



# Troutlines

### *Special Points of Interest*

Local TU Camper Places 2nd in National Essay Contest

Fly Tying Volunteer Opportunity

### **Chapter Meetings and Events Calendar**

November Chapter Meeting  
Marla Blair  
Thursday, November 21

Annual Conservation Banquet  
Saturday, March 8, 2014  
Grappone Center

### **Inside this issue:**

<i>Presidential Commentary</i>	2
<i>Editor's Soapbox</i>	3
<i>Fly Tying Class Registration Form</i>	5

## **Chapter Sponsored Trout Camper Wins 2nd Place in National TU Essay Contest**

James Dunbar of Concord, one of two chapter-sponsored TU Kids' Trout Camp participants, won 2nd place in the 2013 TU National Trout Camp essay contest. While those of us who have been counselors at the annual camp can observe how effective and fun Trout Camp can be, when a 14 year old writes an essay such as James', there is little doubt that our support of TU Trout Camp is one of the best things we can do as an organization. Read on.

### **2013 TU Winning Trout Camp Essay by James Dunbar**

If you go to Boston, Manhattan or Los Angeles the traffic system or crowds of noisy people might overwhelm and stress you. What you need is a relaxing time out in free nature. Maybe you will take a friend or family member up to a healthy flowing river near a little town to spend some quality time together. This would be a wonderful way to breathe out the stress of life and breath in the quiet beauty of God's nature. You could cast into swirling eddies inhabited by large fish. After a while you may find there is something on your line. There is excitement on having anything on your line, but this would be the real excitement and realization that you may have caught a twenty-inch fish.

I had an awesome experience similar to this. After my own stressful year, I was able to go to a Trout Unlimited Fly Fishing Camp, where I had the privilege of meeting some extraordinary people who had a true passion for fishing. They taught me how tremendous fly fishing is. It is peaceful and exciting all at once. Peaceful, because it is quiet and a

*Essay, continued on page 6*

## **Secrets of the Upper Connecticut Revealed: Boezeman Spills the Beans**

It was a phenomenal season on the Upper Connecticut this year. There were more big fish than ever and early on, the fish were in the river. This glowing assessment was by well-known Upper Connecticut fishing guide, Angus Boezeman. With over thirty years of extensive experience in this highly targeted body of water, Angus' observations were not just fish stories.



Angus Boezeman on the Upper Connecticut.

At the October 17<sup>th</sup> chapter meeting, our main speaker reviewed this past season on Pittsburg's famous waterway and followed with tips on how to fish it. Angus encouraged chapter members to try out the Upper Connecticut in February and March – not just the peak times. Watch the weather and if a mild spell softens the North Country's Tundra-like grip, take a day or two off and wet your line above the 45<sup>th</sup> parallel.

*Upper Connecticut, continued on page 3*

## Presidential Commentary - George Embley



We had a good turnout for our second meeting of the year – thanks to Angus Boezeman who, as usual, was entertaining and informative. And also a thank you to the nine people signed up for our volunteer list at the meeting. Anyone who wants to be on this list can send their contact information to Jim Timmins at [concordtu@yahoo.com](mailto:concordtu@yahoo.com). There is no obligation and the list is kept confidential. Being on the list means that you will be alerted to volunteer opportunities at both the chapter and state level. And as you will read in another article in this edition, we can use instructor help in this year's fly tying course.

Angus' presentation gave me a few things to think about when I set off for my annual trip to the San Juan River a couple of days later. For example, Angus explained that even though he prefers to fish nymphs without a strike indicator, there are occasions when he uses one – such as in a deep run containing big fish.

With the possibility of a large fish, he was concerned that if he crimped the weight too hard it would weaken the tippet. His solution is to tie about 6 to 12 inches of tippet between the end of the leader and the first fly - so that the knot keeps the weight from sliding down the tippet. I don't usually take this extra step. Thinking about it though, I have probably lost fish because the line broke where the weight was attached. After it happened once on this year's trip, I experimented with Angus' approach. It certainly keeps the weight in position, but after changing a couple of flies it is also necessary to retie the knot holding the weight in place. Under the right circumstances though, the extra effort could pay off.

