

# Hickory NC Trout Unlimited

## December 2018 Newsletter



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### A LINE FROM THE PRESIDENT

Hello, everyone, and a very special Welcome to the new faces taking part in our chapter. And for the rest of you, you may have been a member for a long, long time but we really want to get to know you. Please come to join us.

Our last Chapter meeting was a workshop in knot tying and I must say it was a lot of fun. Maybe the most fun of any meeting we've had so far. We learned all kinds of knots hands on.

After learning to tie that "quick as a flash knot using your forceps", one member said quite seriously "This is life changing" and I agreed. Everyone there had a great time. I hope you can join us for our January meeting on Tenkara.

Now on to our discussion about Hellbenders. Last month my questions were: Are there any Hellbenders in Wilson Creek? Have you seen one anywhere while fishing? What can we do to protect them?

Well, we had a couple of responses. Longtime TU member (1974) Steve Carrigan from Taylorsville reported that he had once seen a Hellbender on the New River outside of Sparta. He also shared that River Girl Outfitters outside of Todd, NC has by permit from NCWRC a Hellbender in an aquarium. So if you're ever in the vicinity of Todd, stop in and see the Hellbender there.

Also, Alen Baker from Rocky River TU reported that while fishing on Helton Creek he observed a full-grown Hellbender about 2ft. long. Just how awesome would that be!

Allen is also the driving force behind the Fly Fishing Museum of the Southern Appalachians. It turns out that the tanks for the new Appalachian Rivers Aquarium that is part of the Museum began arriving this week. Several 1000 gallon tanks are being set in place as I write this.

A pair of Hellbenders will be on display in one of the Aquariums exhibits. I suggest a contest to name the Hellbenders.

Mark your calendars now for the Grand Opening of the Aquarium in Bryson City for the last weekend in March 2019.

- March 29th. - The Lagers with Legends
- March 30th.- Aquarium Grand Opening followed by the 2019 Hall Of Fame Induction

So that still leaves us with one unanswered question, are there Hellbenders in Wilson Creek? Well, I still don't know. I've had conflicting reports but, I'm working on it.

The tug is the drug,  
Jacqueline Greene  
[HkyNCTUpres@gmail.com](mailto:HkyNCTUpres@gmail.com)

### NEXT MEETING

There will be no meeting in December. Please take the time to be with your family or do a little trout fishing.

**January meeting**—We have had several requests for a presentation on Tenkara fly fishing. We are fortunate to have a nationally renowned speaker on the topic, Jason Sparks, living right here in North Carolina who will be coming to tell us all about it.

### QUOTE OF THE MONTH



"We regret to report that Christmas may come a little late this year. It's taking Santa a lot longer to tie that fly with bifocals."

### 50<sup>th</sup> ANNIVERSARY OF THE WILD & SCENIC RIVERS ACT

The day dawned a little chilly, but with blue skies and bright sunshine. By the time the main event started, it was comfortable and the winds were light. The event truly was an amazing success. Over 200 people turned out to help celebrate. Wes Starnes was a big success fly fishing along

the river in front of the event. He was lucky to catch some fish with the viewers lined up along the banks watching, but he was able to get a beautiful 11" rainbow for the display aquarium.

The fly casting activities and the fly tying were well attended, but the marshmallow roast probably drew the most people. Cathy Starnes sold almost a hundred tickets for our TIC rod raffle.

There were several excellent speeches toward the end of the program including presentation of four of the original five Caldwell County commissioners who were active in getting the Wild & Scenic River Designation through the U.S. Congress.

Special thanks go out from the program committee to two very special people that made this such a wonderful event. First we would like to thank Roy Beane. Roy took the lead for Caldwell County in obtaining the designation and at the event shared some interesting history of it. Second we want to thank Andy Brown, our SE TU Stream Restoration Manager. Andy was our committee chairman and did a tremendous job in bringing this all together. Thank you so much Andy.

And of course thank you to the great number of volunteers from our chapter who were there to help make in a great success.

