



# SENECA VALLEY ANGLER

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# 369

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[www.senecavalleytu.org](http://www.senecavalleytu.org)

**SEPTEMBER 2015**

## OFFICERS

President: Noel Gollehon  
Vice President: Warren Junium  
Secretary: Charles August  
Treasurer: Nate Wallace

## FALL IS HERE!

Welcome to all Chapter members. With the heat of summer almost behind us we look forward to the cool days, and great fishing that fall brings.

Fall also begins the renewal of Chapter meetings and we have some excellent programs planned as well as some opportunities to participate in several activities SVTU is involved with.

Our activities are only limited by the number of volunteers who participate, so if you want to see the Chapter do more in 2015 and 2016, volunteer!

## MEETING SCHEDULE FOR 2015

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|----------|--|
| SEPT. 22 | <b>SVTU Chapter Meeting</b><br><b>Topic: Patagonia... Big Water, Big Fish by Jack Higgins</b>  |
| SEPT. 26 | <b>IWLA Hunting &amp; Fishing Day</b> (check the SVTU website or <a href="http://www.iwla-rockville.org">http://www.iwla-rockville.org</a> ) |
| OCT. 21  | SVTU Board meeting   |
| OCT. 27  | <b>SVTU Chapter Meeting</b><br><b>Topic: Casting Clinic with Dave Cleaves: certified FFF fly caster (check SVTU website)</b>                 |
| NOV. 18  | SVTU Board Meeting   |
| DEC. 1   | <b>SVTU Chapter Meeting</b><br><b>Topic: Local Resource Conditions</b> (details to follow check the SVTU website)                            |
| DEC. 16  | SVTU Board Meeting   |

## SEPTEMBER CHAPTER MEETING

**WHEN: TUESDAY, SEPTEMBER 22**

**WHERE: IWLA CLUBHOUSE: 18301 Waring Station Road; Germantown**

**TIME: 7:30 -9:00 PM**

**Social: 7:30-8:00**

**Program: 8:00 – 9:00**

**WHAT: CHAPTER MEETING**

**SPEAKER: Jack Higgins,SVTU board member**

**PROGRAM: Patagonia, Big Water Big Fish**

We are excited to have Jack Higgins as our speaker. The adventure starts with Jack landing in Balmaceda

Airport, a converted military airbase, then travel on a highway cut into the Patagonia to move troops to a conflicted area on the Chilean-Argentine border. From there we and descend into a vast territory that has been unscathed. The only scars seen on the landscape are those left by a volcanic eruption five years ago. Beautiful, breath taking, and Isolated Jack saw hikers and cyclists with fully loaded back packs, rafters to challenge the class VI rapids and of course Gauchos. He did not see caravans of fishing gear laden trucks that are hauling clients to the fast running Baker River. This five hour trek begs the question **Where are we going? The answer: to big water, big fish, and a continuing saga..**

## IWLA HUNTING AND FISHING DAY

**WHEN: SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 26**

**TIME: 1:00 PM - 5:00 PM (Volunteers please arrive by 11:00 AM)**

**Where: IWLA Pond. Enter at gate off of Clopper Road (prior to Seneca Creek and Waring Station Road)**

**What: IWLA Hunting and Fishing Day**

On this National Hunting and Fishing Day, IWLA- Rockville has an open house for the public. SVTU has a booth at the lake and assists with the kids fishing. Last year we had over 250 kids that came down to the lake to fish, many for the first time. It is a lot of work to herd that many kids and a very rewarding experience as well.

Volunteers are welcome to help, or just come out with the kids (grandkids, neighbor kids) and see what IWLA has to offer. There will be blackpowder shooting (18 and over), BB-guns for the younger kids and much more. It is great time for the family and it is free!

## **LEARN TO FLYFISH DAY @IWLA**

**When: Sunday, October 4th**

**Time: 12:00 Noon = Free Lunch / Lessons**

**Start PROMPTLY @ 1:00 PM**

**Where: IWLA Pond**

**What: LEARN TO FLYFISH**

Come join us on Sunday, October 4 for our "learn to fly fish" afternoon, and starts with a free lunch at 12:00 p.m. At 1:00 we will start our four hour hands-on lessons to introduce beginners to the sport of fly fishing. Because fishing is "more than just casting" we will have sessions on: equipment, types of knots, the difference between lake and stream fishing and macroinvertebrate identification (so you can see how a fly imitates the real thing). There will also be beginning casting instruction, and casting stroke refinement for more advanced students.

