

Hickory NC Trout Unlimited March 2020 Newsletter



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A LINE FROM THE PRESIDENT

It always excites me to see a kid on the water fishing. It always brings me back to taking my sons fishing when they were kids. Now they have grown up to love fishing today and are pretty darn good fishermen too. Memories good memories.

I remember the smiles on their face when they caught every fish. I remember them scrambling to outdo each other but still help with the net for their brother's big fish. I remember how excited they would get when I would say after this housework is done we're going fishing. Those chores disappeared in a flash, our gear was loaded and we were headed out in no time flat.

It's the making of memories that mark the annual kids fishing day each year on my calendar but now with my grandchildren. Landon, Laney, and Macie are becoming fishermen and they are old enough now to make that transition to fly fishing.

Every year when delayed harvest turns over to Hatchery Supported fishing they have that one special day kids can fish first. It's that day every year that I make sure I take the time to have a day on the water with my grandchildren. Will they remember that day every year? I sure hope so because I will remember it. It's going to be me in my old age when I say remember when..... Nana took you camping and your friends would come along. Remember cooking over the fire? Remember swimming in the creek? Remember those big fish you caught?

That's what taking a kid fishing does. It builds a special bond of memories that last a lifetime. It helps them have someone to look up to. Fishing is magical.



A couple of years ago I had the opportunity to work Rivercourse when my granddaughter was a participant. I was there that day to see her catch that first trout with a fly rod. What a memory we share.

Do you remember fishing as a kid? I do, they are some of my most favorite memories. Your kids are taught by someone. It should be you.

So what are memories? They are something you make yourself quite unexpectedly while having an amazing experience.

So here is our memory, Macie's first fish on a fly, upside down. Priceless.

The tug is the drug.
Jackie Greene

MARCH MEETING

WHEN: Tuesday, March 17

5:30 PM \$12 Buffet (Includes Tip)

6:30 PM Program

WHERE: Market on Main Cellar

PROGRAM: Fly Tying Workshop

RSVP: HKYNCTU@gmail.com

Located at 332 1st Ave SW. Free parking across the street.

The program is being designed for people new to fly tying and will include tying a few flies. **This is a *chapter effort* program with the more experienced members working with those new to fly tying. We are asking everyone who is able to bring along a vise and tools and a spool of black thread. We will demonstrate with a video how to tie a simple fly and then new tyers will tie the fly with the help and guidance of them experienced tyers. Individual material packs will be provided for each fly. Please RSVP for dinner.**

QUOTE OF THE MONTH

"The earlier and more often children are exposed to nature, the happier, healthier, and brighter they become."

.....Growing Ideas Blog

TEACH YOUR CHILD TO FISH

For those of you who have been reading this newsletter for a while, you will have heard me state many times the value and merits of teaching your child to fish. For me it has been a lifetime of companionship that in my aging life also brings me many benefits such as my son helping me climb into the stream or handing me his rod to use while he untangles my line. To that end, this edition is dedicated to teaching your child to fish. I hope your life with your child can become as wonderful and eventful as mine has.

You are receiving this newsletter either as a member or prospective member of the Hickory NC Chapter 032 of Trout Unlimited. If you do not wish to receive this newsletter, please respond by email to HkyNCTU@gmail.com and let us know.

FLY FISHING PASSED DOWN THROUGH THE GENERATIONS



Me with my "Tenkara" Rod

When I was five years old my grandfather took me down to the dock at his cottage and showed me how to use a flyrod. I practiced a few casts and then he headed to work. He had a live-in yard boy who then rowed me out to the weed beds and I made my first attempt at fly fishing for bluegill. Unfortunately, it didn't end well. After a few casts I managed to sink the fly into the

crown of my head. He took me to the neighbor who said he was going to take the hook out. To a five-year old that sounded like something out of a monster horror story and I ended up at the hospital having it removed. Fortunately, that didn't put an end to my lifetime of fly fishing.

I was fortunate to grow up in Michigan with a family of fly fishermen. Beginning when I was eight years old, my Grandfather, Uncle, Father and I would head north for ten days of fly fishing. The northern lower peninsula and all of the Upper Peninsula had excellent fly fishing in those days. We had a camping trailer and would drive along the sandy road by the rivers until we came to an area clear and large enough for the trailer. We'd set up camp and spend the next day or two fishing the creek. Morning and evening was dry fly fishing and daytime we would chunk night crawlers with our fly rods. None of us had heard of nymphing back in those days. I have wonderful memories of family and fly fishing from those days.



