

New Oak Brook TU Chapter Website Launched; Newsletter and Conservation Blog Go Digital

With over 50 percent of all emails and website visits now viewed by a mobile device—either a smartphone or tablet—Oak Brook TU is introducing its first truly “mobile responsive” website and electronic newsletter. “Mobile responsive” means the content will reformat for easy viewing and reading regardless of the screen size—from a desktop PC to today’s smartphones.

The new website is very robust, featuring broader and deeper content, from the “about us” section to a detailed overview of our conservation history and current projects as well as youth education programs.

Fishing Section

The in-depth fishing section features location content from Michigan, Wisconsin and Missouri, with sections on Minnesota and Iowa to come in a couple of months. Local guides and fishing reports are featured along with online fishing license and area map links and in the case of Michigan rivers: current stream flow reporting.

A “Marketplace” page allows OBTU members to list fishing gear and items for sale with a 5% sales fee donated to the chapter to support its fundraising efforts.

Show off your 2016 spring and summer “catches” by sending us your photo(s) with caption information—for example, where you were fishing (don’t need

to disclose secret location), guide (if you used one and recommend him), and anything else of interest (fly pattern). Email your photo and information with “Photo Gallery” in the subject line to: jimschmieds@gmail.com

Membership Engagement Encouraged

The new website’s home page provides information on our fall schedule of events and the volunteer page seeks greater member engagement with leadership contact information easily accessible throughout the website.

Links to Facebook plus our new LinkedIn and Twitter pages allow members and other OBTU followers to receive our latest news and other timely information via the news channel they prefer in addition to our usual e-blasts.

Photographer Credits

Special thanks to the following photographers who provided their river and stream photography: Joe Barker, Brad Eaton, David Stonner, and Kyle Zempel.

Website WordPress Volunteer Needed

If you have experience updating WordPress websites and would like to join the chapter’s Communications Committee, please contact Jim Schmiedeskamp via phone (312.375.6502) or email: jimschmieds@gmail.com.

Meetings and Events

Save the dates on your calendars

Chapter meetings are at 7:00 p.m. the third Wednesday of every month at the Oak Brook Recreation Center, Central Park West Building near 31st Street and Jorie Blvd. in Oak Brook unless otherwise noted.

August

No membership meeting

August 10, Wednesday,
6:30–9:00 p.m.

Board of Directors Meeting

September 11, Wednesday,
7:00–9:00 p.m.

Board of Directors Meeting

September 18, Wednesday,
7:00–9:00 p.m.

Membership Meeting
White Eagle Homeowners Clubhouse, Naperville
Speaker: Ann Miller on “Understanding Hatches: The Key to Better Fly Fishing”
5:30–7:00 p.m. Brat cookout, fly casting tips on White Eagle Lake

October 12, Wednesday,
6:30–9:00 p.m.

Board of Directors Meeting

October 19, Wednesday,
7:00–9:00 p.m.

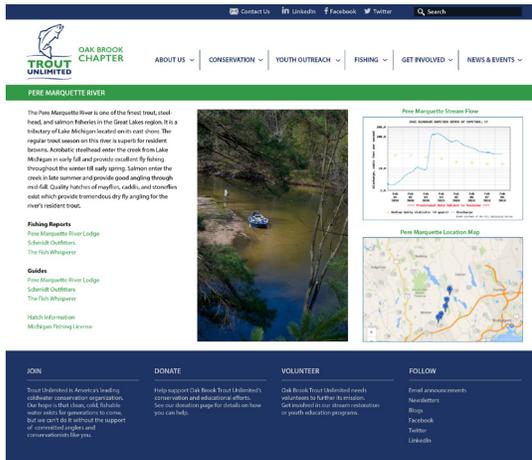
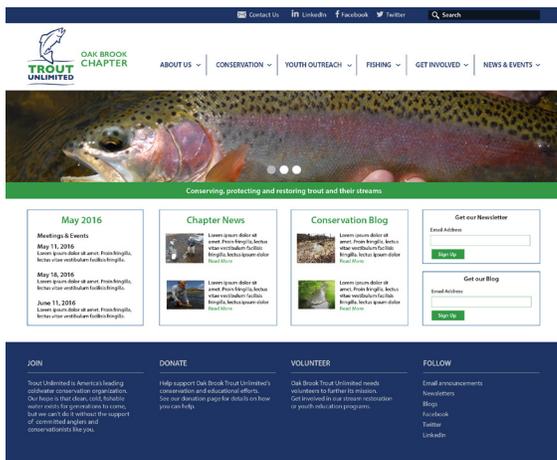
Membership Meeting
Oak Brook Recreation Center, Canterbury Room
Speaker: Guide and Author Rich Osthoff on “Driftless Nymphing Techniques”

