



**SPRING  
2024**



**Photo courtesy Larry Olson. Hay Creek.**

## **INSIDE EDITION:**

**LARRY OLSON    fencelinepool@gmail.com**

**Communications Director, Upper Midwest Council**

**Another Great Waters Expo is here. These are events I look forward to every year. I went to my first Helgeson Show twenty some years ago and they always mark the beginning of a new season for me. This winter I have for the first time fished our trout streams in every month. Hard to know what to make of it. I always set goals of new waters to explore and new techniques to learn. With FFi we are “All Fish All Waters” Don’t get me wrong I love my road trips and I spend a month in Wyoming every year but we have some fantastic waters and diversity of species that we should take advantage of. At a recent Lew Jewett meeting we listened to Evan Griggs and fishing right here in the metro area. I was struck by the pure joy of the life he is living. This is something we should all reclaim. It can be a difficult and depressing world if we only watch TV. Turn the TV off. Go outside. Fish all of our local waters and all of our fish. Then, write to me with your own story of joy.**



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

**UPPER MIDWEST COUNCIL PRESIDENT:**

**LYTH'S RANDOM THOUGHTS**

**Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo:** While our winter in Minnesota this year was quite mild, we now have spring visible on the horizon and that means it's time for the Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo. The Expo is sponsored by Minnesota Trout Unlimited and will be held at Hamline University in St. Paul, MN. The dates of the Expo are March 15 – 17, 2024. Both the Upper Midwest Council and the Lew Jewett Fly Fishers will have booths at the Expo. They will be located next to the Fly Casting Instruction area. Please come and visit us! For more information check out the web site: [www.greatwatersflyexpo.com](http://www.greatwatersflyexpo.com)

The Expo is a very busy time for many of us in the Upper Midwest Council. We have for many years offered **free fly casting lessons** at the Expo for the attendees. We will have about 12 Certified Casting Instructors available to provide these lessons. Our lessons last for 15 minutes (if there is a lineup of people waiting to take a lesson) but, if there is no one waiting, the lesson can go longer. It can get quite busy at the casting lessons. Last year we provided 212 lessons during the three day event and we were only able to provide 4 at time due to limited space availability for the lessons. All the equipment is provided and the only thing a student needs to do is show up wanting a lesson. We provide many lessons to beginners, but we also provide instruction for more advanced techniques like the double haul, shooting line, and various ariel mends etc.

**Youth:** Members of the Lew Jewett Club will provide fly fishing education to youth at the Expo. The youth, after a classroom session, go to various parts of the Expo to get their "Passport" signed. The passport is a way to get hands on instruction to the youth in addition to the classroom instruction. After they get their passports signed, they participate in a drawing for a complete fly fishing outfit. This year we have at least two outfits to have in the drawing. This provides the youth with good equipment to use on the water of their choice.

**Fly Tying:** Many of our UMC Members help provide fly tying demonstrations and instruction during the Expo. So many talented tyers show up and provide this great activity to the attendees.

Tight loops, lines, and threads,

Lyth Hartz

President Upper Midwest Council

## **ROD SILENT AUCTION AT THE GREAT WATERS EXPO**

**DONATED BY RAY MORRIS**

**EAST FORK RODS**

**MENDOTA HGTS., MN**

**MEMBER OF THE CUSTOM ROD BUILDER'S GUILD**

**FRIDAY THROUGH SATURNDAY AT THE UMC FFi BOOTH**

**OPEING BID IS \$195.00**



**Custom Lamiglas 9'0" 8 weight Fly Rod G1000 Pro model GP1088. The rod blank was handcrafted in Woodland, WA. Full Wells Grip with a fighting butt. High quality anodized aluminum reel seat with 2 locking nuts. High quality stainless steel stripping guides with ceramic inserts. Stainless steel snake guides (8) and an extra large eye stainless tip top. Pro wrap metallic twist blue and silver wraps with red accents. Two coats of Generation 4 rod finish. The rod blank has a limited lifetime warranty and all custom work has a two year limited warranty.**

**Lyth Hartz**     **lhartz@comcast.net**



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

FFi is promoting the Fly Casting Skills Development program (FCSD) as a fun way to develop improved casting skills for anglers. This is not instruction that is aimed at Casting Instructor Certification, but it can lead to that. The FCSD program provides participants with new casting skills that will enhance their angling efforts. The whole point of the FCSD is to have fun while learning new casting skills.