## **DELAYED HARVEST**

The fall stocking is complete and there will not be another stocking until the first week of March. Be very careful with your releases over the winter as these are all the fish we will have until next year. Especially remember if you are out there when it is below freezing, the gills can freeze very quickly and kill the fish.

## **HICKORY NC TU LOGO GEAR**



The Hickory Chapter has an account at Lands' End for clothing and other items with our logo.

There are frequent discounts available that you can sign up for by going to <https://business.landsend.com/>. To access the account go to:

<https://business.landsend.com/store/hkynctu/>

We also have a second option for logo gear that Zan's wife Peggy has set us up with. Check out the following website: [www.companycasuals.com/hickorytrout/start.jsp](http://www.companycasuals.com/hickorytrout/start.jsp) (note: this site requires a minimum of 12 items)

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## **Tight Lines & Road Kill Need to Smile?**

Milton Berle said, "Laughter is an instant vacation." After being cooped up in the house for so many rainy days in November, I need a trip. Last month I did great fishing quotes. Let's smile this month with some of my favorite fishing jokes. And away we go!

\*Fisherman to his friend: I got a new fly rod for my wife. Best trade I ever made.

\*A fisherman made a beautiful cast, set the hook, and landed a voluptuous mermaid. "OK, you caught me," said the mermaid, "you get three wishes." The angler thought for a minute, "I can't think of but one, but will you do it three times?!"

\*Women around the bridge table. One says, "I've figured out why my husband likes fishing so much. It's the only time he hears anybody say, 'Gosh, that's a big one!'"

\*A guy rolls over to his wife in bed about 4 a.m. "I can't decide whether to go fishing or stay here and make mad, passionate love to you all morning." She sleepily says, "I put your fishing hat in the hall closet!"

\*A Carolina grad and a Wake grad who are novice fly fishermen drive out west to fish in Yellowstone. They have no gear, so they rent everything: rods, reels, waders, boots, and they buy a bunch of flies and tippet. They fish all day the first day and catch nothing. Same on day 2, 3, and 4. Finally, on their last day, the Wake grad catches one 8-inch rainbow. As they're driving home the next day, the Wake grad says, "Do you realize that one little fish cost us over \$1500?" The Carolina grad replies, "It's a damn good thing we only caught one!"

\*Two blondes were fly fishing on the same stream, one on each bank. One is catching nothing but looks at the blonde on the other side and sees she is catching a fish on almost every cast. She yells across, "How do I get to the other side?" The second blonde, looking confused, yells back, "You are on the other side!"

\*And then, one of my all-time favs:

Two avid fly anglers bumped into each other on Wilson Creek.

"I've not seen you here in a good while, Fred."

"Well, my wife's been very sick, and I had to take care of her. She finally died a few days ago, so I decided it would be good for me to go fishing again."

"Damn, Fred, sorry to hear that. But where's your son? He always comes fishing with you."

"Oh, he's at the funeral!"

Last month Editor Chick and I offered a dozen hand-tied flies to the person who sent in the best fishing quote that I didn't have. I guess nobody needed any flies! We'll make the same offer: submit the best fly-fishing joke by December 15 to [hkyNCTUlrk@gmail.com](mailto:hkyNCTUlrk@gmail.com) and you get the flies.

If you win and get a great fly rod for your wife for Christmas, you'll have flies to go with it!

**By Dr. Joel Miller**

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## A CHRISTMAS GIFT FOR YOUR TROUT FISHERMAN

While there is little doubt that the number one thing on a fly fisherman's Christmas list would be the trout in that photo, it would be very difficult to put it in a stocking. So to get a good idea of what is at the top of the list I asked our chapter's board members what is their number one fly fishing gift request. I think we got a pretty good list of things you may want to consider. Let's start with items you might want for stocking stuffers.

Gary Schnick suggests a very reasonably priced tool that he loves and has given to many friends. It is a Ty-Rite Jr. Hook Holder. The Ty-Rite Junior Tool makes tying flies onto your leader much easier by holding the bend of the hook while you tie in the fly. It allows you to tie a cinch knot with ease for that #22 fly. This gift comes in at our lowest price of \$12.



