

## Annual Rod Raffle and Holiday Party a Success!

Oak Brook Trout Unlimited would like to thank everyone who participated in our 2016 Rod Raffle and December 14 Holiday Party fund-raising activities.

And an additional thank you for your financial support via monthly chapter raffles and other fund-raising programs throughout the past year!

### Rod Raffle Mailing Program Netted \$4,229

We had 82 participants in the Rod Raffle which netted \$1,384 after expenses plus another \$2,845 in "directed" donations which compares with \$844 net revenue and \$1,310 for the 2015 raffle program. The 2016 total of \$4,229 compares with \$2,154 for the 2015 combined programs and \$1,913 in 2014 when we had just the rod raffle. "Directed donations" were donations made specifically to either conservation programs, youth education, 2017 Illinois TU Youth Camp or endowment fund.

We would like to recognize all **Rod Raffle/ Directed Contribution participants** through the list which can be downloaded from the email linked to this newsletter.

Special thanks to the Orvis Yorktown store for their donation of the first and second prizes. Third prizes were purchased by the Oak Brook TU chapter.

Our Orvis prize winners were:

**First Prize:** Jim White of Oak Park, IL—winner of the Orvis Recon rod and Hydros reel outfit.

**Second Prize:** David Stuckel of Peoria, IL—winner of the Orvis Carry-It-All case and Safe Passage sling pack.

**Third Prize:** 10 OBTU members won \$25 Orvis gift cards redeemable at the store, or for phone or website orders.



Jim White of Oak Park—with Orvis Yorktown store manager Glenn Martenson—is the first prize winner of a Recon rod and Hydros reel outfit. (Left photo). David Stuckel of Peoria is the proud winner of the second prize—an Orvis Carry-It-All and Sling Pak.

### Holiday Party at D.O.C. Wine Bar Draws Crowd and Delivers Record Funds

Our Holiday Party at the D.O.C. Wine Bar in Lombard drew 53 members and guests for the second year in a row compared to 27 attendees at the Rock Bottom Brewery in 2014. The Holiday Party which included a silent auction and bucket raffle netted \$4,649 after expenses compared to \$3,692 in 2015 and \$1,689 in 2014.

Special thanks to Steelhead Vineyards of Sonoma Valley—a Trout Unlimited sponsor—who donated a case of wine for our silent auction and wine for three wine basket bucket raffles plus donations from other "valued sponsors" Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's.

Also appreciated are donations of guide trips from the following guides:

- **Dowagiac River**—Jay Anglin of Anglin Outdoors.
- **Driftless Area**—Rich Osthoff.
- **Kankakee River**—Will Winans of Big River Fly Fishing.
- **Muskegon River**—Kevin Feenstra of Feenstra Guide Service.
- **Pere Marquette River**—Pere Marquette River Lodge.

Please support these guides as you make your 2017 fishing plans. For a list of other OBTU "business partners" and donors to the Holiday Party and monthly raffles, please see our website "Business Partners" page in the "About Us" section.

Your donations to our annual rod raffle and holiday party event help fund our Chapter's general operating expenses for the year for monthly meetings, speakers, and various conservation activities.



## 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.

#### January 18, Wednesday Membership Meeting, 7 p.m.

Oak Brook Recreation Center, Central Park West Building

**Speaker:** Guide **Will Winans** of Big River Fly Fishing on "Kankakee River Smallmouth Fishing"  
Plus Annual Board Elections

#### February 8, Wednesday Board of Directors Meeting

7:00 p.m.

#### February 15, Wednesday Membership Meeting, 7:00 p.m.

Oak Brook Recreation Center, Central Park West Building

**Speaker:** Guide **Jay Allen** on "Seasons of the Muskegon River and Current Conservation Efforts"

#### February 25, Saturday Youth Fly Fishing Classes "Train the Trainer"

10:00 a.m. - 12:00 noon  
Camp Sagawau  
12545 11th Street, Lemont, IL

#### March 8, Wednesday Board of Directors Meeting

7:00 p.m.

#### March 15, Wednesday Membership Meeting, 7:00 p.m.

Oak Brook Recreation Center, Central Park West Building

Speaker: TBD

#### April 12, Wednesday Board of Directors Meeting

7:00 p.m.

