



**FALL  
2023**



**A great place to spend a day with a Fly Rod in the Upper Midwest.**

## **INSIDE EDITION:**

**LARRY OLSON    fencelinepool@gmail.com**

**Communications Director**

**Fall, already?**

**Thanks for reading the latest news from the Upper Midwest Council of FFI. I welcome contributions to the quarterly newsletter. Let me know what you are doing and thinking about.**

**Vinny, our Conservation Director, sent me a great reminder, and included in this issue, to take the time to look around the river. He was particularly instructing us to look under the rocks for bugs and see what is there. This can be a indicator of the health of our streams. I took this to heart recently. I also took the time to look at the nearby vegetation and the birds all around me.**

**There was a Trico hatch on the river and I caught one so I could come up with a fly to match. It was a great exercise and I did eventually tie a size 22 fly to use my next time out. I invite you to do the same and share your photos of what you find. I will put them in the next newsletter.**



**VISIT THE UPPER  
MIDWEST COUNCIL @  
[umcffi.org](http://umcffi.org)**

**UPPER MIDWEST COUNCIL PRESIDENT:  
LYTH'S RANDOM THOUGHTS**

I certainly hope that everyone in our Upper Midwest Council enjoyed the summer fishing season. The water levels were certainly concerning in our rivers, streams and lakes, making some fishing outings more challenging. While summer is coming to an end our opportunities to fish are certainly not. Some of our best fishing of the year comes in the fall and even the winter months. We really need to get some rain to bring our water levels back closer to normal. In the meantime, get out there and just dress warmer for the weather.

One of the activities that the Upper Midwest Council did in past years was to hold a weekend "Introduction to Fly Fishing School" in the spring of the year. We held several of these schools until the Covid 19 Pandemic caused us to stop holding the event. We would like to start these up again now that the pandemic is behind us. (We certainly hope it is behind us!) To get this back on track we need to find someone to fill the role of "Education Director". In order to properly recruit this person we needed to create a Position Description for the Education Director. The UMC Board has just approved this description and will be sending it out to the members of our Council. Please be sure to read this position description and let me know if you are interested in playing this role.

The **Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo** dates for 2024 have been announced. **The dates are March 15 – 17, 2024** and will again be held at Hamline University in St. Paul, MN. The headliners are Jeff Currier and George Daniel, and it should be a great Expo again next year. The UMC will provide Casting Instruction and will also be instrumental in Fly Tying activities. This is a big event for us every year! We will need several members willing to help us with this event. We plan to have a booth again and will need a new banner and people willing to staff the booth. It's a great opportunity to promote fly fishing in our area!

Tight loops, lines, and threads,

Lyth Hartz,  
President Upper Midwest Council

**Lyth Hartz      lhartz@comcast.net**



### **Upper Midwest Council Casting Director's Report:**

In Duluth this summer, Todd Heggstad held about 7 sessions of informal casting events on Thursday evenings from June through August. Todd is a Certified Casting Instructor and he held these casting sessions at Homecroft Elementary school. Todd reported that they had about 12 people participate, and they even had “drive by” people who found the casting interesting. These sessions received great reviews and thank you Todd for doing this for the Duluth area!

In the Twin Cities area: Lyth Hartz CI, John McCain CI, and Ivan Streif MCI, held informal sessions at the Linwood Community Recreation Center field in St. Paul to help people with any casting issues that they wanted help with. These sessions were held on Wednesday evenings starting at 6:30 and were usually over by 7:45 p.m. These sessions were held during July and August, but several sessions had to be canceled due to storms or extreme heat. The sessions that were held were well attended by new people to the Lew Jewett Fly Fishers Club and some of our more veteran members who wanted to improve their casting skills. We had about 12 participants throughout the sessions. Look for a few pictures of taken at our sessions.

## **Casting Improvement Tip:**

Many summer fishing trips for our members include float trips on area rivers for smallmouth bass and muskies. These trips usually involve “blind casting” to likely spots where a fish may be located. Very rarely does one cast to a sighted fish. What this means is that during the fishing day, an angler may cast upwards of 900 casts or more. This calls for techniques that are “efficient” so that the angler doesn’t tire out too early in the day. This is where the Pick Up and Lay Down Cast (PULD) becomes so very important. PULD is simply picking up the fly and fly line off the water, making one back cast and then making the delivery cast. On the delivery cast one usually shoots some line to get back to the last fishing location. There is no false casting with the PULD thereby making the casting more efficient. False casting in these situations is inefficient as you are casting and not fishing. When done correctly, the PULD is very efficient and should increase your enjoyment of a long day of fishing.