The next item on our list was offered by Doug Wells who commented he is tired of slipping and getting wet on the river and has decided a wading staff is the right thing to add to his gear. As chance would have it, I have written an article about wading staffs you will find latter in this newsletter. The bottom of the line staff (Hammer) which I have used and liked for years is a stocking stuffer price of \$25. However, there are some very nice features on the more expensive products like the Simms Pro that can run you as much as \$150.

Another stocking stuffer suggested by Joe Giovannini is the C&F Ultralight Flybox. We are all constantly trying to reduce the load we tend to carry on the river and this box will cut back some of that weight while still carrying over a hundred flies. The box costs about \$30.



One thing that didn't make the list by our board members, but has become a very popular item is a fly fishing lanyard. A fly fishing lanyard is basically a specialized necklace with attachment points for commonly used fly fishing

accessories like clippers, tippet, floatant, and forceps. If your fly fisher doesn't wear a vest or chest pack, the lanyard is a must-have accessory that works well with or without waders. Lanyards also pair particularly well with waist or lumbar packs. But wait, there's more: Lanyards are great fly fishing gifts for kids and newbies, but they're handy for experienced fly fishers, too. We like to attach a small fly box to ours, which gives us everything we need for quick jaunts down to the river or around base camp.



One last item suggested by Joe is an Abel Nipper. While this item qualifies well as a stocking stuffer due to its small size, I'm not sure the \$85 dollar price tag qualifies it. Personally I have never paid more than \$10 for a pair of nippers and they have served me well. These are made of lightweight anodized aluminum and have replaceable jaws, but I think what you are truly paying for is a work of art. These nippers come in a multitude of colors and designs.

OK, now let's get into some more serious gifts. Chick Woodward wants a Tenkara rod for Christmas. After watching a few videos on Tenkara and realizing it is very much like high sticking with a regular rod I realized there are some big advantages to a Tenkara rod. If you are fishing some of the smaller high mountain streams this rod makes it much easier. First is the compactness and light weight. The rod folds down to about 20" for carrying into the stream and only weights a few ounces. This is especially great for hikers. The rods extend to around 12' which allows you to high stick the width of many of our mountains streams without getting too close to spook the fish. The price of the rods tend to vary from about \$150 to \$250. Please join us in January to learn more about Tenkara from our renowned speaker who will be joining us.



Joel Miller wants a pair of Orvis Ultralight Wading Boots. Actually he already has them, but loves them so much he thinks you should have a pair too. Boots are probably the heaviest item we haul with us on the river (of course other than our beer bellies) and Joel says these are a dream to hike in. The price is \$169, but that is without studs. From Orvis the studs are an extra \$28.

Now of course we have several people asking for new fly rods. Gail Garrison wants a Euro nymphing rod. I understand that she and Jackie Greene were recently fishing over on the Little Rock River and had a chance to try out one of these. They were quite impressed with the ability to land large fish on light tackle. I don't know a great deal about Euro nymphing, but from what little I've read it appears it is similar to Tenkara, but the rod has a reel on it. A Euro nymphing rod appears to be in the price range of about \$250.

Jackie Greene wants a Butterstick fiberglass 3 wt. fly rod and Gail quickly responded she does to. The price of this

rod is \$250. Apparently a guide in Montana recommended this to Jackie. This immediately sparked a discussion. Chick Woodward got a 3 wt. fiberglass for his son a couple years ago. It is a full flex and is so flimsy it's difficult to cast. Gary Schnick suggested that maybe you should consider the Reddington Vice series which has a little more backbone and is priced at about \$200. If you are going to start fishing smaller streams, a shorter 3 wt. rod is a great idea, but be sure to try it out before you buy it.

Spencer Welland is asking for a G. L. Loomis IMX Pro 590 priced at about \$500 and a Nautilus XM reel priced at about \$300. Spencer is a student at Lenoir-Rhyne and president of the TU Five Rivers Club there so unless he's there on a full scholarship, I hope his parents can afford tuition and this rod/reel combo or Spencer might be out of luck this year.

