

TROUT TALK

The Official Newsletter of Western New York Trout Unlimited (www.wnytroutunlimited.org) March 2020

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Spring Banquet- **[open]**

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Welcome- **Bob Bohner**

Video Library- **[open]**

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Next WNY TU Chapter Meeting: The next chapter meeting, previously scheduled for **Tuesday, March 31, 2020, 7:30 pm**, at the **ORVIS SHOP, 4545 Transit Road, Williamsville, New York, HAS BEEN CANCELLED DUE TO THE COVID-19/ NOVEL CORONA VIRUS STATE OF EMERGENCY**. Please see the President's report for details.

President's Message:

Hi Everyone,

"I used to like fishing because I thought it had some larger significance. Now I like fishing, because it's the one thing I can think of that probably doesn't."

John Gierach (2010) - "*At the Grave of the Unknown Fisherman*"

This has always been one of my favorite John Gierach quotes, and there are many. He's certainly my favorite non-fiction author. At any rate, at this time of dire crisis we need to reflect on what's truly important. Please, everyone be safe and stay healthy. In order to help to protect everyone's health, we have cancelled/postponed any events which would have occurred in the near future, at least through mid-April. As circumstances change, or

remain the same I guess, we'll issue updates concerning planned activities. TU has said that they think it would be reasonable to continue to hold stream projects/cleanups under certain conditions. (See Joe Morgan's report on stream projects/cleanups.) Since the Governor has pretty much asked people not to get too close to each other (until who knows when), we're going to play that by ear. The general meeting scheduled for March 31 is definitely cancelled, as is the Board meeting that was to take place on April 14th. The 50th anniversary celebration will be rescheduled for when it is practical. We'll keep people informed as to other events.

Jim Budny gave a great presentation on Atlantic Salmon fishing at the February meeting. As always, his talk was interspersed with tips, wisdom, and humor. Thanks, Jim.

We DO have a very important piece of business that demands our attention. Over the last few years, we have been advocating for reclassification of many streams in NYS. The DEC spent 3 or 4 seasons sampling streams throughout the state, finding many that had populations of wild trout, or were spawning streams, or were capable of supporting trout. The total number is 3177, which is a bit misleading. These are "reaches" (segments of streams, some of which may be whole streams, but some of which are different parts of the same stream, maybe even more than one on a particular stream). Of these, about 50% (around 1500) are Class "C", which means they currently have essentially *no* regulatory protection in the form of permit requirements and review of proposed habitat disturbances affecting water quality. Protecting them would normally call for a long, involved legal process conducted by the Division of Water to reclassify EACH one. There is a bill in the State Legislature which would put all Class "C" streams under the same protection as streams already classified as supporting trout. The bill has passed the Assembly and is waiting for a floor vote in the Senate. This means it is ready to be voted on by the entire Senate. If it passed, it would go to the Governor to be signed into law. This is a HUGE step forward in protecting cold water fisheries in the streams of NYS. This bill was submitted in the 2017-'18 session and, for some reason, failed to pass. What we're asking everyone to do is to contact their State Senators to ask them to support this bill and to ask the Senate Majority Leader to schedule it for a vote and then to vote for it. We'll be sending a letter about this to every Senator in Erie, Niagara, and Wyoming Counties on behalf of the Chapter, but hearing from individual constituents always carries a lot of weight. This is an opportunity to obtain protection for trout streams that will likely never get reclassified due to the amount of red tape involved in EACH reach of a stream. Senator Harkham sponsored the bill. It is Senate Bill #5612 - "An Act to amend the environmental conservation law, in relation to the protection of certain streams." We know the Senate will be busy with other matters for a while; but, at some point, they are probably going to return to "normal" business. It would be great if this were part of it. We'll also be reaching out to all the conservation groups we can think of in an effort to start a grassroots movement of support. (I'm attaching a copy of the Bill – the proposed changes are in green - and a sample copy of the letter we're sending to Senators. The letter is in Word format, so you can edit or alter it to suit your own needs, name your own Senator, etc.) [Editor's Note: These attachments are not included if you have requested no attachments.] You don't need to keep it on TU letterhead, but you have permission to do so if you wish. Also, it's very important to list your contact information, with at least an address, so the Senator can understand that you are of one of his or her constituents. I spoke with Assemblyman Ryan's staff Thursday; and his aide said that an email was not only as good as a physical letter, but would probably be better now since they can't be sure how often anyone would be in an office to collect and/or read mail. (Assemblyman Ryan sponsored the Bill in the Assembly.) Please, please send an email to your Senator. We'll also be asking the State Council to send this out to all TU members in the State. This has the possibility of being the most important piece of legislation for protecting trout streams in NYS in decades.

