



The Flyline

The Newsletter of the Hawkeye Fly Fishing Association

September 2026



"Success"

Third Place in HFFA Show Photo Contest

By Jeff Moore

2027 HFFA 51st Anniversary Annual Meeting & Show
Save the Dates February 5th & 6th, 2027; See Page 8



President's Hatch - page 2
Future HFFA Show Model Minutes - pages 5 - 7
2026 State Fair Fly-Tying Competition Results - pages 9-10
HFFA at the 2026 Iowa State Fair - page 11
Ray Thys Essay - page 12
Beaver Dam Analogs Essay - page 13
HFFA DVD Library - page 14
Classifieds - pages 15 - 16

The President's Hatch

Hawkeye Fly Fishing Iowa State Fair Outreach

A huge thank you to everyone who volunteered at the Iowa State Fair this year! Your time, energy, and enthusiasm gave Hawkeye Fly Fishing an outstanding opportunity to connect with the public, introduce people to fly fishing, and showcase our club to thousands of fairgoers. This year, our members supported three State Fair outreach efforts:

- **Fly-Tying Competition** – Featured at the DNR Building
- **Fly-Tying Demonstrations** – Demonstrations at the Cultural Building during the first six days of the fair
- **Fly-Fishing Presentation** – Presentation at the DNR Courtyard on the final day of the fair

A Special Thank You to Our Leaders

A special thank you goes to James Barnhart and Mike Schrader for the leadership and considerable work they put into making these events possible.

James led the fly-tying competition, coordinating the judges and volunteers and helping make the competition a success.

Mike organized and led our fly-tying demonstrations at the Cultural Building. He not only coordinated volunteers and managed the event throughout the fair but also took the initiative to research the opportunity and handle the behind-the-scenes paperwork, planning, and coordination required to make it happen.

Their leadership, along with the efforts of all our volunteers, allowed us to take advantage of a tremendous outreach opportunity.

An Impressive Reach

The visibility generated by these efforts was impressive.

The Cultural Building had approximately 558,000 visitors during the six days our fly-tying table was there. Based on that attendance, our table likely put Hawkeye Fly Fishing in front of 70,000 to more than 100,000 fairgoers.

The DNR Building, where the fly-tying competition was displayed, sees approximately 10,000 visitors on an average day, providing another significant opportunity to introduce people to fly tying and fly fishing.



Kirk Rosenow

Altogether, Hawkeye Fly Fishing members contributed more than 200 volunteer hours at the State Fair.

Putting Our Mission Into Action

Opportunities like the State Fair are an important part of Hawkeye Fly Fishing's mission of education and outreach.

They allow us to:

- Introduce people to fly fishing and fly tying
- Answer questions and share our knowledge
- Encourage newcomers to give fly fishing and fly tying a try
- Share our enthusiasm for the sport
- Show the public what Hawkeye Fly Fishing is all about

For many people, their first exposure to fly fishing may be watching someone tie a fly or talking with a fly fisher at an event like the State Fair. Our volunteers made those first impressions possible.

State Fair Volunteers

Cultural Building – Fly-Tying Demonstrations: Mike Schrader, Joe Wedum, Dale Sanders, Paul Wright, James Barnhart, Jeff Moore, Lance Zook, Patrick Burns, & Bill Trilk

Fly-Tying Competition – Coordinator & Judges: Joe Wedum, James Barnhart, Lee Schulteis, & Paul Domoto

Fly-Fishing Presentation: Ron Dunek, Mike Schrader, & Kirk Rosenow

Spring Branch Creek Project

Speaking of the dedication and hard work of our volunteers, we are once again proud to turn the efforts of our members into meaningful conservation action in Northeast Iowa. Thanks to the time, commitment, and support of our membership over the past several years, we were able to make a significant contribution to conservation and habitat protection in the region.

We are proud to have donated \$10,000 to the Spring Branch Creek project initiated by the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation (INHF). This project protects 193 acres of woodland and grassland that buffer Spring Branch Creek, adjacent to the Manchester Fish Hatchery.

Protecting this land will help improve water quality and preserve habitat along one of the most popular and treasured fishing streams on the southern edge of the Driftless Area. This section of Spring Branch receives significant foot traffic from fly anglers, making the protection of this property especially meaningful to our membership and the broader angling community.