The final rod request comes from Joe Giovannini. He would like a G. Loomis Asquith rod priced at about \$1200. The Asquith series is the culmination of global cooperation in design, materials, and manufacturing techniques. Built on Shimano's proprietary Spiral X platform, the Asquith boasts superb power transfer from tip to hand, quick recovery, and increased sensitivity. Designed by world casting champion Steve Rajeff, the Asquith is an exploratory step into the future of rod manufacturing technology. With fast actions, generous power levels, titanium guides, and exceptionally light swing weight, all rods in the series excel in fishing situations where developing high line speed and making precise casts means success.

From there we go to requests for fishing trips, which surprisingly cost about the same as the Asquith rod. (Excluding travel and lodging of course.) Holly Cole would like a guided Montana trip. Having done that this summer, though a lot of that time was just into Yellowstone Park in Wyoming, I think it's a great idea. Three days of local guided fly fishing seem to range from about \$800-1200 (plus tip) based on a party of two. Travel will be on the order of \$600 for coach and lodging for four nights about another \$1000. Add a car, meals and expenses and based on two people sharing the room and guide, the total cost \$2500 total per person. You might save a little money on the room if you check out some on-line BnBs.

Our last trip request to Santa came from Gary Hogue who would like to fish the Deschutes River in Oregon. The Wild & Scenic Deschutes provides some great trout fishing from May into August starting with the world renowned Salmonfly hatch. In September the steelhead fishing begins. A 3 day camping/float trip runs \$1200. Again, assuming two people the total with travel and expenses would be maybe just a bit higher than the \$2500 for Montana.

The remainder of our board has either been influenced by Scrooge or was on a Thanksgiving vacation last week when they were asked to report in. There is one gift, however, that no one has mentioned and I know every fly fisherman would like and that is some Hickory TU logo gear.

We are registered with **Lands End** who makes some beautiful and excellent clothing. Details are elsewhere in this newsletter. I only have one suggestion, be sure to check the logo colors against the clothing color you are buying. I got a beautiful dark blue shirt that is amazingly comfortable from my family last year. Only problem is a part of our logo is also dark blue and my shirt says "Hickory Trout."

Merry Christmas everyone and I hope Santa brings you everything you've wished for this year.

## **WILDLIFE COMMISSION SEEKS INFORMATION ON HELLBENDER SIGHTINGS**



With fall fishing in full swing, the N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission is asking the public, in particular anglers, to report any sightings of hellbenders (water dogs) to the agency. Reported sightings are an important part of a long-term

inventory and monitoring project for hellbenders that agency staff, along with partners, began in 2007. Agency biologists want to learn more about where hellbenders—gigantic, aquatic salamanders averaging 16 to 17 inches in length—are located and how their populations are faring.

In North Carolina, hellbenders are found only in fast-moving, clean mountain streams in the western part of the state. Hellbenders, also called "snot otters" and "Alleghany alligators," were once common but have disappeared throughout much of their habitat, due mainly to declining water quality and habitat degradation, and to a lesser degree to persecution from anglers who mistakenly think that hellbenders decrease trout populations.

Although they may occasionally go after a trout on a line or stringer, looking for an easy meal, hellbenders eat mainly crayfish according to Wildlife Diversity Biologist Lori Williams, who has done extensive work on hellbenders. "They may also eat unsuspecting minnows and scavenge for dead fish, discarded bait or other dead animals. However, fish can be bigger predators of young or larval hellbenders than hellbenders of fish."

Contrary to popular belief, hellbenders are not poisonous, venomous, toxic or harmful to humans, although they may bite if someone tries to pick them up. Leaving them alone is not only good for hellbenders but also it is the law. Hellbenders are listed as a species of special concern in North Carolina. Because of this listing, it is illegal to take, possess, transport or sell a hellbender or to attempt to do so. A violation is a Class 1 misdemeanor, which can result in a fine and up to 120 days in jail.

Williams also cautions people to refrain from moving rocks in mountain streams as these rocks provide shelter for hellbenders, as well as other species of fish, salamanders and insects.