November 9, Wednesday,
6:30–9:00 p.m.

Board of Directors Meeting

November 16, Wednesday,
7:00–9:00 p.m.

Membership Meeting
Oak Brook Recreation Center, Central Park West Building
Speaker: Shedd Aquarium Research Biologist Dr. Phil Willink on “Lake Michigan” Aquatic Ecosystems”



All Things OBTU...

By Rick Ralph, President

Summer is synonymous with recreation – leisure, amusement, sport. I also think of recreation as regeneration, refreshment, and reformation. I wish that you have some recreation of both types during this summer.

Our chapter completed the spring with the Trout in the Classroom fish releases, a fabulous May meeting, and began Youth Fly Fishing Classes. Many thanks to Marvin Strauch who leads our Trout in the Classroom program and Youth Fly Fishing Classes and the many volunteers who find these activities fun and rewarding.

Our May “Spring Fling” meeting included a grilled dinner coordinated by Dennis Wisnosky, fly fishing equipment showcased by Orvis Yorktown and DuPage Fly Fishing Company, and Marcy Hamilton who gave us perspectives on the St Joseph River watershed and a major stream restoration initiative kicking off in 2017 on the Dowagiac River.

We owe our thanks to Willie Beshire who organizes our monthly meetings.

In June, we enjoyed a warm but good day on the Coldwater River watershed measuring the macroinvertebrate population. On July 23 we scheduled a stream restoration work day at Farmers Valley Creek in Sparta, WI.

Under Tom Hoagland’s leadership, over 20 OBTU members volunteered their fly rod casting expertise and mentoring as instructors in the Orvis Fly Fishing 101/201 classes that ran from April through July.

Thank you to those who contributed to the conservation and education fundraising solicitation so far. This campaign defines to a large extent how much of our mission in conservation and education we will pursue next year through our financial support. See the Weister Creek story to understand the type of stream restoration project your financial support helps make possible. You have an opportunity to still make a donation either online via our “Donate” page on our website or by responding to the letter we sent you in May and the follow-up email we will send you in August on our latest results as we extend the fundraising campaign to friends and family. Special thanks to John Snyder who led a team of enthusiasts and gave the campaign its energy and focus.

Of special note is the introduction of our new website and e-newsletter which are both mobile-responsive—meaning they are both easily viewed on your smart phone and tablet as well as desktop PC. This was a major initiative led by Jim Schmiedeskamp who manages all chapter internal membership communications and external publicity. Take a few minutes to review the breadth and depth of content and bookmark the site on your home and work PCs.

Your board of directors will be busy this summer assessing our conservation activities for next year, organizing a fall event for funding our operating expenses, planning next year’s budget, and following through on our three-year strategic plan which you can view on the Leadership page of our new website.

Look for details later this summer on our exciting fall kick-off meeting September 21. We’re moving this gathering further west to Naperville to be closer to many of our members and are lining up a great get-together.

