



# Troutlines

## Of Interest

A peaceful & successful season on the water to all

## Members Matter

Be diligent and involved.

Give an alert eye & clear voice to acts that compromise our precious waters

Volunteer!

## Chapter Meetings and Events Calendar

Next Chapter Meeting  
September 18

NH KIDS' TROUT CAMP  
June 25 - 29, 2014

May Chapter Meeting & Picnic  
May 15

**May Chapter meeting at the Passaconaway Club on Garvins Fall Rd. Concord beginning at 5:30 PM**

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## Basil Woods Jr hosts noted author, guide Topher Browne

Forty members gathered at Society for the Protection of New Hampshire Forests on April 17 to enjoy a presentation by Topher Browne. Mr. Browne is a well traveled guide and author with particular experiences in Patagonia; and, the topic of this evenings conversation Atlantic salmon rivers in the Gaspé and the Maritimes. His recent books include Atlantic Salmon Magic and its companion text 100 Best Flies for Atlantic Salmon. He is also a devotee of and noted instructor in the art of Spey casting.

The evening's stunning slide presentation showcased the Gaspé rivers with a particular emphasis on the gin clear waters of the Bonaventure River. Programs such as these remind us why river protection is paramount. Not only are these waters the home to the fish of kings, but they are an objects of art



and beauty in their own right. Mr. Browne spent some time discussing the harmful effects that salmon farm

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## Youth Fishing Day Bright Success!



Its about the Water



and the Fish

Saturday April 19th, Merrill Park in East Concord was the place to be for some 125 boys and girls and their moms and dads. Basil Woods Jr TU hosted an opportunity to come to the water and cast a line for some 300 trout provided by the chapter and the state. While at days end a few trout remained, many went home with the happy smiles of their captors; including a 16 inch lunker unexpectedly provided by Fish and Game.

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## Presidential Commentary - George Embley



President's letter—March 2014

Spring is finally here and the brook trout eggs deposited in streams last fall have now hatched. Every year, about this time, a couple of us will travel up to Lebanon when the fourth graders will release the fry that they raised in their trout-in-the-classroom program. As part of their release day, we dredge up some stream bugs and show the kids the assorted stream bottom denizens – which always include some stoneflies. We always devote some time to the stoneflies because they, along with brook trout, are a sign of high water quality. They are also an important source of food for trout and probably account for at least part of the success of popular general-purpose flies like the Copper John or Prince Nymph. They are an ancient species and, along with their cousin the cockroach, go back almost 300 million years. Adult stoneflies are easy to spot in flight because of their distinctive fluttering motion. They use their two wing sets to skim as well as fly and, if you are interested, you can find slow motion videos of their wing motion at the link:

[www.personal.psu.edu/jhm10/project2.html](http://www.personal.psu.edu/jhm10/project2.html). On May 23 chapter members will return to Lebanon to help at the two elementary schools' annual all-day 4th Grade Watershed Conference.

Chapter elections took place at our April meeting. The full slate of current officers and directors is listed on page 4. The new faces on the board are Tim Pease and Charles Stumb. Charlie lives in Bow and has been a TU member for over 15 years. Tim, who resides in Gilmanton Iron Works, is working along with his good friend "Parson Weems" to continue the same high quality newsletter that Gordon Riedesel produced. Board member Brad Towle is our new treasurer, taking over from Dan Davidson. And lastly, Alex Hicks is now maintaining the chapter website, picking up another of Gordon's former responsibilities.

Topher Browne, also at our April meeting, spoke on salmon fishing and salmon conservation. If you missed his talk, there is summary elsewhere in this newsletter. We all enjoyed Topher's travelogue of stunning wild salmon rivers as well as his description of casting techniques. For conservationists, the most important part of his talk was about the decline in the Atlantic salmon fishery throughout the east coast. As you know, the latest attempts to restore salmon to the Merrimack and Connecticut Rivers have been abandoned, and now the fisheries in Maine are losing ground. The return rate in a healthy stream or river should be 5 to 15%, but the rate in Maine has fallen to 1% or below, and even in healthy rivers in Canada, it is now around 3%. Salmon smolt going to sea face a lot of obstacles – including predation by striped bass and decreases in prey food. But the single biggest cause may be the amount of salmon aquaculture occurring in the mouths of these rivers. Escaped farm fish compete with wild salmon and dilute the gene pool. They also host bacteria and parasites that lead to high mortality among wild fish. Climate change seems now to be playing a role as well. Apparently, rapid ice melt in Greenland is cooling the ocean to the point that salmon --underweight because of the decrease in ocean biomass --may be less able to survive in their second year at sea.

