CHAPTER ACTIVITIES PAST & FUTURE

Past Meetings
If you haven't been attending FTTU meetings, you're really missing out. In September, we went on the road to the Donohoe Center in Greensburg where Chelsea Gross and Andrea Halfhill of the Westmoreland County Conservation District gave outstanding presentations on Lyme Disease, West Nile Virus and other insect borne disease threats for outdoors enthusiasts. Another road trip in October took us to the Powdermill Nature Reserve for a crash course on trout stream macroinvertebrates and an introduction to “macroinvertebrates.org” by entomologist Andrea Kautz. Andrea's presentation was very enlightening even for experienced “macromaniacs” and veteran trout bug nerds. If you haven't, you really should check out macroinvertebrates.org, an online atlas of common freshwater organisms put together by Carnegie Mellon University, Carnegie Mellon Museum of Natural History and other partners. The site features all common genera from our area down to the genus level. Gigapixel photography by Andrea at Powdermill shows detailed views of mayfly and stonefly nymphs as well as caddis larva and many other organisms found in local streams from top (dorsal), side (lateral), and bottom (ventral) views. This is a great learning resource for fishermen, conservationists and fly tiers.

In November, member Milt Claney treated us to an entertaining and informative video of his family's steelhead fishing trips. Milt participates in a steelhead survey with the PAF&BC and make meticulous records of his catches.

Coming Up in 2020

February
Our meeting schedule for 2020 kicks off on Wednesday, February 5 with a fly tying materials flea market. We have received many donations over the years and have accumulated a wealth of surplus fly tying materials and other fishing supplies. We will be liquidating this surplus with a sale at this meeting. Get a few bargains and help out the chapter at this fundraising event. We will also welcome the 2020 Youth Group with a pizza party. The meeting starts at 6:00 pm at the Nimick Family Education Center in Ligonier.

March
The March meeting will feature our popular “Fishing Trip Slide Show 'n Tell”. Bring photos or video of your fishing or outdoors adventures and we’ll put them up on the big screen. Anyone can participate and any locale from Loyalhanna Creek to Timbuktu is welcome. Business meeting starts at 6:00 pm, slide shows to follow. Nimick Center, Ligonier.

April
No foolin', the April meeting will be on the 1st at the Nimick Center with a program to be announced. Note, due to other activities at the center, the start time of this meeting will be 7:00. Apologies to those who arrived at 6:00 for the November meeting. We had to push it back to 7:00 due to scheduling conflicts. Please check forbestrailtu.org for updates and for any changes. Should we need to cancel due to winter weather, a notice will be posted in the Announcements sidebar on the website by 4:00 pm the day of the event.

2020 SCHEDULE

| January 29       | Youth Group - 2:30 pm Ligonier Valley Middle School |
| February 5       | Monthly Meeting - “Fly Fishing Flea Market & Pizza Party” 6:00 p.m. - Nimick Family Education Center |
| February 12      | Youth Group - 2:30 pm Ligonier Valley Middle School |
| February 26      | Youth Group - 2:30 pm Ligonier Valley Middle School |
| February 29      | PA Fly Fishing Museum Banquet - 3:30 pm Mars Memorial Association, 331 Mars Valencia Road, Mars, PA |
| March 4          | Monthly Meeting - “Outdoors Slide Show ‘n Tell” 6:00 p.m. - Nimick Family Education Center |
| March 11         | Youth Group - 2:30 pm Ligonier Valley Middle School |
| March 25         | Youth Group - 2:30 pm Ligonier Valley Middle School |
| April 1          | Topic TBA - 6:00 p.m. - Nimick Family Education Center |
| April 8          | Youth Group - On-Stream Casting/Fishing |

Visit forbestrailtu.org for info on updates, cancellations or changes.
Did you know western Pennsylvania has played a significant role in the history of fly fishing in America? Renowned author and teacher Gary Borger first honed his fly fishing skills around his hometown of Cooperstown in Venango County. Expert fly tyer and originator of the “Green Weenie”, Russ Mowry was a resident of Latrobe and played a role in the founding of FTTU. One of the most effective dry flies for trout of all time, the Elk Hair Caddis, was first tied by a kid from Monesson, Al Troth. Another, the Crowe Beetle was developed by John Crowe also of Western PA. Mike Sajna, the author of several books on the fishing and hunting and the outdoors editor for the Pittsburgh Post Gazette, hailed from Mount Pleasant and was a member of FTTU. And, believe it or not, Theodore Gordon, the “Father of the American Dry Fly” and the Quill Gordon was born in Pittsburgh in 1854!

