

2019  
**WISCONSIN**  
TROUT UNLIMITED

**Awards  
Banquet**



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**TROUT UNLIMITED**







Thank you for joining us in the celebration of Wisconsin's coldwater resources. Your support will allow our members to continue working to ensure that future generations have access to cold, clean, fishable water. The 2019 Wisconsin Trout Unlimited Banquet would not be possible without the dedicated work of our Banquet Committee, the generosity of our donors and the support of our 21 local TU chapters.

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# Resource Award of Merit

**Jon P. Wilcox**

Jon P. Wilcox grew up in Wild Rose, received his undergraduate degree from Ripon College in 1958 and a law degree from the University of Wisconsin in 1965. From 1959 to 1961 he served as an officer in the U.S. Army. After serving his country, he started his own law practice in Wautoma and represented the 72nd Assembly district from 1969 to 1975.



On February 23, 1971 at a law office in Berlin, Wisconsin, several men from Berlin, Wautoma and Poysippi met in what was called an “organizational meeting.” That was the start of a new Wisconsin Trout Unlimited chapter, which would be called the Central Wisconsin Chapter. John was elected to serve on the board of directors for the chapter and also helped out with other duties.

Jon fished trout in the local waters of Central Wisconsin with his good friends Dr. Tom Poulette, Russ Younglove, a fly shop owner named Arling Erickson and others. They would also travel to western states annually and fish for cutthroats, browns and rainbows in the beautiful streams of Idaho, Montana and elsewhere.

Jon developed a love of trout and their beautiful environs and realized that their habitat needed to be protected. As a state representative, Jon Wilcox wrote and introduced Wisconsin a bill in 1971 which proposed that Wisconsin fishing license holders who wanted to fish for trout pay an additional \$1 for a trout stamp to fund trout habitat improvement. The bill did not pass, as the DNR did not think separate funding was a good idea at the time.

But Jon persisted and continued to push the bill for the remaining time he was in office. He was then elected to the Wisconsin Conservation Congress from 1975 to 1980. During that time he continued to push for the passage of his bill. The trout stamp bill finally passed and the first trout stamp came out in 1978 and sold for \$2.50.

Jon Wilcox served as a circuit court judge in Waushara County for 13 years and Chief judge of the sixth judicial district. He was appointed to the Wisconsin Supreme Court by Governor Tommy Thompson in 1992 and elected to a 10-year term in 1997. His term expired in 2007 and he did not seek reelection. Throughout Judge Wilcox’s long career he remained a strong supporter and member of Trout Unlimited and its mission to improve trout habitat and protect our coldwater resources. The trout stamp program continues to this day.

For his life-long support of our coldwater resources, we recognize Jon P. Wilcox with the State Council’s Resource Award of Merit.



# Gold Trout Award for Service

**Gary Horvath**

Gary first became involved with Kiap-TU-Wish in the 1980s and has served as a board member or officer ever since. His involvement with the State Council goes back nearly as far. He has served as Western Region Vice Chair and as chair of the council's Water Quality Committee.

Gary possesses keen intelligence, strong analytic skills and the passion of an outdoorsman with an appreciation for nature. A chemist by profession, Gary manages a laboratory in a public agency, so he understands governmental entities. These traits make Gary an effective voice for conservation.



Even before his involvement with TU, Gary has been interested in his "home" water, the Kinnickinnic River. Gary has educated city staff and elected officials about the benefits of a healthy river. He was involved with the creation of a stormwater management plan and ordinance, a stormwater utility and a shoreland ordinance. He participated in the development of a Comprehensive Plan that includes protection of the river as the city grows. And he has served as chair of the city's Environmental Task Force.

Gary is a strong advocate for free-flowing rivers. He led TU involvement with removal of the Willow Falls and Mounds Dams on the Willow River northeast of Hudson. He has led the chapter's efforts to return the Kinnickinnic to a free-flowing river. Two dams remain on the river, both within the City of River Falls. The dams are equipped as hydroelectric facilities and are part of a city-owned utility. They inundate a mile of trout water and discharge warm, low-quality water from their impoundments.

The dams produce an ever-smaller and replaceable percentage of the city's power needs, but sentiment and local politics can create strong resistance to their removal. Gary has worked with the city's utility, the DNR and the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission to ensure the proper operation of the dams to protect the Kinnickinnic.