Lyth Hartz  
UMC Casting Director



## **CONSERVATION REPORT**

**Chris “Vinny” Vincent**

**Conservation Director Upper Midwest Council**

**FFi Board of Directors—Conservation VP**

This is a shared article that I came across a few years ago when I was still doing water quality work. It is two years old but still very prevalent today. I feel we as anglers should take the time to understand the intricacies of our favorite watersheds, this not only includes everything surrounding the water, but also what is living and thriving below the surface. The next time your out on your favorite water, bring a small seine net with you and turn over some rocks and logs and see what’s hiding down there and you’ll be surprised what you find.



A stonefly larvae is found in Seneca Creek in Pendleton County, W.Va., on April 21, 2018. (Photo by Will Parson/Chesapeake Bay Program)

Each spring, scientists, natural resource managers and volunteers head out into streams to check up on the health of the waterways. Armed with buckets and nets, they are searching not for water samples, but for bugs—insects that live the first part of their life underwater. These larval-staged bugs, called macroinvertebrates, live in the streams for a few months to a few years looking for food. Each different type needs a certain set of conditions to survive, so their presence or absence in waterways says a lot about quality and health of the water.



Caddisflies are heartier macros, living in a wider range of water quality conditions including slightly degraded or polluted streams. Depending on the species, caddisfly diets range from bacteria to plants to other insects. Larval caddisflies can spin silk from a gland in their mouth which they use to build a case around their body or a net to catch food. The cases can be elaborately made using sticks, leaves, rocks or sand grains. When caddisfly macros are ready to transform into adults, they use their silk to build a cocoon on rocks in the water. They emerge as adults after a few weeks and can live for several more.



Dragonflies and damselflies are commonly found in shallow, non-flowing waterbodies like ponds and wetlands. Dragonflies have huge wraparound eyes and flat, wide airplane wings at rest, while damselflies are daintier, with space between their eyes and wings demurely folded on their slender bodies when at rest. Both are predatory and hunt a variety of prey including small fish, tadpoles and other aquatic insects. They have well-developed, movable lower jaws to snatch prey as it swims by, and they are the longest lived of our macroinvertebrate group. The nymph stage (the stage before full maturity) for dragonflies and damselflies can last up to seven years, while the adults can also live for multiple years and may even migrate to avoid harsh winters.



Mayflies live in some of the best quality water, preferring clean, cold, fast-flowing streams. Larval mayflies will live in the stream for about one year, grazing on algae or bacteria. Though they live for only a single day, the mayfly adults – known as “spinners” to the fishing crowd – are a favorite food of another clean water-loving creature, the brook trout. Identifying characteristics of larval mayflies include three tails (sometimes two), and flattened gills that are attached to the outer edge of the body.



Many of the insects people dislike, such as mosquitos, midges, black-flies and horseflies are true flies—though these are only a small percentage of a vast order. True flies include any insect with only one pair of flight wings and a pair of modified hind wings called halteres. The creatures serve as an abundant food source for many well-loved species and in many cases are even important pollinators. They are tolerant of poor water conditions, so they will be found in degraded and polluted streams.



# **UPPER MIDWEST COUNCIL CHAPTER AND AFFILIATE NEWS AND HAPPENINGS**

## **LEW JEWETT FLY FISHERS**

Summer is a time for independent fishing within our club. Many members have gotten out to fish. We hope to hear big fish stories when we meet in October. Myself and our Vice President, Bryan Croft, did a little exploring for locations for a fishing event we are working on for next year. We enjoyed our outing on the Cannon River despite the low water and catching mostly creek chubs. As we often say, “Just getting out on a river is worthwhile.”



We are looking forward to fall when our club begins to meet for dinner and speakers at Joseph's Grill in St. Paul. Our up coming meeting dates are Tuesday, October 17th and Tuesday, December 19th. We are working on securing speakers for all of our winter meeting dates. Notices will be sent and posted when that process is complete. The club is having their regular Chili Fishing event in Monticello, fishing for small mouth bass on the Mississippi followed by a chili feed on Sunday , October 29th.