In the future, we hope to provide UMC members the opportunity to participate in the FCSD program. Todd Heggstad from our Council is involved in the leadership team for this effort, so I anticipate events with Todd to participate with the FCSD program. You can find out more about the FCSD Program at the FFi Website: [www.flyfishersinternational.org](http://www.flyfishersinternational.org) and going to the "Learn" tab then to "Fly Casting Skills and Drills" You should be able to locate the requirements for the Bronze, Silver and Gold levels of these casting skills. They are not easy but are very fun to do!!

### **Casting Improvement Tip:**

One sure way to improve casting skills is to get a lesson from a Certified Casting Instructor. Don't know one? Well, you will be able to meet many Certified Casting Instructors at the Expo and many will provide you with private lessons after the Expo. Many strong instructor/student relationships have started at the Expo. Instructors are eager to help you learn to cast better and to catch more fish as a result. Can't come to the Expo? You can also find an instructor by visiting the FFi website and searching for a casting instructor. They have a listing of the Certified Casting Instructors from all over the world. It's an amazing resource. Go to [www.flyfishersinternational.org](http://www.flyfishersinternational.org) and click on the "Get Involved Tab" and then look for "Find an Instructor or Examiner". Information about the instructors included their certification level and their contact information. Try it, I think you'll like it!

Lyth Hartz,

Casting Director of the Upper Midwest Council

## CONSERVATION REPORT

**Chris “Vinny” Vincent**

**Conservation Director Upper Midwest Council**

**FFi Board of Directors—Conservation VP**

# So how healthy are Wisconsin’s waters overall?

- Good news – over 80% of Wisconsin’s waters that were assessed for water quality are meeting state criteria!
- **Only 18% of Wisconsin’s waters are not meeting state criteria** and are listed as “impaired” or “in restoration”. Impaired waters in Wisconsin are waters that do not meet one or more water quality standards and may not support fishing, swimming and recreation, aquatic life, or public health and welfare.

**Total phosphorus is the most common pollutant** affecting water quality in Wisconsin’s waters. Waters were also listed this year for degraded aquatic plant communities and chlorophyll (algae) in lakes, which are often related to high nutrient levels. Other waters are listed for elevated bacteria, metals or toxins, or degraded habitat or biology.



A Volunteer collects data on the Kinnickinnic River in Milwaukee.

Credit: Milwaukee River-keeper

## Stories highlight WAV volunteers' contributions

WAV nutrient data can help DNR biologists understand the ecological state of a river or stream and help them decide whether to list it as healthy or impaired. Dave Bolha, a DNR stream biologist in central Wisconsin, says that one of the roles that WAV volunteers play in the establishment of the Water Condition Lists is to collect Total Phosphorus (TP) data in areas where the DNR *does not* expect a problem. **Volunteer nutrient monitoring data can reaffirm the healthy status of a river, often in places where data has not been collected before.**

One of the best examples of this, Dave explained, is **Flume Creek** (WBIC 286600) in central Wisconsin where WAV volunteer Tom Janssen (pictured) recently collected nutrient samples. In the summers of 2022 and 2023, Tom collected samples at 6 sites on the creek for one of Dave's monitoring projects. The samples from two of those sites, Drake Road and Hwy 66, **confirmed that the phosphorus level in the stream meets the state's criteria for the pollutant.** Tom traveled about 250 miles roundtrip each month to collect this data, and it has proven to be extremely valuable information for future stream management and planning!



For example, data collected by WAV volunteers on the **Kinnickinnic River and its tributary Wilson Park Creek**, which are already listed as impaired waters, **confirmed continued total phosphorus and chloride exceedances and suggested adding *E. coli* (bacteria) as a new pollutant** impacting these heavily urbanized waterbodies. A 2007 article titled "[The Lost River](#)" in Milwaukee Magazine highlighted the water quality challenges for the Kinnickinnic River and its tributaries. Since then, the Milwaukee Metropolitan Sewerage District, Milwaukee County Parks, Army Corps of Engineers, Milwaukee Riverkeeper, Wisconsin DNR, and many others have [continued their work to repair this river](#). Volunteer and professional data alike have served as impetus for this important work, and in the case of the Kinnickinnic River and its tributaries, will help document future successes.

Greetings,

The previous two pages are from an article I wanted to share with you written by Katy Bradford, WAV (Water Action Volunteers) Program Manager and Lily Butler, WAV Program Student Assistant.