Gary's long-term goal has always been their removal. His Wisconsin TU license plate reads "NO DAM." Gary has served as a member of the city's Kinni Corridor Project Team. A key outcome of Gary's participation in this process was the recent adoption of a city council resolution that will ultimately result in the removal of both dams and the restoration of the river and its riparian corridor.

In addition to these amazing efforts, Gary is also a chapter regular, a person who is there for monthly meetings, educational events and workdays. He is a consummate coldwater conservationist. He is most deserving of the State Council's Gold Trout Award.



# Silver Trout Award for Chapter Merit

## Lakeshore Chapter

A few years back, the Lakeshore Chapter was suffering the fate common among chapters – an aging leadership looking for young leaders. Gordy Martin stepped in, and with support from the older leaders, he successfully led the chapter through the preliminary years of its resurgence. Work on the Onion River was a significant highlight of this period. Gordy inspired the next generation of leaders, like current chapter president Myk Hranicka, who has continued the resurgence.



Their first goal was to generate activity, and began holding work days once a month, which really got chapter members excited. Often with help from other chapters, the Lakeshore Chapter spent a year clearing Nichols Creek, while still doing maintenance work on the Onion River. Meanwhile, they brushed cleared portions of Ben Nutt and Mill Creek.

The chapter's new DNR fish biologist, Addie Dutton has become a great advocate for the chapter. She garnered a \$5,000 grant for the Onion River, and the chapter has been working with the DNR to restore a section of the river that has never been worked on. On its Nichols Creek project, Addie helped identify an invasive species called Creeping Nightshade. The chapter raised \$1,000 to have the invasive sprayed. Come spring, Lakeshore members will help remove the invasive from the stream.

Recognizing a need for improved communications, the chapter's newest leaders have taken to Facebook, Instagram, emails, a web site, mailings and more. They recently sent out a questionnaire to learn what its members want to see more of.

The Lakeshore Chapter is a member of the Sheboygan County Conservation Association, working with 28 other conservation groups to broaden their efforts, such as youth and women's events.

Besides being more active in its grant-writing efforts, the chapter has been building relationships with local businesses. Last year they contacted more than 70 businesses for donations.

The chapter is investing in shirts, hats and stickers for its events, and to help build its identity. Leaders are excited about bringing back a fundraising banquet, hopefully in 2021.

The number of active members has more than tripled recently, and efforts to attract younger members continues through its upcoming Trout In the Classroom program, youth fishing days, women outdoor programs, and even working with the Boy Scouts and Girl Scouts. Making events more family friendly is another way the chapter hopes to attract younger members and develop younger leaders.

The Lakeshore Chapter's future is bright, and its leadership is confident that it's heading in the right direction and will be successful for many more years. They are most deserving of the State Council's Silver Trout Award for Chapter Merit.



## Gold Net Award

**Rick Frye**

Rick Frye has provided decades of service to trout resources. It is rare to have any type of event within the Southeast Wisconsin Chapter where Rick does not participate, often providing leadership. He has also been a regular participant at the State Council Banquet and has been a regular volunteer helping with the prize management duties.



Rick has been a long-standing member of SEWTU's Habitat committee and is a mainstay at nearly all of the chapter's work days. He regularly leads work day efforts and is quick to fill any void. He thinks nothing of running a chain saw for hours straight in hot summer work days, often work days where we're helping other chapters.

Rick was one of the first members of his chapter to work with veterans, and he's continued that work for more than a decade. He often ties flies with the vets twice a week and is a great coach and mentor for our fishing outings.

Rick is the chair of his chapter's Education Committee and has been instrumental in its "Trout in the Classroom" program, information and outreach efforts and creating a positive image for TU.

Rick is a mainstay at the many chapter events which build membership and image in the community. He is an active leader growing relationships with the likes of Cabela's and Orvis.

Rick has taken the time to advocate on behalf of TU and our conservation agenda including trips to Madison to visit legislators and participation in public hearings such as the Estabrook Dam saga.

Rick regularly donates items to the Southeast Wisconsin Chapter's fundraising efforts and is a participant and volunteer assisting with the setup and management of these efforts.

In addition to his leadership role in many chapter committees, Rick has been a long-standing member of the Southeast Wisconsin Chapter's Board of Directors. His peers on the board highly value his point of view and input. He never dodges controversy and always speaks his mind in a professional and direct manner.

Rick has long been a water quality monitoring volunteer.