Tight Lines,
Rick

Orvis Yorktown Thanks OBTU FF101/FF201 Volunteers

Orvis Yorktown kicked off their 2016 fly fishing basics classes for beginners on April 16 and conclude them on August 7. Orvis segments their classes into two sessions—Fly Fishing 101 and Fly Fishing 201. FF101 is for beginners of all ages where attendees learn the fly fishing basics from outfit rigging through fly casting. FF101 graduates can advance to the FF201 class which features a short outing on local water for a chance for each participant to catch their first fish!

“With the Orvis Fly Fishing 101/201 season completed, I would like to thank all of the OBTU volunteers who took time out of their weekend schedules to help run the program which comprised 22 sessions,” said Glenn Martenson, Orvis Yorktown store manager. “We truly would not be able to have the success we experience with this program without the help each from Oak Brook Trout Unlimited and its members. And special thanks to Tom Hoagland for coordinating the volunteer efforts this year and assuring we had enough volunteer staff for each class.”

166 Participants and New TU Members

For 2016, 166 participants took the 101 and 201 classes with two classes to go, which should exceed the Yorktown store’s 2015 total of 170 with two classes remaining.

The FF101 classes are usually comprised of 12 to 15 participants which are led by 5-6 OBTU and Orvis volunteer instructors. The FF201 classes are larger (15-20 members) because there are fewer classes.

“I think it’s a great program for TU because it not only introduces new people to the sport of fly fishing, but also adds to the ranks of our members,” said Tom Hoagland, OBTU volunteer organizer. “The class make-up is typically 80% male adults with the balance being women and kids. We had had OBTU volunteers fill 57 instructor slots with at least 2 hours per session for a total of 114 man hours devoted to this program.”

In addition to the free instruction, all FF01 participants also join Trout Unlimited through a special free first-year membership. OBTU instructor volunteers earned discounts on Orvis equipment and merchandise up to 40% depending upon the number of classes they led.

OBTU Volunteers Recognized

OBTU volunteers included Ron Abrant, Darwin Adams, Wayne Bernahl, Steve Carlson, Dave Moore, Ed Evans, Frank Harford, Fred Hodge, Tom Hoagland (OBTU coordinator), Ron Kurasz, Ralph Loza, Jeff Kroger, Greg Prosen, Frank Sprouse, Craig Thornton, Joe Weisenberger, Tom Wilhelm, Phil Young, Stan Zarnowiecki and Frank Zbyski.



An Orvis FF101 class participant receives fly casting instruction from Tom Hoagland.

Autumn Meeting Schedule Kicks Off with “Fall Fling” in Naperville

The Oak Brook TU autumn membership meeting schedule kicks off with a September 21 “Fall Fling” event featuring a grilled dinner at the White Eagle Homeowner’s Clubhouse in Naperville from 5:30 to 7 p.m. preceding our speaker. A special “TU Women’s Initiative program” will be part of the event with details to be announced.

Our slate of speakers is probably the most interesting and topics as diverse as their background and locations. We will have an author and TU member from Michigan, a Wisconsin Driftless Area guide and fly tier, and a noted Great Lakes biologist from Chicago’s Shedd Aquarium. So make sure you mark your calendars and invite a friend to join us as a guest.

Wednesday, September 21, 7-9 p.m.

Speaker: Aquatic biologist, fly fisher and author Ann Miller on “Understanding Hatches: The Key to Better Fly Fishing.”



In her book “Upper Midwest Hatch Guide,” Ann discusses the naturals and their behaviors then provides matching fly patterns and fishing techniques. Fly tying is a combination of art and science; fly tiers understand the biology and behavior of an insect, and then imitate it artistically. Color, size, silhouette, and behavior of an artificial are essential, which is why it’s important to have some knowledge of the local insects. Mayflies, stoneflies, caddisflies, lesser insects, and crustaceans of the upper Midwest are covered in Ann Miller’s book. Learning to identify insects can be daunting for anyone, but doing so will pay off for you with more fish.

Wednesday, October 19, 7-9 p.m.