Anyone who finds a hellbender is asked to leave it alone but to note the location (physical location or GPS coordinates) and take a photo, if possible and email that information to Williams at [lori.williams@ncwildlife.org](mailto:lori.williams@ncwildlife.org). If anglers happen to catch one on hook and line, they should carefully remove the hook if it is safe to do so without



harming the animal or cut the line as close as possible and return it back to the water. People also can call the Commission's Wildlife Interaction Helpline (866) 318-2401 and provide details of the observation.

Learn more by visiting the Commission's [hellbender webpage](#).

## **Wading Staff**

[www.SouthernTrout.com](http://www.SouthernTrout.com) | Southern Trout | October 2018 | 29

I thought for years that wading staffs were made for those foolish enough to venture into currents where they had no business being or by older trout fishermen who no longer had a lot of faith in their balance, footing, or leg strength. I suppose to a certain degree I was correct, but after finally getting my hands upon a good wading staff, it occurred to me that a lot of the slips and tumbles and downright frightening situations experienced over the years could have been avoided had my haste and pride not gotten in my way and I had had a wading staff. Depending on where you fly fish in the South, doubtless, you see these wading tools to some degree. Prior to parting with money for a real wading staff, I pressed many different items into service to serve as wading staffs. Ski poles, shovel handles, and beaver sticks are a few that come to mind. Tie a length of cord to a stick to act as a tether, and you have a wading staff of sorts.



Anything that helps you wade safe and upright seemed to me to be a cheap alternative to spending greenbacks.

My first wading staff was an Orvis Black Diamond Trail Back Staff. After the second trip out with it, I chucked it into the trash. Next, I tried a

Simms' Pro Wading Staff. It performed to my expectations and will probably outlive me. Simms says of the wading staff, "Become a wading wizard sourcing steelhead across the roiling waters of Washington's Olympic Peninsula is easier with an ally at your side. Simms' Pro Wading Staff excels against the push and pulls thanks to the lightweight, high-strength capabilities of best-in-class carbon tubing." As fun as it might be to sample the waters of Olympic Peninsula casting to steelhead, I can't find it on my bucket list. Nevertheless, I decided to give the Simms' Pro Wading Staff a try (plus strict orders from Mrs. Kirk that I could not go back to the creeks and rivers without being a c o m panied by a wading staff.)

The Simms' Pro Wading Staff (list price \$150/aluminum version for \$99) is a four-section staff that features the company's FastLock system. The staff is constructed of lightweight, rigid carbon fiber tubing that is extremely lightweight. The Fastlock system similar to those found quality touring-style ski poles. It enables you to customize lengths between 51 and 56 inches. A contoured cork handle delivers non-slip grip. And the ergonomic strap is quick-release enabled for enhanced safety in the field. The handy belt worm neoprene sheath comes standard. Contoured cork around

handle allows for a secure grip. The approximate weight of the wading staff is merely 11.2 ounces.

The Simms design has a few advantages like not pulling apart in the mud, not using shock cord and IMHO a better guarantee from Simms. Simms recently changed the design of their wading staff and added a few new features and options like a "Pro" carbon fiber version which is lighter and comes with a cork grip, along with a lower cost aluminum version with a molded rubber grip. Both staffs feature a swappable tip that can be either aluminum or rubber.

The staff requires three extra steps when deploying. The FastLock clip must be undone first, then the staff pulled open until the locking button pops into the hole. The staff length then is adjusted and the FastLock clip re-secured. The locking button that keeps the staff from collapsing now protrudes through a hole on the upper section as opposed to just sticking out below the adjacent section. The new FastLock clip requires for the adjustable length feature necessitated a redesign of the case so the collapsed staff goes in easily.

The aluminum tip of the wading staff can be swapped with a rubber tip (an additional charge) which is a nice feature. However, to get it off you most likely need a pair of pliers which sort of means you couldn't easily swap out from metal to rubber streamside.

All and all, I give the Simms Pro Wading Staff an A-. I lost it in camp last weekend and it took me an hour to find it. Otherwise, it would grade out at a solid A. It gets management off my ass which is pretty sweet too. For more information, visit [www.simmsfishing.com](http://www.simmsfishing.com). Sooner or later you'll need a get out of jail pass. Prepare now.

