

## TROUT CAMP GETS BETTER EVERY YEAR

Our annual Michigan TU Youth Conservation and Trout Camp was, once again, a tremendous success. Cochairs Jon Chizmadia and Andy Pokorski, aided by a host of volunteers and counselors from throughout the state, guided a group of teens who will be our future conservation stewards (and fishing aficionados). Here are some of the comments.

“This is the most important work that TU does.”

“Conserving cold water resources can only be done by people who care about cold water resources, and hopefully we are inspiring our campers to someday be those people.”

“The harmony among the campers, their questions, comments, general activeness to purpose, and smiles when they, or others, caught fish were the overall highlight for me.”

“This camp should set the standard for expectations for future camp experiences.”

“Kudos to Jon and Andy for their leadership and to all others who contributed to the overall quality of the camp.”

“You have done an amazing job providing not only a well thought out curriculum, but in arranging the financial part as well.”

“The amount of work you all put in was impressive, as was the talent the kids got the opportunity to learn from. This is such an amazing program!”

“This year’s camp was one of the best camps we’ve had.”

Congratulations to all!

The photos on the next few pages tell the story of what they learned, what they accomplished, the fun they had and the friends they made.

Click here to see [more photos](#).



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

[Trout Camp](#)

[Fly One Kazoo](#)

[Wa Wa Sum](#)

[George Disborough Fund](#)

[Summer Fun](#)

[Weber Fund Update](#)

[Welcome New Members](#)







Casting ☺



Knots



Gearing up



Canoeing

**TROUT  
CAMP  
2023**



Stream dynamics



Macroinvertebrates



Fly tying





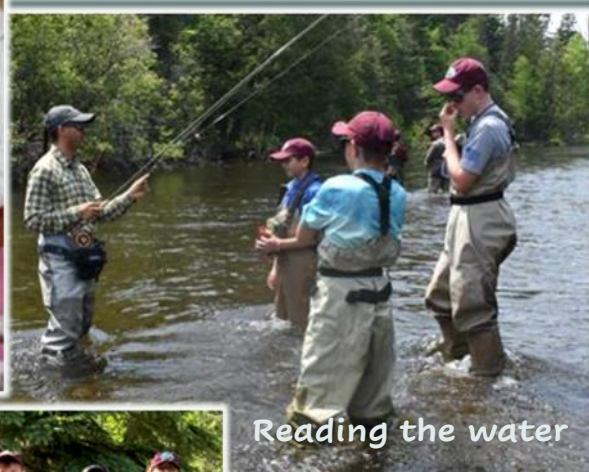
Stream improvement



Au Sable Riverboat fishing



Building spinners



Reading the water



Counseling is exhilarating ...



TU Heritage

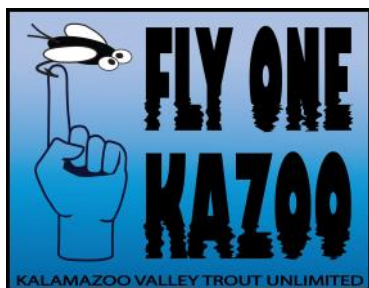


... and exhausting



Catching fish!





## FLY ONE KAZOO

-- John Keagle

As the July 15 Fly One Kazoo (FOK) date approached, there was activity of preparation and competitive positioning. Jim Young and his daughter Madeline (Maddie), aggressively explored sections of the river. On one accounting of their

adventures, Jim shared a photo of a broadly smiling Maddie with a very nice smallmouth bass. In an exchange of text messages, Jim related a story of his adventurous mile-long wade downstream looking for favorable conditions for Maddie and a quick route back to his truck. He probably found some good water, but not the quick trip back.

Last minute updates included an offhand statement accredited to Greg Potter that the river was fishing very well. Greg replied, "Actually, John got it a little wrong. There are few fish in the Kalamazoo River in the Marshall area. There are a few shiners and a couple chubs, but they tend to be small in size. You may just want to send in your donation and sleep in Saturday."