The next major fly fishing event in my life was to graduate from high school and get accepted into Michigan Tech University at the very tip of the Upper Peninsula on the Keweenaw Peninsula. Some of the greatest unknown trout streams in the country are located there and are so remote that you seldom see another person. I developed several friends who fly fished and even took fly casting as a Phys Ed elective. My friends and I did a lot of exploring and the biggest wild brook trout I ever caught was a 16 incher in a stream no more than six feet wide, but right at the head of a beaver pond we had discovered.



When I graduated from college, I married the love of my life who went camping with me on the trout streams and learned to fly fish. That's where I first discovered women in waders. It is amazing, but there is something in a woman's genetic makeup that makes them

excellent fly casters. Maybe it's in their innate sensitivity that they are just better able to feel the fly rod load as they cast, but every woman I have known is good at it. We had a wonderful time fishing together until the children came along. I need to mention that as a bonus to my beautiful wife I married into a family where her father worked at the Bronson Reel Company. As a result, I ended up with a dozen 1960s fiberglass rods and a few reels, many of which are still in my closet and get used occasionally.

For several years after that, trips to trout streams were put on hold for T-ball, band, soccer, and all the other activities young children have today. We did have a lake nearby so there was still fishing, but in their younger years it was more cane poles and spin casting. My eldest never developed my love of fly fishing, but my youngest did and occasionally we would throw a fly rod together.

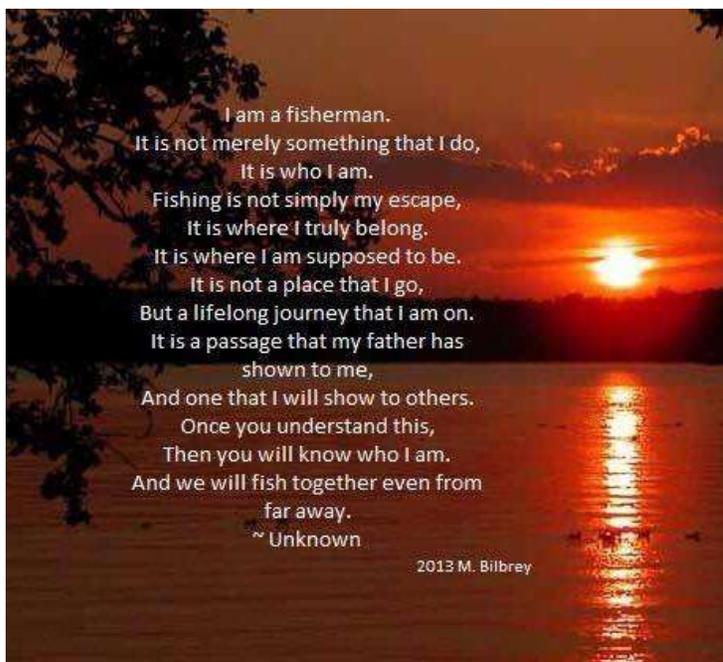
Through a change in jobs the family eventually ended up in North Carolina and when my youngest graduated from high school he enrolled at Appalachian State University. I equipped him with a complete set of fly fishing gear and that was the beginning of our shared love affair with fly fishing. I made frequent trips there and we spent many hours together on the rivers (mostly the Watauga). He also took fly casting as a phys ed elective and became very proficient. By the time he graduated his casting skills exceeded mine. In the summer we planned our summer vacations around fly fishing many famous streams like the AuSable in Michigan and the Frying Pan in Colorado.

That was just the beginning of the benefits of having taught my son to fly fish. After college we made several trips to delayed harvest streams together here in NC and then when I retired a few years ago we started planning trips together. I knew teaching a son to fly fish created a companionship, but there was another benefit I had not anticipated. Wives tend to question why you need to spend several thousand dollars to go fly fishing, but spending several thousand dollars to take "her son" fly fishing is totally acceptable. In recent years we've been



to Alaska, Yellowstone, Belize, South Andros, and this summer are headed to the Green River in Utah. All of that would never have been possible without the incentive of convincing a mother to make her son happy.