I fish the San Juan River below the Navajo Dam in New Mexico. Once the home of the Colorado pike minnow and the razorback sucker, this stretch of river is now a world-class trout fishery. As with many fisheries in the west, the San Juan River is a tail-water fishery with water temperatures normally in the 40s (F) – temperatures that large numbers of large trout thrive in. With thousands of trout ranging between 12 and 20 inches (and some larger) in a four and a quarter mile stretch below the dam, there is no shortage of fish to cast to. In spite of the numbers, the fishing is challenging, especially when using the tiny dry flies and nymphs that are required to be successful. In these waters a #18 hook is huge. I usually use smaller hooks of down to about a #24.

The Navajo Dam is just one of many dams built since the early twentieth century in a frenzy of competition between the Bureau of Reclamation and the Corps of Engineers. These organizations bear a marked similarity to beavers – if there is flowing water, they want to dam it. Their efforts have left us with tail-water fisheries, such as the San Juan River, which are a boon to fly fishermen. On the other hand, a lot of blue-ribbon trout water now lies buried under mammoth reservoirs, and that is probably minor compared to the impact of dams on anadromous fish such as the Pacific salmon.

So the San Juan River is an artifice – a byproduct of an effort to provide water and power to the western United States without a lot of consideration for the native fish life. Despite some conflicted feelings about dams, I have returned to the San Juan every fall since 1995. The fishing isn't easy but it can be very rewarding. And even though it's a pretty busy place, the other fishermen make it interesting too (mostly in a positive way). For example, the stretch of river I fished most often this year can have a lot guide boats on it. And I mean a lot. On a particularly active day, after I thanked a guide for going out of his way to float behind me (and not disturb the fishing), he mentioned that there were 40 boats behind him. Sometimes I even get comments on my fishing. When I was trying to net a fish which slipped the hook about a foot or so from my net I was still able to scoop him up. I immediately heard a voice (another guide) from a boat right behind me say "nice timing." Another time when I was fishing a blue wing olive hatch, a guide inquired as to how it was going and I responded that I was having very little success in spite of throwing everything I had at the fish. She diplomatically observed that they were indeed being "picky" that day. "Picky" was an understatement. Not only would fish ignore or even visibly refuse my fly, but a couple of them even came up and bumped it to the side. I did manage to hook or nick a couple of good fish that afternoon, and overall the fishing was good this year. So I will return again next year.

*Presidential, continued on page 3*

*Presidential, continued from page 2*

The San Juan is like a laboratory for trout fishing. If you pay attention you can usually see fish and learn from their behavior. Maybe I will understand this behavior even better after hearing Marla Blair's presentation at our November chapter meeting. Marla, a well-known guide and fly fishing instructor, will present a program entitled "hatch and body language of trout." Marla's presentations are very popular, and this meeting should be well attended. I hope to see you there.

And finally, our heartfelt thanks to Dick Calvert, a member from Wolfeboro, who made a generous donation of countless flies that had been tied by the Andover (MA) Flyfishing Club. He made this donation in honor of Fred Cummings who had kept their program going for many years. Some of these flies have been included in the "Board of Flies" which is a prize in this year's annual fundraising raffle. You have tickets for purchase with this month's newsletter mailing.



Drawings courtesy of www.davewhitlock.com

## Editor's Soapbox

Gordon Riedesel

There is plenty of reading in this issue of TROUTLINES so this Editor's Soapbox will be short.