He is one of the most popular members of his chapter and is regularly sought out in terms of mentoring new and returning fishermen.

He has manned the Sports Show booth for nearly its entire run and is a positive face to the thousands of people we have interacted with over the last decade.

The State Council's prestigious Gold Net Award could not go to a more deserving person than Rick Frye.



# Joan & Lee Wulff Award for Outstanding Conservation Leadership

**Randy Arnold**

Kiap-TU-Wish has a long history of doing hands-on stream improvement work. One of the more popular activities over the decades has been streamside brushing projects. “Brushing,” while accurate as far as it goes, doesn’t do justice to the intensity or variety of the work done. A headline in the chapter newsletter years ago read “Chainsaw Maniacs Attack Kinnickinnic,” which better conveys what happens on winter Saturdays.



Randy brings the term “brushing” to life, not only through personal action, but through leadership of a cadre of “maniacs.” As the chapter’s volunteer coordinator, Randy has recruited, trained and supervised a group that in the 2017-2018 work seasons logged 2,300 hours on streamside projects from assisting the DNR to maintenance such as brushing, mulching, sign building and stile construction. Randy’s mantra is “So much buckthorn, so little time!”

Randy was quick to recognize and quick to respond to the reality that life is more complex than it once was and that the paperwork must be done. When formal training in chainsaw use became a prerequisite for participation in DNR-involved projects, Randy quickly found someone to host professional trainers and volunteer participants at his pole barn. Randy also formally trained in the use of herbicides. Through the seriousness of this effort, Randy has become known to the DNR as a partner who can be counted on. His relationships with DNR staff create opportunities for chapter members to participate in interesting projects like electrofishing studies.

Randy has convinced his cadre of volunteers that all this work is somehow fun. The list of email contacts interested in workdays continues to grow, and turnout on workdays is always solid, even when temperatures dive and snow falls. A sense of accomplishment and a sense of camaraderie evolve around the fire on brush-burning days as the fire is tended and lunch, generously provided by Randy, is consumed and volunteers head home with a sense of having done well by doing good.

Randy’s involvement in TU go far beyond his considerable efforts in the field. Randy has served on the chapter’s board for the past 10 years. He’s a skilled designer and fabricator and he’s put those skills to use in the construction of specialized fly-tying desks that he’s donated to both the chapter and to the council for auction at banquets.

For the years and countless hours of Randy’s passionate efforts, we present him with the Joan and Lee Wulff Award for Outstanding Conservation Leadership.





# Robert Hunt Resource Professional Award

**Sara Rigelman**

About 10 years ago, Sara Rigelman, land acquisition specialist and park planner for the Dane County Land and Water Resources Department, was charged with creating and running the Dane County trout stream easement program. Sara has secured more than 20 stream miles on trout streams including the Sugar River, the West Branch of the Sugar, Kittleson Creek and Gordon Creek.



The issue of maintenance soon arose as the easement program flourished. Sara worked with the Southern Wisconsin Chapter to create Streamkeepers. Now chapter volunteers walk the easements throughout the year, removing vegetation and reporting major problems to the committee and Sara.

She was the key staff person in the joint Dane County/DNR/SWTU restoration of a half-mile of water on the Sugar River. The project included fundraising, work days and a demonstration day. It included innovative techniques and ongoing prairie restoration. Sara coordinated all of these efforts. She found a neighboring landowner who proved to be vital in the prairie restoration. She took delivery of much of the construction material, arranged the Demonstration Day and made all the TU work days possible. In a complex project involving many individuals and organization, Sara held the project together.

Sara was the principal coordinator of the county's Partners in Conservation grant program that funded portions of the Black Earth Creek restoration project near Mazomanie.

Implementation of a \$165,000 restoration project on the Sugar River will start this year. Sara spent 2018 working with the DNR, the US Fish and Wildlife Service, other County staff, and the Southern Chapter in planning a comprehensive restoration project. She also recently secured an easement on a small spring tributary of the West Branch of the Sugar with a hitherto undiscovered population of wild brook trout.

Sara was part of the staff team that secured more than 60 acres of wetlands and oak woods, almost a mile-long easement on the Sugar River, and a historically important stagecoach stop. This took years of difficult negotiations.

Bob Hunt was a model because of how he worked, not just his accomplishments. He was courteous, kind and respectful to all the staff, anglers and landowners he worked with. Sara embodies all those qualities. She loves trout, trout streams and all the life that thrives around them. She works to ensure that restorations include a prairie, a wetland or a ridge of old oak trees. She is respectful and cooperative with all her co-workers, and unfailingly kind and thoughtful with landowners.