Here we are at the beginning of March already and while this usually brings us to thoughts of when will winter end and spring begin, it seems like we are stuck somewhere in the middle these days. Being a river rat at heart, this time of year has me prepping my switch rods for the annual walleye runs in my favorite rivers. I have witnessed these rivers change in many ways and most of those changes were not in favor of the river. Changes such as health and water quality, the amount of trash and other pollutants found. The walleyes still use the rivers, but there has been a definite decline in numbers and size. All of this points to a host of environmental issues affecting water quality. Wisconsin is doing a good job of getting our rivers back into good shape but there is still a lot of work to be done.

My past experiences leading various large and small stream sampling projects have led me to be on the look out for good information to share with others on how they can stay informed and getting involved. I encourage everyone to go take a look at your favorite river and try to remember how it was the first time you set foot in it and what it is today.

Chris “Vinny” Vincent    5grizzlys@reagan.com

**Are you interested in helping collect total phosphorus water samples at a stream location in your local watershed?** Contact your local WAV Coordinator to learn about opportunities to participate in WAV’s nutrient monitoring program.

**Wondering what these “nutrients” are that we are talking about, and where these water quality pollutants may come from?** Read our blog post on [“Nutrient monitoring in Wisconsin’s waters: What does it all mean?”](#)





**LARRY OLSON**

**FTG BOARD OF GOVERNORS**

**Whip Finish Journal ,Editor**

**fencelinepool@gmail.com**

If you tie flies take the time to check out some of the unique and extensive resources on-line at the FFi website and with the Fly Tying Group.

**BUZ BUSZEK LIBRARY (New in the Learning Center)**

**Videos and articles from some of the best tiers in the world!**

**Quarterly Journal of Fly Tying—Whip Finish Journal**

**Fly Tying Skills Award Program**

**Fly Tying On-line Manuals**

**Fly of the Month**

**Fly Tying Video Library**

**Stop at the UMC Booth at the show and find out more and talk fly tying with me. I'd love to see and hear what you are working on.**

# UPPER MIDWEST COUNCIL CHAPTER AND AFFILIATE NEWS AND HAPPENINGS



**Meet us at the Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo March 15-17th** Hamline University, St. Paul MN

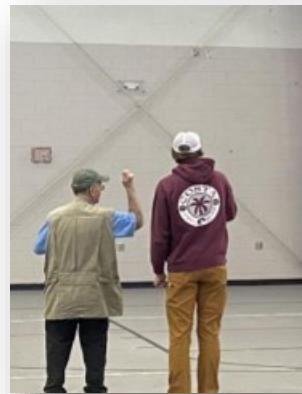
Lew Jewett will have a booth at the Expo. Come by for a visit and chat. We will also be conducting the Youth Passport on Saturday March 16th. The passport guides the youth through 6 activities that will help them learn more about fly fishing. The activities are An Introductory class at 10:45, knot tying at the Lew Jewett Booth, a casting lesson, watching or tying a fly in the tying area, checking out the live aquatic insects and visiting the MN Department of Natural Resources booth. After completing five or six of the activities the family can enter for a drawing for two fly fishing outfits. Each participant that turns in a completed passport will get a box with flies.



**NEXT DINNER MEETING** is APRIL 16th at Joseph's Grill, St. Paul, MN  
Annual membership meeting and Silent Auction!

## FEBRUARY 20th MEETING: EVAN GRIGGS

Evan Griggs began his fly-fishing life as a member of Lew Jewett as a teenager. He returned to give a presentation on fly –fishing close to home. Evan is now the owner and head guide of Fishing For All. He spoke about fly-fishing in our urban backyard the National Park—the Mississippi National River and Recreation Area. The Recreation Area starts in Dayton, MN where the Crow River flows in and down through Hastings, MN. Evan broke down the five main sections of the river, detailed the fish species and the tactics to use in each area. Evan had us laughing throughout the presentation. If you missed our meeting, Evan is giving multiple presentations at the Great Waters Expo. Learn more about Evan at <https://fishing-for-all.com>



We are having a **Fly Casting Get Together** at the Sports Expo Center located within the National Sports Center in Blaine on April 28th. Whether you are a beginner or a seasoned caster, it is a great way to warm up for the upcoming fly-fishing season. Register with the club.

