



## President's Letter

Welcome to our summer, 2021 Edition of the "Flyer". OBTU has a lot of great news to report. OBTU conservation work days are taking place, youth fly fishing classes are underway, Trout-on-Tap and Breakfast Club events are being well attended, "meet up and cast" sessions are happening and we are looking forward to our upcoming chapter "grand reopening" meeting at the Oak Brook Park District on Sept. 15. We have had a strong response to our planned Driftless Area fall fishing outings to Wisconsin in September, and to Iowa in October. While Zoom has served us well, it is great to be reuniting in person with OBTU colleagues. (However, the recent surge of new cases forces us to maintain contingency plans.)

OBTU's Spring Fundraising campaign has exceeded expectations resulting in the most funds raised by the Spring Campaign since its beginning several years ago. We set new chapter records for the total amount contributed as well as the number of people making contributions. Thanks for your contributions which enable us to continue pursuit of TU's conservation mission in our home region. The chapter could not continue the good work without your generosity.

If you are looking to get more involved, I encourage everyone to visit OBTU's calendar on the [obtu.org](http://obtu.org) web site: [Link to OBTU Calendar](#) The calendar is the easiest way to access the schedule of chapter events, become informed of event details, or contact the event organizer to register. Make sure you click on the event to "drill down" to significant details that are often available.

Read all about OBTU news in the summer edition of "The Flyer" below. I hope to see everyone at an OBTU event soon. Don't hesitate to contact me or any of the OBTU Board members with your questions or comments.

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Oak Brook Trout Unlimited  
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## "The Flyer" 2021 Summer Edition

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## 1. Conservation Report

OBTU Conservation efforts are back in full swing in 2021! So far this year we have conducted the Spring DuPage River Cleanup, Spring Coldwater Macroinvertebrate Survey, Karcher Creek Workday, and were represented at the Bluff Creek Workday. In addition, progress continues on Conway Creek and other projects in the Wisconsin Driftless Area for which we have provided financial support.

### Spring DuPage River Cleanup



The Spring 2021 DuPage River Cleanup Day, Saturday, May 1, was a rousing success, with thirteen hard-working volunteers taking part. The weather turned out great and an amazing amount of trash was picked up. Unusual items collected included a folding camp chair, computer, carpet remnant, metal chair frame, and 50 feet of fire hose.

**Make sure to mark your calendar for the Fall Cleanup, scheduled for Saturday, October 23.**

*Participants of the Spring 2021 DuPage River Cleanup – Pictured standing from left to right: Stan Zarnowiecki, Ken Krueger, Jim Hohenberger, Phil Young, Willie Beshire, Dale MacDonald, John Martyn, Ed Michael, Dennis Wisnosky and Steve Carlson. Front row kneeling: Dan Lafave and Carol Hennessy. (The photographer, Dave Carlson, is not shown.)*

### Adopt-A-Stream Sign

DuPage River Cleanup Days are part of the DuPage County Adopt-A-Stream program, which was created to support the maintenance and restoration of local streams. Groups are asked to make a two-year commitment to their designated section of stream and engage in a minimum of two stream cleanups each year. DuPage County recognizes groups for fulfilling requirements of the program by furnishing and posting signs with the organization's name along their adopted stream section.

OBTU began participating in the DuPage County Adopt-A-Stream program in 2019, with spring and fall cleanup days held on our adopted stretch of West Branch of the DuPage River south of downtown Naperville, IL. After completing two years of cleanups, we became eligible for an official Adopt-A-Stream sign. Our sign was installed this spring, on Hobson Road, east of Washington Street by the bridge that crosses the West Branch.



**Coldwater River**

Turnout for the May Coldwater River Spring Macroinvertebrate Survey was great! Sixteen volunteers collected stream samples from our five designated sites in the Coldwater watershed. This marked OBTU's 8th year of conducting macroinvertebrate surveys. Many participants took the opportunity to extend their stay and get some fishing in. While water levels were low and trout fishing a little slow, several members reported some thrilling steelhead action on nearby rivers. The Fall Macroinvertebrate Survey is scheduled for Saturday, October 6. This should be a good time to try your luck for salmon on larger rivers, such as the Muskegon.