Climate change was also the subject of an April 22 panel discussion with Senator Jeanne Shaheen and NH Fish & Game and Audubon biologists that I and several other TU State Council members attended. The National Wildlife Federation, together with NH TU and the NH Audubon Society, sponsored the event which addressed the effects of climate change on NH wildlife. The wildlife biologists illustrated the impact of climate change with discussions of the decline of the moose and purple finch populations. We of course are more concerned with the threat to the native brook trout. Locally, for example, the Warner River watershed is currently the home of a large wild brook trout population. A couple of degrees, increase in average summer air tem-

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## Winter relents Spring struggles forward

Folks that know tell us that this winter was just average for cold and snow. Its only in the last 30 years or so that we have had shorter warmer winters By the end of the third week in April we still have the Big Lake in ice, not everywhere; but, by no means of traditional measuring is ice out. Despite this years snowpack Smokey was showing dangerous fire warnings below Lake Winnipegesauke. Chucking streamers for landlocks from docks and piers has been uneven this spring. Though, there was notable activity and success for recently stocked but undersized (for lake taking) rainbows. A few anglers suggested that the rainbow activity had somehow diminished the salmon success. Not sure if it makes sense or is just another in the long list of reasons for not catching fish. Others caught fish but not in the numbers of past years.

Valley snow had left the upper Connecticut by April 23 but with considerably more snow melt to come the rivers remained high and dirty. Some angler successes in the north country has become

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## Editor's Soapbox

Close readers know by now that that our long standing and admired editor of Troutlines Mr. Gordon Reidesel has taken his skills to North Carolina. And so we begin anew.

I am Tim Pease, New Hampshire resident from 1975 and long time marginally successful beater of our beautiful trout and salmon waters.

My introduction to NH TU came in the mid 70s in Manchester and involved mostly fly tying but included introductions to noted local sportsman, Dick Talleur, Nick Lambreau, Don Dombrowski, Jay High, Harry Perkins. I later met notables Angus Boezeman, and Jeddy Waterman.

Not that they knew who I was but it was a fair measure of the quality of cold water fishing expertise at our fingertips. Combine that with endless journeys to Hunters Angling Supplies in all its incarnations and I came to appreciate, all the more, the New Hampshire trout and salmon traditions.

I called the Contoocook river in Henniker my home waters for over 25 years, traversing the old rail bed behind the river; busting up my ankles and knees on the streambed's slippery cannonball like rocks and boulders. TU was there too with posters announcing the regulations it had fought to introduce on these waters. The Suncook, Soucook, Blackwater rivers and of course Archery Pond filled out my local trips. Annual spring and fall trips to the Upper Connecticut and to some of the hallowed Maine destinations completed my New England dance card followed later by a few sojourns to the Maritimes of Canada for Atlantic Salmon. It has been a privilege and hoot.

I often meet anglers' lusting for the waters of the angling magazines' who forget the quality of local streams and ponds. Case in point, me. I was living away for a few years in Connecticut and joined a lo-

cal sportsman club. The folks there annually visited New Hampshire for their "big trip". Last year I was finally able to join them and was introduced to their hallmark streams, the Newfound, Baker, Pemi, and Smith rivers. Go figure!

Beauty is in the eyes of the beholder and we in New Hampshire have much to be thankful for right here. I hope as word purveyor for our newsletter to share with you the pleasures of our angling world and provide some thoughts about how we can preserve, protect, and grow our precious water resources. I look forward to meeting online and on paper with you in the months ahead.

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ing may have on both the quality and the quantity of the fish stock. His observations are that escaped farmed salmon are altering the genetics through crossbreeding with the resultant species being inferior to wild stock salmon of the past. He also indicated that some diseases, specifically high levels of sea lice, generated from the salmon farms may be reducing the numbers of smolts returning to sea from their native rivers. The ongoing problems of open ocean mortality continues whether from temperature variations, resulting in food chain alterations or from commercial harvest.

Mr. Browne's books Atlantic Salmon Magic and 100 Best Flies for Atlantic Salmon updates and extends on the classics of Bates, Faulkus and others providing technical how to, and the ephemeral beauty of the sport with brilliant photography and text; a recommended read.