That brings me to the moral of all this story and the theme of the newsletter this month: *teach your child to fly fish*. Children today need an incentive to put down their phones and get off their video games to go learn about the beauty of the world outdoors, and what place is more beautiful than a trout stream. Whether it's a son or a daughter if you get them out there before they become a teenager, they usually love being with their parents on an adventure and if you get them started soon enough it will even carry them through those dreaded teen years. And most important of all, it will create that companionship that you and your child can share throughout your lives.



What Does He Need?

By [Domenick Swentosky](#)

A new baseball bat? A fishing reel? A dog? How about his own room instead of sharing cramped quarters with his younger brother? Ask him what he wants, and he'll jump for any of those things. (There will also be a strong emphasis on

the puppy — accompanied by a long, persuasive argument.) But what does he need most?

I barely remember my life at eleven years old. Fifth grade, Little League, fishing, a few video games, and . . . hey, that's just like his life right now. Yes, by no surprise, my son is a lot like me. And I understand what drives and motivates him.

He's been spending hours at a time in the woods this year, on solitary walks with a pair of binoculars or a walking stick. And I get that too. I think I spent half my childhood roaming the twelve acres of my parents' land and hiking across neighboring fields and dirt roads. I knew my surroundings, and I expanded my perimeter as I grew. He's doing the same now, and on many after-school evenings this fall, he geared up with boots, waders, rod and vest. Then he walked down the hill toward our home water and fished. That's something I was missing at eleven. But he has access to one of the best wild trout rivers in the state.



Every time he returns from one of these solitary hikes or fishing trips, my son seems a little older, somehow more mature. He also returns more peacefully than when he left. I feel that in him. I understand what the woods and the water do for a soul.

But I'm also surprised. While I'm classically introverted, he's clearly an extrovert — and that alone is our major difference. I've gone to the river for an escape my whole life, to get away from the people, places and things that wear me down after an overflow of exposure. So seeing him seek out that same experience reminds me how there's more to being in nature than just escaping things. It's the feeling of independence, the connection to life without language, to things that exist free of judgment. Nature just *is*. It lives. It thrives. And the space between the branches and riverbanks harbors time itself. These places change, but they are more constant than shifting, more lasting than fading. The stream that I fished as a boy every April still holds the same trout, and I follow those familiar bends upstream around rocky mountains. Fallen trees have diverted the channels enough to move the main flow twenty yards east or west, but permanence is more powerful. Here, change is minimal. And that's comforting.

He feels it too. And so he's drawn to the woods, to these places larger than his small life that often seems too big. I've been doing the same for forty-four years.

But what else does he need? Time.



More than anything, I feel his desire for my companionship, for my leadership, for some instruction and for my love. The closest bonds I've formed with other men in my life have been forged on the river. I get it. So my son and I fish. And we walk through the forest when he asks. He wants to hunt, so we'll do that too. Anything that brings us together, outside and with dirt and water under our feet, I'm in.

Ed O'Neil said the following, on the TV show, *Modern Family*: *Ninety percent of being a Dad is just showing up.*" This nod to Woody Allen's phrase about showing up for life in general hits home for me. I've spent much of my time following through on the commitments and promises I've made to myself. After playing guitar for a few months in my late teens, I realized that I'd only progress if I dedicated a part of myself to the instrument. So I vowed to play the guitar every day — at least one chord — no matter what. To fulfill that promise, I took it with me everywhere. I played every day. Always. And on those days when I picked it up merely to fulfill my obligation — to play one chord — I was predictably tempted by the muse to play more. And an hour later, my fingertips were sore from a good workout. All of that eventually led to a rewarding career in music for seventeen years.

I fished as a kid. And I fished a lot more when I turned sixteen. Finally, I could drive to the next county, toward better water with elusive wild trout. But I always wanted a good stream in my backyard too. And in 2003, when my wife and I moved to central PA, I had it. So I made a promise to myself, to fish five days a week, no matter what, in all four seasons. I did that for six years, until my first son was born. Then those fishing hours turned into Dad hours. Being a father is the greatest opportunity I've been given. So I show up. And I do my best to balance other responsibilities with dedicated time for both of my sons.

And when my oldest seems a little lost, a little confused or overwhelmed because he's eleven years old, I take him fishing. Or we go for a walk among the pines and look for squirrels. Because both of us need nothing as much as we need what the woods gives back to us.