*The Simm's PRO Wading staff is certainly the Cadillac of wading staffs and is likely to last you a lifetime, but if you are basically cheap like me, check out the Hammer's wading staff (list price \$28 on Amazon). There is one serious feature to consider...if it gets stuck in the mud it will pull apart and if you're not used to it you could end up in the water. Fortunately most of our streams are gravel and rock so it's not as much of an issue here. It folds into 12" sections that slide into a pouch that comes with it. My first lasted probably ten years and I might still have it if my lanyard had not come untied. It is constructed with  $\frac{3}{4}$ " aluminum and is fairly light weight. It has a contoured rubber grip and a carbide point. If you are willing to settle for a Hyundai rather than a Cadillac it will do the job for you. And of course if you don't need it to fold up for travel, just pick out a good piece of wood, sand it down, and give it a coat of varnish. Whatever you use, remember that it will be sitting there in the water just downstream of you and your line will tangle on it. Just remember to give it a little push behind you to get it out of the way. Happy (and dry) wading.*

## **DECEMBER FLY PATTERNS**

Reprinted from Carolina Sportsman magazine

Although hatches are common during December, nymph patterns usually are preferred.



Suggested nymph patterns are No. 10 My Pet, No. 10 Mink Hair, No. 12-10 Zug Bug, No. 8 Woolly Booger, No. 10 Girdle Bug, No. 12-10 Prince, and No. 10-8 Brown Stone. Best time to fish in the winter is the middle of the day.

For more information on fly hatches and patterns, visit our website helpful links page at <http://www.hkynctu.org/helpful-links/> and look for the NC Fly Hatch Chart.

## TIP OF THE MONTH

### Making the Bobber Better

by [Louis Cahill](#)



Photo by Louis Cahill

#### If you're going to fish a bobber, you should make your bobber better.

I've written a little lately about my growing discontent towards bobber fishing. I'm going to say again, on the record, that there is a time and a place for a big gaudy bobber and when it's time to fish one, you want it to work at its absolute best. Right?

There are two common problems with the way a bobber functions. They are both a matter of drift. On the one hand, a bobber can negatively impact the drift of your fly, pulling it up in the water column and causing an unnatural drift. On the other hand, there can be too much slack between the bobber and the fly, causing your bobber to react slowly when a fish eats.

I was talking about this with my friend Whitney Gould the other day and she showed me a cool trick that solves both problems. This is ironic because Whitney is a renowned Spey caster who will not fish a bobber under threat of death and openly makes fun of anyone who does, including me. I don't mind, because I'm not too proud to learn something and this trick is so simple I'm shocked I've never seen it before.

#### Simply place a piece of split shot or tungsten puddly about six inches below the Thingamabobber.

This takes the heavy end of the leader straight down under the bobber and accomplishes two things. It gets your fly down in the water column, where the fish are, and by taking the butt of the leader with it, minimizes the effect of drag from the faster surface water. It also takes the slack out of the system and turns the bobber right side up, making it far more sensitive.

I tried it and the difference was obvious. A more responsive indicator and a better drift meant more fish. There are still a lot of times when a different style of indicator or no indicator at all is a better choice but for the times when the bobber is the ticket, this trick makes the bobber better. Give it a try. I'm sure you'll like the results.

Louis Cahill

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## FLY CASTING ESSENTIALS...

By Gary Hogue

Gary has been an outdoor educator for over 35 years working as a guide, outfitter and fly casting instructor for various groups including the YMCA, American Camping Association and Sierra Club. Locally, he has started Fish Tales an instructional program in fly casting and fly fishing.

### Principles of Casting: Part Two

Following last months, Part One, the following is a continuation of sound principles that are the foundation for you to produce a cast that allows you to enjoy fly fishing and catch more fish.

5. The casting stroke represents the action that prepares the fly line for launch. The casting stroke begins at the start and ends when the fly line launches... short line-short stroke-short pause... long line-long stroke-long pause.
6. The V-shaped arc between the rod butt at the beginning of smooth acceleration and the rod butt in the stop position is called the casting arc.
7. Good timing is demonstrated when the pause between strokes is long enough to allow the line to straighten fully without losing its tension and falling in the process.