Contributions like this are possible because of your continued support, membership, and willingness to volunteer. Together, we are not only enjoying Iowa's outstanding fisheries, but we are also helping protect them for future generations.

Kirk



**Help Support
Port-a-Potties at N&S Bear Creeks
Go Fund Me**
<https://www.gofundme.com/port-a-potty>

Contacts & Meetings

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Work Day Coordinator
Vacant

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hawkeyeflyfisher@gmail.com

Project Healing Waters Fly Fishing

Meets 1st & 3rd Tuesday of Month
7:00 to 9:00pm
Paralyzed Veterans of America
Iowa Chapter
7025 Hickman Road Ste #1
Urbandale, IA
Contact: Paul Wright
blackwolfe47@yahoo.com

Quad Cities Chapter

Meets 3rd Thursday Every Month
6:00pm to 8:00pm+
Riverdale Town Hall
310 Manor Dr.
Riverdale, Iowa
Contact: John Channon
jc.channon@icloud.com

Dubuque Fly Fishers

Meets 2nd Monday 6:00pm
September to May
Swiss Valley Nature Center
13606 Swiss Valley Rd., Dubuque,
IA
Contact: Rob Kundert
flyfishersdubuque@gmail.com
facebook.com/dubuqueflyfishers

Central Iowa Fly Fishers

Meets 3rd Saturday 9:00am
September to May
Our Lady's Immaculate Heart
Church
510 East 1st St., Ankeny, IA
Contact: Kirk Rosenow
kcrosenow@gmail.com

Iowa City Contact

Contact: Ryan Maas
maas_ryan@yahoo.com

Cedar Rapids Contact

Contact: Lance Zook
l.a.zook@mchsi.com

TROUT UNLIMITED NORTH BEAR CHAPTER

Meetings held second Thursday of
month
September – May, Starting at 6:30
pm.
Johnston Public Library
6700 Merle Hay Road
Johnston, Iowa
Website: tu-northbear.org
Jay Leach - President
president@tu-northbear.org

TROUT UNLIMITED DRIFTLESS CHAPTER

Check the Website
For Information
www.iadriftless.org

Iowa Women Fly Fishers

Join us for good fishing
and good company .
[https://www.facebook.com/
groups/170891783425206](https://www.facebook.com/groups/170891783425206)
katelodge25@gmail.com
willacamp@gmail.com

Trout Unlimited Spring Creeks Chapter

3rd Thursday September - May
Location To Be Announced
Ronda Long-Craig - President
Check Their Facebook
www.facebook.com/springcreekstu

Iowa's Coldwater Conservancy

Tom Murray
jandtmurray@gmail.com

Waterloo/Cedar Falls Group

Meets 2nd Monday Every Month
6:00pm to 8:00pm
Fly Tying & Conversation
Hudson Public Library
Hudson, IA
Contact Robert Federhofer
robertfederhofer@gmail.com

