

## **State Council Award: Georgia Council**

Recognizing that the southeast's growing population and ever encroaching development are creating a severe threat to coldwater resources, the Georgia Council has spent the last few years setting a strategic, well-built course for its home waters. Through the longtime leadership of Charlie and Kathy Breithaupt, the Georgia Council has raised the visibility and credibility of TU within the state. The Council has partnered with groups such as the Georgia Water Coalition, the state Department of Natural Resources and the U.S. Forest Service to accomplish specific objectives like the acquisition of a 469-acre tract containing over two miles of Amicalola Creek and operating one of TU's finest youth trout camps.

It's the old "golden rule," he who has the gold... rules. And Georgia rules. The council has worked hard in the last few years to creatively raise funds for its conservation efforts through innovative outlets such as the Dream Fly Fishing Trip Raffle -- raising \$59,000 through ticket sales alone. One of the goals of any successful council should include providing support to strengthen existing chapters, re-invigorating inactive chapters and creating new chapters to serve areas of the state not currently served by a chapter. The council added another chapter this past year, and some of the proceeds from the raffle went towards seed money to help the new Savannah River Chapter get on its feet.

The Georgia Back the Brookie Program is an excellent example of organizing and executing a successful volunteer program -- with more than 6,000 volunteer hours logged. The Georgia Back the Brookie program has received over \$72,440 in grants, as well as \$34,140 from Georgia TU chapters. Working with landowners, schools, agencies and lawmakers, this all volunteer council is working hard to make the peach state a haven for trout and anglers alike.

## **Gold Trout Award: Schrems West Michigan Chapter**

This past year has been extremely productive and busy for the volunteer leaders of the Schrems West Michigan Chapter, in and around Grand Rapids. Among many other accomplishments, the second largest TU chapter in Michigan has worked alongside staff to secure funding for Michigan's first Home Rivers Initiative. The chapter started working on this project focusing on the Rogue River in 2008, and they have spent the year developing the necessary tools for coldwater protection in an urbanizing environment.

The chapter also worked in 2010 to establish their fourth and fifth Salmon in the Classroom (SIC) programs and collaborated with the schools and the local media to feature the salmon releases on a local television news station.

Recognizing the need to be more pro-active in reaching out to their membership, chapter volunteers implemented a new web site design and electronic newsletter this year. These steps alone have saved the chapter roughly \$4,000 to date -- a savings that will, no doubt, be put right back into the water.

Through electrofishing surveys, volunteers discovered that the trout population along a particular stretch of the Coldwater River was only 40 fish per mile, while in other parts of the river the trout population approached 800 trout per mile. From this a project was born. The chapter is set to restore 2,500 feet of instream habitat in the coming year. The chapter secured over \$40,000 from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation and \$20,000 from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and has committed to monitor the stream's ecology for five years.

And as part of the Michigan Council's pioneering River Keepers Program, Schrems West Michigan installed temperature loggers and collected temperature data on six different streams throughout southwest Michigan.

### **Silver Trout Award: Pemigewasset Chapter**

In the late 1970s, a significant amount of sand and gravel was removed around and near the Pemigewasset River, (not too far from where we are sitting today,) to aid in the construction of a new interstate highway. As a result, the river jumped its bank during a period of very heavy rain and high waters. The avulsion was so severe the Pemi was placed on the 303(d) list of impaired waters for New Hampshire for failure to support aquatic life use.

In fall of 2009, the Pemigewasset Chapter (with fewer than 60 members) completed a comprehensive project that reconnected the river to its original channel, reduced the impacts associated with flood plain land loss and enhanced the fishery. The project has also generated a living laboratory and classroom at the restoration site. Local, state, and federal officials as well as those from academic institutions and non-profit organizations will be able to study this site and witness the large-scale river restoration techniques (grade controls and floodplain creation) utilized by TU.

The project – that has provided the Pemi the opportunity to reach equilibrium – is just one great example of what an engaged, passionate membership can accomplish.