Speaker: Guide and author Rich Osthoff on “Driftless Nymphing Techniques”

Rich is an author, guide, and fly tier based in Wisconsin’s Driftless Area. In his presentation, Rich makes extensive use of videos to demonstrate effective Driftless Area small stream nymphing tactics. The proof of his techniques is clearly evident by the results he achieves on video. Among numerous credits, he has authored 3 books: *Active Nymphing--Aggressive Strategies for Casting, Rigging, and Moving the Nymph*, *No Hatch To Match--Aggressive Strategies For Fly-fishing Between Hatches*, and *Fly-Fishing The Rocky Mountain Backcountry* based on Rich’s 20 years of backpacking and fly fishing out west.



Wednesday, November 16, 7-9 p.m.

Speaker: Dr. Phil Willink, a senior research biologist at the Shedd Aquarium in Chicago, will speak on Lake Michigan’s aquatic ecosystems.

His talk will include fluctuating water levels, oil spills, invasive species and current conservation initiatives impacting endangered species. Dr. Willink will also review current research projects. Dr. Phil Willink joined Shedd in 2012 as senior research biologist for the aquarium’s Daniel P. Haerther Center for Conservation and Research, leading Shedd’s efforts to develop a comprehensive evaluation of the state’s list of threatened and endangered species through on-the-ground population assessments. Dr. Willink has more than 20 years of



experience in research, teaching and global expeditions studying fish biodiversity as well as endangered and invasive species. His work includes studies on the Great Lakes, examining the genetics of invasive species and the impact of development and invasive species on native fish populations, as well as a project to publish a field guide of Chicago lakefront fishes. Dr. Willink holds a doctorate in ecology and evolutionary biology from the University of Michigan.

Weister Creek Success Story: Interview with Paul Hayes, Project Visionary, Lifetime TU Member and Driftless “River Keeper”

By Jim Schmiedeskamp

On a sunny day in May after fishing Wisconsin’s Driftless Area, I rendezvoused with Paul Hayes to get a walking tour of the Weister Creek stream restoration project Oak Brook TU has supported with \$4,000 in grants supporting phase 3 work in 2016 and 2017. If you enjoy flora, fauna and critters of all types, then this outing was like spending an hour with Marlin Perkins, the long-time host of Mutual of Omaha’s “Wild Kingdom.” Paul’s vision, passion and commitment to this project are what makes it a success and ideal template for other Trout Unlimited conservation initiatives.

Here’s my interview with Paul on “living the dream,” the Weister Creek project, and Trout Unlimited’s role.

OBTU: First provide some background information on your professional career and current activities since retirement.

Paul: My background includes a Master of Science degree in Biology from St. Mary’s University in Winona, MN. It was there that I caught my first trout and came to love the biotic diversity of the Driftless Area. I spent my professional career teaching high school science for 43 years, 38 of those at Loyola Academy in Wilmette, IL.

OBTU: Why did you retire to the Driftless Area?

Paul: Our family bought an old dairy farm in 2000 near Westby on the West Fork of the Kickapoo. We restored the stream, took the cows out of the woods and planted prairie and oaks in most of the corn fields. In 2009, I retired and we built a new home on the hillside overlooking our little valley and have been living the dream.

OBTU: What are your personal hobbies and interests in retirement?

Paul: I have been a TU member since 1970 and have worked on countless stream restoration projects which have allowed me to combine my scientific training with my passion for the outdoors. My wife—Bernadette—and I are “river keepers” and spend many hours doing stream monitoring; we are also active in Audubon, the local prairie group and woodland owners group.

OBTU: How would you describe Weister Creek?

Paul: Weister Creek is a spring-fed stream, some 15 miles long, in Vernon County in the Driftless Area of southwestern Wisconsin and is a tributary of the Kickapoo River. The lower 5 miles of Weister Creek is surrounded by wetlands, forests and fields and lies in the Kickapoo Valley Reserve (KVR). The Kickapoo Valley Reserve is an 8,000-acre public land that was rescued from an Army Corps dam project in the 1970s.