Event Calendar

<u>September 2026</u> September 11-12 Tri-Lakes Fly Fishers 2026 Expo Clinton, Missouri Linda Chase lschase52@att.net September 12 HFFA & North Bear TU Work Day Manchester Hatchery 8:00 AM to Noon Ronda Long-Craig rondalong67@yahoo.com September 12 Brule River Spey Day Lake Superior Steelhead Assn. Brule river@ McNeil House Brule, WI www.steelheaders.org September 17 - 19 Northern Rodmakers Gathering 10th Annual West Fork Sports Club Avalanche, Wisconsin northernrodmakers.com September 24 - 26 Fly Fishers International Fly Fest Redding, CA flyfishersinternational.org <u>October 2026</u> October 2 - 4 2025 Casting for Recovery Camp Ewalu's Stone Retreat Center Strawberry Point, IA 52076 Must Register norrisl@ihaonline.org October 12 - 17 FFI - Women Connect 2026 Rendezvous Decorah, Iowa Registration on line March 2026	October 17 HFFA Board Meeting Manchester Hatchery In person Noon kcrosenow@gmail.com <u>November 2026</u> <u>December 2026</u> <u>January 2027</u> <u>February 2027</u> February 5 & 6 HFFA Annual Fly Fishing Show Courtyard by Marriot Ankeny, Iowa Kirk Rosenow kcrosenow@gmail.com February 27 - 28 Mid-Iowa Bass Masters Swap Meet & Boat Show 4-H Building State Fairgrounds Des Moines, IA www.midiowabassmasters.com <u>March 2027</u> March ? Fly Fishing Film Tour 10 am to 2 pm Varsity Cinema, Des Moines North Bear TU jjleach27@gmail.com March 12-14 Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo Hamline University St. Paul, MN info@greatwatersflyexpo.com March 20 Fly Tyers Rendezvous Spring Creeks TU Eagles Club, Monticello, IA Facebook March 18 - 20 Sowbug Roundup North Arkansas Fly Fishers Mountain Home, AR www.sowbugroundup.org	March ? Cornhusker Fly Fishers Spring Fling tlgoodwater@gmail.com om/springcreekstu <u>April 2027</u> <u>May 2027</u> <u>June 2027</u> June ? TU/HFFA/Johnston Library Introduction to Fly Fishing Johnston Library Johnston, Iowa 6700 Merle Hay Road 1 to 4 pm June ? HFFA board Meeting Virtual 6 pm kcrosenow@gmail.com Wisconsin Women's Fly Fishing Clinics June ? Intermediate June ? Beginner Need to preregister! Avalanche, WI wisconsinwomenflyfishing@gmail.com <u>July 2027</u> July ? Project Aware Check their Website July ? Iowa State Fair Fly Tying Competition Deadline for Fly Submission PO Box 57130 Des Moines, Iowa, 50317 <u>August 2027</u> August ? HFFA Board Meeting Virtual 6 pm kcrosenow@gmail.com
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The Flyline is the official publication of the Hawkeye Fly Fishing Association. It is published in April, June, September, and December. The HFFA is a chapter of the Fly Fishers International. Articles may be submitted as MS Word or as a text file. Typed, printed or clearly handwritten documents are also accepted. Photos can be submitted digitally. Send original jpeg. Deadline is one month before publication. Send all materials to:
Don Otto, The Flyline Editor
hawkeyeflyfisher@gmail.com
641-230-1468

HFFA Business Report

Hawkeye Fly Fishing Association Strategic Retreat – Future Show Model

Meeting Notes:

Location: Big Spring Hatchery onsite - 11am – 2:30 pm 6/27/2026

Attendees: Kirk Rosenow, Dave Jones, Henry Moeller, Rob Kundert, Ryan Maas, Don Otto, Ron Stahlberg, Mike Scrader, Willa Campbell, Patrick Burns, Dale Tayloe

Purpose of Retreat

The purpose of this retreat was to evaluate the long-term sustainability of HFFA's annual show model and identify opportunities to reduce volunteer workload while maintaining a high-quality show experience. From time to time, it is important for any organization to step back and assess what is working well, what can be improved, and what changes are needed to remain effective and sustainable.

Current HFFA Show Model:

Under the current HFFA show model, responsibility for sponsoring, planning, and staffing the annual show rotates among the Cedar Rapids, Quad Cities, Central Iowa, Dubuque, and Iowa City chapters. The sponsoring chapter selects the venue in its local area and assumes primary responsibility for planning and producing the entire event, with limited behind-the-scenes support provided at the state level. The traditional format has typically been a three-day event featuring vendors, educational programs, the HFFA annual business meeting during the Saturday lunch hour, and a formal banquet on Saturday evening.

Notes from the start of meeting:

- There is a strong desire and an urgent need to reduce the volunteer labor required to plan and operate our annual shows while still maintaining a high-quality experience.
- Members and board members may have slightly different perspectives to a degree on what constitutes the "ideal" show and what its highest priorities should be. Recognizing and balancing these differing viewpoints is both expected and healthy for the organization.
- There is strong support for maintaining the current general show format, including vendors and a two-day schedule consisting of Friday evening and Saturday. Moving to a one-day event would likely reduce vendor participation and the overall show experience. Currently, there appears to be limited interest in continuing Sunday programming unless future demand justifies it.

The current site sponsored show model no longer makes sense for following reasons:

- Current member population densities do not match our current model for site rotation.
- Current model generates a big learning curve every five years under current show rotation for a local site to fill every skill set in show production.
- Site sponsorship doesn't leverage statewide resources when they may be needed. The number of active members available to volunteer at shows can fluctuate over time, and different locations may periodically experience shortages of volunteers when they are needed most.
- Local site resources have been historically burnt out after the show which has limited ability to immediately connect with new fly fishers coming to the show.