**Please register by October 1**

[www.senecavalleytu.org/events & meetings](http://www.senecavalleytu.org/events&meetings)

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## **OCTOBER CHAPTER MEETING**

**WHEN: TUESDAY, OCTOBER 27**

**WHERE: IWLA CLUBHOUSE: 18301 Waring Station Road; Germantown**

**TIME: 7:30 -9:00 PM**

**Social: 7:30-8:00**

**Program: 8:00 – 9:00**

**WHAT: CHAPTER MEETING**

**SPEAKER: Dave Cleaves**

**PROGRAM: Casting tricks and Training**

Dave Cleaves, Chapter Board member who is a certified FFF master fly casting instructor will be our speaker and has a program planned that will help your casting. He has a fly casting "exercise" program developed that he will present to the audience. If you want to improve your casting, you not only need to practice, you need to know how to practice. Let Dave be your "personal casting trainer" to improve your performance.

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## **MARYLAND DNR FISHERIES NEWS:**

**FALL TROUT STOCKING:** Keep checking the DNR website for updates regarding when / where the DNR may be stocking trout this fall. You can also sign up for email updates.

<http://dnr2.maryland.gov/fisheries/Pages/email-contact.aspx>

Though summer is waning the following article can help us with

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## **“SUMMERTIME TROUT FISHING” by Dale Thatcher: SVTU Chapter Board Member**

The beginning of this summer proved to be very good for catch and release trout fishing in our local area. This was at least partially thanks to above average water flows and fairly moderate temperatures.

But as I am writing this, things are very different. The good old three H's have been very frequent and the rain seems to have left us too. As a result, water flows have dropped significantly with many streams now below normal flows as indicated on the USGS stream flow charts. A number of our streams, including trout streams, are on the USGS site so you can get some idea of what you might find at places you intend to go. I think the birds of prey love these low water conditions and of course are not constrained by any regulations. I have seen some of the largest blue heron on trout streams this year. For fishermen that practice catch and release, the above conditions lead to the biggest problem—potentially lethal water temperatures. With the exception of our few tail waters or spring creeks, most streams heat up to 68°F early in the day and some don't really drop down much overnight. Carefully handling, and particularly reviving the trout, at these warmer temperatures is very critical. At temperatures much above 68 if we must fish for trout, it should probably be not only with barbless hooks but also with no hook point. Be sure to carry a thermometer and check the stream temperature often. Temperatures can vary quite a bit even along the same stream. When it is getting too hot to fish, you might consider other activities such as telling fish tales over lunch and a cold beverage. We are fortunate to have some very good "watering holes" near our trout streams. A lot even have excellent local MD brews on tap!

As I noted there are some stream exceptions that do not suffer from the water temperature problem although they still can be difficult due to low and clear water conditions. The Gunpowder has been held at 35 cfs since about mid-July, well below its norm for this time of year, but the temperature has rarely been above 56 degrees. I have only been able to catch a few fish on ants and very small nymphs. I seem to miss a fair number on my floating ants but I suspect that the fish might be making last minute refusals. I'm hoping for some fall action on trico or caddis hatches? Beaver Creek can also be difficult with the low and clear conditions, but fish can be caught on nymphs like scuds and sow bugs and even more action can

sometimes happen with dry flies or terrestrials.

In addition to good old ants, this year there has been some good action on beetle patterns and in particular the Japanese beetle. If you look in the vegetation you should find some of the naturals.

Big Hunting creek is a tailwater but the flow is typically so low that it too can warm up quite a bit. There are definitely wild brown trout there and some stocked rainbow trout are still managing to survive. Both are easily spooked, but when not spooked, they seem willing to take well placed terrestrials on fairly fine tippets. Refusals are also common in the low, clear conditions.

I should also mention Little Seneca creek, if only because TU has helped release a large number of young-of-year rainbows into the stream from the Trout in the Classroom program. Little Seneca also suffers from very low flows and there continues to be an ongoing mystery as to what happens to the fish. Mid-summer I did manage to catch a number of 3 to 4 inch rainbows above the Clopper road bridge on caddis flies. Unfortunately I searched upstream almost to the RR bridge and did not catch a sizeable trout. I also tried downstream to around Denny Raugh's memorial. I did not catch a fish but I did take along some tools and re-staked the tree at the marker.

Until we get some cooler temperatures and hopefully some good rains, don't forget the thermometer and be prepared for tough conditions. Hopefully DNR will be able to provide us with some more trout fishing opportunities with their fall stockings.

