



NEWS RELEASE

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Local Oak Brook Trout Unlimited Chapter Celebrates 50 Years

When Doug Vanerka hosted the inaugural meeting of Oak Brook Trout Unlimited (OBTU) at his home in 1973, a small band of founding members never envisioned the chapter would have 1450 members by 2023. Doug says: "It is remarkable how our not-for-profit, 100 percent volunteer, local TU chapter has prospered over the past 50 years!" Trout Unlimited focuses on cold water conservation and is dedicated to conserving, protecting and restoring North America's trout and salmon and their watersheds. Dave Carlson, OBTU President & Conservation Committee Chairman comments: "TU members are passionate about these habitats which often represent the most pristine sources of water in our environment. Where would we be without someone looking after our precious home waters? Oak Brook Trout Unlimited (OBTU) has a strong track record in supporting cold water conservation efforts in our upper Midwest region and conducting nationally acclaimed education programs reaching well over 1000 participants each year. Our lives are enriched by fellowship with our colleagues which is often combined with fishing for trout & other species that live in beautiful places." For more information about OBTU, please refer to our web site: www.obtu.org

Join Us to Celebrate OBTU's 50th Anniversary (Admission Free to Public)

OBTU invites the public to our celebration to take place at the Oak Brook Park District at 1500 Forest Gate Road, Oak Brook, IL on August 12 from 2:00 to 6:00pm. We offer everyone a good time while raising public awareness of Trout Unlimited's good work. Festivities include:

- Family Activities, Vendor Displays/Demos, and TU Information Displays (starting at 2:00pm).
- Entertainment by Jeff Troutman and the Parachute Adams Band (3:00pm).
- Key Note Address by Chris Wood, TU National President and CEO (4:00pm)
- Opportunity to mingle with Chris Wood and share fishing stories with OBTU members (till 6:00pm)
- Food and Refreshments

OBTU Wins Prestigious National Award

OBTU is pleased to announce that TU National is awarding the prestigious "Silver Trout" award to our chapter. Out of 386 TU chapters in North America, only 2 chapters are recognized with an annual award (The "Gold Trout" or "Silver Trout"). This award will be presented to OBTU at the TU National Annual meeting being held in Spokane, Washington in September this year. We are blessed to have a great chapter!

The criteria for OBTU's "Silver Trout" award include:

1. Conservation Impact
2. Communications
3. Member & Community Engagement
4. Fundraising
5. Volunteer Leadership Development



Oak Brook Chapter Trout Unlimited P.O. Box 5046 Oak Brook, IL 60522-5046 www.obtu.org

Marvin Strauch, Education Chairman and longtime OBTU leader sums up the award as follows: "While the award recognizes chapter performance over the past year, OBTU's ability to win this recognition is clearly a culmination of 50 years of contributions by a very long line of generous volunteers who have worked well together and have built our outstanding TU chapter. For instance, OBTU has had 19 dedicated volunteers serve as chapter president who have passed the torch from one to the next over the past 50 years."

More about Trout Unlimited (National)

Trout Unlimited is the nation's oldest and largest cold water conservation organization. Trout Unlimited currently has 386 local chapters in 35 states with 300,000 volunteer members. Members work to fulfill this cold-water conservation mission through their advocacy, fundraising, work on conservation projects on nearby cold-water streams and rivers, and providing extensive education services. There are four chapters with over 2400 members in Illinois. These four Illinois chapters are the Elliott Donnelley chapter (Chicago and nearby), the Oak Brook chapter (western and southern suburbs, and downstate), the Gary Borger chapter (northern suburbs), and the Lee Wulff chapter (northwestern Illinois). Trout Unlimited's national web site is: www.tu.org



Chris Wood, Trout Unlimited President and CEO (since 2009), will be travelling from TU's National Office in Arlington, Va. to speak at our 50th event. Wood, who started at TU over 20 years ago, has grown the organization into an internationally respected conservation powerhouse with an annual budget approaching \$100 million. Based on his conservation accomplishments, Chris was admitted into the fresh water fishing Hall of Fame in 2021.



OBTU has a special affinity for Brook Trout since it is native to the upper Midwest and Eastern parts of North America as well as being such a beautiful fish. Sadly, native Brook Trout populations have declined significantly in our region. Brook Trout restoration is one of many cold-water conservation issues where OBTU invests some of the chapter's time and conservation dollars.