Here is the Senate's website link for finding who your Senator is: <https://www.nysenate.gov/find-my-senator>. It really couldn't be any simpler to use. Just type in your address, and then click on "find my senator", and send your email. We'd also ask that, if you belong to any other conservation organizations, you ask them to support this also. The more emails we get send, the more likely this is to pass. [Editor's Note: *The context of the New York*

State bill to which Mr. Godfrey refers is as follows: As I understand the information on the DEC's website, New York's waters are classified as AA; A; B; or C. The first two classes are for sources of drinking water. "B" refers to waters whose "best usage" is for swimming and other "contact" recreation but not for drinking. "C" waters are all others. Waters whose classification is AA, A, B, or C, can also have an additional standard of "T" (may support a trout population) or "TS" (trout spawning). "Special requirements apply to sustain these waters that support these valuable and sensitive fisheries resources" (www.dec.ny.gov). Apparently, the bill to which Mr. Godfrey refers would add the protection equivalent to having a "T" or "TS" designation on all "C" level streams, without doing the actual reclassification, which is not practical.]

In other action, we were approached by a representative of Cockaigne Ski Resort with a request to help them with a proposed "Trout Fishing Derby" to be held in April. We listened to his presentation at the February meeting but voted, at the March Board meeting, against participation as an organization in helping set it up, running it, or publicizing it. The feeling was that it just doesn't fit in with our conservation goals. We won't oppose it but won't support it, either.

We have a chapter report to submit to National by May 15th. We don't know if they will extend the deadline or not, but want to have it done by then, anyway. Tony Messina will take care of the financials, and I will deal with reporting "volunteer hours." If you participated in any activity, other than meetings, we need to report that. If the activity was led by one of our chairmen, they have kept track of the hours and will report them to me. Electroshocking streams in the summers with the DEC counts, but Scott Cornett will give me those hours. I don't know if we had anyone helping to stock trout during the past year, but if you did, please send the number of hours worked to me. I suspect we have some people helping, but I never see any hours reported on that. If you spend any time doing anything TU-related on your computers during the year, that counts, also. We don't need any kind of detailed log – just an estimate. This reporting period will go all the way back to Oct 1 of 2018, since that is when our fiscal year began.

This was to have been my last submission as president. Elections were to be held at the March meeting. We will be holding them at our next general meeting, which, as of now, is scheduled for April 28th. I'm not at all sure that will be practical, but we will certainly let you know. The Board is responsible for presenting a slate of officers and directors for the election. Bob Bohner has agreed to run for president but would prefer someone else do so and wishes to serve for a maximum six-month term, rather than two years. We do not have a candidate for vice-president, but Tony Messina and Dave Unetich have agreed to run for Treasurer and Secretary, respectively. Dave Bollman, Bill Jedlicka, and Spencer Schofield have agreed to run for three-year terms on the Board. We also have one open Board seat that has been unfilled for over a year now. Also, nominations will be accepted from the floor for any of these positions at the next meeting. Please consider stepping up and helping us lead the chapter. We don't have to have the same group leading all the time. The newcomers we've gotten over the last few years have really helped to change the way we do things, for the better.

Finally, I'd like to thank all the officers, Board members, and "regular" members for all the support you've given me over the years as president. You have really helped to make a difference in coldwater fisheries in Western NY. Also, I want to thank you for the personal support you have given Debbie and me. Many of you know how tough these last almost three years have been for Debbie and me; and I'm happy to report that she is doing much better, and is almost all the way back to being the wonderful, cheerful "girl" I married 50 years ago. None of what I do would be possible without her constant and unwavering support. Stay safe and healthy out there.

P.S. – Referring to the Gierach quote above, tomorrow I hope to do something insignificant with steelhead.

Salmon and Steelhead: Speaking of these creatures, zebra mussels have been detected in the Rome Hatchery. The DEC is being proactive in trying to eliminate them and also to prevent their spread throughout the rest of the State. To that end, NO Rome Hatchery trout will be stocked in any water in the State that does not presently have zebra mussels. Therefore, the DEC has revamped its stocking plan; and Lake Erie will be receiving a brown trout stocking this spring, since it already has zebra mussels. This will be in addition to the domestic rainbow stocking that was reinstated recently

Trout in the Classroom: I'm waiting to hear from our participating teachers, but I know at least one will not have been able to get into the school the entire time they are out. I do know that Maryvale and Newfane have released their fish. In this unprecedented time, we're going to have unprecedented results, but the safety and health of people is the highest priority.

Chuck Godfrey, WNYTU President

- **Editor's Position Open, Third Notice (lol):** *"The time has come," the Walrus said, "to talk of many things: Of shoes--and ships--and sealing wax--of cabbages--and kings--and new newsletter editors"* [Apologies to Lewis Carroll]. So, let us talk: After over ten years as editor of "Trout Talk", I have decided to hang up the red pen (or whatever is the digital equivalent). It has been a real pleasure to produce the newsletter of Western New York Trout Unlimited. The time has come, though, to give someone else the chance to compose and to distribute this important medium of communication to, and among, our members, and to exercise creativity in composing a document which often includes photography and original articles. A love of the language, a respect for grammar (with the assistance of Spell Check – LOL), and a desire to keep our members in the loop are definite assets for this job. Some familiarity with Microsoft Word and Excel is required; but you do not need to be a computer expert. I would, of course, be willing to guide your transition to the role. If interested, please e-mail me at adruss@gmail.com. Russ Shefrin, Newsletter Editor.
- **Report from Mr. Dave Bollman:** Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing – All activities at he Buffalo VA have been cancelled for the month of March.
- **Stream Conservation Report – by Mr. Joseph Morgan:** I am very pleased to announce our chapter has been awarded a \$5000 grant from the NY State Council of Trout Unlimited's Fishery Enhancement Fund and \$4000 from the NYS State Council of Trout Unlimited Conservation Fund. These grants will be applied to the Wiscoy Pike Dam Removal Project. We have also applied for funding through the Patagonia Corporate World Trout Grant. I am waiting to hear back from them. Our friends at Orvis have also offered to help out with some funding for this important project. If everything falls in place, removal/construction will begin this summer.