Dale Thatcher

## **“FISH THE EDGE”**

**by Noel Gollehon: SVTU Chapter President**

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While on a recent trip to the Conjeos River in Southern Colorado, Leslie and I fished with the “Edge Guy” otherwise known as Tom, her brother. We have fished with Tom for years, mainly on New Mexico's San Juan, which is a tailwater fishery with a different character. Anyway, Tom did something really out of character, he kept telling Leslie and ME to “Fish the Edge.” Tom has not tried to tell Leslie and me how to fish for years, so what was the deal now with the “suggestion.”

We were fishing water (both dry and nymph) that had a complex flow pattern. About three feet out from the near bank was a chute with a fast current about eight feet wide. On the other side of fast water was a large

area of slower current with great-looking holding water.

So I walk down to the stream and fish to the best holding water. Drifts without micro drag were difficult to achieve even with the best reach cast I could muster into the slower water in the middle of the river (or so I discovered). I did manage to hook and land a few fish in the slow water in the middle of the river.

After a ton of casts I hooked another in the middle holding water and in the process of bringing this fish in along the edge of the fast current I observed—what to me—was an amazing sight. As the fish was coming in, it moved through the lair of the bigger fish in the stream, fully double the size of the 10-12 inch fish I had hooked in the middle. The bigger fish were lying in the near edge of the chute! Not only was the one big fish along the “edge” there were several in plain view as this fish on the line disturbed their resting place. Why am I not fishing to where the big fish are?

So after the fish settled down, I stood back on the bank six feet from the water and fished my size 14 elk hair on the “edge”, just like Tom recommended. Guess what he was right and I hooked the guy in the photo.

The lesson in this is to fish the inside “edge” first, then move further away from the stream if needed. Resist the temptation to walk up to the water, and cast to the premium holding water in the middle of the stream. For good results, stay back and “fish the edge.”



## **“CROSSCURRENTS NOTEBOOK” (PART 2)**

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Following is an excerpt from another article written by Dave Cleaves, SVTU chapter board member and a Federation of Fly Fishers certified master casting instructor. The full article can be found on the SVTU website.

Dave has authored several great articles on Fly-fishing and, more specifically, the intricacies of

casting, that we will be sharing with our reading public in a section of our website.

We will keep you all up-to-date on future offerings through our email announcements and on our website. Tight Lines! And now, the article.

### **“WEIGHTY ADJUSTMENTS” by Dave Cleaves**

“The first time I tried to cast a heavily weighted fly was a humbling experience. I had become quite confident from my entire backyard casting practice, watching my jaunty little piece of yarn scoot out behind the loop like the ribbon in my daughter’s pigtail. But then the scene changed to the big river, with big fish and big flies. My fishing buddy had just discovered what the smallmouth were taking. He was nailing them - big bronze brawlers - and I wasn’t. In a blend of gloating and mercy, he tossed one of flies up to me. It hit the bottom of the canoe with a resounding thud. Uh Uh...

I was horrified at the creature in my hand. It was a mutant Woolly Bugger, a Darth Vader of streamers. It couldn’t have been made for a fly rod. It had dumbbell eyes I could have done curls with, an oversized hook, and enough chenille, rubber, and Crystal Flash to be entered in a parade. How was I supposed to get this thing moving? Even if I could, it would surely bonk me on the back of the head, bang the side of the canoe, or fly off like a stray bullet.

And it did all those things, all afternoon. My ‘Nam veteran buddy didn’t help by continually yelling, “Incomiiiiing.” I was exhausted and shell-shocked on the ride home, and longed for the controlled environment of backyard casting. After two days of self-pity, I pinched some shot on the leader of my practice rod, dug through my casting books, and attacked the weight problem. I’ve learned a little since that day. I’m still no expert, but at least I didn’t have to buy a hardhat and I save more energy for gym workouts and honey-do lists. I’ll summarize.

First, don’t abandon your casting fundamentals; just adapt them. Fly-casting, even with weighted nymphs and streamers is nevertheless a process of unrolling a flexible line to a target. The fly may offer resistance or ballistic belligerence because of its bulk or weight, but you then must adjust your basic cast to impart just enough energy through the loop to keep the fly aloft and to turn it over at the end of the cast. Don’t expect to make the same graceful, calligraphy loops you do with a #18 Adams. But you can learn to cope with the weight, actually use it to load the rod, and sling it a fair distance.

What follows applies to heavy weighted streamers and nymphs. The same adjustments, with some variation, apply to sinking lines and to bulky air-resistant flies. Compared to an unweighted fly, a weighted fly sinks and falls faster, is harder to get moving and harder to stop and turn around. You must adjust to each of these properties.