#### April 19, Wednesday Membership Meeting, 7:00 p.m.

Oak Brook Recreation Center, Central Park West Building

## All Things OBTU

**Rick Ralph – President**

Happy New Year! Good news – the days are actually getting longer after the winter solstice as we look forward to Spring!

First, I am very grateful to all members who supported the chapter operating expense budget by donating through the annual Rod Raffle and participated in the Holiday Party.

How did we do? For the Rod Raffle, when you include the additional donations that members sent in with the tickets, we met our \$4,000 revenue goal! For the Holiday Party, we also achieved our \$4,000 revenue goal!

This means that the board of directors can focus on delivering fun, organized, and valuable experiences for you rather than trying to figure out how to pay the bills.

The Leadership Development and Nominating Committee will present a slate of directors for the election at our January 18 membership meeting. Nominations from the floor are also accepted for directors and officers. It's important that as many members as possible attend the January meeting for the election. Next up, the board will decide on a long-term fundraising strategy.

Snow on the ground and the frozen creeks provide you the chance to begin to think about the coming year. As you plan your 2017, decide to take advantage of what the chapter offers: conservation projects; youth education programs; connecting with our members socially and through fishing trips; connecting with our community; and sustaining our chapter through fundraising, training, and leadership opportunities.

Here is a partial list of fun, rewarding opportunities that we offer: June and October macroinvertebrate studies on the Coldwater River watershed in Michigan; stream bank improvement work days in Wisconsin's Driftless Area; Trout in the Classroom release days in May; Youth Fly Fishing classes on Saturdays May through September; fundraising for conservation; membership fly fishing trips; fly rod casting instruction at Orvis Fly Fishing 101/201 classes this Spring and Summer; and social, entertaining, and educational monthly membership meetings. Watch for details in our emails, newsletter, Facebook page, and our fine website, [www.obtu.org](http://www.obtu.org).

With the elections in January, I am stepping down from the role of chapter president after my one-year term. Special thanks to Steve Carlson and Joe Weisenberger who are also leaving the board in January. I ask that you support our future board as well as you've supported us this year. This year we created a forward-thinking chapter strategic plan, started up an exciting conservation and education fundraising effort, and increased member engagement in our various offerings. It's been a pleasure to serve you this year.

Tight lines,  
**Rick Ralph**

## Winter Fly Tying Classes and Outdoors/Fishing Shows

January kicks off the New Year with a slate of free fly tying classes at the Orvis Yorktown store, the Annual Chicagoland Fishing, Travel and Outdoor Expo at the Schaumburg Convention Center, and a Fishing/Outdoor show in Tinley Park.

### Free Orvis Fly Tying Classes Scheduled for January and February

The Orvis Yorktown store will offer free "Fly Tying 101" two-hour classes featuring fly tying basics on Saturday mornings over six weeks. Participants will be provided with fly tying equipment and all materials at no cost. The 9-11 a.m. Saturday classes are scheduled every Saturday from January 21 through February 25. Stop by the Orvis Yorktown store, visit their website or call 630-932-6573 to reserve a spot. Spaces are limited.

### Annual Chicagoland Fishing, Travel and Outdoor Show, January 26-29 in Schaumburg

Whether looking to improve your fishing knowledge through seminars with top-notch local and national fishing professionals, buy the newest equipment, book a trip of a lifetime, or buy a new fishing boat, it's all available January 26-29, 2017 at the Schaumburg Convention Center. Featuring over 100 travel-related exhibitors (including guides, lodges, resorts and regional promotion agencies), most of the major fishing tackle manufacturers, local fishing retailers, and almost 100 fishing boats, you can see it, learn about it, touch it, and buy it at "The Sportfishing Spectacular" in Schaumburg. Covering all species through most techniques, fly fishing to conventional, you can attend seminars with expert instructors and nationally recognized pro fishing celebrities, learn to fly cast, and talk with some of the best guides and outfitters from around the globe. Admission is \$12.00 for adults and \$3.00 for children 5-11.

Show dates and times are:

- Thursday, January 26, 12 noon to 8 p.m.
- Friday, January 27, 12 noon to 8 p.m.
- Saturday, January 28, 10 a.m. to 7 p.m.
- Sunday, January 29, 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

### Tinley Park Fishing and Outdoor Show, February 11-12

Over the past 24 years, the Tinley Park Fishing and Outdoor Show has grown to be one of the best outdoor shows in the Midwest. Hours 9:00 a.m. to 5 p.m. Admission: \$6 Adults; \$5 Seniors; \$4 Kids 7-13; Kids 6 and under free. For more information including seminar schedule and exhibitors, visit the Tinley Park Fishing Show website. Location: Tinley Park High School, 6111 175th St, Tinley Park, IL.