New HFFA Model

Based on the discussion, participants agreed that transitioning to a statewide support model would better position HFFA to reduce volunteer workload, improve continuity, and build long-term organizational sustainability.

Key changes:

- Go to a statewide model for show production with site sponsored chair/co-chairs instead of site sponsored model for total show production.
- Rotate the chair and co-chair positions across the state
- Look to consolidate on 1 to 3 venues to lower not only the cost of the venue but also limit labor trying to investigate and research new venues each year.
- Standardize the annual show as a two-day event (Friday evening and Saturday), while retaining the flexibility to expand to a three-day format when there are sufficient interest, programming, or other compelling reasons to do so.

Chair/Co-chair

- The chairs will have access to virtual meeting software like Zoom or Google Meet.
- Determine the speakers/agenda/themes for the show
- Pick venue unless contract commitment is in place. Try to leverage established venues, if possible, with overall goal of consolidating to a few statewide sites.
- Chair/co-chair will likely be from different locations across the state

continued on next page

HFFA Business Report

- Determine whether historical banquet format makes sense or remove for different format.
- Overall ownership of show and work with board if need help

2028 – Chair/Co-chair

Dave Jones/Rob Kundert

2029 – Chair/Co-chair – Note: Need names for these chairs before 2027 show.

Cedar Rapids/Central Iowa

Skill set experts

HFFA, at the state level, will provide support and resources in the areas listed below upon request by the show chair or co-chair. To ensure long-term sustainability, the organization should develop a pool of volunteers with expertise in each of these functions, with a goal of having at least three individuals capable of filling each role. Rotating these responsibilities every three to four years will help prevent volunteer burnout, broaden organizational knowledge, and build bench strength. Ongoing communication and information sharing among these volunteers after each show should capture lessons learned, reduce learning curves, and promote continuous improvement from year to year.

- Registration/Web site integration
- Vendor management
- Games of chance
- Audio/video support
- Food (Limited need if no banquet)
- Fly-tying
- Donors/sponsors
- Kids/Family/Youth outreach at show

Benefits of new model

- Better leverages statewide resources by allowing experienced volunteers to support multiple show locations.
- Encourages specialization in key functions, such as vendor coordination and registration, reducing learning curves, improving continuity, and lowering the volunteer effort required from year to year.
- Consolidating shows to a smaller number of venues builds familiarity with facilities, strengthens relationships with venue contacts, and reduces the time and effort needed for planning and execution.
- Reduces volunteer burnout at the local site level by distributing responsibilities more effectively and providing consistent state-level support.
- Improves succession planning by creating multiple volunteers with experience in each key function, reducing dependence on any one individual.

Risks/Challenges to new model:

- The new model of statewide staffing for shows still requires key skill sets to be filled. Certain skills may not be much easier at state level. Some roles are more specialized or less desirable than others, making them more difficult to fill. Successfully sustaining this approach may require increased involvement from the board in recruiting, mentoring, and encouraging volunteers to develop expertise in these critical functions.
- As responsibilities shift from local sites to statewide teams, it will be important to maintain local ownership and engagement, so members continue to feel invested in the success of the show.

Side discussions:

- Some discussion that people prefer experiences over things. We should consider more prizes for guided trips over fly gear.
- It is important to segregate activities such as keeping vendors separate from fly tiers.
- There is some discussion on banquets and labor involved in producing. If a banquet is not part of the show the annual business meeting would need to incorporate the awards for the organization.
- Auctions recently have been less participatory.

Items for Further Study:

- Cost of an event planner – Would cost make sense for limited use cases?
- Can we leverage a particular venue company for shows across the state? Potentially not only labor savings here for each new chair/co-chair but also look to negotiate a contract with venue/hotel company with statewide locations to lower costs.

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HFFA Business Report

- We have historically had some missed opportunities to capitalize on new members post show creation. We should look for ways to get new fly fishers attending shows invited to either local upcoming events or some form of mentor program if there is interest in that.

Measures of success post model change:

- Have we reduced volunteer hours required to produce each show?
- Do we have at least three trained volunteers for each critical skill set?
- Is there increased continuity between annual shows?
- Have we improved volunteer satisfaction and reduced burnout?
- Have we increased post-show engagement of new members?
- What is the member and chair/co-chair feedback on changes?
- Has the venue consolidation helped?
- Has attendance remained stable or increased following implementation of the new model?