OBTU: How and when did the Weister Creek project originate? What has been your role?

Paul: I was appointed to the Kickapoo Valley Reserve management board in 2012; at that time the Reserve’s primary outdoor activities were hiking, biking, horseback riding and skiing. My wife and I did a thorough assessment of all the feeder streams to the Kickapoo

on the Reserve. We identified Weister Creek as having the most potential for restoration as a trout fishery. The project was proposed and approved by the Board. My role has been twofold—to raise funds for the 30% match that most of the major grants require, and secondly to provide scientific advice to promote biological diversity and stability to the project.

OBTU: What makes this project unique from the typical Driftless Area stream restoration project?

Paul: The project is a demonstration site for a number of practices that enhance biological diversity and sustainability. Many of these are documented in the Nongame Wildlife Habitat Guide by Jeff Hastings from Trout Unlimited Driftless Area Restoration Effort (TUDARE).

Some specifics include:

- Providing stillwater wetland habitat, some connected to the stream and some not connected. These provide habitat for minnows, tadpoles and larva of many aquatic insects.
- Incorporating natural logs, root wads and shallow sloped grassy banks for turtles and frogs to use for basking and egg laying.
- Connecting spring water outflows directly to deep water pools for thermal refuge in both summer and winter.
- Constructing snake and turtle hibernacula. (A hibernacula is a protective abode in which a creature seeks refuge to survive winter’s cold temperatures, such as a bear using a cave to overwinter.)
- Removing willow and box elder brush from the stream corridor to discourage beaver while keeping some large hardwoods for songbirds and raptors. Some standing dead trees were saved for woodpecker habitat.
- The 100-200-foot stream buffer is planted in prairie grasses and flowers; once established the prairie plantings will be managed with fire to keep out woody brush. These plantings will enhance the pheasant hunting opportunities as well as nongame species.
- Some sandbars are protected to provide shorebird habitat.
- Some brush piles were saved or partially buried outside the floodway for small mammals and furbearer dens.
- Some vertical banks in phase 3 will be enhanced for bank swallows and kingfisher nest holes.

“Continued on page 5”



Paul Hayes, lifetime TU member, Kickapoo Valley Reserve board member, and Driftless “river keeper.”

OBTU: Who was responsible for the project planning and construction?

Paul: Project planning is shared by the KVR staff, myself and the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources (DNR) fisheries crew chief. Construction has been contracted to the Wisconsin DNR on a yearly basis—July to June. We may contract with other governmental agencies as well as the DNR in the future.

OBTU: Where did the funding come from?

Paul: Over \$95,000 was funded for phases 1 and 2 with approximately \$28,000 coming from Illinois and Wisconsin TU chapters, \$15,000 from Vernon County (Ho-Chunk Trust); and \$45,000 from the Wisconsin DNR Trout Stamp fund, as the major contributors. We are currently raising funds for the 2016-17 phase 3.

OBTU: What was the role of TU volunteers?

Paul: We have had three TU workdays, one each in 2014, 2015 and 2016. One was for a chainsaw day, the other two days were for construction of fish cribs (LUNKERS). All workdays have been midweek due to the schedule of the DNR and KVR staffs.

OBTU: How would you describe the handiwork of DNR contractors regarding their contribution?

Paul: I refer to the DNR contractors as “artists with backhoes.” There are many aspects of this work that are very subtle. Some examples would be visualizing the stream during high water events—where will the energy be spread out? How can we use flood energy to scour out pools? How to manage farm field runoff? The “artist’s eye” will break up long straight stretches with some gentle curves. Natural logs are used to cover fish cribs or lunker structures rather than squared-off face rock. There is a mix of sun and shade—some trees are in groves, some alone.

OBTU: How would you describe each phase? When do see your work completed?