Enjoy the day.

Domenick Swentosky

TROUTBITTEN

domenick@troutbitten.com

ADVICE FROM THE VISE

Feeling like Spring is nearly here, and all that tying over the winter is about to get wet. For March's Advice for the Vise, I wanted to share one of the most rewarding parts of our sport, and that's bringing along the next generation. Taking a kid fishing is great. Teaching a kid to tie a fly, and then having them come back around with a picture of a fish caught on their fly is just about as cool.

I was asked a few years ago to do a tying demo at a picnic. I took it a step further and set up some vises and materials,



came up with a really easy pattern and found that young and old alike had a blast tying a fly. This is a really easy leech pattern that uses an orange cone head, marabou tail and mohair body.



the drift with the tail waving in the current.

Start out with a 3XL streamer hook, and barbless is the choice for small hands. Place the bead. Wrap a dozen or so turns of lead free wire .020, and snug up to the bead. You can wrap more for a heavier fly, or omit for lighter. Wrapping the front keeps the head down on



Start the thread and build a thread ramp using multiple wraps between the hook shank and the lead free. Stroke the marabou tail fibers back and tie in the tail about a hook shanks length. Trim excess and wrap in.



Tie in the mohair yarn behind the lead free and back to the hook bend, return your thread to the front, leaving a hook shanks length off the bend. Take even touching wraps forward leaving a smooth body.



Capture the mohair with a few wraps and whip finish. That's it. Super simple and now your kiddo has a fly that will work in rivers, streams and still water. Even the spin kids can use this with a bobber successfully.



For those wanting to start tying, this is a great pattern to start with, gets you all the fundamentals and teaches you the wrap, and making your fingers do what you want them to.



For all you tyers, this is a great way to introduce a kid to the craft, and I would encourage you to share your gift with the next generation. Kids see the world in a different way, and teaching them to tie a simple fly will spark imagination and questions you never thought of. No doubt, it's time we'll spent.



I'd love to hear your feedback and I'm always happy to answer any and all questions, give a lesson, or just talk fly fishing. Don't hesitate to contact me at jacobsforkflytying@gmail.com or check out some of my current ties on Facebook and InstaGram at Jacobs Fork Fly Tying.

Dave Everhart

FATHER/SON BONEFISH TRIP



For those of you who have been reading this letter for a while you will have heard me speak many times about the benefit of teaching your child to fly fish. The benefit again paid off the first week of

February when we shared a trip bonefishing in South Andros.

The real benefit comes from seeking permission from my wife to make the trip. If I were to ask to go with a group of friends, I might be lucky to get that permission, but when her son comes to her and says can dad and I make a trip, it's a guaranteed approval.

Last year we took our first saltwater trip to Turneffe in Belize and had a great time. (See July 2019 newsletter) We did a little more researching this year and decided on Deneki Andros South Lodge on South Andros Island in the Bahamas. Some of the things that helped us make that decision were that the lodge offered individual rooms (normally an extra), cost was all in including rods, flies, and drinks (all extras at Turneffe). The research indicated larger bonefish and access to the lodge was quite easy.

Access can be made through Nassau or Fort Lauderdale. My son flies a lot and had miles to book us to Fort Lauderdale (and even got us upgraded to 1st both ways) so that made the most sense for us. From Fort Lauderdale we Ubered up to the Executive airport and caught Makers Air to the island. That was also a real plus on the return coming through customs there rather than at a major entry.



We were there for four nights and three days of fishing and arrived early afternoon at the island. We were met at the airport and driven to the lodge where our hosts Liz and Max met us at the lodge and gave an orientation. They have an interesting life. Deneki has lodges at South Andros and in Alaska. Liz and Max manage South Andros from October through April and then the Alaska lodge from June through September. At 4:30 the other fisherman arrived home from their day of fishing. There is a nice area to sit outside and relax with drinks and appetizer until dinner at 6:30.



The next morning we were up for a 6:30 breakfast and at 7:30 took a short ride to the boats before we headed out to the interior island saltwater flats. The first thing we noticed was the cleanliness of the mangrove marshes in South Andros. Turneffe is a wasteland of plastic that is everywhere in the mangroves. We never saw any of that in South Andros. We hear so much about plastic polluting our oceans that I can't explain the cleanliness here. Perhaps this part of the world takes much better care of the environment.