*Jim & Maddie Young*

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*"This was the most rewarding FOK to date. Good crowd, good fishing, good fellowship ..."*

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*Chillin' out, literally, waiting for the start of FOK23.*

### The Conditions

Weather is always a factor with FOK. Each of the last two events had to be postponed because of high waterflow. Leading up to this year's event, the weather (rain) had been great—little or no rain. It is called a drought. Waterflow in the Kazoo dropped to historic levels—well below the 50-year average. Sure enough, a short time before the event, it started to rain, big time. Fortunately, the watershed absorbed most of the rain, leaving the river in ideal condition.

The near weather forecast for the event was not ideal, but manageable. It called for rain and possible storms Friday night and Saturday morning and again around noon—right in the middle of the event. To answer a few text messages about possible postponement or

cancellation, a message was sent out: "Having learned the lesson about cancelling events based on forecasted weather, the event will not be cancelled or postponed until Saturday morning. However, there is a new rule—no fishing from an Ark." As it turned out, the conditions could not have been better. A gray overcast sky yielded a very light rain that forced us into shelter during registration. Greg Potter was nice enough to provide hot coffee and sweets to lift our spirits and get us ready for the morning ahead.

Drizzle and cold air temperature continued into the start of the fishing stage. One would think these might be ideal conditions for fly fishing. Yet, after 30 minutes of casting and having little to show for it, Greg and John became concerned about the lack of fish taken. Most teams expressed the same results during the social hour. With the sun's arrival, fishing improved dramatically. By the end of the day, we were enjoying a beautiful summer day. The water was in beautiful condition—clear, cold—enough to cool those fishing in waders, and easy and safe to wade.

*continued on next page*

## FLY ONE KAZOO *continued*

### The Teams

For the first time in the event's history, anglers filled all available team slots. Twenty-one anglers, making up ten teams, competed for shortest fish, longest fish, and the most accumulated inches of fish awards. Of these 21 anglers, eight were new participants: Caswell Evans, Chuck Jones, Jim Young, Maddie Young, Joey Tatar, Brady Lawrence, Judy Chizmadia, and Casey Timmons.



*Casey Timmons & Judy Chizmadia*



*Salina Kalnins & Teej Morse.*

Judy Chizmadia was by far the most recent to join the ranks of fly fishing anglers, having just completed KVCTU's Damsels Fly and Fishing 101 introductory classes last year. Yet, she turned in more fish than many of the more experienced anglers. She was on a team with Casey and from the banter and laughter in the parking lot, it is assured that these two had more fun than most of the teams. That is the way it should be.

Dark Horse Brewery was the scene for bragging, lamenting, hydrating, and enjoying some awesome pizza. The competitive spirits turned to fellowship, making new friends and catching up with old ones.

### Fish were caught!

Sixty-four fish were successfully caught, measured, and released. Smallmouth bass accounted for 73 percent of those caught. The average length of all fish was 7.8". The average length of smallmouth and largemouth bass was 8.2". Six fish measured over 10", with three over 16".

### This year's winners:

- Joey Tatar – Biggest (17") fish (smallmouth bass)
- Madeline Young (12 years old) – Smallest (4") fish (smallmouth bass)
- Greg Potter and John Keagle – Most inches (143") of Fish (all smallmouth, except for one rock bass)

*continued on next page*



*Joey Tatar*



*Maddie Young*



*Greg Potter & John Keagle*



## MORE FISH TALES

Here is a post-FOK23 story that is worth telling.

Jack and Laurie Seibert, Mershon-Neumann Heritage Chapter, planned a camping trip in association with FOK23. They wanted to explore the area and do a little more fishing. Greg Potter suggested Rice Creek and gave them some guidance on good fishing locations and flies to use.

A few days later, Laurie was asked if they had success on Rice. This is her response:

“Well ... there are many ways to define success.

We didn't have to hike far to access the river.

We each caught a respectable chub.

I met a new friend, Julius, age 7, with a killer cast and huge spirit of adventure. He will be your president of your chapter someday. I really had no choice but to teach him to cast—he was going to stick by me anyway. He needed to teach me all about crayfish and where the biggest chubs are ....”



## FLY ONE KAZOO *continued*

### A fun day

A good time was had by all. In addition, we will likely see new participation from others in chapter activities, on the Board, and we have one new TU/KVCTU member.