Show Retreat Recap

The changes outlined are intended to strengthen HFFA's ability to deliver high-quality annual shows while creating a more sustainable volunteer model. By leveraging statewide resources, developing specialized expertise, and reducing unnecessary workload, the organization will be better positioned to serve its members, attract and engage new fly fishers, and ensure the long-term success of its annual shows.

The transition to this new model should be viewed as an evolving process rather than strictly a one-time change. The Board will continue to review the implementation of the new show model throughout the 2027 and 2028 show seasons, evaluate its effectiveness against the identified measures of success, and adjust as needed. This commitment to continuous improvement will help ensure the model remains responsive to the needs of the organization, its volunteers, and its members

This report compiled by Kirk Rosenow and Dale Tayloe June 27, 2026

Kirk & Dale

2027 HFFA Annual Meeting & Show



51st Annual

FLY FISHING SHOW

FEBRUARY 5-6, 2027



COURTYARD BY MARRIOTT

2405 SE CREEKVIEW DR. ANKENY, IA 50021

FEATURING



PHIL ROWLEY

Stillwater fly-fishing expert with over 35 years exploring rivers and lakes North and South America.

Best-selling author (Orvis Guide to Stillwater Trout Fishing), award-winning fly tyer, instructor, and sought-after speaker and guide.



DAVY WOTTON

Lifelong fly-fishing professional whose journey began in the 1950s.

Master guide, product developer, consultant, and conservation advocate known for incredible feats like a White River Grand Slam and for inspiring anglers worldwide.

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EXPERT
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GEAR



AUCTIONS &
RAFFLES



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FISHING COMMUNITY AND HFFA



FOR MORE INFORMATION
www.hawkeyeflyfishing.com



SHOW HOURS & ADMISSION
To Be Announced



BRING THE FAMILY
Everyone Welcome!

2026 Iowa State Fair Fly-Tying Competition

By James Barnhart

The fly-tying competition was held at the 2026 Iowa State Fair. This competition has been developed and sponsored by the Hawkeye Fly Fishing Association (HFFA) with support of the Department of Natural Resources (DNR). There were 16 entrants with 52 flies entered into the competition from across the state. There were 3 entrants in the junior division (ranging in age from 4 years to 7 years), 10 in the adult division, and 3 in the expert division. There are four categories; dry flies, wet/nymph flies, streamer flies, and open. There are 3 divisions (Expert, Adult and Junior).

This year's judges were Joe Wedum (Des Moines), Paul Domoto (Ames) and Lee Schulties (Perry). The judging took place at the State Fair on Wednesday, August 12th.

The flies were on display in the DNR building on the fairgrounds during the entire fair.

Fly Tying Competition Results Iowa State Fair 2026

Junior Division

Dry Fly Category

1 st Place	No entry
2 nd Place	No entry
3 rd Place	No entry

Wet Fly/Nymph

1 st Place	Maverick Mendick	Spikey	Moulton
2 nd Place	Magnolia Mendick	Unicorn	Moulton
3 rd Place	No entry		

Open Category

1st Place	Maverick Mendick	Red White & Blue	Moulton
2 nd Place	No entry		
3 rd Place	No entry		

Streamer Category

1st Place	Marky Mendick	Last Cast	Moulton
2 nd Place	Magnolia Mendick	Mermaid	Moulton
3 rd Place	Maverick Mendick	American Bulldog	Moulton

Adult Division

Dry Fly Category

1st Place	Tom Donnelly	Red Quill	Cedar Rapids
2nd Place	Ray Corry	Lime Trude	North Liberty
3 rd Place	Andy Hunsinger	Foam Cicada	Pella

Wet Fly/Nymph Category

1st Place	Thomas Polehna	Crackles	Cedar Rapids
2nd Place	Andy Hunsinger	Crimson Copper Brassie	Pella
3rd Place	Tom Donnelly	Royal Coachman Wet Fly	Cedar Rapids

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Open Category

1st Place	Andy Hunsinger	Pearl & Peacock Futsu (Tenkara)	Pella
2nd Place	Ray Corry	Whitlock's Near-Nuff Sculpin	North Liberty
3rd Place	Kevin McVey	Spirits Hope	Ankeny