*Participants of the Spring 2021 Coldwater Macro Survey*



*Aquatic Insect Capture at former Freeport Dam Site*



*Macro Invertebrate Identification & Logging*



*Almost Stepped on at Freeport Site!*



*Chef Zarnowiecki was superb!*



*No Fish Stories here----Jim has pictures!*

## Two Joint Workdays with South East Wisconsin TU

The Southeast Wisconsin TU Chapter (SEWTU) generously invited OBTU to join them for two recent workdays: **Bluff Creek on June 10 and Karcher Creek on July 10**. SEWTU has a proud heritage of frequently conducting hands on stream improvement workdays on nearby streams in their area. We are excited to grow our relationship with SEWTU and look forward to working together more in the future! They are a friendly group and we encourage members to attend future work days.

### Karcher Creek

Karcher Creek, is located in southwest Racine County, south of Burlington, WI. and is less than a 1.5 hour drive from Oak Brook. Seven OBTU members participated in the workday, which ran from 9:00am to noon on Saturday, July 10, followed by a traditional brat fry lunch. Karcher Creek is in the Karcher Springs State Natural Area, located at the southern end of SEWTU's area, close to Illinois.

This was the first workday that SEWTU had done on Karcher Creek. Some brushing work had already been done by the DNR but there was still plenty to do. Work consisted mainly of cutting down buckthorn with a chainsaw and dragging the branches away from the stream corridor. Also, loppers were used to cut numerous other invasive species. There were enough volunteers to split up into three groups, each with a person geared up for chainsaw cutting.

Karcher Springs State Natural Area is owned by the Wisconsin DNR and was designated a State Natural Area in 1972. The springs originate on the east side of a wooded esker and feature a complex of springs, calcareous fen, and stream. The stream is small, but fast and undisturbed in its upper reaches. The DNR has been stocking the creek with fingerling brook trout for several years and is finding some 6-to-8-inch carryover fish in surveys.



*Karcher Creek Workday Team. (Two Wisconsin DNR staff members who helped with the project are not shown.)*



*Most of the work was sawing & pulling invasive buckthorn trees. Dave Carlson, OBTU VP, prepares to drag away the buckthorn.*



*Karcher Creek  
(Water temperature = 56 degrees on July 10)*



*Crews clearing invasive growth on both sides of Karcher Creek. (The creek is hidden from view by the heavy foliage.) Dale MacDonald, OBTU Board member, is shown in blue long sleeves on the far side of Karcher Creek assisting a crew.*

### **Bluff Creek Workday**

Bluff creek is a spring fed, coldwater trout stream in SE Wisconsin. The June 10 project consisted of placing "biologs" along a bank of the creek in its upper stretch. This is a slow flowing stretch, with a lot of sand and silt deposition. The biologs narrow the stream, creating a deeper, swifter flow.

We thank Marvin Strauch, OBTU Education Chair, for representing OBTU at a June 10 workday conducted by SEWTU on Bluff Creek near Whitewater, Wisconsin. Due to conflicts of other members, Marvin braved Bluff Creek as the lone OBTU member participating. A fine demonstration of commitment-- well done Marvin! Marvin shamed us into a much better OBTU turnout on the July 10 Karcher Creek workday described above!

### Conway Creek Update

The contractor hired to do the main restoration began work in June. Bank stabilization and habitat improvement (weirs, embedded root wads, and mid-stream boulders) is expected to be completed this summer.

OBTU is serving as a sponsor and funding leader of this project. We were awarded an \$8,000 Embrace A Stream grant from TU National for the project. With help from the local Coulee Region chapter, OBTU raised a matching contribution of \$8,000 and, this year, presented a check to TUDARE for a total of \$16,000. The total cost of the project is expected to be over \$80,000, about half of which will be covered by USDA Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS) funding. Other organizations providing financial support include Bass Pro Shops and Cabela's, Blackhawk TU, Crawford County, and Elliott Donnelley TU.



*Shown from left to right: Dave Carlson (OBTU), Mark Kowaliw (Coulee TU), John Snyder (OBTU), and Paul Krahn (TUDARE)*

### Volunteers Wanted

If you would like more information on any of the 2021 projects or are interested in volunteering, please contact Dave Carlson at [dmcarlson@hotmail.com](mailto:dmcarlson@hotmail.com).

## 2. Education Update

### Youth Fly Fishing Update

After 17 years of hosting Youth Fly Fishing Classes designed to meet the (BSA) Fly Fishing Merit Badge requirements, OBTU was forced to shut down in 2020 due to Covid 19 disappointing countless scouts and youth. In response to Covid-19, OBTU re-tooled its youth fly fishing classes using “Zoom” media, not ideal, but necessary to keep things rolling.