## January 18 Speaker: Will Winans to Speak on “Kankakee Smallmouth Fly Fishing”

Captain Will Winans—who owns and runs Big River Fly Fishing, a guide service centered on smallmouth bass angling the rivers of northern Illinois near Chicago—will be our featured speaker at the January 18 membership meeting at 7 p.m. at the Oak Brook Recreation Center Central Park West Building.

Just over an hour's drive from Chicago, through the cornfields of Illinois, runs a particularly scenic and well-preserved stretch of the Kankakee River. Will Winans of Big River Fly Fishing specializes in drift boat trips through this productive smallmouth bass fishery. Of the nearly 20 miles that Will guides, 11 are largely undeveloped, passing through the Kankakee River State Park.

Visit the Big River Fly Fishing website for more information on Will Winan's guide service.



## February 18 Speaker: Jay Allen will speak on “Seasons of the Muskegon River and Current Conservation Efforts”

Jay Allen is a resident of Newago, Michigan where he guides anglers on the Muskegon River for steelhead, salmon and trout year round for River Quest Charters. Jay will be our featured speaker at the February 18 membership meeting at 7 p.m. at the Oak Brook Recreation Center Central Park West Building.

Jay has fly fished for over 25 years and guided for 14 years. Guiding in the eastern and western parts of the United States has given Jay diverse knowledge and experiences which contribute to his unique perspectives on fly fishing. Jay managed a fly fishing program at a guest ranch in Jackson Hole, Wyoming – a role which contributes to his providing an exceptional fly fishing experience. Jay's passion for entomology is particularly evident in his understanding of the intricacies of nymph fishing.

In addition to his discussion of Muskegon River fly fishing, Jay will also provide an update on chumming, recent fall salmon spawning runs and other fishing-related conservation issues affecting the river.



## President Rick Ralph Completes Successful OBTU Transition Year

By Jim Schmiedeskamp, FLYER Editor

Rick Ralph joined Oak Brook TU board in 2014 and served on the Conservation Committee. In 2015, Rick became Conservation Committee Chair and was elected Vice President. He was elected as OBTU's 16th President for the 2016 year.

The following interview recaps Rick's perspective on an important transition year for Chicago's largest Trout Unlimited chapter with over 900 members in the western and south suburbs plus almost 300 members downstate.

**FLYER: What is the reason for not running for a second year as OBTU President?**

**RR:** In 2017 my wife and I will fulfill a long-held dream of moving to the Colorado mountains. I will not be in the area year-round to effectively lead the chapter in 2017. My single-year term was understood by the board of directors at the time of nomination.

**FLYER: What was your motivation for becoming OBTU President in 2016?**

**RR:** I wanted to better focus the board of directors on those key activities that support our mission, to conserve, protect, and restore North America's coldwater fisheries and their watersheds. I wanted to get the board focused on our strategic plan, create sustainable fundraising that supports our conservation program, and to increase members' engagement in what we do.

**FLYER: What were the Board's most important accomplishments in 2016?**

**RR:** With John Snyder's leadership we created a sustainable fundraising campaign for conservation and education. This was very crucial to our mission. One effective campaign completed in the second quarter allowed the board and members to focus on other important matters the rest of the year and allowed us to plan credible conservation and education programs for 2017. Also, the board functioned as a team to be more welcoming. Jim Schmiedeskamp lead the creation of a great website that provides members with helpful information, Willie Beshire organized really compelling monthly meeting programs, and directors provided welcoming invitations to our events through email, and our events were fun, organized, and valuable. We also continued to deliver an excellent youth

education program lead by Marvin Strauch with Trout-in-the-Classroom supported by 10 area schools and five monthly youth fly fishing classes. Lastly, our board identified future leaders of the chapter and nominated several of those people to serve as directors and officers. An important measure of success is how the organization functions after a leader's departure. I feel confident about our future leadership.

**FLYER: Which one accomplishment in particular was most satisfying to you personally?**

**RR:** The most satisfying accomplishment was to increase membership engagement because the role of the board is to serve chapter members. To a large extent members vote on each event that we hold by their presence and they vote on our alignment with their values with their dollars. Increased participation both personally and monetarily indicated to me that we have done better in serving our members.

