

IT'S BANQUET TIME!

Our annual KVCTU Conservation Banquet is just around the corner!

This year's FUNdraiser is Thursday, March 16, at The Fountains Banquet Center in Parchment. The banquet starts at 6:00 pm with our Wetlines social hour. Dinner will be served at 7:00 featuring a delicious buffet including The Fountain's famous roast beef. There will be several gluten free dishes among the many buffet items.

We will have many raffle items large and small, dozens of silent auction treasures and, of course, a live auction for the more interesting items. Auctioneer Glen Blackwood will once again entertain us with his sharp wit and experienced command of the auction!

Our prizes and auction items include original artwork, new and vintage rods and reels, guided fishing trips, fishing gear, handmade jewelry, Yeti merchandise, as well as the chapter's Traveling Heirloom Bamboo fly rod!

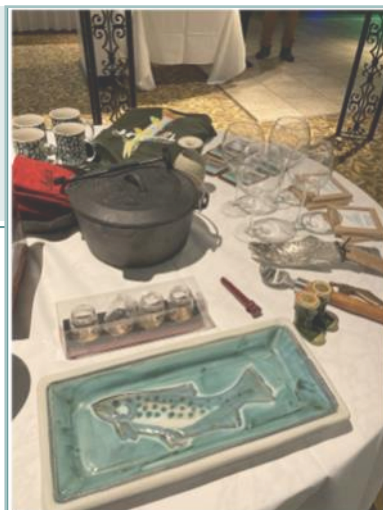
This will be our 39th banquet and will again provide the majority of funding for projects such as the Michigan Youth Conservation & Trout Camp, Project Healing Waters, stream improvement projects, chapter outings and other conservation and education programs.

Our 2023 theme is: "A Common Target" and refers to the many different supporters focused on our mission. By attending or donating to the banquet you affirm KVCTU's commitment to conserving, protecting, and restoring cold water fisheries as well as promoting responsible angling.

In addition to the dining, socializing, and fundraising we will have a brief annual election of officers and board members and also a vote on chapter by-laws changes.

Bring your family! Bring your friends! It's a guaranteed fun time and as well as a good cause.

We look forward to seeing you there. If you haven't received your invitation in the mail yet, please contact at charlotte.hammond23@gmail.com or (269) 720-9172.



"Bring your family! Bring your friends! A guaranteed good time!"



INSIDE THIS ISSUE

[Banquet Time!](#)

[Fly Fishing Film Festival](#)

[Tie-A-Thon Chapter Challenge](#)

[In Case You Missed It](#)

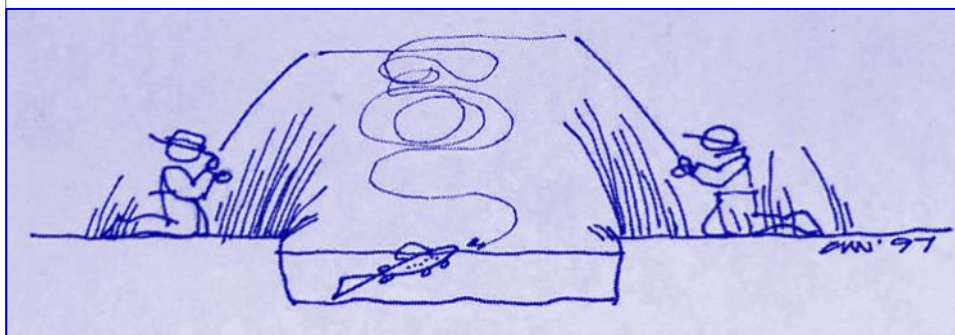
[New Websites Launched](#)

[Montana in the Spring](#)

[Help Find a Culvert](#)

[Upcoming Events](#)

[Suggest a Speaker](#)



DON'T MISS IT!



We are proud to host a screening of the International Fly Fishing Film Festival on **Saturday, March 4**, at Presidential Brewing Company, 8302 Portage Road in Portage.

IF4™ is the world's leading fly-fishing film event, consisting of films produced by professional filmmakers from all corners of the globe, showcasing the passion, lifestyle, and culture of fly fishing. Created by fly anglers for fly anglers, it's the gathering place of the fly-fishing community and a celebration of friendship, fly-fishing stories and stoke.

What better way to spend a winter day while anticipating spring's arrival? Join your fellow enthusiasts for a fun afternoon! There will be door prizes, and food and beverages will be available.