As we went to press, we heard that a second NH TU Kids' Trout Camp participant, Hugh Cipparone won 1st Place and a Scott Fly Rod in the National TU Essay Contest. Hugh comes from the Thames Valley Chapter in Connecticut and, like all this year's campers, was a great young man. I was fortunate to be a counselor this year and got to know Hugh, James (the 2nd place essay winner), and the other campers. You can read Hugh's winning essay at the TU website: [www.tu.org/blog-posts/2013-tu-camp-essay-contest-first-place?gid=5806](http://www.tu.org/blog-posts/2013-tu-camp-essay-contest-first-place?gid=5806)

October 5th and 19th marked the fourth year that the Great Bay TU Chapter and members from other New Hampshire chapters got to spend some fun respite time with cancer patients, survivors, and families who have been or are in treatment in the Wentworth-Douglass Hospital Cancer Center. As part of Amy's Treat - a respite program started over four years ago - TU anglers and our new friends spent several hours on the Cocheco River in Dover. The fishing was excellent and the food outstanding as usual. Wendy Nixon of Great Bay TU is the event coordinator for her chapter and did a superb job again making this fun day happen. Perhaps Basil Woods TU can do something similar soon.



*Upper Connecticut, continued from page 1*

It is worth fishing then – especially below Murphy Dam. Come April, the early Spring fishing can produce nice sized fish. The water stays open most years and you can find the fish stacked up along the Lake Francis Campground where the Trophy Stretch empties into the lake. It was noted by one of the TU Youth Trout Camp counselors that even in late July, fishing was very good on the Upper Connecticut. The river had not been stocked prior to Trout Camp as in previous years, but the fishing was the best ever. And although there were slow times over the course of the season, overall, the trout and salmon tightened plenty of lines this year according to Angus.

Although Angus' talk was titled, "Secrets of the Upper Connecticut" his advice appears universal for most coldwater river fishing. "When do you change flies?" is a question he hears frequently. One audience member replied, "before it's too dark". Most of the grey-haired audience members nodded in agreement. For Angus, our fly boxes hold "confidence flies" – and we should use them. How exactly does confidence play out on the stream? That can be addressed by two factors: 1) fish can be anywhere and 2) in order to find them, you need to cover the water. Water type dictates the flies we use and the methods we put into play.

The Upper Connecticut is mostly pocket water. This means streamers can't be effectively fished in major stretches. But dries and nymphs can. Confidence and fly choice depends on the knowledge that fish in pocket water hold in runs and in narrow lanes. Anyone who has hired Angus or seen him fish knows he rarely uses strike indicators. Rather, he uses fluorescent butt

*Upper Connecticut, continued on page 4*

*Upper Connecticut, continued from page 3*

material on his hand-tied leaders. (See December 2011 Troutlines on how to make them.) One of the reasons he relies on the visible leader material is because depth in pocket water varies quickly over a short distance and strike indicators interfere with proper placement of your nymph either hanging them high or snagging them low. The rule of thumb for indicators is to place them at twice the depth you are fishing. However, Angus ties his leaders with a 4 foot fluorescent butt section and from that, he gauges how deep his fly is. Although anglers who use strike indicators substantially outnumber those in Angus' camp, we know his catch ratio exceeds most.

In stretches of river where there are open runs, the boulder covered bed of the stream offers many refuges for our piscatorial challengers. Here you need to cover the water and be methodical. Soft hackles work well as can streamers. Cast close and swing. Repeat. Then, extend the distance a little, cast and swing. Repeat. Do this until you cover the stream. All casts should be slightly downstream making a series of arcs. On the Upper Connecticut, finding fish than aren't hammered (no easy task many days) can be accomplished by fishing open runs rather than the obvious pools and easy-to-get-to spots.

Using small flies on the Upper Connecticut's pocket water is advisable. The largest hook Angus uses is a 14. Impressionistic rather than attractors or imitations produce the most fish. One way around the problem of older eyes trying to attach very small flies with equally tiny eyes is to tie a small pattern on a larger hook. Inspired by Atlantic Salmon flies that are tied short on the hook, Angus feels that by exposing more of the larger hook may result in more successful hookups.

Another piece of advice, which we have heard by many presenters, is to observe what is going on in the river and surroundings. Early this year Angus noticed lots of dead smelt that washed out of Murphy Dam. The fishing was terrible – because the fish were gorging on the abundant and easy food washing down stream. But Angus said that over the next few days, smelt patterns were killers – especially a dead smelt pattern.