Sara is most deserving of the Robert Hunt Resource Professional Award.



# Corporate Sponsorship Award

## Scott's Rod Shop and Oshkosh Business System

Scott has been active in the Central Wisconsin Chapter of Trout Unlimited and has provided help and support to many other chapters as well. He is one of the best bamboo rod makers in Wisconsin and is recognized nationally for the quality of his rods. Scott has made donations of his bamboo rods to the Wisconsin State Council of TU and other TU chapters. Through his donations, he has helped raise thousands of dollars for conservation projects and other TU activities.



Scott has also been active in the planning and implementation of many Central Wisconsin TU and Central Region projects and activities. He has served as a board member and treasurer of CWTU. Scott is the owner of Oshkosh Office Systems and has donated the services of his company for the printing and distribution of many promotional materials used by CWTU for its fund raising and educational efforts. His business background and organizational skills has helped provide guidance in the activities of CWTU and the Central Region.

Because he often works in the background and does not look for recognition, he does not always get the recognition that he deserves. He often plants the seed by coming up with ideas related to fundraising, membership recruitment and other activities, and then finds a way of following it through to completion. To recognize Scott for all he has done personally for TU and through his businesses – Scott's Rod Shop and Oshkosh Business Systems – we present him with our Corporate Sponsor Award.



# Tomorrow's Angler Award

Linda Lehman

The only person in her family that fishes, Linda Lehman has fallen hard for water, fish and the natural world. The consummate Trout Unlimited volunteer, Linda constantly gives of her time and passion for the sport. Linda has been an active member of the Wisconsin River Valley Chapter. She has served generously in every officer position of the chapter and has always been our youth coordinator. When something needs doing or attending, Linda steps up.



For more than 25 years Linda has been a tireless advocate for bringing youth into the world of angling and conservation. She is the quiet, ever-present person who makes things happen for future generations. When youth are present at Trout Unlimited events, you will find Linda engaging with each one and often with cookies. Linda's face lights up when she talks about how excited kids get about casting a fly rod, tying a wooly bugger or identifying a particular aquatic critter.

She has been a fixture at the youth expos in Beaver Dam and Poynette. She helps Wausau East science classes on the Plover River, Youth Sporting Heritage Days, Taylor County Youth Sporting Expo, Wisconsin TU Youth Camp, and the list goes on.

Maybe her greatest gift is allowing us old folks an opportunity to be young again by inviting us to join her in interacting with the young anglers of tomorrow.

Linda Lehman is a living example of the Tomorrow's Angler Award.



# Certificate of Appreciation

**Tom Schnadt**

Early into his first year as president of the Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter, it dawned on Tom Schnadt that he was basically doing what he had done as a sales manager: setting up meetings, putting people in their best place and figuring out how to get things done.

During the past seven years as a chapter leader, Tom has used his skills from the business world to invigorate and expand the chapter's role in the protection and betterment of trout streams in western Wisconsin.

Tom's ability to recognize talent and find the best uses for it have produced an expanded presence in Trout In the Classroom and Bugs in the Classroom. These programs require considerable effort from volunteers and high-level technical involvement. Trained scientists administer the programs and are staffed with eager and competent volunteers. The programs are popular with the participating students and with the classroom volunteers.

Those two programs are, by their nature, youth oriented. Tom understands that successful long-term conservation requires the interest and involvement of future generations, and he has worked hard to develop outreach programs for youth and young adults. The chapter now takes part in the Pierce County Pheasants Forever Youth Day, providing an on-stream fishing clinic. The chapter also sponsors participants in the Wisconsin TU Youth Fishing Camp.

Tom has renewed the chapter's outreach to University of Wisconsin – River Falls students, including initiating a volunteer recognition certificate program for natural resources students. He also recognizes that an element of fun can go a long way toward drawing adults of all ages into chapter events. There is Kiap on Tap, for example, which moves the meeting at least once a year to a local micro-brewery. The most recent event, held last September, was an all-ages evening with casting events available on the lawn outside the brewery.

Tom is a long-time member of the chapter's conservation banquet committee. His strong organizational skills, goal-setting and realization skills play an important role in creating an event that is not only a financial success, but one that more members and guests enjoy every year.