It took us the better part of an hour to get to the fishing areas on the western side of the island and then our guide gave us a quick orientation and we got started fishing. The wind was blowing about 15 MPH, but we found another benefit in that fishing in the marshes helped to break up the winds. We fished generally in the lee of the mangroves. Not to say that makes casting easy, but it does help. The guides we had were terrific. Most of them have over 20 years experience and know what it takes to make fishing easier. Ellie on our first day was generally able to maneuver the boat at an angle to the wind to manage the cast better. Only a couple times did I have a wind coming over my right shoulder and got whacked with my fly.

Bone fishing is truly more like hunting than fly fishing a stream. You cruise the flats for maybe a half hour and the guide suddenly yells nine o'clock at 40'. Any of you who have



hunted deer know what buck fever is and it applies to bone fishing as well. As you're starting out in bone fishing, you panic, drop your fly line out of your hand and whip the fly out to where you think it should go. My son often was able to spot the fish he was throwing to, but it

was difficult with my old eyes and I often missed. Even my son in his haste casted too quickly to think through the cast and wind angles to hit his target. In spite of that I was able to bring in my first bonefish rather quickly and being quite tired from traveling the previous day let my son have the bow the rest of the day. He landed three bones that day including one near six pounds.



The second day our guide was Charlie who handled the trip a little differently. Rather than just shout out where the fish was, he would stop the boat and have you point your rod to where the fish was and

try to get you to spot it before he had you cast. Even I was able to spot some of the fish I threw to. Slowing down and spotting the fish makes casting a lot easier. I again got my fish early and turned the rest of the day over to my son who managed four fish that day.

The final day our guide was Phillip who is the least experienced of their guides, but still has been there for nine years. We headed south and back again to the western side of the island.



We started the day with a couple hours of fairly heavy rain, but then it cleared up and we had blue skies the rest of the day. The lack of clouds and white sands where we were

fishing made it easier to spot the fish and I got my bone out of the way early before turning it over to my son again. My son got two fish that day, but I was actually able to tie him. On one of my casts I brought in a 4" snapper.



Bone fishing is a whole different class of fly fishing than for trout on a river. The winds and quick



reactions required make it a tough sport and I highly recommend you take a few lessons before you head to the flats. I live on Lake Hickory so I went onto the lake on a moderately windy day and practiced before heading out, but even that didn't totally prepare me. I would guess each day my son and I cast to 30-40 bones just to average our 4 per day. But once you've hooked up to a bone, you are hooked for life. Even a two pounder will often take you into your backing.

I think the best way to describe our trip to South Andros Lodge is summed up well on their website. *"If you're looking for white linen tablecloths, you should look elsewhere. If you're looking for clean, comfortable accommodations, outstanding service and the finest bonefishing in the world, you've come to the right place."* We will be going back.



Maxine McCormick photo by Chris Korich

5 Tips For Teaching Kids To Fly-Fish

BY LOUIS CAHILL

Taking the time to teach a kid to fly-fish is an investment in the future.

To my mind, there's nothing more important than teaching kids to fish. If done right, it's an investment that pays three times. For the child you teach, it's a life of wonder and purpose, which builds character and keeps them grounded. For yourself, the satisfaction of knowing you have changed a life for the better. For society, another grounded soul with respect for others and the natural world.

We are not all, however, teachers by nature and the task of passing on the fundamentals of fly fishing to a young person

can be as hard on us as on them. With all of the excitement surrounding 11 year-old Maxine McCormick's performance at the 107th ACA National Tournament, I thought there was no better person to ask for advice than her coach, Chris Korich.

CHRIS KORICH'S FOUNDATIONAL RULE AND 5 TIPS FOR TEACHING KIDS TO FLY-FISH

Foundational Rule: CONSERVATION OF ENERGY: Make it look easy, effortless, efficient, encourage rest and relaxation.