**FLYER: What do you see as the important challenges short-term and long-term for Oak Brook TU?**

**RR:** In the short term there is still a lot of opportunity to better engage our members. Our strategic plan contains an objective to have active committees that consist of members led by the board chairperson. The result will be better, more robust programs. This objective is not yet fulfilled. A long-term issue is engagement with the larger community. Marinette County in Wisconsin has six hundred miles of trout streams. Everyone either uses these streams or has a neighbor who does. The connection of coldwater conservation with the community is very high. In contrast our area has no trout streams. To many people in our community, the concept of what we do is a bit foreign. The challenge is to form relationships, communicate our interest in a way that appeals to groups in the community, then partner in meaningful ways.

**FLYER: What are your future plans and will you remain a member of Oak Brook TU?**

**RR:** I'm going to continue to live in the area when I'm not in Colorado. I'll continue to serve on the chapter board in the position of ex-officio director for the next year. During that time I expect to support the next president and board. I'll continue my TU membership and investigate service opportunities with TU and Boy Scouts of America out west.

## Youth Fly Fishing Class Instructors Needed

By Marvin Strauch

We are now entering the 13th year of Youth Fly Fishing programs for Oak Brook Chapter Trout Unlimited. This has been a highly successful program for the chapter, allowing us to pass on our love for the sport of fly fishing, along with the conservation message of Trout Unlimited to hundreds of area young people. As you can guess, the success of the program relies on our volunteers each year. We have a great crew, but are always in need of additional volunteers!

The Youth Fly Fishing program is conducted one Saturday per month from May through September. The program is available to boys and girls 11 through 18 years old— is free of charge. Successful completion of the class meets all the requirements of the Boy Scouts of America Fly Fishing Merit Badge. We limit the class to 15 young people, and typically have a staff of 10 OBTU volunteers per class.

Our volunteer needs are twofold:

**Presenters** – members willing to present one of the class sections on basic fly tackle and flies; knots; fly tying; fly rod casting; outdoor safety; fishing regulations and etiquette; conservation and the message of Trout Unlimited.

**Mentors** – members willing to help the young people as they tie knots, tie flies, learn to cast, and fish.

We welcome new volunteers, especially those relatively new to fly fishing to be part of this program. Don't worry about your skill level; we can help you brush up on your nail knot, or roll cast. What we need is an enthusiastic staff of volunteers willing to help newcomers to fly fishing.

Each year, we conduct a "Train the Trainers" Day near the end of winter. The program allows us to:

- Present an overview of the program to any new volunteers.
- Discuss any particular skills needed for the program sections.
- Review the previous year's program with an eye towards any improvements that can be made

This year, we will conduct the Train the Trainers Day on:

Saturday, February 25th  
10:00 a.m. – 12:00 noon  
Camp Sagawau  
12545 11th Street  
Lemont, IL (Near the intersection of Kingery Highway and Archer Avenue)

Whether you are new to TU and interested in finding out more about the Youth Education program, or a seasoned veteran, please contact Marvin Strauch and sign up for the Train the Trainer day.

Marvin Strauch  
Youth Education Chair  
Oak Brook Chapter Trout Unlimited  
708-638-1318  
mjstrauchjr@gmail.com

## TU IL Youth Camp Announced: July 23-28, 2017

The tenth edition of the Illinois Council of Trout Unlimited Youth Conservation and Fly Fishing camp is scheduled July 23-28, 2017 at the RAM Conference Center in Roscommon, Michigan.

The 2017 camp mission is to develop the next generation of coldwater conservation advocates while also providing a rigorous introduction to the sport of fly fishing on the famed Au Sable River in Michigan. An experienced Trout Unlimited mentor team will instruct and guide 13- to 18-year-old participants through primetime morning and evening fishing sessions to help them develop a range of fly fishing related skills. In addition, an abundance of "hands on" active learning opportunities will be conducted during the mid-day periods to explore the geology, biology, conservation initiatives, and history of the Au Sable watershed.

The camp is designed to be an intense experience that makes a significant impact on youth," said Willie Beshire, Oak Brook Trout Unlimited board member and camp director. "Campers will learn more about conservation and fly fishing in a week than most of us learn in a lifetime. It is an enjoyable and educational experience."

