the service of KVCTU. At today's gas prices that is a lot of personal money. He is a caring, talented, and giving person.

As you are aware, Joe presided over the stocking of our "Millionth Fingerling" this past April. Additionally he was awarded the West Virginia Watershed Association's Guiding Light Award.

Joe started a Stream Chemistry program in 2004 that covers the central part of the state. He is a Level III Stream Monitor in the WV DEP SOS program. This past year he was involved in SOS events in five counties. The volume of his data collection is staggering! Recently, he provided WV DNR Coldwater Fisheries with the analyses of 130 streams. Mike Shingleton and Tom Oldham had never seen so much annual sampling data. Joe shares these data with all the groups with which he is involved.

An important extension of Joe's stream-chemistry work is his positive interaction with land owners and other organizations. Joe takes the time to show that he cares about people and their concerns and they respond in kind. Private landowners recently opened posted streams to trout fishing—Camp Creek and Amos Run in Webster County, and Hickory Run in Clay County because of Joe's interaction. Joe jumped into the Little Sandy Creek Watershed Association with both feet this year. He started a SOS program; he is leading development of a community park and a recently completed stream-bank restoration.

Joe likes kids—and they like him. This year he is involved with Cub Scout Packs in Jackson and Kanawha Counties. He teaches the kids how to tie spinners, talks about how to improve and respect the out-of-doors, and shows them videos on the environment. He is constantly recruiting young people to participate in KVCTU activities.

How is it possible to say thank you for all that Joe Crowder has done? The KVCTU has presented Joe with every award in its arsenal. In February he received the Paul Brannon Lifetime Achievement award—the chapter's most prestigious.

We firmly believe that Joe Crowder is well qualified for "The West Virginia 2007 Sportsman of the Year." He has made a significant impact on trout fishing in West Virginia. To see Joe getting the award, check the website: <http://wchstv.com/newsroom/wwwildlife/2007/ww071003.shtml>



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Kanawha Valley Chapter of Trout Unlimited
Alvan Gale <alvangale@suddenlink.net>
317 Eureka Road
Charleston, WV 25314-2151

**NON-PROFIT
ORGANIZATION
PERMIT NO. 245
CHARLESTON, WV 25301**



Three mules, a few dogs, and 38 people helped stock brown trout fingerlings at Laurel Fork of Cheat River in Pocahontas County on September 22, 2007. Each mule carried four bags of trout which were stocked in the hard to get to places of Laurel Creek. This TU Council Project has been held on a regular basis for over 20 years and the mules make this project successful. West Virginia Wesleyan College students along with many TU members and families participated this year. (Ernie Nester photo)