## Parson Ponders

*Parson Weems, north woods guide savant, periodically leaves his cabin and campfire to offer a few words and insights that can only come from a dark sky view of Orion's Belt on a clear New England winter's eve.*

Parson remains largely unplugged in the great north woods, and were it not for occasional trips to town the Internet, I-Phones and Apps would go unknown to him. Radio and TV had already seemed ultra modern.

He has noticed that fewer and fewer of the folks he meets on the stream are the same young men of past years. Sure the old codgers come back and now he sees a few ladies, but it sure seems different somehow. It is not just the shiny new rods, gleaming reels and zippered waders. It is how few folks he sees. When once he feared being overrun by the close cropped engineers of Rte.128 and then the long haired baby boomers he now sees fewer and fewer fishermen in the best pools with fewer sporting camps and a bunch of them for sale. Backwoods adventures, recounted in the sporting magazines of old, long ago disappeared.

Bert, the local conservation officer has reported lower and lower license sales for years. Bert says the government guys in Concord spend less each year and no one seems to care. Few play so few pay I guess

Maybe we forgot to tell our kids what a good deal this being outdoors is. Bert says the TU guys in Concord have trouble giving away free trips to fishing camp.

Maybe we the moms and dads, grandpas and grandmas let the Internet, iPhone and Apps replace our responsibility to introduce today's kids to the great outdoors and beautiful waters. Maybe we made them afraid of the outdoors. Even LL Bean seems to think it is better to look like you have been outdoors than to really be there.

Parson hopes that today sports will begin a new period of getting the youth of our times back. One way is for TU members to reach out to the local kids, yours, your relatives and your neighbors, and get them into it. Take them out, get them dirty and wet; and let'em see and experience the fish, the frogs and bugs up close. Parson thinks that once they do it they will find that the fun is as good as or better than the Internet iPhone or App.

Lets find the 20 and 30 yr. old young men and welcome them to our experience. The economics of that group has not been great of late; but we sportsmen need to let them know that the enjoyment is in the doing not in the \$700 rod or in some vast collection tackle. Lets be sure that our outdoor world looks like an "everyman's" world.

Parson thinks when the kids and the young guys and perhaps some new young ladies come to the stream the dollars and government problems will go away.

Thoughts to ponder

*Parson Weems*

## Elected Officers and Directors

Officer and Directors nominated in April were voted and approved at the April membership meeting. Below is the complete Basil Woods Jr. leadership team

### **Officers:**

President: George Embley  
Vice President: March McCubrey  
Secretary: Nancy May  
Treasurer: Brad Towle

### **Directors:**

Bill Hall  
Peter Denoncourt  
George Cummings  
Alex Hicks  
Bob Ives  
Tim Pease  
Charles Stumb  
Ken Welch  
Steven Lowe  
Dan Stickney (ex officio)

*Winter Relents from page 3*

increasingly controversial. Trophy fishermen, in pursuit of the truly large fish in the Upper Connecticut River, have taken an inordinately high number of them in recent years. These fish are not returned for the river. Not sure if they are injured from inhaling bait or merely preserved over the fireplace mantle. In any case they are no longer with us. These long in the tooth fish do not come back quickly and if we are to continue to have our best waters denuded of its best fish we diminish the quality of fishing to all.

Some new plan for managing the take of these fish needs to be put in place. Interested authorities, guides and other river stakeholders are becoming galvanized and we can only hope that some solution will be at hand soon. Feel free to lobby your state representatives and Fish and Game for a near term solution. When they are gone they are gone.

A waltz around the New England notable waters shows a slow spring too. The Farmington was a couple of weeks behind schedule though the dam release has been generally low for this time of year. In fact many of the lower New England state flows were somewhat lower.

Later ice out and thus later lake drawdown means higher run off this time of year for most of the Maine venues. Should make for great mid May fishing opportunities.

The Battenkill rounded into form in late April but Otter creek remained quite high.

Remember that this will be the last release of the brood stock salmon left over from the now discontinued Atlantic Salmon restoration program. Do buy the stamp and wet a line. These are large lovely fish and worthy of your attention. Try the usual haunts, Sewall's and Eastman Falls and the Pemi in Bristol.

It pays to poke about. Not all productive waters appear in the magazines and on video. At this time of year the tributaries of ponds and lakes are the home to many large fish. The run off

swollen steams host hold over fish that are staging to spawn or chasing smelt. The streams and brooks are often high but have manageable flows with safer wading opportunities.