5 TIPS

- TRUST** – Establish rapport by asking questions, probing about other sports & interests. Listen and repeat, prove that you care!
- SIMPLIFY** – Teach the basics. Teach grip and stance with a pencil, not a fly rod. Next, practice the casting stroke with just the 2 tip sections of the rod and **NO LINE** to start, then add a third section and a line. Cast to 20-30 foot targets with short 0X leader and yarn.
- PRAISE** – Ignore bad strokes, loops, etc. Immediately praise good strokes, positive stops, tight loops, good timing, mechanics and results.
- CHALLENGE** – Set goals. Start with large targets and work towards smaller targets. Encourage multiple hits, consistent loops and casts at varying distances. Make it a game and keep it fun.
- REWARD** – Kids need feedback. When they achieve their goals, they should be rewarded with age appropriate awards: breaks, play time, treats, movies, fishing trips. Bigger rewards for bigger challenges help keep them focused.

"Eight to ten years old is the perfect time to start," Chris tells me. "If you don't have them hooked by 4th or 5th grade, you may have missed your chance."



Remember, an eight year-old's attention span is limited. Practice sessions should be short. Especially at first, maybe only 5-15 minutes. When

you see them getting tired or losing focus, it's time to stop. Keep it fun. Practice sessions may be 30% focused time and 70% playing with the dog or climbing trees. Let them learn at their own pace.

Don't take them fishing too early, and when you do, make it easy. The last thing you want is to frustrate them. Play the casting game until they can consistently make a good 30 foot cast and hit a target. Then take them to a trout pond or out for some feisty blue gill. There will be plenty of time for wary brown trout later.

Louis Cahill

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MARCH STOCKING

The Wilson Creek stocking will take place on Tuesday, March 3. If you would like to help with the stocking, be at the Handicap parking lot between 9 and 9:30. For stocking of other streams visit:

<https://www.ncwildlife.org/Portals/0/Fishing/documents/Delayed-Harvest-Trout-Waters-Stocking-Dates-Map.pdf>



Hatchery Supported Trout Waters Closed to Fishing Feb. 29 - April 4

The N.C. Wildlife Resources Commission will close approximately 1,000 miles of Hatchery Supported Trout Waters to fishing one-half hour after sunset on Feb. 29 and reopen them at 7 a.m. on April 4. While fishing is closed, Commission personnel will stock all Hatchery Supported Trout Waters in preparation for opening day.

CASTING CAROLINAS 2020 EVENTS

March 6-8: SC Coastal Retreat, Johns Island SC

(taking applications on www.castingcarolinas.com on Jan 1)

April 3-5 Alumni Staff Retreat, Wildacres Retreat Center

(for women who've already attended a regular retreat-contact Starr@castingcarolinas.com)

May 22-24 NC Spring Retreat, Lake Logan Center

October 9-11 NC Fall Retreat, Lake Logan Center

October 24 Tie One On Tournament in Cherokee

Casting Carolinas is a free program for women cancer survivors. To apply for a future retreat or to volunteer to help out, sign up at www.castingcarolinas.com.

EAGLE ROCK CAMP RETREAT

The fly fishing training for veteran families will be held on Friday, April 17th at the YMCA camp in Boomer. The program will be in that afternoon from 1-5, but everyone is invited for lunch before the program. The chapter will provide all the gear, but bring along a few panfish flies if you can. If you will be able to attend, please contact us at HkyNCTU@gmail.com.

RIVERCOURSE YOUTH CAMP 2020

Rivercourse is a high quality experience for boys and girls between the ages of 13 and 15. While fly fishing is the camp's primary activity focus, campers get to enjoy some other unique, often once-in-a-lifetime experience, like releasing a raptor (like a hawk) and catching it when it returns, a campfire, outside games, visits with conservation officials, fish sampling and many others. During the week, sessions on a variety of topics are mixed into the day. Geology, fish and insect sampling, scientific and natural encounters; all things

related to the things in the natural world around us and cultivating a better understanding of them and how precious they are. Camp this year will be June 21-26. For more information and to sign up, visit <https://www.rivercourse.org/>.

2020 SOUTHEAST REGIONAL RENDEZVOUS

TU's 2020 Southeast Regional Rendezvous, taking place at the Kanuga Conference Center in Hendersonville (about 15 miles east of Asheville), April 3-5. The Rendezvous is the single best way for volunteer leaders to make valuable contacts, learn more about the resources available all across TU, and how everything works together from the grassroots to the national level.

Friday is an optional day of hosted fishing with North Carolina TU volunteer hosts. Sample some of the finest fly fishing around with people who fish them regularly!