Paul: Phase 1 was 1,622 feet above the 24 Valley Road bridge; phase 2 was 1,693 feet below the bridge. The total project is planned at 9,627 feet. We are currently working on phase 3 which will continue into 2017. My involvement with Weister Creek will be ongoing once the actual stream restoration work concludes. As a new “adopted” stream, my wife and I as “river keepers” will have plenty of biotic diversity to monitor and maintain at Weister Creek.



Large rock is positioned to cover lunker structures along the new meandering stream (above) by DNR contractors who created this deep pool below an island feature (below).



Oak Brook TU Fundraising Campaign Raises \$6,675 To Date

Through the end of July, Oak Brook TU chapter members had raised \$6,675 toward its goal of \$15,000 for our planned conservation and youth education programs.

The mission of Oak Brook Trout Unlimited is to conserve, protect and restore coldwater fisheries and their watersheds in the Midwest. Oak Brook Trout Unlimited fulfills its mission through advocacy and education efforts regarding the impact of pollution and soil erosion on water-based ecosystems, and by engaging volunteers in hands-on projects to improve and rehabilitate coldwater river systems.

We must provide Chapter funding for these programs because there are no other outside sources of funding. National Trout Unlimited membership annual dues are not shared with our Chapter for funding our local conservation activities, youth programs and general operating expenses.

See the Weister Creek story in this issue's newsletter to see the kind of stream restoration work your donations support. Oak Brook TU contributed \$4,000 toward this project in 2016 and has committed \$4,000 to its 2017 phase 3.

Thank you very much for your volunteer and financial support of these past activities!

Seek Friends and Families Support

As the next phase of our 2016 fund raising campaign, board members are encouraging Oak Brook TU members to share its mission with friends and families as a broader outreach effort. Share our newsletter and new website with friends and families to better understand our signature youth education programs like Trout in the Classroom and Summer Youth Camp and conservation initiatives like Weister Creek.

Visit the website's "Donate" page to understand how you can help support our mission.



The Librarian's Corner

by Phil Young

The Fly Rodder's Guide to Carp

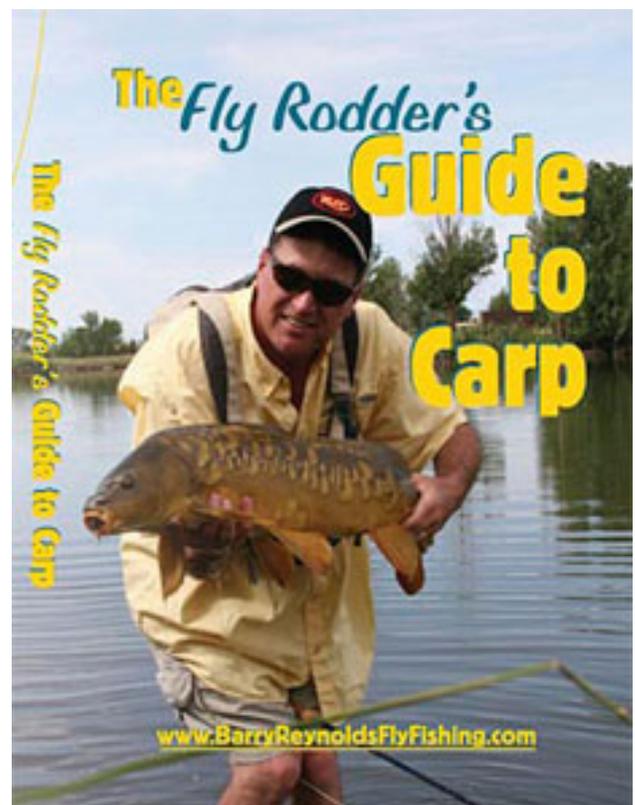
by Barry Reynolds (BT² Productions / 2006) 98m / DVD

Guilty pleasures. For the last few years, I have been indulging in some unseemly fly fishing activity in the creek at the rear of my lot. Fly fishing for common carp. All of the power of saltwater redfish no more than 200 feet from my back door.