By tapping into the predatory instincts – especially of larger fish – and by presenting them with a panic scenario, you have a good shot at some sizeable trout. Because fish normally face upstream, if you present a large streamer streaking downstream, large fish may succumb to their instincts and chase their panicked prey. Much like teasing cats with

feathers, large fish sometimes cannot resist this presentation. Angus suggests that when you have a situation where there is a “window” of flat water sandwiched between two faster lanes, cast your large streamer upstream into the window and strip fast. There are sections below Murphy Dam where you can do this. (See “Fishing for Walter” in September, 2012 Troutlines for how this works.)

Most of us like to fish big pools. We know they are the perfect spots and produce. You can fish pools with almost every fly in your box. Should Angus be your guide, this is how you would fish a large pool. Starting at the head of the pool, you would rig up 15 inches of 15 pound leader and then tie on about 5 feet of 5X tippet. At the end of the long tippet you would tie about 6” of tippet with a blood knot. You would attach several split shot above the blood knot to get your nymph down. You would then adjust the strike indicator (this is when to use one) to work the proper depth for that pool. Because large fish are leader shy (that's why they are big) using the tippet material as leader is effective. Work the pool hard and take your time – adjusting depth as necessary. Sometimes it may take a couple of hours to fully work the pool.

Angus closed by noting that he and others are trying to start a “Pittsburg Fly Fishing Association.” Already they have support from local merchants and want to have a voice in how the Upper Connecticut resource is taken care of. This past summer, changes in the dam flows were a problem but worked out with the dam operations of Trans-Canada after meeting with many concerned anglers, guides, and interested parties. In addition, they would like to buy and stock the Upper Connecticut earlier than NH Fish and Game can. Probably April – and with larger fish. There would be a minimal fee for the Association. So stay tuned.

As always, Angus presents a fine program and makes many of us ready for next year on the Upper Connecticut.



### Seeking Fly Donations

The chapter is holding a benefit raffle this season and we are looking for donations for the famous “Board of Flies”. If you can spare a few, please let us know through the chapter e-mail ([concordtu@yahoo.com](mailto:concordtu@yahoo.com)) or bring them to a chapter meeting. In November, raffle ticket sales will begin. Watch the newsletter and website for information.

**Thanks!**

## We need your help !

You may be aware of the chapter's beginners and intermediate fly tying classes will be commencing on January 7 at the Passaconaway Club on Garvin's Falls Road in Concord. We are renewing and revising our fly tying courses. We are looking for both new instructors and assistants and would like you to consider volunteering.

With classes of up to 15 students with no, or minimal tying experience, 3 or 4 assistants are needed to help a small group of students as they learn the pattern and how to master materials and tying tools. Not all students proceed at the same speed, and this makes fly tying assistants extremely important. Each class begins with the lead instructor tying the "fly of the night". Next, the students learn to tie step-by-step with the assistants providing guidance.

Instructors and assistants need not be experts at the vise, but should possess basic and intermediate tying skills with a desire to pass on those skills. Remember, most new students won't even know how to properly seat a hook in a vise, or start the thread on the shank. And no one should feel that they have to be there every night. The beginner's class runs for 6 weeks tying one fly per night that covers the basic patterns. The intermediate class, which most often consists of students from the beginner's class, runs for 5 nights, and ties 2 flies per night. All classes run from 7 - 9 PM: see the form below for the specific dates.

We are trying a pilot program this year by supplying the required materials plus vises and tools as needed. This should be a great advantage to a beginning student as choosing quality materials is a large part of the fly tier's knowledge. Please consider volunteering. Contact Bob Ives to sign up for an adventure: ivesr@comcast.net.

### Winter Fly Tying Class Registration Basil W. Woods, Jr. Chapter Trout Unlimited Tuesday Evenings: 7 - 9 PM, January 7 - March 18 Passaconaway Club - Garvins Falls Road, Concord NH

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone \_\_\_\_\_

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Check the Class or Classes you are signing up for.

Beginner's Class    January 7 - February 11    \$ 50    \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Intermediate Class    February 18 - March 18    \$ 75    \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Please make check payable to: Basil W. Woods Chapter TU*

**Total \$** \_\_\_\_\_

I am not a TU member     I am a TU member

Send registration and payment to:    Basil W. Woods Chapter TU  
PO Box 3302  
Concord NH 03302



Please photocopy this form if you need extras.