Saturday we have a packed agenda featuring guests from our grassroots leaders, partners and agencies, Trout Unlimited national staff, and more!

Sunday we'll wrap up the in-class sessions mid-day and provide a box lunch so you can head out fishing, start the drive home, or join us for more hands-on conservation training.

There are numerous registration options for the event, lodging and accommodations, plus the fishing day sign-up.

To learn more about the event and venue, [please visit this link](#).

FFMSA HALL OF FAME WEEKEND

April 17-18
Bryson City, NC

A Friday, pre-event evening fundraiser: 'Lagers with Legends' at [Mountain Layers Brewery](#), 90 Everett Street beginning at 7 pm. The event will honor the Hall of Fame inductees and raise funds for Casting Carolinas.

On Saturday, the Hall of Fame Induction Ceremony will be held at the Fryemont Inn in Bryson City with Museum supporters as well as the family and friends of our inductees in attendance. Fly anglers from across the southeast will celebrate the Fifth Annual Museum Hall of Fame Inductions. This year's inductees are:

Dave Whitlock – Recreation
Jackie Greene – Ambassador
Ryan Harman – Humanity
Don Kirk – Communications
Malcolm Leapheart – Conservation
Davy Wotton - Crafts

With limited space, advanced reservations are essential and are currently being taken. The ticket price of \$40 per person includes admission to the induction ceremony, dinner, admission to the Fly Fishing Museum of the Southern Appalachians and the aquariums. Access the museum website: www.flyfishingmuseum.org to register and pay via PayPal or

E-mail info@greatsmokies.com or call 828-488-3681 to reserve your place.

All of these events will be filmed to be included in an episode of *Fly Rod Chronicles with Curtis Fleming*. He will be present along with past Legends.

HIGH COUNTRY FLY FISHING JAMBOREE April 3-5

Join us in the beautiful mountains of Western North Carolina for a full weekend of fishing and comradery in one of the east's best fisheries. All for \$250! Or join us for dinner and entertainment on Saturday, April 4, for only \$50.

The High County Chapter of Trout Unlimited is excited to host a Fly Fishing Getaway April 3-5, 2020 in Valle Crucis, NC. All meals and two nights accommodations along with evening programs are included in the price as well as access to fishing advice, entertainment, and special deals from local guide services. For more details please visit:

<https://www.highcountrytu.org/jamboree-1>

COME VISIT OUR FACEBOOK PAGE

I follow a dozen different fly fishing blogs and include many in the newsletter, but many of these articles are too long to include in the newsletter so get posted on our Facebook page. Recently I posted a blog on fly fishing for big bluegill. It turned out to be one of the most followed posts we've ever had. There are also posts on targeting fish in small streams, how to tie a Tenkara fly, and even a bit of humor thrown in. Please visit our page at: <https://www.facebook.com/nwcttu/> and be sure to like and follow the page so you will be kept up to date on the latest posts.

CHAPTER WEBSITE

Is it getting a little crowded for you at Wilson Creek? There are ten Delayed Harvest rivers within an hour and a half drive of Hickory. There are articles in past newsletters describing these rivers along with maps to help find them. The articles start in April 2017 and run through April 2018. You can find them at <http://www.hkynctu.org/past-newsletters/>.

NEWSLETTER CONTRIBUTORS INVITED

If you have a great day on the river, please send us a photo to share at HkyNCTU@gmail.com

If you have success on your trip, please share it with us.

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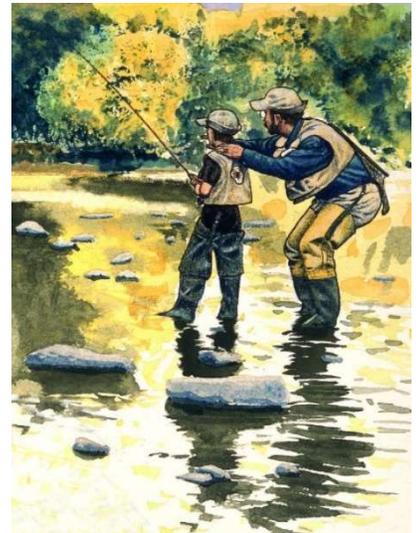
Hooked on Fishing