Streamer Category

1st Place	Ray Corry	Clouser Minnow	North Liberty
2nd Place	Andy Hunsinger	Hawkey Super Bugger	Pella
3rd Place	Thomas Polehna	Chillin Villian	Cedar Rapids

Expert Division**Dry Fly Category**

1st Place	Jeff Moore	Biot Parachute Adams	Cedar Rapids
2nd Place	Mark Smothers	Gray Ugly	Peosta
3 rd Place	Mike Jacobs	Chubby Chernobyl	Monticello

Wet Fly/Nymph Category

1st Place	Jeff Moore	Captive Dun	Cedar Rapids
2nd Place	Mark Smothers	Beadhead Soft Hackle	Peosta
3 rd Place	Mike Jacobs	Duracell	Monticello

Open Category

1st Place	Jeff Moore	Seven Layer Frog	Cedar Rapids
2nd Place	Mike Jacobs	Ol' Mister Wiggly	Monticello
3 rd Place	Mark Smothers	Crappie Catcher	Peosta

Streamer Category

1st Place	Jeff Moore	Carrie Stevens "Larry"	Cedar Rapids
2nd Place	Mike Jacobs	Barteaux Minnow	Monticello
3 rd Place	Mark Smothers	Black Nosed Dace	Peosta

James

Shown below left to right Judges: Lee Schulteis, Joe Wedum, Paul Domoto and their leader James Barnhart.



Hawkeye Fly Fishing Association 2026 Iowa State Fair



Shown above left to right Mike Schrader answering a question, fair goers examine fly display & the fly display.

HFFA Members,

Last spring at a Pleasant Hill Library Fly-Tying session, the subject of our past participation at the Iowa State Fair came up. Several years ago, we had a table in the DNR Building where members demonstrated fly tying for fairgoers.

Knowing that wood carvers, wood turners, wood burners, and leather crafters had demonstrations and displays in the Iowa State Fair Cultural Building, I went to the State Fair Administration building to see who we should speak with about securing a space for the HFFA in the Cultural Building.

They connected me with the person responsible for Creative Arts. When I explained that we were interested in demonstrating fly tying and displaying flies, she was very enthusiastic about the idea and said she would see what could be arranged. Later, she called back with some great news: HFFA had been given a space in the Cultural Building for the first six days of the fair, from 9:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. We were also provided with admission and parking passes.

Joe Wedum and I staffed the table for a couple of days, and we were both pleasantly surprised by the amount of interest we received. There was a steady stream of fairgoers stopping to look at our display, ask questions, and watch us tie flies. The first six days of the fair drew approximately 658,000 visitors, or an average of 109,000 people per day. While we obviously reached only a small percentage of those attendees, the exposure was significant.

The time passed quickly as we talked with people about fly fishing and fly tying. It was clear that there is good interest in the sport, and our presence at the fair gave us an excellent opportunity to introduce people to HFFA, fly fishing and fly tying.

Since the fair, I have also noticed several people expressing interest in joining our Central Iowa Fly Fishers Facebook group. That additional interest is a good indication that our participation is already generating new connections.

The Creative Arts person asked whether we would be interested in participating for the entire fair next year. If we can recruit enough volunteers to staff the table, having a presence throughout the fair would be great.

This is the most exposure the Hawkeye Fly Fishing Association has ever received at an event. With the number of people we reached, the interest we generated, and the new connections we made, our participation at the Iowa State Fair was a success.

Mike

Kirk Rosenow, Ron Dunek and Mike Schrader, representing HFFA presented on the Iowa Department of Natural Resources Stage, Sunday afternoon August 23rd. Kirk (below left) reviewed fly fishing in general and discussed the possible fishing for both warm and cold water species in the state of Iowa. Ron Dunek (below right) discussed the various equipment used. Mike Schrader showed the crowd the different types of flies used. Kirk's Hatch on page two of the Flyline, thanks all the volunteers whose efforts made HFFA's exposure at 3 different venues possible.