In *The Fly Rodder's Guide to Carp*, Barry Reynolds asks the question, "Why not carp?" He then explains that these highly-intelligent selective feeders are great fighters that can live to 50 years and weigh up to 70 pounds. Also discussed are items in the carp diet (they are omnivores), flies to match that diet and ways to find feeding carp (tailers and cloopers) in still and moving water. This is a great video if you are interested in something different.

Whoa! I have to go now. There is a mulberry hatch going on over my creek.

This DVD, as well as others in the chapter's library, are available for check out at chapter meetings. If you are holding any of the chapter's other videos, please return them when you are finished so that others may view them.



June Coldwater River Macroinvertebrate Study Completed

The Oak Brook TU chapter held the first of two 2016 macroinvertebrate study days on the Coldwater River near Alto, Michigan on Saturday, June 11. The outing featured 17 volunteers, including five students from the Riverside Brookfield High School (RBHS) TU Teen Club. This year's study marked the third year of spring and fall studies on the Coldwater River watershed.

By definition, macroinvertebrates are organisms without backbones, which are visible to the eye without the aid of a microscope. Aquatic macroinvertebrates live on, under, and around rocks and sediment on the bottoms of lakes, rivers, and streams.

Marv Strauch, a Coldwater River Watershed Council (CRWC) member, was the event organizer. After breakfast, members and students were divided into four teams. Each group was assigned sampling locations from the five sites that have been sampled twice a year for the previous two years. Team assignments were made, equipment (nets and buckets) distributed, and volunteers headed to the designated sample sites.

Once there, macroinvertebrate samples were collected from about 100 yards of stream bottom in about 30 minutes. Samples were collected in 10-gallon buckets for classification and counting later back at the camp site.

At the campsite, members began the process of classifying and counting the macroinvertebrates using shallow trays and ice cube holders. Reference books were used to help identify the collected aquatic insects and macroinvertebrates like crayfish and sculpins.

Collected specimens included stoneflies, mayflies, caddis, scuds, and blood worms. After classification, the bug types were counted and recorded. Results were reported to the CRWC for evaluation and tracking of stream health.

This is the third year of a three year study. Some macroinvertebrate types, such as stoneflies, require non-polluted conditions to thrive. Others, such as blood worms, are less sensitive to water cleanliness and survive in polluted water. By classifying and trending the populations of the different macroinvertebrate types and their sensitivities to pollution, the CRWC gets an idea of how stream health is evolving.

And it's fun. After the counting was done, Stan Zarnowiecki grilled brats for lunch. Later in the afternoon, participants went fishing or headed home.

Our next Coldwater River study is scheduled for Saturday, October 8, 2016 at the same location. The October survey will end the three-year program. However, the Conservation Committee is expecting to initiate a new three-year study with potentially new sampling locations in 2017.



Oak Brook TU members sort and classify macroinvertebrate specimens from the Coldwater River watershed.

Please contact the following board member regarding volunteer activities or other questions

Rick Ralph	President	Officer	r.ralph1@comcast.net	630.939.2643
Dave Moore	Vice President	Officer	bpdave56@alum.lehigh.edu	630.881.4047
Dave Lunardini	Treasurer	Officer	djl22@attnet	630.939.3471
Carol Hennessy	Secretary	Officer	clhennessy@earthlink.net	815.341.6010
Willie Beshire	Director		wbeshire@aol.com	630.200.2532
Steve Carlson	Director		s_carlson@msn.com	312.961.5970
Jim Schmiedeskamp	Director	Publicity/Communications	jimschmieds@gmail.com	312.375.6502
John Snyder	Director		frazier-tech@attglobal.net	630.977.9077
Marv Strauch	Director Emeritus	Youth Education	mjstrauchjr@gmail.com	708.638.1318
Joe Weisenberger	Director	Membership	flytie8@yahoo.com	630.390.9494
Dennis Wisnosky	Director		dennis@wisnosky.net	630.240.6910
Stan Zarnowiecki	Director	Ex Officio	shotawisky@yahoo.com	708.606.4148