Doors open at 11:30 am, and the film begins at noon.

Tickets are \$20 if purchased in advance. Go to [Buy IF4 Tickets](#). If any tickets remain on the day of the event, you can purchase at the door for \$25.

A film teaser and details can be found at the [IF4™ website](#) or on the [Festival Facebook page](#).

“What better way to spend a winter day while anticipating spring's arrival?”



TIE-A-THON CHAPTER CHALLENGE

There's still time to take part in the Tie-A-Thon challenge!

It's simple. Sign up and tie 100 flies by April 15.

For your efforts you'll get a limited edition Tie-A-Thon T-shirt, you'll be supporting worthy causes (this year it's [Reeling in Recovery](#), the [Mayfly Project](#), and the [New York Brotherhood of the Junglecock](#)), and you'll be helping our KVCTU chapter win the award for most flies and/or highest percent of members participating.

Let Greg Potter know you're taking part (hipboot@icloud.com). He'll need your shirt size and mailing address to get you registered for the chapter.

IN CASE YOU MISSED IT

CHAPTER MEETINGS

December

Our always popular Show & Tell meeting in December was great fun.

Kevin Thomason intrigued us with tales about fishing in Cuba, and Eric Jeska told us about his adventures fishing some private waters in New York.

The evening wrapped up with an exciting story of a monster brown caught by the delightful Claire and Olivia Strombeck.

We also remembered our dear friend and long-time chapter member Herb Spencer, with an opportunity to take home some of his fishing gear.



The Strombeck sisters illustrating their adventures at Dry Run Creek.



Dennis Martin remembers Herb Spencer, with Judy Spencer looking on.



January

Kevin Feenstra packed the house at our January meeting.

Not only does Kevin have a wealth of knowledge about fishing techniques, Michigan waters, and just about every type of aquatic species, his photography is jaw-dropping.

Here he is signing his latest book, *Matching Baitfish*.

NEW WEBSITES!

KVCTU SITE

Our chapter website has been revamped with a great new look and feel. Check it out at www.kvctu.org.

Many thanks to Jon Chizmadia and Tyler Keeton for their work on the new site, and to Tom Mollet for serving as our webmaster for the past several years.

Send your feedback to kalamazoovalleychapter@tu.org.

The chapter is looking for a new webmaster. If you're able to lend your talents, drop an email to gundlach.emily@gmail.com.



TROUT CAMP

A new website devoted solely to the Michigan TU Youth Conservation and Trout Camp can be found at michigantucamp.org.

Take a look!

And while you're at it, send the link to a 13-16-year-old who loves conservation, the outdoors, fishing, and meeting new friends,

MONTANA IN THE SPRING

- - Paul Tulgetske

My friend Kenny was in Michigan to pick up a trailer and some equipment he needed to drive back to Montana. Being such a good friend and not wanting him to make that difficult drive alone, I volunteered to travel with him. Having two drivers made the time on the road go by quickly. It also didn't hurt that we left from Grayling so we started out heading north to cross the bridge and head west on US 2.

Kenny had been giving me almost daily updates on the river conditions around Livingston before he drove to Michigan so I was pretty excited to get in some great fishing. We pulled into Kenny's driveway just in time for dinner. Then we drove down to check out the Yellowstone.

The runoff was in full force and the river was completely unfishable.

Being that there are some islands that braid the river near his house, I gave it a try the following morning. But the river looked like coffee with cream and there were no fish caught.

Kenny convinced me that if I really wanted to catch fish I should book a day on DePuy's Spring Creek, which branches off of the Yellowstone River and reconnects several miles downriver.

“There were caddis. This was the famous Mother's Day Caddis hatch.”

We drove over to check out the creek and visit the fly shop. I was told not to expect to see any caddis and that most fish are caught on small nymphs in the spring. Because it was the off season the rod fee was pretty nominal.



The next morning found me on the spring creek. There were several other anglers, so I decided to fish the uppermost beat. I started with a nymph and caught a small rainbow right away. The river was stunningly beautiful and crystal clear. I fished a variety of nymphs for the next hour without another bump. Then I started noticing fish rising with quite a splash.

There were caddis. This was the famous Mother's Day Caddis hatch. I tied on an appropriate caddis pattern and after a few casts I was into a much better fish—about a 14-inch rainbow. Then the fish kind of shut down so I took advantage of the situation and



ate my lunch in one of the angler's huts on the creek. This section of the river was closed to fishing to protect spawning fish and there were lots of them. They put on quite a show.