These fish will not be available here for long and they won't be in large numbers; but, you will be astonished by the quality. The large trout and salmon will be gone by the time the stocking truck arrives which likely means that you will have the stream to yourself. Check out the slow bend pools and blow downs and don't be surprised when your rod doubles and your heart stops.

Good Fishing and I will see you in September.

**President continued from p2**

-perature, could have a big impact and would at least remove brookies from the more vulnerable parts of that watershed. Senator Shaheen talked about the bipartisan Energy Efficiency Bill that she and Senator Portman of Ohio are co-sponsoring. Senator Shaheen feels the bill has a good chance of passing and, if so, it will be the first major energy bill since 2007 to pass the Senate. It might only be a small course correction in the fight to address climate change, but it is a move in the right direction. As Yogi Berra might say, "If we do not change our direction, we are likely to end up where we are headed."

Many thanks to all the chapter members who made Youth Fishing Day and our exhibit at NH Fish & Game a big success. And congratulations to the winners of our annual chapter raffle! Vice-president March McCubrey took charge of the raffle this year and made it a very successful fundraiser.

Our chapter and the Merrimack River Valley Chapter have been supporting and helping to fund the Avery Brook land protection project. This project protects what Dr. Barry Wicklow at St. Anselm College has identified as a key wild brook trout tributary to Rand Brook and the Piscataquog. On Saturday, May 17, Dr. Wicklow will give TU members a

**Presidents continued on P.6**

**Youth continued from page 1**

The day included raffle prizes, burgers, dogs, and soda to go along with the worm handling, hook baiting and fish releasing.

Congratulations to the Benefit Raffle winners:

Grand Prize Angler Kayak —Alex Hicks

First Prize Winston Fly Rod —Rebecca Bellerose

2nd Prize Board of Flies—George Foster

3rd Prize HMH Fly Tying Vice —Bob Johns

4th Prize Fishing Books— Rebecca Bellerose

5th Prize Christmas Tree—Patty Jared

and thanks to all who purchased raffle tickets.

The proceeds go toward the chapters general fund for stream improvement.

While Youth Fishing entertained in East Concord, Fish and Game held Discover Wild NH Day on Hazen Drive. Attended by over 6000 outdoor enthusiasts, the event reminds us all of the outdoor bounty here in NH.

Basil Woods Jr. deep down in the Fish and Game building provided an information table disguised as a fly tying exhibition and had the opportunity to meet, greet and solicit members for TU.

The bright day kept many at the outside exhibits but a few passing clouds delivered families and youngsters to our table from all over the state; all ready to launch themselves into the great outdoors. Lets hope we see them on the water soon.

**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.

With rising mail costs adversely impacting a budget that needs to be directed to water projects we have decided to corral mailing expenses. The newsletter will continue to be offered in paper to those currently receiving paper. Paper copies will no longer be offered to new members.

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**President continued from p5**

tour of the Avery Brook property. He will talk about the science behind the project, how it was funded, and what work can be done to enhance brook trout habitat in the watershed. Attendees will meet at 10 a.m. at the town hall in New Boston. All chapter members are welcome, but please let Paul Doscher know if you plan to attend. He can be reached at 603-224-9945 or [orpdoscher@forestsociety.org](mailto:orpdoscher@forestsociety.org). If you do make it, bring your fishing rod as there is reportedly some good fishing in the area.

Again this year we will be supporting conservation work in the Warner River watershed. The work scope is still being defined but will likely be focused stream crossing assessments. I will be sending out further information to those of you on our volunteer list. If you would like to be notified when we have more specifics, please let me know and I will add you to the list. You can reach me at 456-2315 or [gembley@tds.net](mailto:gembley@tds.net).

Finally, please note that our annual chapter picnic will take place on May15 at the Passaconaway club on Garvins Falls Road in Concord. Hamburgers and hot dogs will be provided. Bring your own drinks and a dish to share (if you wish). Hope to see you there.

**Calendar**

- |        |                                                                                                           |
|--------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| May 15 | Final Chapter Meeting/Picnic of the Season – 5:30 PM<br>Passaconaway Club Garvins Fall Rd.<br>Concord, NH |
| May 17 | Avery Brook Land Protection Project.<br>10 AM Town Hall, New Boston, NH                                   |
| June 7 | NH Free Fishing Day                                                                                       |