### **Silver Trout Award: Valley Forge Chapter**

The Valley Forge Chapter in Pennsylvania is leading the way by implementing pilot projects to demonstrate that a watershed that is 25% covered with impervious surfaces can be restored. According to experts, 10% impervious surface is the "tipping point" in any watershed, when the system is so altered hierologically that water resource values are lost. Even knowing this, the chapter leaders embarked on several projects to reduce the impact of rain events on streams in their watershed. On one such project, Crabby Creek directly benefited from the Valley Forge's volunteers when they installed 22 habitat structures, planted habitat alongside the stream and relocated wild brook trout from a stream in the same river drainage. The chapter has put considerable effort into developing partnerships, communicating their ideas as to what can and should be done and educating the stakeholders in the watershed.

Their work has encouraged the home owners, corporations, townships and other stakeholders to assume a greater role in protecting and restoring the Valley Creek Watershed.

### **Bollinger Newsletter Award: Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter – *RipRap***

Scott Hanson of the Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter has been the tireless editor of *RipRap* for many years, working continuously to make its newsletter a dynamic and vital communication medium.

*RipRap* is, simply put, a wealth of information. Any and all pertinent membership information is displayed on the front page including project work times, calls to action, chapter meetings, the President's Lines, board member information, etc... Topics are ordered and neatly titled for ease of navigation. Articles relate to a wide array of topics, including, local fishing, poignant member

stories, where to fish throughout the state, fly tying, and of course, ecological concerns. These stories are not only a pleasure to read but they are also edifying and truly capture the Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter members' interest from issue to issue.

Scott Hanson has been the tireless editor of the newsletter for many years, crafting it into a member-friendly document that members rely on for both communication and enjoyment.

### **Best Website Award: Rabun Chapter -- [www.rabuntu.org](http://www.rabuntu.org)**

In 2010, [www.rabuntu.org](http://www.rabuntu.org) was re-born. The chapter's aim was to create a site that powerfully showcases the chapter's hands-on, pragmatic, and collaborative approach to its mission. The website is a content-rich site that emphasizes two major aspects of the chapter's activities: conservation and education. Using an extensive collection of photographs, a substantive and compelling story is told about the chapter's mission and program of activities.

Chapter members frequently access the calendar of chapter activities to find timely, relevant, and always accurate information. The site also has an easily accessible leadership contacts page and a full archive of, *Tight Lines*, the chapter's newsletter. The innovative and easy to navigate website has a unique ability to motivate and encourage member participation.

### **Conservation Communications Award: Confluence Films**

Confluence Films is the result of a partnership between director and cinematographer Chris Patterson and executive producer and writer Jim Klug. In 2008 the group produced *Drift* and in 2009, *Rise*. One of the strongest attributes of Confluence Films' movies is that they introduced a new multi-segmented, documentary style of filmmaking to the fly fishing community. Rather than a single story or an hour-long movie featuring the same anglers chasing fish on the same river for the entire length of the film, this style of filmmaking instead offers viewers a variety of segments and stories: each one a different profile of anglers, species, and locations shot around the globe. Another factor setting Confluence Films apart from other filmmakers is that they shoot in the highest of definition using 16mm motion picture film, razor-sharp lenses, creative techniques and slow-motion cameras. From the scenic skies of Idaho to the wilds of Patagonia, Confluence Films' amazing cinematography and vibrant images provided a level of strong, defining visuals. A new film is in production and will be released in 2011.

Confluence Films has made it a priority to donate a significant portion of profits and proceeds from DVD sales, screenings and events to a variety of different conservation programs. Confluence has helped raise over \$100,000 for more than three dozen different conservation groups and events, including numerous local chapters of TU across the country.

### **Conservation Professional Award: Doug Besler**

Doug Besler began his career with the North Carolina Wildlife Resources Commission (Commission) in 1996 as an Assistant Fisheries Biologist. Today he serves as the Regional Fisheries Supervisor with responsibility for all the fishery resources, including the trout resources, in western North Carolina.