My fondest memories in life have been on the water with a fishing pole in my hand since I was old enough to hold one. My dad taught me to fish saltwater for redfish, drum, speckled trout, flounder and other species as well as fresh water catfish. An old man named Elijah that was around the family for years, showed me some tips on fishing for bass and crappie. The rest I learned on my own and from talking to people that were willing to help along the way. My mom figured out and an early age that a fishing pole in my hand was the best babysitter in the world. I would sit on a pier, dock or jetty for hours on end fishing. The first thing in the morning, I would run out with pole in hand and maybe something in my hand for breakfast. She would have to drag me in to eat lunch or supper and often would bring me something to drink. I spent hours in the boat with my dad while we fished the gulf coast. Through time as I grew up, I helped my friends, friends of friends, extended family members and others learn to fish or would give tips on fishing. I have always taken people out to catch fish and helped people I did not know when I could. I always had a passion for working with kids and young adults and helping with their fishing techniques as others before had done for

me. I guess it was my way of paying it back.

Last year I had taken a few days off and went to Wilsons Creek to camp out, relax and fish. On the first day, I was fishing and I noticed a teenager off to my side fishing with a fly rod. He was not doing a bad job with his casting, but he seemed to struggle just a little bit. I also noticed that he had not caught anything while I was there. I looked over my shoulder once and saw that he was watching me fish when he finally worked up enough nerve to come over to me and talk. We struck up a conversation about fishing and he finally asked what kind of fly I was using. I showed him what I was using to catch my fish and he started digging around in his box. We talked some more, I went back to fishing and then I eventually got in my truck to go to another spot. About an hour later, I heard him behind me asking if I had caught anything yet. I told him a few as the fly came down upon the water and within a short drift a nice little rainbow took the fly. He watched me a little more and moved up a short distance above and started casting. I noticed his setup and that he was struggling with catching fish. "I am not sure what I am doing wrong" he said as he laid the fly out. I walked over to him, looked at his set up and asked him if he minded if I made a few adjustments? He eagerly said "please do" and I pulled out one of my leaders and tied it on for him and some new and longer tippet, gave him a different indicator to use and I tied on one of my flies. I showed him where to cast and how to work it. He immediately caught a few fish back to back. I gave him some more tippet, a few indicators and several flies of different sorts to use. His fly box was a bit bare so I loaded him up with some. He was so excited and could not stop thanking me enough. We went on upstream and fished more before I said goodbye and I went on my way.



The next morning, I went out and started again at a different spot. Within a short period of time, I heard a sound behind me and there he was. "Good morning" he belted out. "I saw that you just caught a few fish and wanted to come say hi". We talked while I fished and he watched and asked more questions. I had him come down into the water and worked with him some more. He caught a few more fish and was just beside himself. This went on every day for 4 days. He finally told me that he kept seeing my truck and stopped in to talk to me when he saw me. Before we parted ways on the final day, his dad had come by to get him to come in so that they could pack up and leave. The boy introduced me to his dad, "this is the man I was telling you about dad." The gentleman shook my hand and thanked me for helping his son. He said he knew nothing about it and was of no help to him. He said in the last year he tried to talk to everyone on the water and was only able to get a pointer here and there. He said that most would not stop and help him or would answer his questions. I told his dad that it was my pleasure and that I enjoyed helping him and that I hoped I was able to give him some good pointers. His dad said he caught more fish with the little instruction that I gave him than he had ever caught. He offered to pay me for the flies and such and I told him it was a gift and that I hoped he would enjoy the new found sport of fly fishing. They thanked me again and I heard the boy telling his dad more about what I had shown him as they walked off. I turned and made a cast with a warm heart and a smile the size of Texas. It made me remember the people



that helped me along the way and the time that I spent on the water. The passion for fishing that grew inside me has led me where I am today. I have no doubt that the young man will continue his fly fishing and that our paths may cross again.

The most important thing in life is to share the beauty, tranquility, the knowledge of fishing with others and especially the youth of today. The joy of fly fishing is not always that big ole brown on the end of the line, but rather the ability to work with a young person and then seeing the smiles and excitement on their faces. The blessings of kids hooked on fishing are not only for them but for the ones that take the time to help them.

Take the time to help a child learn the sport of fly fishing and the conservation of our waters. It can change their lives and yours forever, just as it did mine. May your blessing be filled with tight lines.

"On the Line with Charlie Walker"