On Saturday, May 2nd, at 9:00 AM, we will be planting trees on Wiscoy and/or East Koy Creek. Depending on the number of volunteers, I may schedule another weekday the week before or after May 2nd in order to complete the work. More details regarding site location, etc., will follow in the April newsletter. Thanks, Joe
- **News from New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. Mr. Scott Cornett, DEC Fishery Biologist, would** like us to be aware that: "The NYSDEC is launching another diary program on the Genesee River for 2020. We are looking for both trout and bass anglers who are interested in participating this year. We rely on the information provided by anglers, like you, in order to manage the

Genesee River fishery. If you are interested in participating please contact Logan Stratton at 716-379-6379 or at logan.stratton@dec.ny.gov with your mailing address, email and phone number. Thank you in advance!”

- Membership Chair Report – by Mr. Bob Bohner:** 1. New members: We are experiencing four to eight new members on average per month. Eight new members have been added in the last 30 days. This is a great accomplishment; and we appreciate all of our members. 2. Board Opportunities: We have openings for President, Vice-President, and one opening on our board that allow people to discover what and when they would like to do to assist TU in general. 3. Our board meetings, open to all members, take place on the second Tuesday of each month, September through June. No meetings are held in July and August. Please come and experience an organization that supports clean water and other passions of Trout Unlimited. It is a very friendly, enjoyable, supportive group. You do not have to join the Board in order to attend the Board meetings. Thanks, Bob Bohner.
- From the Editor:** Our “Trout Talk” newsletter is published in an expanded electronic format each month except for July, August, and December. In order to contain costs, the (typically brief) print version is only available once a year, namely, in September. Unfortunately, even on this schedule, the financial burden, to WNY TU, of the print newsletter remains considerable. Many of our members have agreed to forgo the print edition and to accept only the digital version (which is sent to them via email). It would help our organization considerably if more of our members agreed to this arrangement. All you have to do is send me your e-mail and surface mail addresses so that I can add you to the electronic mailing list and remove your name from the paper mailing list. I can be reached at AdkRuss@gmail.com
- Trout Unlimited Discounts:** Mr. Bob Bohner would like us to be aware of discounts available to TU members. They can be found by checking out this link: <https://www.tu.org/members-discounts/>.
- Treasurer’s Report for the Period February 1, 2020 through February 29, 2020 (Submitted by Mr. Anthony Messina):**

		(CHECKING ACCT)	prior period thru 01/31/20	this period thru 02/29/20
BALANCE AT	JANUARY 1, 2020		\$1,274.85	
BALANCE AT	FEBRUARY 1, 2020			\$959.85
INFLOWS:	SHOWS		\$0.00	\$318.00
	BANK ITEM DEPOSIT			\$1.00
	TOTAL INFLOWS:		\$0.00	\$319.00
OUTFLOWS:	MEMBERSHIP DUES (EC Federation)		\$135.00	
	DONATION (EC Federation - Banquet Tickets)		\$80.00	

	DONATION (EC Federation - Booklet Ad)		\$100.00	
	SHOWS			\$60.00
		TOTAL		
		OUTFLOWS:	\$315.00	\$60.00
BALANCE AT	JANUARY 31, 2020		\$959.85	
BALANCE AT	FEBRUARY 29, 2020			\$1,218.85

			prior period thru 01/31/20	this period thru 02/29/20
		(MONEY MKT ACCT)		
BALANCE AT	JANUARY 1, 2020		\$27,370.75	
BALANCE AT	FEBRUARY 1, 2020			\$27,371.21
INFLOWS:	INTEREST		\$0.46	\$0.43
		TOTAL INFLOWS:	\$0.46	\$0.43
OUTFLOWS:	NONE			
		TOTAL OUTFLOWS:	\$0.00	\$0.00
BALANCE AT	JANUARY 31, 2020		\$27,371.21	
BALANCE AT	FEBRUARY 29, 2020			\$27,371.64

			prior period thru 01/31/20	this period thru 02/29/20
		(RESTR. FND. ACCT.)		
BALANCE AT	JANUARY 1, 2020		\$10,000.00	
BALANCE AT	FEBRUARY 1, 2020			\$10,000.00
INFLOWS:	NONE		\$0.00	\$0.00
OUTFLOWS:	NONE		\$0.00	\$0.00
BALANCE AT	JANUARY 31, 2020		\$10,000.00	
BALANCE AT	FEBRUARY 29, 2020			\$10,000.00



Photography:

Mr. Chuck Godfrey sends us this image of Dr. Budney's Presentation at our February, 2020, Chapter Meeting.



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