Doug has consistently demonstrated his dedication to science-based fisheries research and

management, professional service and collaborative conservation. His leadership, vision and commitment to managing and conserving trout resources in North Carolina are unparalleled.

Among many other things for which we have Doug to thank, is his recognition of the importance of protecting native brook trout genetics, specifically the Southern Appalachian strain brook trout. He was responsible for spearheading the identification and genetic typing of all known brook trout populations in North Carolina. This information will be critical for revising the Commission's Trout Management Plan.

As fisheries management challenges increase into the 21<sup>st</sup> century, forward-thinking and comprehensive approaches like Doug's will be recognized as the most effective means to meet those challenges. Doug is respected by many of the TU members in North Carolina because of his participation at NCTU council meetings and his willingness to speak at chapter meetings.

### **Conservation Professional Award: Stephen Edward Moore**

Reading through Stephen Edward Moore's credentials leaves one wondering if he has left any professional stone unturned.

A Supervisory Fisheries Biologist in the Great Smoky Mountains National Park, he has been heavily involved with all aspects of native brook restoration. He has worked with numerous groups on fisheries projects throughout the country, served on over a dozen master's and doctoral students' graduate committees, has published many articles on fisheries management and water quality and has supervised more than 250 students and seasonal fisheries technicians during field services at the national park. He has written a field manual for restoring native fish and has, since 1992, worked with the Little River Chapter of TU to support the Great Smoky Mountains National Park fisheries program. A true partner of TU and a steward of our natural resources, we are happy to give Stephen Edward Moore the one distinction he has not had until now: the Conservation Professional Award. Thank you, Stephen Edward Moore, for all that you have done to partner with TU.

### **Conservation Professional Award: Deborah Nardone**

Deb Nardone has done much to increase the stability and public awareness of the Pennsylvania Council. Deb's primary role is to manage the Coldwater Heritage Partnership Program. The purpose of this partnership is to provide small grants to watershed organizations and TU chapters to assess Pennsylvania's high quality and exceptional value streams. Each year since Deb's involvement, there have been between eight and ten \$5,000 grants awarded, each of these resulting in conservation plans.

In 2005, Deb voluntarily assumed the task of overseeing PATU's Trout in the Classroom Program. Deb has now established a partnership between the PA Fish and Boat Commission and PA Department of Education to ensure the program meets the curriculum needs for teachers in the state's public schools. As of this year, PATU has 159 schools enrolled in TIC, and is reaching out to over 6,000 students statewide.

Deb made significant contributions in developing the white paper, *Gas Drilling in the Marcellus Shale and Pennsylvania's Coldwater Resources*, and has been the PATU spokesperson at many Marcellus Shale conferences and meetings. She recently spearheaded the effort to start the PA Council Coldwater Conservation Corps, a grassroots effort by TU members who will receive training to scientifically monitor environmental conditions adjacent to gas well sites and act as

watchdogs on the gas extraction industry. Largely due to Deb's visibility and involvement with a number of key environmental groups, Pennsylvania Gov. Ed Rendell was prompted to say in a March address to the oil and gas industry in Texas that "groups like Trout Unlimited, which is a very powerful organization in Pennsylvania, have begun to come out against expansion of shale drilling."

Without Deborah Nardone's focus and dedication, PATU would not be as solid as it is.

### **Conservation Volunteer Award: Roy Lamberton**

This year's conservation volunteer award goes to a man who has been an active member of TU's Clearwater Chapter for 29 years. He is a retired engineer with the New York State Public Service Commission and is one of the founders of the Battenkill Watershed Alliance. For a couple of years, he served as the organization's executive director. For the last several years, he has been working to restore a little-known trout stream, Onesquethaw (ones-qua-THAW?), in Greene County, New York.

A resident of East Berne, New York, he is involved with many local conservation efforts--he is on the steering Committee for the Hudson River Watershed Alliance, is president of the TU Onesquethaw/Coeymans Watershed Council and is the current project coordinator for the Hudson River Estuary Program. His conservation reports are frequently found in the Clearwater Chapter newsletter and he's on hand at each chapter meeting to give his conservation reports.