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The entire article can be found at  
[www.senecavalleytu.org](http://www.senecavalleytu.org).

Another published article by Dave Cleaves.

### **“DON’T FORGET THE LINE HAND FOR BETTER CASTING “ by Dave Cleaves**

*“The line hand plays an important role in fly casting ... In really long casts, the left (line) hand will be as busy as the rod hand ... line-hand control is half the battle in making a talented caster.”*

*-- A.J. McClane. The Practical Fly Fisherman. 1953. (pg 33)*

“We sometimes take the line hand for granted in fly casting. But the work of the line hand influences every aspect of our connection with the fish – casting, presentation, line management, striking, and playing the fish. (Line hand refers to the hand, arm, and shoulder of the caster’s non-rod side). Line-hand adjustments influence the loop through the management of slack, line speed, and interference/support of how we align and make the casting stroke with the rod hand. The rod and line hand have separate functions and must work together. When they don’t, we have problems.

We should not neglect the line hand and we may have to focus on improving our line hand movements if they are the source of casting problems. Line-hand problems can show up in poor loops but be mistaken for problems with the rod hand’s basic stroke. For example unintentional curves (usually to the line hand side) on long casts are sometimes caused by hauling with the line hand aggressively out to the side – an issue of taking/giving (releasing) and tracking.

Functions of the line hand in conjunction with the rod hand include:

- Positioning for the cast (pick up)
- Managing slack before, during, and after the stroke
- Changing line length being casted
- Supplementing the stroke through line speed – (hauling)
- Retrieving the fly
- Striking and playing fish.
- These functions are served by three fundamental line-hand skills—holding, giving, and taking line.
- Holding and organizing line
- Maintaining tension on the line during casting, fishing, and playing fish.
- Holding loose line off the water or the deck and keeping it organized and out of the way as it moves in and out of the casting system.
- Moving the line to and from the “control point” finger on the rod hand.

### **Taking In Line—the Essence of the Hauling Motion**

Off the reel, off the water, retrieving the fly (stripping, hand twist, other), taking up slack, striking and playing fish. This is a companion skill to giving line in changing line length. Taking in line includes starting the line in motion as well as changing the speed at which it is taken in. This is the essence of the hauling motion.

### **Giving Line Back**

*Where? On the shoot at the end of the stroke and when creating mends in the air or on the water.*

This is a key skill that often needs work on timing and a feel for the moving line and distance. The classic mistake is to release line too early on the shoot, too late on aerial mends. To change the length of the cast we use this skill to shoot, false cast different lengths of line, and get enough line outside the rod tip to start a cast.

Line-hand skills should be developed at first separately from the rod-hand skills and then right along with the stroking movements of the rod hand. We should develop the feel for the line hand’s direct influence on the line and understand its role in the work of casting and fishing. If things are working for us, fine. Don’t try to fix the unbroken. But as we stretch our skills and start to false cast different lengths of line, mend, and haul, we may need special attention to how well we are working our line hand. We can have bad habits, ground in by hours of fishing,

so it might be wise to get some supervised practice under the watchful eye of an instructor.”

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*Dave Cleaves (CI, MCI) of North Potomac, MD recently retired from the US Forest Service as the agency's climate change science advisor. Dave teaches fly casting and guides in Maryland and has worked for Trout & About (Phil Gay) and the LL Bean Outdoor Discovery schools.*

### **HOW TO KEEP INFORMED!**

#### **SIGN-UP FOR EMAIL UPDATES FROM SVTU**

The Chapter maintains a secure opt-in email alert and event invitation system that is used only by the Chapter for functions that we sponsor or support. This service, along with the Chapter’s website, provides up to the minute details of upcoming activities.

If you would like to opt-in to this service email your name, address, phone number, and preferred email address to: [svtroutunlimited@gmail.com](mailto:svtroutunlimited@gmail.com)

#### **SVTU WEBSITE** [www.senecavalleytu.org](http://www.senecavalleytu.org).

The website is the primary manner in which we can reach all friends of the Chapter. Check it out for info on upcoming events/activities.

### **EDITOR’S NOTE**

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If you have articles, photos, fish stories, fishing/stream reports, etc. that you think might be appropriate for inclusion in the newsletter, or the website send an email to me @ [wjunium1@hotmail.com](mailto:wjunium1@hotmail.com) or to the Chapter [@svtroutunlimited@gmail.com](mailto:@svtroutunlimited@gmail.com)