Date/Time: Sunday, April 28th, 1 PM to 3 PM

Location: Sports Expo Center within the National Sports

# ARROWHEAD FLY FISHERS

The winter months have been active for Arrowhead Fly Fishers. In January and February, we co-hosted two events with Gitche Gumeet Trout Unlimited. The first was our annual presentations by regional DNR officials from Northwest Wisconsin and Northeast Minnesota. Club members always come away from this meeting better informed of regional projects that are improving fish habitat and the environment. Our second joint event, held in February, was the International Fly Fishing Film Festival. This is an important annual fund-raiser for both clubs. Together, we netted nearly \$7,000 dollars from ticket sales and raffles. Generous donations from local and regional businesses made this event a success. Over 200 people attended the IF4. AFF will put money raised toward conservation and education initiatives. Each winter, AFF also hosts three fly tying events that are free and open to the public. Several new fly tyers joined us to learn how to tie a fly or two. The mild winter has also allowed for an early start to preparing for tree planting and maintenance along some of our adopted local streams.



# **PROJECT HEALING WATERS**

## **APPLETON WISCONSIN—FOX VALLEY**

The Project Healing Waters crew has been very busy these last few weeks with several projects being completed for an upcoming event.

We took a break from tying the flies in the Silver Award Handbook ending with the Troth's Elk Hair Caddis and tied up some Hippie Stompers for an upcoming trip to SW Wisconsin's Driftless region.

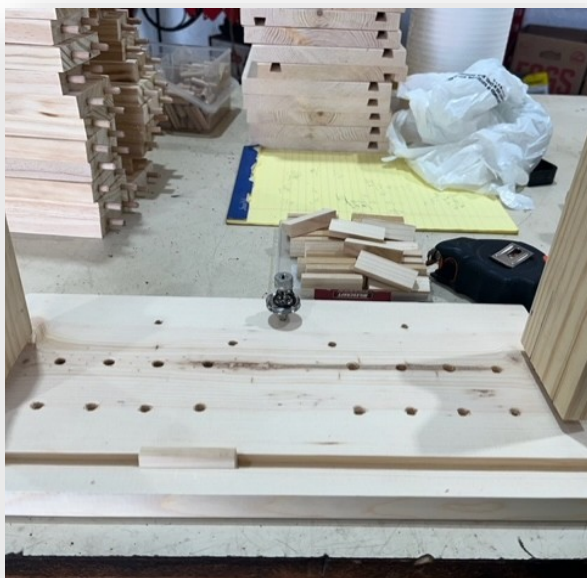
We are also preparing for our first rod building class in April. A few of the guys have volunteered the time to making the individual build stations for everyone building a rod. They have been planning this event over the last six months and are excited to start turning rods. We have a very unique opportunity for one of our participants to attend a bamboo rod building workshop in Michigan at Bamboo Bend on the shore of the Au Sable River. Everyone in attendance will build their own bamboo fly rod and will take it on a guided fishing trip on the river when their rods are completed.

PHWFF will also be attending the Fly Fishing Film Tour in Green Bay on the 8th of March. We are looking forward to seeing all the great locations to fish throughout the world.

Tightlines,

Vinny

PHWFF Program Lead





Join the FFi Upper Midwest Council & FFi Women Connect this fall for our 4th Annual Women's Driftless Rendezvous! This event will be held in the heart of the Minnesota Driftless. This area is known for its expansive trout habitat and beautiful, deeply carved river valleys with pristine spring creeks. This is an event hosted by women, for women! Registration includes food & lodging; all other travel/transportation, licensing, and guide trips are at your own expense.

**Pricing & Package Info:** We are offering tiered pricing which includes all food and lodging. Everyone will have their own bed. Participants will help with food prep & clean up throughout the week. Not included: guided fees, tips, licensing, transportation, alcohol. You will be responsible for bringing your own fishing gear (4-5 wt rods w/ floating line recommended). Individual participant pricing for the 2024 trip is as follows:

Private Room w/bathroom	\$995.00
Private Room (shared bathroom)	\$875.00
Double Room	\$675.00
Loft	\$475.00

Monday Oct. 7 - Sunday Oct. 13, 2024

Where: Cedar Valley Resort - Whalen, MN

To Register: Info & registration will be posted on: [umcffi.org/women-connect/](http://umcffi.org/women-connect/) Or contact: [womenconnect.UMC.ffi@gmail.com](mailto:womenconnect.UMC.ffi@gmail.com)

Payments must be made prior and in full. In the event of a cancellation, refunds will be issued only if we are able to fill the spot.

We will have events planned throughout the week including topics and events such as: conservation, casting skills development, social events, Driftless ecology & entomology, and of course, lots of fishing!!!