### **Conservation Volunteer: John Lenczowski**

John Lenczowski's contributions to Minnesota TU began at the chapter level nearly 20 years ago, when he served as the president of the Gitche Gumee Chapter for many years. He also served on the Minnesota Council's Lake Superior sub-committee, tracking issues specific to the Great Lakes. He was integral in advocating for a protective 20-inch minimum size limit for Minnesota's coaster brook trout in the mid-1990s and has been the council's point person for efforts to push the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources and the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency to implement stricter regulations concerning the spread of aquatic diseases.

More recently, as state council chair, John spent countless hours organizing the council's support of a proposal to create constitutionally dedicated funding for fish and wildlife habitat protection and restoration. MNTU was the only non-governmental organization to receive full funding from the state legislature and has since successfully applied for over \$3 million in grants to implement close to 30 stream habitat restoration projects across the state. The amendment will provide funds to MNTU for the next 25 years. An estimated \$50 million will be dedicated to uphold the vision of TU. The amount of work John does to administer these grants and projects is simply staggering.

John's efforts have not been limited to only habitat and fish. In his role as council chair, John also worked hard to foster more effective chapters and to move the council toward more strategic decision-making. Without his efforts, MNTU would not carry the reputation for effectiveness and competency that it does.

### **Distinguished Service Award: David Van Lear**

It's the combination of long-term dedication and success that make us give the Distinguished Service Award to David Van Lear. For 37 years, he has been dedicated to TU and its mission. A charter member of the Chattooga chapter, he has done it all--chaired committees, acted as a TU representative to the state council and has worked with federal and state partners to achieve results. He has also served as a board member and a chapter president. A professor of Forestry at Clemson University, David's knowledge has been invaluable to the chapter and its work.

Whether working on stream habitat or a youth conservation program, David has personally been responsible for restoring several South Carolina streams and ensuring that a major South Carolina trout river corridor has its own special protection plan. A

As his nomination reads, "as much as any member since Chattooga River Chapter member Ray Mortenson, Dave is deserving of being recognized by TU with the Distinguished Service Award."

We couldn't say it better.

### **Distinguished Service Award: Jerry Rekart**

Often times, a volunteer takes an idea and runs with it, turning a project into a huge success. Jerry Rekart is an example of just that. When Jerry started the Candlewood Chapter's Trout in the Classroom program five years ago, there was one fish tank available for use in one school. Now, there are 54 tanks in 27 schools. As a result, an estimated 1,300 children learn about trout through the program each year. Jerry has been the TIC project director for the last five years and has made it a great success. In five years, 5,000 children have participated in the Trout in the Classroom program.

As any volunteer knows, it's often difficult to sustain a willing group of volunteers. Jerry provides the ongoing support and sustenance it takes to keep things going, always touting program successes and community benefits, keeping volunteers energized. Through his work, the chapter's visibility has greatly increased--local newspapers have covered chapter activities more and the chapter has had a resurgence of energy. It is volunteers like Jerry who are the heart of TU. Thank you.

### **Distinguished Service Award: Art Coleman**

There's a clean-up of the Batten Kill scheduled tomorrow (Sept. 18) and for once, Art Coleman will not be there, removing trash from the stream and corralling volunteers for the clean-up day. He is usually in charge of the quarterly clean-up effort there, but he's a little further north this time, here in New Hampshire.

A retired chemist, he has been a constant champion of the Batten Kill, and of trout. He is a resident of Ballston Lake, NY and has also been a member of the Board of Directors for several years and has been an active member for 13 years. Art was asked by the New York Department of Environmental Conservation to organize a survey of 72 brook trout streams in Washington County for TU's Eastern Brook Trout Joint Venture. He was happy to comply and conducted his survey, in part, by fishing in those streams. He and his team also gathered data on stream

structure, vegetation and invertebrates, submitting it to the department to help reclassify those streams.