Judy C. said, “I had such a great time at FOK23 yesterday, such a great time ... that I forgot about paying for it! It was certainly a fun day; I appreciate all the time and effort it took to put it together. As well, thanks for the help as I was getting ready to go fishing.”

Joey T. said, “Thanks for putting this together. Please don't hesitate to reach out with anything regarding the chapter in the future.”

This was the most rewarding FOK to date. Good crowd, good fishing, good fellowship – all of which we have been working for over the years.



*FOK23 participants sharing post-tourney fish tales, pizza, and brews.*

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*“The competitive spirits turned to fellowship, making new friends and catching up with old ones.”*

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*Brady Lawrence, bass-slayer.*



*Joey Tatar with a winner.*

## WA WA SUM

- - Al Henderson

This year's summer outing at MSU's Wa Wa Sum lodge was, as always, fun and interesting.

Jim Wellever brought food for the Friday evening meal and, being the nice guy he is, when he received much deserved compliments, gave all the credit to his wonderful wife, Kathy.

On Saturday, Jim and Paul Tulgetske prepared an awesome steak dinner. Jim had gone so far as to bring two sou vide cookers, allowing him to grill the steaks to perfection.

The John D. Voelker cocktail hour was filled with laughter and conversation. After we all toasted the joys of our sport, Justin Miller, one of the graduate students staying in a cabin at Wa Wa Sum, shared his research on the temperatures of the Au Sable and surrounding rivers.

Justin is busy completing and submitting his research, but promised to supply us with a future *Slacklines* article describing his research and findings. Stay tuned.

The weather was hot and sunny, with some river temperatures going over 65°. Fishing was slow on some rivers and avoided altogether on others (for fear of overstressing the trout).

But still, fish were caught.



*Learning about Justin's study of water temperatures in the Au Sable watershed.*



*It's all about tradition. Toasting Old Fashioneds at the annual John D. Voelker cocktail hour.*

### LET'S GO!

Anyone up for another KVCTU outing?

Every spring we hold an outing in northern Michigan and each summer at Wa Wa Sum. We've also enjoyed chapter outings in other states, on some legendary rivers, in the excellent company of our fellow chapter members.

If you've got suggestions, interest, and/or you're willing to help coordinate, let any board member know. Then we can gather and plan ...

## GEORGE L. DISBOROUGH FUND - - Dennis Martin



George L. Disborough

When I first started attending KVCTU meetings, I met many interesting and skilled anglers from a variety of backgrounds. The president of the chapter at that time was Mick Kolassa who worked in marketing at the Upjohn Company.

One of my new acquaintances was charter member George Disborough, who also worked at Upjohn as Art Director. I soon learned that George was a talented artist who loved to fish with his good friend Bob Jackson, also a founding chapter member.

In 1985 I was saddened to learn that George had been killed in an auto accident after a day of fishing on the Coldwater River near Freepoint.

George's widow, Janet, met with Mick Kolassa to discuss how the chapter could honor the memory of her husband. The idea of establishing a scholarship or grant was shared with the board of directors who enthusiastically embraced the idea. A committee was set up to explore how to accomplish this goal.

Janet donated some of George's collection of fishing equipment and angling books which were auctioned at a chapter meeting. The board also set aside 10 percent of the annual conservation banquet proceeds to be earmarked for the fund. With the guidance of chapter member Bruce Darr, our chapter approached the Kalamazoo Community Foundation. And in 1990 the George L Disborough Trout Unlimited Research Grant was established.

The purpose of the fund is to recognize and support studies of trout habitat and other projects consistent with the goals and objectives of KVCTU. The award comes from the interest generated by the principal. The foundation manages the funds and helps us reach out to appropriate universities who promote the scholarship opportunity to graduate students each year. A chapter committee reviews the applications and determines who receives the grant. We also ask the graduate students to make a brief presentation to the chapter to help us all learn from their studies.

Current members of our chapter's George Disborough committee include David Lyth, Gordon Lanker, Andy Klein, Betsy Allen, and Tom Swartz. The chapter is looking for new volunteers to join this committee. David Lyth has served on this committee for over 20 years and will soon step down. David is donating some of his fly fishing gear to be auctioned at a future time, with proceeds earmarked for the Disborough Fund.