## Annual Chili Fest on Sunday, October 29<sup>th</sup>

Lew Jewett Fly Fishers will be having the annual Chili Fest at Ellison Park in Monticello, MN on Sunday, October 29<sup>th</sup>. It will start at 11 AM and will go until everyone has had their fill or all the chili is gone! It is open to club members and their families and friends.

The way this works is there will be one or two large pots on stoves to warm the chili. Everyone brings their favorite chili to add to the pot. Bring enough for yourself and a little more. Also, bring your own bowl and utensils.

A couple of tips regarding your chili:

If you bring chili that is considered “very spicy” please let us know and we can put it in a separate pot.

Please do not bring it frozen as it will take too long to thaw in the pot.

Treats such as brownies, etc. are happily accepted also. Crackers, onions, shredded cheese, etc. will be available. Also, instant coffee, hot chocolate mix and hot water.

And bring your fishing gear to wade the Mississippi river for smallmouth bass. The bass congregate in this area of the river in the late fall into the winter. The fishing tactic is to swing woolly buggers or small clouser minnow flies.

It's always a great time to spend with your fellow members and friends.

# ARROWHEAD FLY FISHERS

The Arrowhead Fly Fishers were involved in several projects this year. In May we coordinated a trout stocking event in Divide Lake with MN DNR for 3<sup>rd</sup> graders from the Silver Bay (ISD 381) Elementary School. In June we planted 50 additional bare root stock trees on two different dates in 2023 where we have an ongoing project along the Us-Kab-Wan-Ka River. We tended previous white spruce plantings to weed cages of both canary reed grass and to remove vines that impacted sunlight getting to the trees. In response to the exceedingly dry conditions (no rain in one 30-day period) we had three watering dates late June-July to increase survival of the recent plantings. Some maintenance was conducted along trails that access Us-Kab-Wan-Ka. We also collaborated with the local Trout Unlimited Gitche-Gumee chapter to work on a 0.5-mile DNR angler access trail to the Blackhoof River that had substantial blockage from downed poplar trees from the record 140" of snow during the winter. In August we collaborated again with Gitche-Gumee on a local restoration reach of Keene Creek to weed tree cages and install coco mats on 100 trees that needed some competition relief from sprouting weeds.

## **September 19, 2023**

Photo presentation by Claudia Berguson of AFF activities for the past year. Prompted Table Talks between AFF members.

## **October 17, 2023**

Tenkara Fishing - guest speaker Melis Arik from Wild Rivers Chapter TU

## **November 21, 2023**

AFF Annual meeting. Further presentation TBD.

## **December 21, 2023**

AFF Annual Holiday Dinner

# PROJECT HEALING WATERS

## APPLETON WISCONSIN—FOX VALLEY

Here we are in the middle of September already. This summer has cruised by in what seems like record speed this year. We have been fishing all summer long in locations near and far with great success.

PHWFF has added a few new participants to our group which is always nice; the more disabled veterans we can help the better. We have one more fishing trip planned before we transition back to tying flies for the winter. Several of the new participants have never tied a fly before and we will be working through the FFi beginners manual with them. On the 23rd of September we have our annual end of summer cookout which is always a great time. This year we will be having some casting instruction and games with the winner taking home a nice Rod & Reel combo.

Tight Lines! Vinny



## **FLY TYING NOTES:**

**Larry Olson**

**FTG Board of Governors**

**Whip Finish Journal**

**Managing Editor**

Fly Fishers International's core strengths are in Fly Casting Instruction and Fly Tying. The Fly Tying Group has an extensive set of tools, both written and video to make you a great tier. I invite you to check out the Fly Tying Group web pages at [flyfishersinternational.org](http://flyfishersinternational.org). Coming in September is the Buszek Library of materials. Past award recipients share many of their articles and videos. There is information on a skills award program and the quarterly publication, Whip Finish Journal.

Back on page two I shared a picture of a small Trico I collected on a local stream. I had a great time tying a fly to match. The fly is a simple pattern with the biggest challenge a size 22 hook! Our local rivers seem to favor using small dry flies. The hook I used was a TMC 101 (22). My thread of choice, Sheer 14/0 black. Microfibetts tail; black superfine dibbing and a sparse white Widow's web for the wing (upright or spent). Here are two great choices for reading material to help you in tying small.