The “Zoom” sessions conducted this past winter, 2021, included many aspects of the program (fly tackle, outdoor code, safety, etc.) that could be accomplished on-line. A hybrid program was devised to complete remaining aspects of the program requiring in-person instruction (fly tying, casting, fishing, etc.) Classes which began with “Zoom” sessions in the winter, 2021, are being concluded with outdoor, in-person sessions in June and July of 2021.



*Troop 50 from Villa Grove, Illinois with OBTU Volunteers: Stan Zarnowiecki, Dave Lunardini, Ken Kruger and Mike Lesiak on June 12, 2021. Hot day, but the kids caught many fish and practiced safe catch and release techniques concluding a successful hybrid youth fly fishing class.*

OBTU has returned to “full” day sessions as in the past years with a successful, August 7<sup>th</sup> session. The next session will be on September 11th, 2021.

**Contact: Mike Lesiak, Youth Fly Fishing Class Coordinator, for details on how you can serve as a mentor in this program.**



## 2. Education Update-continued

### Trout in the Classroom Update

OBTU's Trout in the Classroom (TIC) program will return with our 15 participating schools once again raising trout from eggs to fingerlings before release at the end of the schoolyear. This is a program that requires quite a few volunteers over the course of the schoolyear; to deliver the eggs in the fall, participate in a classroom entomology program, and finally for the trout release field trips in the spring. Please contact Marvin Strauch if you are interested in volunteering to assist with the TIC program.

### STREAM Girls Update

In the coming year, OBTU will begin a new program in Illinois. STREAM Girls is a cooperative program between Trout Unlimited and the Girl Scouts of the USA. There are successful programs in Michigan, Pennsylvania, Colorado and other states. We have spent the last year developing local cooperation with Girl Scouts of Northern Illinois. STREAM Girls uses investigation of a stream as a vehicle to further STEM education (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics) along with Reading and Art. Over the course of multiple sessions, Trout Unlimited volunteers lead the Girl Scouts in observing a stream, collecting flow data, sampling macroinvertebrates (aka aquatic bugs), fly tying, and fly casting. Each day also gives the girls time to intimately explore their natural surroundings and record their thoughts, feelings, and observations in their handbooks.



**STREAM Girls Patch**  
(Awarded for Program Completion)

STREAM Girls is a great opportunity for OBTU to broaden our outreach, and we hope that will ultimately draw new members to Trout Unlimited. I also hope that our adult female members will be interested in volunteering to help in the program as mentors, and presenters.

Link to National TU web site:

[Stream Girls Overview Video \(3 minutes\)](#)

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So, we have exciting education programs returning to OBTU, and we hope that you want to join in. For more information, or to volunteer, please contact me.

Marvin Strauch  
Education Chair  
Oak Brook Chapter Trout Unlimited  
708-638-1318 [youthed@obtu.org](mailto:youthed@obtu.org)



### 3. Spring Fund Raising Results

#### OBTU Spring Fund Drive Exceeds Expectations:

The OBTU Board expresses its sincere gratitude to the membership for a record level of participation in the 2021 Spring Funding Campaign.

OBTU began conducting annual spring fundraising drives 6 years ago as a concentrated effort to raise funds earmarked directly for the chapter's conservation & education programs. We are pleased to report that the 2021 spring campaign significantly outperformed each of the previous years:

- Monetary donations slightly exceeded \$10,000 (a new OBTU record for this event).
- Just over 100 people have contributed (a significant increase in participation compared to past years)
- Contributions averaged \$100 per donor.



OBTU recognizes 101 contributors to our record setting 2021 Spring Fund Raising Campaign. Your generosity is much appreciated. Thank you.