### **Distinguished Service Award: Charles McCaughtry**

An avid canoeist, Charley McCaughtry has personally explored many of eastern Connecticut's waters. A retired teacher, he is eager to share his knowledge with others, whether it's a new paddling route or a conservation challenge. His conservation walk, "Walking with Trout," is a popular hike that is filled with facts about the fish we are all here to protect.

Charley joined TU in 1985. He was president of the Natchaug chapter. When the chapter merged with the Thames Valley chapter in 2004, he stayed on as a board member. He is on the board of a local watershed council and is considered the go-to person for conservation issues in the towns of Eastford, Ashford, Vernon, Woodstock and Mansfield. He always engages people by first introducing himself as a member of Trout Unlimited. "It's not a fishing club!" he says, and then proceeds to tell them all about what TU is doing to protect local watersheds.

An artist and lifelong adventurer, seeing the world through Charley's eyes is a gift that he so readily shares with anyone lucky enough to make his acquaintance. He has graciously donated many art pieces to TU fundraising events and to TU national. Take a look--his work is available on [www.mccaughtryart.com](http://www.mccaughtryart.com). Thanks for all that you do for TU, Charley.

### **Youth Education Leadership Award: Bart Chabot**

Bart Chabot, of Schenectady, NY, has been an active member of the Clearwater Chapter for 27 years and has served on the board of directors for several years. Since losing a leg in a work accident in the late 80s, Bart has become a champion for helping people with disabilities. From working with veterans and other patients at Sunnyview Rehabilitation Hospital in Schenectady, to organizing fishing clinics for 250 children in town, he is extremely active in the community. He helps local Boy Scouts with their merit badges and has worked to establish the Trout in the Classroom program in the Schenectady area. According to an article in the Schenectady Gazette yesterday (Sept. 17) , "he is one of the nicest guys you will ever meet."

His quote in the article truly embodies who Bart is and what he has given to TU: "My thought is, as long as you have something to give, you've got to do it", he said. "There are people out there in worse shape than I. I think we're put in this world to serve people."

And if it weren't for people like Bart, TU wouldn't be the organization it is.

### **Youth Education Leadership Award: Fred Hodge**

In the nomination form for the Youth Education Leadership Award, Fred Hodge is dubbed, "the Pied Piper of fly fishing." A member of the Oak Brook, Illinois TU chapter, Fred has been instrumental in creating a partnership with TU and the Boy Scouts of America and helping to create a fly fishing merit badge. An Eagle Scout himself, he loves working with young anglers and scouts on fly tying and fishing.

His volunteerism takes a quiet, powerful form. He has never served as an officer or director of his TU chapter. Instead, his service has been through many, many hours of continued volunteerism and dedication to teaching young people the things he loves. It's clear that the kids admire him for just that, and it doesn't hurt that "lights out" at trout camp is often a lot later than 11 p.m. when Fred is at the fly tying table.

A strong mentor, a gracious guide and a generous individual, Fred Hodge is the recipient of the Youth Education Leadership Award.

### **Winn-Memorial Award for Sea-Run Fisheries Conservation: Warren Winders**

This award is given each year in honor of Betty Winn, who worked in the Pacific Northwest to ensure the future of salmon and steelhead. It is given to an individual who has most significantly contributed to conserving, protecting and restoring America's native sea-run fisheries in the Atlantic or Pacific.

Many people outside of New England don't even know that sea-run brook trout exist. But Warren Winders has worked for two decades on one stream in Massachusetts to help make their presence known. Red Brook is a stream near Plymouth, Mass. where sea-run brook trout call home. In 1990, Warren took on the role of project director to prevent these fish from becoming extinct. After several dam removals, numerous studies and lots of fundraising, Red Brook finally received the distinction it needed to help protect sea-run brookies, thanks to Warren's plodding work. In 2010, the Commonwealth of Massachusetts purchased 245 acres to protect the stream's headwaters. At last, a project many thought was impossible finally came to fruition.

Red Brook and sea-run brook trout in Massachusetts are better off because of Warren Winders-- through your hard work, dedication and determination, you have helped these fish thrive.