Now that you have become familiar with the Essentials and Principles of casting let's look at a few steps to help with your accuracy:

**Line of Sight:** Look where you want the fly to go, not where you don't want it to go. Pick a spot, a rock, a riffle, a reflection on the water, or an overhanging branch.

**Pick a Target:** First find the fish, don't cast blindly. One of the worst mistakes is to cast to a group of fish. Find one and watch it's movement.

**Practice:** Knowing the distance to the target, and knowing how much line to have out is one of the most difficult skills to master. Place targets in the backyard and practice casting til you can hit a cone at 20-30-40 feet. Try to accomplish your presentation with one/two false casts.

Next month we will begin looking at different casts for different fly fishing situations.

If you have specific questions, please let me know.

Fish Tales... Gary

If you have an interest in becoming a better fly caster you can also find several books on the subject in the chapter library. Just go to <http://www.hkynctu.org/library/> and look under the INSTRUCTIONAL category.

## ORNAMENT CHALLENGE



If you missed the November meeting, you missed a great chance to win a fly fishing ornament in the raffle. I love tying flies and last year decided to make up several of these. They went like hotcakes. If you enjoy fly tying, I challenge you to spend some of that cold winter weather time at your fly tying desk. A.C. Moore carries the sand, globes, and ribbons and I'm sure Michaels does as well. I found a clear thin liquid glue that could be used to keep the gravel in place. Then all you need is your imagination and skill. Perhaps you may want to spread out some of the fun over the year and tie up something special for all the holidays (St. Patricks, July 4<sup>th</sup>, etc.) that will help us raise some funds in our chapter raffle.

## TROUT IN THE CLASSROOM

### River Bend Middle School



We had a bit of a wild experience yesterday morning. A small 10 Amp fuse failed in our chiller and I went on a frantic search to find one at 8:30 yesterday morning. After hitting multiple stores, the best I could do was a 6 Amp fuse from Home Depot (Best Buy, Pet Smart, and other electronic stores weren't open until 10:00). Between placing ice bags in the water and somehow getting around the deficiency of the 6 AMP fuse, Stoney saved the fish and is looking for a long-term solution to our hard to find tiny 10 AMP fuse. All in a day's work!

**Chip Cathey**

Principal, River Bend Middle School



Footnote: We posted a photo of the blown fuse on Facebook along with a request for help. Thank you for the many responses. A huge **THANK YOU** goes out to Gary Jones who responded that he had a pack of the fuses and delivered them to Stoney Turner. Everything is now operating as it should.

### West Alexander Middle School

Teacher Ryan Rowe now has the 24/7 webcam up and operating. The link seems to change periodically so the best way to access it is by going to [www.youtube.com](https://www.youtube.com) and searching for **Ryan Rowe live stream**. The currently active stream will say **live stream**. The computer used for streaming is Mr. Rowe's personal laptop, so occasionally he needs to shut down the stream while he uses the computer. If any of you have a used laptop you could donate to the program we could keep it full time live. If you have one please email to [hkynctu@gmail.com](mailto:hkynctu@gmail.com) and we will arrange to get it to him.

It is an underwater camera, but he hasn't found a way yet to connect a waterproof wire to it so it can be submerged. If anyone has a good idea you can contact him at [rrowe@alexander.k12.nc.us](mailto:rrowe@alexander.k12.nc.us).

## ATLANTA FLY FISHING SHOW

The biggest fly fishing show in the south is back in Atlanta on February 1&2 at the Infinite Energy Center in Duluth, GA, about a four hour drive from Hickory. For details about the show visit <https://flyfishingshow.com/atlanta/>.

## VIRGINIA FLY FISHING AND WINE FESTIVAL

If you're looking for something with a little more flavor, visit the Virginia Fly Fishing and Wine Festival on January 12 & 13 in Doswell, VA. You'll be able to sample wine from several vineyards around the State of Virginia and then if you can keep your eyes open browse the exhibitor booths and attend a fly fishing class. For details visit: <http://www.vaflyfishingfestival.com/>.