Tom's business experience has given him a sense of the importance of organizational continuity. He completed his third term as chapter president last March but continues to serve as an ex-officio member of the board. The officers and other board members appreciate his steady hand, his thoughtful and considerate nature and the valuable insight and direction he provides.

For Tom's amazing service to TU and our coldwater resources, we present him with a Certificate of Appreciation.







# Certificate of Appreciation

**Sally Gawle**

For years Sally Gawle has been one of the Aldo Leopold Chapter's most active members, seldom missing out on chapter meetings and events. She has been a chapter board member since 2015.

For years she has been a fixture at chapter fly-tying classes as both an instructor and photographer, providing the specialized guidance needed to get beginners on the road to a life-long love of fly tying. And she always makes sure to take photos so to accompany our reports in chapter and State Council newsletters. Her fly-tying skills have also been of great benefit to the chapter, as she has been a regular contributor to chapter fly boxes donated for WITU fundraising.



Her attendance at Becoming an Outdoor Woman (BOW) activities has allowed her to reach other like-minded women and spread the TU "message" to others. She has attended fly-fishing events for women offered by TU chapters and even donated the "full cost of admission" to one of these events at one of our fundraisers.

For nearly a decade Sally has been an active Water Action Volunteer and Phosphorus-level testing volunteer on both Bear Creek and Lodi Spring Creek. Relying on her extensive WAV skills, she put on an outstanding "bug show" at the Aldo Leopold Chapter picnic last year, collecting and identifying aquatic insects from Lodi Spring Creek for picnic attendees.

Every year when the chapter picnic rolls around, Sally is always a part of the planning and preparations, arriving early for setup and staying for the cleanup as well. She can be depended on to hunt down some high-quality raffle items annually for both our chapter picnic and the WITU Banquet.

At workdays and casting classes, Sally is always there, helping in any way called for. She also helps with production of our chapter newsletter. Always present, always participating, always leading with her "volunteer" hand in the air, Sally Gawle is a model TU member and is well deserving of a WITU Certificate of Appreciation.



# Most Valuable Unsung Trout

**Terry Cummings**

Terry Cummings has been a passionate advocate for the protection of Wisconsin's water resources, statewide and locally, in both a professional and volunteer capacity. A constant presence in the Northwoods Trout Unlimited Chapter for nearly two decades, Terry has served as the treasurer for the majority of that time.

Terry has assisted or led the organizing and hosting of the chapter's annual banquet, consistently procuring the majority of the banquet prizes each year. He rarely misses a Northwoods TU

workday. Terry also has a passion for teaching and mentoring youth both through his involvement with Trout Unlimited and Kinship. He has taught fly tying and fly casting to countless children, individuals with special needs, and veterans within our community. For 17 years Terry organized and instructed at the Northwood's TU Youth Conclave. In more recent years he has assisted with the State Council's Annual Youth Camp.

Finally, Terry represents Northwoods TU at Northeast Regional and State Council meetings, staying abreast of conservation challenges and opportunities statewide. Terry is the backbone of the Northwoods Chapter, and for his many years of dedication to our resources and to TU, we present him with the Most Valuable Unsung Trout Award.



# Reel Partner Award

## Milwaukee Riverkeeper

Milwaukee Riverkeeper has spearheaded the effort to restore the Milwaukee River watershed. As part of its mission, Milwaukee Riverkeeper led the fight to repair or remove the Estabrook Park Dam for nearly 10 years. The group's efforts were rewarded, as demolition of the dam began last April.

Milwaukee Riverkeeper has earned recognition and thanks for its efforts. For 10 years the group and its lawyers bore the brunt of public outcry, and through it all they persevered and removed a major fish passage barrier and environmental nuisance on the Milwaukee River.

The Estabrook Park Dam removal was a major feat. The 15-foot dam was large, spanning 562 feet, and depending on the season it impounded as much as 30 million cubic feet of water. All that impounded water changed the ecosystem of the Milwaukee River for the worst. The dam was a conservationist's nightmare. During the "non-winter" impounding season, that impounded water also impeded public access to the Milwaukee River by submerging nearly a mile of the Milwaukee River under eight feet of water. Milwaukee Riverkeepers' successful fight to remove the Estabrook Dam has restored that section of the Milwaukee River to public wadable access.

Milwaukee Riverkeepers' 10 year battle for conservation and public access is an achievement that has earned them the State Council's Reel Partners Award.



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This seat is reserved for:

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