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|----------------------|---------------------|-------------------------|---------------------|
| Clyde Alho           | James Hohenberger   | Kevin McLaughlin        | Paul Stinsa         |
| Richard Anderson, MD | Craig Holderness    | Lukus W McLeod          | Mark Stoll          |
| Brendan Banaszak     | James Hope          | Brian McPheters         | Marvin Strauch      |
| Wayne Bernahl        | Darryl Howe         | Jack Mensching          | Ernest Stryjak      |
| James Bernard        | Paavo Husen         | Ed Michael              | Gary Stuck          |
| Theodore Bernhard    | Robert Hutchinson   | Richard Moldenhauer     | Peter Sullivan      |
| William Beshire      | Don Jackson         | Fred Moore              | Jack Sulouff        |
| Walter Bird          | Chris Johnson       | Jim Nelson              | Philip Templeton    |
| David Carlson        | James Jones         | Novak/Sharp Family Fund | William Thoms       |
| Steve Carlson        | Dennis Kelly        | Richard Palese          | Richard Tworek      |
| James Colgan         | Walter Kinney       | Carl Peterson           | Phillip Uhl         |
| Ed Costin            | Daniel Klingberg    | Jack Potts              | Douglas Vanerka     |
| Alexa Cottrell       | Ronald Koziol       | Greg Prosen             | Lawrence Varsek     |
| Arthur Cottrell      | Dan Lafave          | The Pro Body Shop, Inc  | Joe Vitti           |
| Robert Davenport     | Michael Lahart      | David Rau               | Walter Wahlfeldt    |
| Danny Dickson        | Michael Lake        | Michael Ring            | C. Adrian Walker    |
| Janet Edman          | Scott Lawryn        | James Risk              | James Watts         |
| Robert Eisenhart     | Michael Lesiak      | Gary Rodvelt            | Charles Weyhenmeyer |
| James Fields         | David Lunardini     | Robert Rosenberg TTEE   | James White         |
| Keith Gabriel        | Dale MacDonald      | Mark Rutter             | Tom Wilhelm         |
| Charles Gartland     | Craig Manske        | Steve Schmidt           | Dennis Wisnosky     |
| Lisa Gilmore         | Steve Martin        | Angela Schrimpl         | David Wochner       |
| Keven Graham         | John Martyn         | Henry Sledz             | Ronnald Wright      |
| Kurt Hall            | Paul McCall         | John Snyder             | Mike Zamis          |
| Warren Hapke         | Scott McCormick III | Donald Soucek           | Frank Zbylski       |
| Carol Hennessy       |                     |                         |                     |

In case you have not yet contributed and feel left out, it is never too late. Click on the link to contribute now:

**[DONATE TO OBTU SPRING CAMPAIGN \(It's never too late\)](#)**

### 3. Spring Fund Raising Results-continued

**Other Contributions to OBTU.** In addition to the Spring Fund Raising Campaign above, OBTU has been the beneficiary of unsolicited contributions from members and friends. We thank the following contributors for taking the initiative to donate significant merchandise and funding to OBTU.

**1. Thank you to Vulcan Materials Corporation.** Vulcan Materials Company is the nation's largest producer of construction aggregates—primarily crushed stone, sand and gravel—and a major producer of aggregates-based construction materials, including asphalt and ready-mixed concrete. The company operates 25 aggregates production and distribution facilities in Illinois.

The Laraway Plant of Vulcan Materials Corporation (near Joliet) won a hotly contested competition based on conservation accomplishments of their plant. As a consequence, the local plant was authorized to donate \$1,000.00 of corporate funds to a “not for profit” conservation organization. Thank you to Mr. Stan Slusser and the Laraway plant team for selecting OBTU as the recipient of this donation. We also congratulate and thank the Laraway Plant for its conservation accomplishments.



**Vulcan**  
Materials Company



*Laraway Plant Team*

**2. Thank you to Joe Gardner, OBTU member from Taylorsville, IL (near Springfield).** Mr. Garner has donated a number of valuable items to OBTU. Look for these items in upcoming fund raising raffles, auctions, & merchandise sales:

- An Orvis Midge model Bamboo Fly Rod in excellent condition.
- A historic collection of books including
  - Swigert's Trout autographed by the author
  - Lefty Kreh's Library of Fly Fishing
- Numerous other titles from distinguished fly fishing authors
- A collection of fly tying materials and flies

**3. Thank you to Fred Hodge's Family (former OBTU stalwart).** With Fred's passing last year, his family has donated an extensive collection of fly fishing tackle and fly tying materials to OBTU.

**4. Thank you to Dr. Mike Youssi, OBTU member,** for his donation of camera and projection equipment to OBTU, a valuable rotary Nor-Vise, and a high quality collection of fly fishing books.

**5. Thank you to Bob Jonas, a TU member from Grayslake,** for his donation of a high quality collection of fly tying materials & tools.

**If your company donates to conservation causes (or matches employee contributions), OBTU would like to talk to you!**

**If you have a surplus of valuable fly fishing equipment, supplies, or books that you would like to donate to a good cause, OBTU would like to talk to you!**

**4. Upcoming Meeting Programs:** Depending on Covid-19 status, we hope to return to in-person meetings at the Oak Brook Recreation Center in fall, 2021.