After lunch I decided to check out some other parts of the creek. Most of the other anglers were fishing the middle section, so I drove down to the bottom section. There was one vehicle there but I could see the anglers were fishing upstream. I watched them until they disappeared around a curve in the river, then I started to fish my way downstream. There were lots of fish rising and I managed to catch a few more midsized rainbows before they started ignoring my fly. I decided to wade my way downstream drifting my fly as I went.

Fish just seemed to come out of nowhere to take my fly. These were much bigger fish. At the bottom of the run there was a great pool that had many fish rising—caddis were everywhere. I was running out of day so I fished my way back to my car and occasionally would get a rise but they were much tougher to catch after I had already waded through that water.

I was almost back to my car when I saw a small sand bar that split the river, with the smallest section curving around under low- hanging branches. I cast my fly to the top of the short run and when it was right in the curve my fly just disappeared. I struck and was tight to my only brown trout of the day. A really nice fish. With that accomplishment I decided to end my day.

The next day I had no plans to fish as Kenny had to work and I already knew the Yellowstone was unfishable. Kenny had hardly been gone when he came skidding to a halt in the driveway and he jumped out and said, "Let's go fishing." He said about an hour's drive we could be on the Madison. It's a tailwater so it will be clear. I was game for sure, so an hour and a half later we were fishing the Madison. When we were rigging our rods we were covered in caddis flies. This was going to be epic.

And it sure was. It was an entirely different experience than the spring creek. There were multiple hatches so although there were caddis everywhere on the water some fish were taking tiny blue winged olives. When I figured this out my first cast with a baetis was taken by a monster brown trout. I almost had him in my net but then he really kicked my butt. He finally ran way out into the river and buried himself in some weeds and broke my tippet. But by the end of the day I had caught many rainbows and browns and even some mountain whitefish.

My advice to you is to plan a spring fishing trip to Montana. Even with difficult conditions there are fish to be caught!



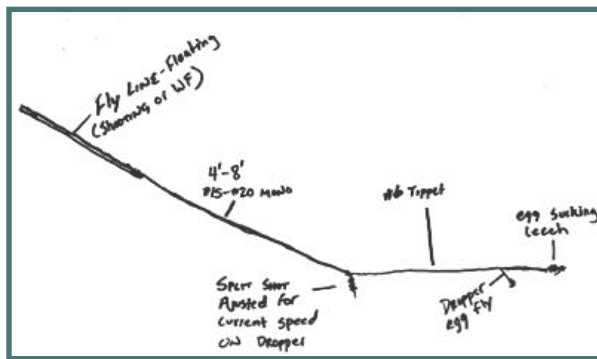
SPRING SLUMPS

-- Jon Chizmadia

Early spring in the Midwest can be a very discouraging time. One day is sunny and 70° and the next is 30° with a rain/snow mix. Making plans for later adventures builds anticipation for the weather to break. I have recently found a few activities to help pass the spring slumps.

Steelhead fishing reemerged as a pursuit I enjoyed in the past. It is very day-to-day fishing. The cloudy overcast days tend to provide the best opportunity. These days also seem to drive other anglers off the river as well, creating elbow room.

My preferred tactic has been using an 8-weight fly rod to drift a double fly rig with enough weight to match the current speed. This technique is known as chuck and duck by some and though it is not considered conventional fly fishing I find it productive and does not require extensive equipment.



My setup includes a larger egg sucking leach or spring wiggler as the main fly with a dropper line tied about a foot up with a small egg pattern. About 3 feet further up the line I add another dropper line, which is used to easily add or remove weight in order to match the current speed. This dropper also reduces hangups as I find the weights will pull free before the leader breaks. The tippet is about 4' of 6-pound monofilament attached to 15- or 20-pound mono that connects to the fly line.

I fish the set-up by positioning myself upstream and adjacent to where I think the fish are lying. I cast straight across and usually give the line a couple mends allowing a free drift downstream through the holding water. I usually work a hole or run thoroughly before moving on.

My theory (right or wrong) is that with all the pressure on the river the fish are turned off by larger presentations. The egg sucking leach pattern is usually enough to get their attention while the following egg pattern is subtle enough to induce a strike.