Questions? e-mail us at: concordtu@yahoo.com or Bob Ives : ivesr@comcast.net

Essay, continued from page 1

time to really connect with your inner self. Exciting, when a fish is on the line and you must decide to let it run with the line or reel it in.

As students of this fly fishing camp, we were each given a wooden box with a fly tying kit inside. We were taught how to tie flies which imitated a caddis, stonefly or mayfly. We were also given the option to tie something out of our imaginations that might attract fish. I felt that I had tied some pretty cool looking flies. At first fly tying was hard because I had to work with such small tools, however I soon got the hang of it, and have even tied some flies since camp. Fly tying has turned out to be a very rewarding experience because I started to figure it all out, and the flies turned out great! We learned that with every river, and at different times of day, there will be different flies needed, so we would need to change the fly. To do that, we needed to cut the line, and use a surgeon's knot to attach another fly. I can assure you that I have used that knot in several other situations.

When it came to the rod and reel, the counselors wasted no time pairing me with my rod. I was excited to receive gear of my very own, and I will take good care of it. Trout camp showed me how to prepare my rod for a river and how to put it away. I learned about backing the fly line, the leader, and the tippet. The minute I was given my rod, I knew it would be special as my first fly rod. That was the same feeling with my reel and the fly tying kit. It seemed like our gifts of gear were endless! It felt good to be using my own equipment on the river. One of the counselors brought in some of the gear he had collected over the years. It was exciting to see some rods and reels dating back to 1700s.

Casting was new to my arm, but the counselors showed me the 10 and 2 approach to casting. At first I did not know what I was doing, but neither did anyone else. The counselors worked with me, and soon I feel I became in tune with casting, and the rod became an extension of my arm. Like in the movie, *A River Runs Through It*, which we watched since I returned from camp, the casting had the rhythm of a peaceful metronome; back and forth, back and forth. The feeling was awkward at first, then easier, and finally I grew to like it.

Standing in a rushing river with waders on is one of the most peculiar sensations that I have ever encountered. To picture how it felt, imagine your hand in a latex glove under a large sink faucet. Then imagine that feeling on the entire lower half of your body. Plus, when you pick up your feet, they will want to float away! Waders are almost as much fun as fishing itself.

When I am fishing, I try to imagine what a fish would think as he swims with little effort in the river, looking for eddies to relax in. After a tough day in school I intend to let the music of the river- soft, quiet, yet steady- calm me down, and then I go fly fishing.

### Calendar

- |               |  |         |
|---------------|--|---------|
| November 7    | Board of Director's Meeting, Szechuan Garden, Penacook   | 5:30 PM |
| November 21   | Chapter Meeting Speaker, Marla Blair "The Hatch, and Body Language of Trout for Choosing The Right Patterns". A fun and educational program for fly fishers of all ages and skills. Another way for thinking about fly selection |         |
| December 5    | Board of Director's Meeting, Szechuan Garden, Penacook   | 6:00 PM |
| March 8, 2014 | Annual Conservation Banquet, Grappone Center, Concord  |         |

All chapter meetings at 7:00 PM, Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests, 54 Portsmouth Street, Concord unless posted otherwise.

### Newsletter Information

**Troutlines** is published September through May. Chapter members who have given TU national their e-mail address will receive an e-mail notice from us through the TU national server that the latest newsletter is online at our chapter website. Paper copies are sent to members who don't have an e-mail address listed with TU national.

If you would prefer to receive paper copies of **Troutlines** rather than electronic copies, drop us a line to either our e-mail or mailing address. If you now receive a paper copy and would prefer to read it online, drop us a note and update your membership information with TU national.

**Basil Woods Jr. Chapter TU**  
**PO Box 3302**  
**Concord NH 03302-3302**

[www.concordtu.org](http://www.concordtu.org)

e-mail: [concordtu@yahoo.com](mailto:concordtu@yahoo.com)