## CHAPTER LIBRARY

We have created a Hickory Chapter library of fly fishing books. The listing is available on the Chapter website at <http://www.hkynctu.org/library/>. You will make your withdrawal request on the website and then pick up and return your books at the Chapter meetings. We will initially start with book donations from our members and if the activity warrants it we may purchase additional books. Susan Anderson has graciously agreed to serve as our Chapter Librarian. If you have any books that you would like to lend or donate to the library, please bring them to the chapter meeting. Please indicate in the book whether you are donating or loaning it to the library.

## FLY FISHING MERIT BADGE & MEET UP

Thank you so much to all of the Hickory TU members who have graciously helped with the Fly Fishing merit badge for Troop# 275. This has been quite an endeavor, but very rewarding for all of those who have been involved.

The troop is doing a field trip to the Asheville Fly Fishing Expo where we have arranged help from several experts to assist with fly tying and casting on the pond. Carolina Fly Fishing Club in Charlotte, The Tuck Fly Shop in Bryson City and Starr Nolan from Asheville have all volunteered to help. This field trip should give the scouts a better idea of the Fly Fishing world. The Expo is giving free entry not only to the Scouts but all Scoutmasters and parents also attending with the troop.

The following Saturday, December 8th. we will be concluding their badge specifications with some matching the bugs and catching, cleaning and cooking of one fish for each scout. This is your last opportunity to be a part of this program. So if you love kids and want to join us let us know so we can be prepared to feed you too.

Our plan for the day has expanded to include a meet-up and lunch. If you would like to fly fish in the morning, meet at Betsey's Ole Country Store at 7:00 AM and then head out to fish. Be back at Betsey's by 10:00 AM to assist with the scouting program which will be followed by lunch.

If you are able to help with this, please contact Jackie Greene at [HkyNCTUpres@gmail.com](mailto:HkyNCTUpres@gmail.com).

## WAY TO GO SPENCER!



Spencer Welland headed up to Wilson Creek on Thanksgiving morning and was rewarded with this beautiful 22" rainbow.

## CASTING CAROLINAS

**RETREAT:** The first retreat for 2019 is scheduled for April 12-14 at Lake Logan Center in Canton, NC. To apply for the retreat visit: <https://castingcarolinias.com/retreats/>.

**VOLUNTEER:** Volunteers are always needed and appreciated. To sign up to help with their programs: <https://castingcarolinias.com/community/volunteer/>

## CHAPTER WEBSITE

Recently we were approached by the Boy Scouts to assist with the Fly Fishing Merit Badge. There are several requirements such as fly casting, safety, and knot tying. Our website is being expanded to include videos to support education for the merit badge. If you go to the Helpful Links page <http://www.hkynctu.org/helpful-links/> you will now find sub pages with videos for knot tying, casting, and safety that are not only important for the scouts, but are worth all of us watching. The videos on wading safety are especially worth watching and after over 50 years of wading, I learned a few tricks. For instance, what do you do if the current traps you against a log? Check back from time to time as we will continue to expand the links.

## THE HICKORY CHAPTER NEEDS YOU



The revived Hickory Chapter has now been back in existence for almost three years. Many terms on the board of directors are retiring soon and we need new members to step up and help continue our programs to keep the chapter going. If you would like to help out as either an officer or volunteer, please contact President Jackie Greene at [HkyNCTUpres@gmail.com](mailto:HkyNCTUpres@gmail.com).

## NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTORS INVITED

I'm sure many of you will be taking trips to Montana, Alaska, or many other places this year. Take some great photos, put some words to it and submit it to the newsletter. Your adventure may inspire others to start planning their own trip for next year. Send it to us at [HkyNCTU@gmail.com](mailto:HkyNCTU@gmail.com) for consideration of publication.

## CHAPTER FACEBOOK PAGE

When you're sitting in the waiting room for the doctor or in the lounge at the airport waiting for a plane, take a little time to check out the posts on our Facebook page. You'll find the latest status on the Trout In The Classroom and many tips to help improve your fishing. Search for **Hickory NC Trout Unlimited**.

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