

GUADALUPE RIVER CHAPTER
TROUT UNLIMITED
MONTHLY E-LETTER
MAY 2006

Welcome to another edition of our e-letter. Please let us know if you are getting the information you need by sending your feedback to mickfly@gvtc.com.

April Chapter Meeting Highlights

We had a great meeting in April, this time at the Dam Red Barn, for a change. We had two speakers at our meeting. Phil Durocher, Director of Inland Fisheries for Texas Parks and Wildlife, gave us an overview of what's happening in Texas's freshwater fisheries and described the progress of building or upgrading fish hatcheries sponsored by the freshwater fishing stamp. Phil also reiterated his department's continuing commitment to trout fishing in Texas and said that the Freshwater Fisheries Advisory Board would always include one representative from GRTU. (Our current representative is Alan Bray.)

Our featured speaker was Frank Weissbarth, author of "Holy Ghost Creek" and Assistant Attorney General of New Mexico. Frank is a charter member of the Truchas TU chapter in Santa Fe and an avid flyfisher and photographer. If you'd like to see some of his photos, like the ones he brought along to auction for our chapter's conservation fund, see his website at <http://pweb.netcom.com/~weissbar/>. Frank's presentation focused on various means of restoring native trout, like the Rio Grande Cutthroat, to their original range, including the pros and cons of the use of piscicides (fish poisons). Frank's presentation was very thoughtful and well received.

The Outcast pontoon boat, available as a raffle item, was donated by Bill Higdon of Hill Country Watercraft. It was won by Bob Runion. Bob is a really nice guy, and a very trusting person, but he still declined the offers of several chapter members to transport the boat home for him. Who knows, that may be why he bought that pickup in the first place.

After lunch, we had an Honorary Life Member Fishing Day, organized by Jeff Schmitt. Thanks to Jeff and guides Rus Schwausch, Alvin Dedeaux, Scott Graham, and Kevin Stubbs, we had five boats floating the river with nine Honorary Life Members aboard. Several more chapter members ran shuttles or stationed themselves downstream to help move the boats across riffles and shallow spots. Almost everyone caught fish, and a great time was had by all. On one of the boats, the average age of the participants was 91! Here's to hoping we are half as active as these guys if we make it to that age.

Also available after lunch was a clinic on rowing, oaring, and boat safety conducted by Banning Collins. Banning is the owner of Class Five, LLC, a guiding and pontoon boat sales company here in Texas and is also a guide and outfitter at Summit Station Lodge near Glacier National Park in Montana in the summertime. The course was well attended and benefited the chapter conservation fund. Check out our "Ads" page at www.grtu.org for more information about Banning.

Annual elections are held each April. In this year's meeting, Doug Kierklewski, Johnny Cargill, Dennis Sheppard, and Corby Bittner were elected to three year terms as Directors and Jorge Simental was elected to a one year term. The officers approved by the Board are: Mick McCorcle, President; Ron McAlpin, VP Chapter Affairs, Bill Higdon, VP Fisheries; Steve Stilp, VP Membership, Phil Dopson, Treasurer and Joe Filer, Secretary. We also bid farewell to David Schroeder, Carl Bohn, and Hylmar Karbach who had all served on the Board for three or more years. David will continue to oversee our temperature monitor and chapter database, while Hylmar will continue to give lease orientations at Gruene Outfitters.

Recent Board Actions

At the April meeting the Board:

- Elected Jeff Schmitt to serve another one year term as the Texas National Leadership Council Representative to Trout Unlimited.
- Approved the expenditure of \$15,000 to sponsor a study of bug life in the Guadalupe, conducted by graduate students and faculty at the Texas Rivers Institute at Texas State University, San Marcos with the cooperation of Texas Parks and Wildlife. The funding will pay half of the salary for one researcher for one year. The University find money to cover the remainder of the salary. Our chapter's liaison with the university will be Alan Bray, former chapter president and currently an adjunct faculty member at Texas State.
- Approved a plan to have Brad Befus and his son Tyler as our October speakers, and to organize special kids and family events for that chapter meeting.
- Announced that the first GRTU Coldwater Outreach Conservation Fund recipient, Trout Run Creek in Southeast Minnesota, will be on the conservation tour for the TU National meeting, which will be held in September in Minneapolis.

Conservation Committee Organized

Eight chapter members showed up at Rio Raft on April 29th to review past conservation efforts and plan more for the coming year. In attendance were Jeff Schmitt, Greg Neubauer, Gretchen Neubauer, Sarah Jameson, Gary Cobb, Corby Bittner, Chris Lambert, and Mick McCorcle. (Another chapter member, Jimbo Roberts, couldn't find the meeting, so he went fishing instead.) Among the local projects discussed were river cleanups, river studies, and cooperative projects like the re-vegetation of stream banks along the Guadalupe. Those present took on several assignments to help organize the projects and prepare ideas for board or chapter approval. The Conservation Committee will also assist the chapter by receiving and reviewing proposals from other TU chapters for projects under the GRTU Coldwater Outreach Conservation Fund. The new chair of the committee will be Chris Lambert.

Casting for Recovery Again Successful

The second annual Texas workshop for Casting for Recovery was held at Joshua Creek Ranch on April 21-23. Thirteen women at various stages of breast cancer diagnosis, treatment, and rehabilitation spent three days building a support network and learning about fly fishing. GRTU played a big part in the success of this endeavor. Member Susan Gaetz is the Texas Program Coordinator, Stacy Trimble and Karen Gebhardt were instructors, and chapter members Greg & Gretchen Neubauer, Alan Bray, Cyndi Schmitt, Mick McCorcle and Andy Niland were River Helpers on Sunday. Our chapter also sponsored one of the women in the program. Thanks to all who provided last minute financial support or flies for the workshop.

What's Happening on the River

Flows continue to be low on the river, as they have been throughout the trout season. That's made it a great year for fishing, since almost all the river has been open to safe wading. But it now becomes a more challenging situation for the trout, since flows are so low that the cool water temperatures they require will be less and less likely as the days lengthen and air temperatures rise. Since Canyon Lake is several feet below conservation pool, and has not been full anytime since January 1st, the Guadalupe Blanco River Authority is not required to release the higher flows through the summer as mandated by our flow agreement. That will make it even tougher for the fish.

Have a great spring and summer and we'll be back in touch when we have more news to share.