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*More than 30 students, and 30 research projects, continue to advance Trout Unlimited goals. What a wonderful legacy! Thank you, George and Janet Disborough.*

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Chapter members who remember George Disborough should be pleased with this tribute. His wife, Janet, was so glad that the chapter could share the legacy of her husband. During my recent interview Mick Kolassa reminded me of one of George Disborough's favorite sayings was, "Any day you wake up is a great day to go fishing."

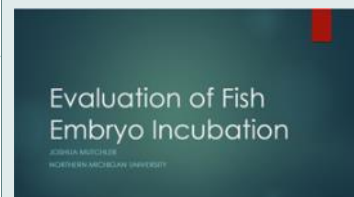
More details on the grant fund, qualifications, and the application process can be found on the [chapter website](#) and the [Kalamazoo Community Foundation website](#). If you're interested in serving on the selection committee or would like to contribute to the fund, [email Jerry Reed](#), our chapter Funds Management coordinator.

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### RECENT DISBOROUGH RECIPIENTS



*Nick Vander Stelt, last year's recipient, assessed the Boardman River for grayling introduction. He presented his findings earlier this year.*



*Our most recent Disborough scholar is Josh Mutchler, who is researching the effectiveness of three types of incubators across three streams in the Upper Peninsula. He has been studying the development and survival rates of roughly 91,000 steelhead embryos for the past two summers. This fall, Josh will begin statistical analysis for both years of study to determine hatch success between incubator types. Josh plans to present his findings late next year.*



## SUMMER FUN



During **Kids Day** at Dark Horse/ROAK Brewery in Marshall we explained how streams work and showed a sampling of bugs that live in the water, explaining why they are important. Madeline Young (one of our younger members, wearing turquoise in the photo on the left) did a great job and handled most of the presentations to a larger-than-expected audience.

KVCTU volunteers spent a June morning at **Scalin' Up for Summer** at Celery Flats in Portage. John Keagle, Mike Smith, Andrew Strombeck, Paul Hammond, and Greg Potter taught kids and more than a few adults how to make Mepps-style spinner baits and identify live aquatic insects.



**Pheasants Forever Youth Day**—The Kalamazoo Rod and Gun Club hosted a youth day in June for 8-12 year-old kids. Tom



Morse and Jon Chizmadia demonstrated casting, bugs, knots, spinner making, and more. Kids loved it!

## WEBER FUND UPDATE

-- Jerry Reed

Beginning in early spring several discussions took place, starting with a meeting at the home of Gordon Lanker, Jr. (previous manager of the Weber Fund) with Gordon, Pete Matthews, and myself in attendance. As a result of this meeting a proposal was presented to the KVCTU board to have the Stanley Weber Projects Fund moved to the Kalamazoo Community Foundation (KCF).

The proposal passed and the process continued. The three of us met no less than two times with KCF and after completing the necessary paperwork and finalizing the process, the funds were successfully moved to the Foundation.

I would like to express my appreciation to Gordon and Pete for their time and expertise in making this transition possible.

See the chapter website for more information about the [Weber Fund](#), and watch for more about the fund in a future issue of *Slacklines*.

*Jerry Reed is Coordinator for the Disborough and Weber Funds*

Our second **Fly Fishing 101** class was held August 5 at Wolf Lake Fish Hatchery. The one-day class covered fly tying, casting, theory and much more. A big thanks to Jon Chizmadia, the Wolf Lake crew, and the many volunteers who made the day a resounding success!



## KVCTU BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Vice-President—Jim Bour  
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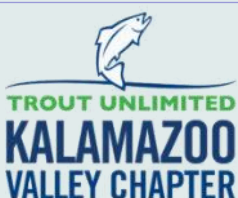


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Contributing to this issue of *Slacklines*: Al Henderson, John Keagle, Dennis Martin, Connie Morse, Greg Potter,  
Jerry Reed.

Please send your articles, feedback, and suggestions to Editor [ConnieMorse@kvctu.org](mailto:ConnieMorse@kvctu.org)