The camp mentors and instructors will be comprised of Trout Unlimited members from Illinois, along with biologists from the Michigan Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Michigan State University, Western Michigan University and a private cold water conservation company.

The camp cost includes round-trip transportation from Chicago, lodging, meals and all required fishing and wading equipment. The tuition fee is \$575 (comprised of a \$75 deposit at the time of application plus a \$500 remaining balance due one month before camp). Sponsorship is available for campers with financial need.

For more information, including an application please visit the Oak Brook Trout Unlimited website ([obtu.org](http://obtu.org)), or contact Willie Beshire, Illinois Council of Trout Unlimited Youth Camp Director ([wbeshire@aol.com](mailto:wbeshire@aol.com); 630-200-2532).



## Notice of 2017 OBTU Annual Meeting

The Annual Meeting of the general membership of the Oak Brook Chapter of Trout Unlimited shall be called to order at 7:00 p.m. on Wednesday, January 18, 2017 at:

Oak Brook Park District  
Central Park West  
1500 Forest Gate Road  
Oak Brook, IL 60523

The meeting shall be called to order for the purpose of Electing two Directors to serve full terms of three (3) years.

The Leadership Development and Nominating Committee has nominated the following members to serve a full term of three (3) years as Directors:

Nominee: Dave Carlson  
Nominee: Ken Krueger

Further nominations may be made from the floor. Each member present shall be entitled to cast two (2) votes for the member's choice of full-term Directors. The two nominees for full-term Directorships receiving the most votes shall be elected.

The Leadership Development and Nominating Committee has nominated the following members to serve a term of one year in the offices as indicated:

**President** – Dave Lunardini  
**Vice President** – Willie Beshire  
**Secretary** – Carol Hennessy  
**Treasurer** – Jack Potts

Further nominations may be made from the floor by OBTU members as so provided in the Bylaws.

## The Librarian's Corner

by Phil Young

### Bugs for Beginners – An Introduction to Entomology for Fly Fishers with Jay Buchner

(Cascade Media Works / 2004) 60m / DVD

I will admit that I am not an entomologist and that I have some difficulty identifying some of the insects at the OBTU stream monitoring sites. But after watching this video, I now know what to look for when identifying these macroinvertebrates.

Jay Buchner starts with a kick net and collects stream bugs. He then proceeds to identify the various characteristics and underwater environments of stoneflies, caddisflies, Mayflies, damselflies, dragonflies and scuds using underwater photography, live specimens in water filled trays and preserved specimens. Side by side displays of the fishing flies we all use next to the real insects may change your way of tying some of these flies. If you have felt intimidated by your lack of entomological knowledge, watch this DVD and then join us at the Michigan stream monitoring sites next spring. You will be glad you did.

### Tying Streamers with A. K. Best

(Video Ventures) 100m / DVD

A. K. Best ties six of his "survival kit" streamers (Black Nose Dace, Mickey Finn, Spruce Fly, Muddler, Matuka and Woolly Bugger) and asks you to try them when nothing else seems to work. There are tying tips, materials and methods used in this DVD that you may not have considered and which will make you a better fly tier. Plus, these flies are also good for bass fishing.

These DVDs, 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.

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

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

## 2016 Holiday Party Photo Gallery



The D.O.C. Wine Bar was the setting for the second consecutive annual Holiday Party.



OBTU President Rick Ralph explains to Ed Michael's wife Lin why board meetings run late sometimes.



Joe Vitti's wife Susan suggests which silent auction item to bid on next.



Nominated Board Director Ken Krueger was kept busy selling bucket raffle tickets.



Dry Fly Distilling of Spokane, WA, a TU sponsor, donated a collection of their fine spirits.



Treasurer David Lunardini is all smiles knowing this is his last Holiday Party keeping track of the cash!



Marty Durkin (left), Frank Harford and his wife Toni enjoy the wine and food pairings.



Board Director Jim Schmiedeskamp (left) and Jack Potts discuss fishing the Pere Marquette River.



Director Emeritus Ed Michael is stuffing the Dry Fly whiskey bucket raffle for some reason.



Rick Ralph announces bucket raffle winners with help from Tom Wilhelm



Joe Vitti won the Directors Wine Basket.



Neels de Coning, OBUTU Flyer newsletter graphic designer, tries to win a Wheatley box of flies.