Don



“Fly Fishing Fascination”

By Ray Thys

Third Place Essay at the 2026 HFFA Annual Meeting & Show

Forty years ago, I was introduced to fishing for trout. I will admit that I started out as bait fisherman. I used salmon eggs, corn and even Velveeta cheese. I later graduated to ultra-light jigs and lures. I was always fascinated with people who used the fly rod, but had pictured in my mind that fly fishing was a snobbish method of fishing and I felt I didn't have the patience or the money to take up that form of fishing. As my kids were growing up and the pressure of my job, I wanted to find a hobby that would provide some relaxation from the hectic schedule my kids and job placed on me. On one of my fishing trips, I witnessed a fly fisherman catch 10 trout out of a hole that I had just given up fishing because they wouldn't bite. He was kind enough to show me the fly he was using and I learned he tied it himself. I noticed a fly-tying class being offered by Mike Jacobs at Washington High School in Cedar Rapids. I decided to take the class to learn to tie fly patterns on jig. I found fly tying relaxing and satisfying. I started purchasing fly tying material and bought a vise. After taking the class for several years, Mike asked me where I fly fish because he has never run into me on any stream. I told him I didn't fly fish. His follow up question was inquiring what have I done with all the flies I have tied over the years'. I told him they are neatly kept in boxes on a shelf in the closet. He insisted I should come to a fly-casting class he offered and give it a try. From that moment on, I dipped my foot into the world of fly-fishing. I discovered it is not a snobbish sport and it didn't require spending thousands of dollars on name brand equipment. I met many wonderful knowledgeable people I now call friends. As I got better at fly-fishing, I traded in my Berkley Cherrywood fly rod for nice TFO rod and Lamson reel. I did purchase a Hobie Cat 75 Float boat (well actually 3 of them) and now have 10 fly rod and reel combinations. I can credit my late wife for purchasing me a rod building class from Chuck Unga and now I build my own fly rods. I have encouraged friends to fly fish and many are enjoying it with me on trips. I became a lifetime member of HFFA and a member of Trout Unlimited. I enjoy being a river guide for Casting for Recovery and support Project Healing Waters. Fly fishing has opened a whole new world for me to enjoy my retirement years. I have spent a lot on fly-fishing over the years but you can't take it with you. I look forward to teaching my grandsons how to fly-fish someday. Although I enjoy all types of fishing other than fly fishing, I can say without a doubt it truly unites you with nature and gives me an even greater appreciation for the cold-water streams of the Driftless Area that we all need to protect for our future.

Ray

Beaver Dam Analogs

By Dave Jones

A Beaver Dam Analog or (BDA) is a human made, semi-porous structure designed to mimic the form and function of a natural beaver dam. They are constructed using untreated wooden posts and woven branches. Beaver Dam Analogs slow the stream flow and raise the water table which can restore degraded wetland ecosystems. Slower stream flow decreases flow velocity protecting the stream shoreline. Slowed water pools behind the dam allowing water to naturally spill and seep into the surrounding floodplain. Finally the slowing water allows sediment to accumulate behind the dam, improving water clarity downstream, filtering pollutants and rebuilding eroded streams.



Iowa Coldwater Conservancy (ICC) was created to protect and restore the ecosystems that sustain Iowa's cold-water streams while expanding public access to cold-water streams. New Melleray Abbey owns substantial acreage that includes Monastery Creek, a tributary to Catfish Creek trout stream, which has public access in the Swiss Valley Nature Preserve in Dubuque, Iowa. The Abbey embarked on a wetland improvement project that included the construction of beaver dam analogs. The project includes BDA's because they are considered "low-tech", process-based restoration tools that use simple, natural materials and do not require heavy machinery. Part of Iowa's Coldwater Conservancy mission is to advocate and support new stream and wetland restoration practices.



Therefore, in August of 2024 ICC decided to support this effort to test the effectiveness of this novel practice with a \$5,000 grant to construct 10 beaver dam analogs on Monastery Creek. In addition to the financial support ICC board members joined other volunteer groups to build the beaver dam analogs. Project objectives include; improving the water quality flowing into Catfish Creek and eventually the Mississippi River by reducing the sediment load and pollutants, restoring the wetlands in the watershed, and protecting from brown trout the South Pine Creek Brook trout that will be reintroduced upstream of the beaver dam analogs. If successful, this project is a true "win-win" proposition by reducing the polluted sediment flow into the Mississippi River while at the same time improving the trout stream conditions just down-stream of the beaver dam analogs.

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HFFA DVD Library

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