**September 15: OBTU Grand Reopening Meeting with Brat Cookout**

**Location:** Oak Brook Park District, Central Park West Building (returning to our normal location)

**Speaker:** Matt Jennings, Gary Borger Chapter

**Topic: Overlooked Big Fish Near Home: Fishing the Southern Wisconsin Tributaries**

We're heading about an hour North of Chicago to chase some enormous potadromous salmonids. There really are some amazing opportunities available to chase stunning steelhead, beastly brown trout, and robust reel spinning salmon fresh out of Lake Michigan within an easy day trip. We'll be talking about these fisheries which compete favorably with many more famous and distant destinations. The beautiful fish in these nearby waters can be had with much less effort, time, planning, or money. Fishing nearby also means that we can maximize our efforts and reap the rewards by going when the conditions are perfect for catching trophy fish. We'll be drilling down on the newest techniques and changing conditions. Topics about timing the fish runs, locations for fishing, rigging for success, and even crowd avoidance, will be covered. This should be a timely talk as we all prepare for an outstanding Fall Season!



*Matt Jennings says:  
"Browns like this have been plentiful the last couple falls."*

**More on Matt Jennings:** Matt is an angler of over 35 years with a fly. Fishing the tributaries to the Great Lakes has been his passion for all of the 17 years since he was transplanted to the North-shore of Illinois from his home state of Texas. As an innovative fly tyer he is responsible for several regional fly patterns. Matt has stepped up and served many roles in local fly fishing organizations including President of the Gary Borger Chapter of TU. As a conservationist he has been a persistent advocate for a healthier management of the Great Lakes and surrounding waters. As a fly fishing writer and photographer his work has been included in several sources including Dun Magazine, and A Tight Loop Magazine.

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**Chapter Meeting Coming Attractions:**

**October 20: Michigan TU presents:** "TU Conservation - What's happening in Michigan?"

**November 17:** To Be Determined

**December 8: Holiday Party,** Arrowhead Golf Club, Wheaton

**January 19, 2022: Dustan Harley,** Proprietor of Ripple Guide Service, South Bend, IN.

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## 5. Upcoming OBTU Outings and Work Days:

**September 10-12: 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Chapter Fishing Outing to the Wisconsin Driftless Area.**

The trip is based at Nature Nooks Retreat on the West Fork of the Kickapoo River, Near Viroqua, Wisconsin. Nature Nooks Rooms are first come, first served.

Click for More Info: [Fall Fishing Wisconsin Driftless Area Outing Details](#)

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**October 9: Coldwater River Macro Invertebrate Survey & Fishing Weekend.**

Grand Rapids, Michigan area.

Click for More Info: [Coldwater River Weekend Outing Details](#)

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**October 15-17: 3<sup>rd</sup> Annual Chapter Fishing Outing to the Iowa Driftless Area.**

This trip will be based in Decorah, Iowa, with a variety of lodging options available.

Click for More Info: [Fall Fishing Iowa Driftless Area Outing Details](#)

This trip will be based in Decorah, Iowa, with a variety of lodging option available.

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**October 23: DuPage River Cleanup** on a Saturday Morning at Pioneer Park in Naperville

Click for More Info: [River Cleanup Outing Details](#)

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## 6. OBTU Volunteer Opportunities

There are a wide range of volunteer opportunities where you can assist on various Oak Brook Trout Unlimited committees. Please let any of the OBTU Board of Directors know if you would like to get more involved. You will find friendly people, rewarding work and an abundance of fishing buddies!

While there are many ways you can help, some of our higher priority volunteer needs at this time are highlighted:

**-Information Technology Team Members** to help with our web site (WordPress/Go-Daddy), email system (Constant Contact), and social media platforms (Facebook & Instagram).

**-Communications Team Members** to develop newsletters, announcements and other written communications, and keep our web site content up to date.

**-Programs and Events Committee Members** to periodically help with managing chapter meeting programs, social events, open houses, fishing outings, trade shows, and other events.

In addition, we welcome all members to participate in our very popular chapter activities including:

**-Conservation work days** such as river cleanups, stream rehabilitation work, and macroinvertebrate surveys.

**-Education programs** such as youth fly fishing classes, trout-in-the classroom events, adult fly tying classes, and the startup of OBTU's new Stream Girls program. OBTU also has a strong record of providing many adult mentors who serve the 6 day camp at the TU Illinois Council Conservation & Fly Fishing Youth Camp on Michigan's Au Sable River.

To discuss volunteer opportunities:

Contact: Willie Beshire, [wbeshire@aol.com](mailto:wbeshire@aol.com)

OR: Reach out to the appropriate program leader.



*Mike Lesiak & Steve Carlson mentor a fly tying Session at the August youth fly fishing class.*