In 2020, The Pennsylvania Fly Fishing Museum located in Carlisle, is having a banquet and induction ceremony in the western part of the state. The banquet is to be held on Saturday, February 29, 2020 at the Mars Memorial Association, 331 Mars Valencia Road, Mars, Pa. 16046. Doors open at 3:30 pm with a cash bar. Appetizers at 4:00 pm. The buffet dinner will include: fried chicken, ham, and all the fixins’. The cash bar will be open until 8:30 pm. The cost is $30.00 and the deadline for buying tickets is February 22nd, 2020. Tickets can be purchased through the website paflyfishing.org and on Face Book.

This year, Chauncy Lively will be inducted to the museum. Lively was a well known fly tyer and angler from Greentree in Allegheny County. He wrote regular fly tying articles for Pennsylvania Angler Magazine and authored a book, Chauncy Lively’s Fly Box. He fished often on Loyalhanna Creek.

There will be fly tying demos, recognition of other WPa. anglers, live and silent auctions, a museum presentation and the induction of Chauncy into the museum.

Come to the banquet and support the museum’s mission to preserve and celebrate the contributions of anglers from across the entire Keystone state.
In October, a delegation from FTTU traveled to Benner Springs hatchery near Bellefonte, PA to help with T.I.C. egg packing day. Trout eggs were measured out packed in ice and shipped to TIC classrooms across Pennsylvania. Trout eggs were placed in plastic bags along with some water and a shot of oxygen. The eggs were placed in styrofoam containers along with some trout food and ice, then packaged in boxes and shipped overnight to TIC schools.

The eggs are “eyed” meaning a fish egg containing an embryo that has developed enough so that the black spot of the eyes are visible through the egg membrane. It indicates that the egg is less sensitive to movement and can be handled safely, e.g. for transportation.

Due to concerns over gill lice and competition with native fish, the PAF&BC has switched to rainbow trout for the TIC program and moved egg shipment up a month to October.

A Look Back...
Don Robb’s Tackle Shop

Don Robb, one of the founders of FTTU, ran a tackle shop on Main Street in Ligonier. Here is a handwritten bill-of-sale from March of 1973, the year FTTU began. Everything you need to build a fiberglass fly rod for $13.09. What a deal!

STREAM IMPROVEMENT

Rock Run Numbers for 2019

We have been recording pH and alkalinity readings at the mouth of Rock Run since October of 2017 as well as other information such as water temperature and flow as registered on the USGS gauge for Linn Run. The numbers are in for 2019; average pH over 12 months was 6.5, average alkalinity - 6.2, average water temperature - 49.5, average gauge height - 1.8.

Highest alkalinity was 15.8 in October which coincided with the lowest flow of the year. Lowest alkalinity was 2.1 in February. We have noticed a trend of low flow/high alkalinity and high flow/low alkalinity. The highest water temperature was recorded in October at 65.5 degrees F.

2019 showed an improvement over 2018 which had an average alkalinity reading of 5.3, but 2018 had more precipitation with the average gauge height at 2.0. pH readings are very stable month to month in mid 6’s which is excellent but we would like to see the average alkalinity to be above 10.

FTTU has had a acid mitigation project on Rock Run since 2005. We have added hundreds of tons of limestone sand to the headwaters of the stream including 26 tons in the early summer of this year. The test site, at the mouth, is furthest from the location of the sand two miles upstream, so the reasoning is that conditions will only improve upstream of the test site.

Alkalinity readings of zero were recorded before the project began.
The Nimick Family Education Center

Directions: From the west, exit Route 30 at the first Ligonier exit. Cross the west-bound lanes at the flashing red lights and make the first left onto the Old Lincoln Highway. Make the first right onto the gravel road and proceed straight to NPEC located in the remodeled barn. There is limited parking at the barn and farmhouse. There is plenty of overflow parking in the Country Market area to the right of the gravel road.

For More Information: www.forbestrailtu.org