Some would argue that 6-pound mono is too light for targeting 5- to 20-pound steelhead but my belief is that you can't land what you can't hook. The lighter line seems to be the way to go with heavy pressure for a realistic presentation.



In most of the Great Lakes streams where I fish, steelhead are heavily stocked. Therefore, I don't feel bad about taking a fish home for a good meal. I would probably reconsider this in the rivers that aren't stocked. But no one should be ashamed for taking advantage of a properly managed sustainable resource.



HELP FIND A CULVERT

According to DNR Fisheries Chief Jim Dexter, there are between 50-200,000 culverts in Michigan. Most were placed 75 to 100 years ago. They are rusting out, they were placed at wrong angles and are typically too narrow. Not only does that weaken the road above, the high water flow in the culvert makes it impossible for fish to pass. Silt builds up, banks erode, and insect life is adversely affected.

Federal infrastructure programs are giving us an opportunity to fix these problems. As Michigan Department of Transportation and road commissions identify roads needing repair, MDNR is working in collaboration to assess the benefits of replacing underlying culverts.

But the DNR needs help finding them all. So—let's hit the road!

When driving over a stream, stop and take a look. If it appears that a culvert is a barrier to fish passage, note the location and maybe take a photo or two. Send your notes to Pete Huver (phuver@msn.com), our Stream Project Chair. Pete will work with our local fisheries agents to evaluate and add it to the [Great Lakes Stream Crossing Inventory](#).

For more info:

[NOAA's Restoring Fish Passage Through Barrier Removal Program](#) (Trout Unlimited)

[Volunteers needed to locate Michigan's culverts](#) (WMUK News)

[New culverts improve streams in NE Michigan; many more in state need same treatment](#) (Michigan Radio)

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

KVCTU Annual Conservation Banquet	Thursday March 16	535 S Riverview Dr Parchment
Midwest Fly Fishing Expo	Sat-Sun March 11-12	Macomb Community College 14500 East 12 Mile Road, Warren
Project F.I.S.H. Training for Trainers	Fri-Sat March 24-25	Rose Lake Shooting Range Bath
Learn to Flyfish - Beginner Class	Mon & Wed April 10, 12, 17, 19	Kellogg Community College 450 North Avenue, Battle Creek
KVCTU General Chapter Meeting	Thursday April 20	535 S Riverview Dr Parchment
KVCTU Spring Outing	Fri-Sun May 12-14	918 Seaman Rd Wellston
Scalin' Up for Summer 2023	Saturday June 10	7335 Garden Lane Portage
MI TU Youth Conservation and Trout Camp	Sun-Thurs June 18-22	Conservation Dr Roscommon
Wa Wa Sum Summer Outing	Thurs-Sun July 6-9	377 Wa Wa Sum Grayling

KVCTU BOARD OF DIRECTORS

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Vice-President—Jim Bour
Secretary—Connie Morse
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Past President—Paul Tulgetske

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Fundraising—Jim Bour
Member Meetings—Emily Gundlach
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Slacklines—Connie Morse
Stream Projects—Pete Huver
Website —Tom Mollett
Youth Camp—Jon Chizmadia

Members at Large

Bill Comai
Leroy Heikes
Al Henderson
Pete Mathews
TJ Morse
Jim Shotwell

SUGGEST A SPEAKER

We are currently planning our slate of speakers for next year's meetings.

Maybe you know of a guide, conservationist, author, artist, scientist, fly tier, advocate, or other who would interest our members. Maybe you've heard of an mission-related Michigan project you'd like to hear more about. Maybe you remember some past presentations that are worth bringing back.

Please send your suggestions to gundlach.emily@gmail.com. Thank you!

KVCTU BOARD MEETINGS

KVCTU Board Meetings are held on the second Thursday of the month, September through April. An additional meeting is usually held midsummer.

All members are welcome to attend board meetings.

Because locations vary, if you would like to attend a board meeting please contact board president Emily Gundlach (gundlach.emily@gmail.com) for the time and place.

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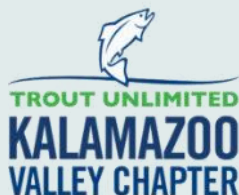


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Contributing to this issue of *Slacklines*: Jim Bour, Jon Chizmadia, Connie Morse, Paul Tulgetske.
Please send your articles, feedback, and suggestions to Editor ConnieMorse@kvctu.org