



the BUFFer

The Newsletter of Buckeye United Fly Fishers, Inc., Cincinnati, OH

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July 2026

President's Letter

Summer is definitely here! The bugs are coming out in force (as evidenced by the number of them on our car windshields), resulting in the fish and other aquatic life becoming VERY active. I've had the opportunity to fish a couple of our local rivers and ponds, and if it weren't for some of the storms and downpours we continue to get, conditions could be called almost perfect! If you haven't had a chance to get out recently, try to find a way to get to our local waters; the fish are waiting!

I'd like to give a big thank you to Lisa Morissette for the program she gave at our last meeting. Her program was titled "Fish really do live in beautiful places" and was a wonderful "travelogue" of her travels in our country searching for adventure and beautiful places to enjoy. While she was at it, she fished. One of the things her presentation reminded me of is that we frequently look at our fishing adventures as a quest for "size and numbers," and many of us (I am often guilty of this) need to take time to look up from the water more and enjoy the incredible beauty of this amazing country. While I have been fortunate enough to visit and fish several of the locations she presented, there were far more that I haven't been to ... and want to!

Our next meeting will be our picnic! This is always a great chance for us to get together, share time with old and new friends, tell some fishing lies, enjoy a wonderful dinner, and even fish a bit, if we wish. If you haven't signed up yet, please do so.

This is the first addition of the BUFFer published by our new editor, Brent Miller. Brent Miller is a long-term BUFF member, comes from an extensive background in journalism, and will be a perfect fit for this role. In addition to taking over leadership of the BUFFer, Brent is doing a great job of coordinating fishing activities for the local veteran population. Thanks, Brent!

See you at the picnic. Fish on!

Bob Miller, President

Editor's Notebook

Greetings! Welcome to my first issue as editor of the BUFFer.

A very big thank you goes to Ken Mandel who offered his expertise and skills producing this newsletter for eight years. He did a fine job keeping us informed and showing what we are all doing out there fishing, telling our stories. You have probably already noticed a few changes to the BUFFer. Ken looked at my ideas for a refresh and approved. The board also said, "Have at it." So, you are going to see a few changes in the BUFFer's layout and content.

As Bob indicated in his President's Letter, I have a background in journalism. Actually, I am a former professor of journalism and photojournalism. I have provided communication consulting to agencies, had a successful commercial photography business, have written for magazines and newspapers, co-authored a book on rural health care, and travel writing for a national motorcycle travel magazine. I also write a personal journal online in retirement.

I bought my first fly rod when I returned from Vietnam and the U.S. Army in October 1971. I played with that rod and played with that rod to no avail. I had no mentor. Skip to 2006 when my wife, Lin, and I moved to Cincinnati. I vowed that I was going to find a fly fishing club and really learn this sport.

I attended my first BUFF dinner meeting in November 2006, and knew absolutely no one. After I walked in the door, a member introduced himself and asked if I was new. He took me under his wing that night and made me feel welcome and wanted. It made a big impression on this stranger, new to Cincinnati. After I joined BUFF in December 2006, I became a fly fisher because of the mentoring. If it had not been for Harry Pass, that night of my first meeting, I might not be here today.

That is important. How we welcome others into our club says a lot about who we are and what we do.

My mission for the BUFFer is to continue telling our stories and to build community. The BUFFer is more than just a newsletter. It's a reflection of who we are as an organization and community, and how we care for each other. Those are the stories we will tell. It's a work in progress!

D. Brent Miller, Editor

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BUFF July Meeting – Wednesday July 8th

It's picnic time!

BUFF members are invited to join us for our annual picnic on Wednesday, July 8, at Miami Meadows Park, located at 1546 OH Route 131, Milford, OH 45150. This is a fun, social event and a great opportunity to spend time with fellow club members.

Time: 5:00 PM – 8:00 PM Dinner: Served at 5:30 PM

Since we have reserved the shelter for the entire day, members are welcome to arrive earlier and enjoy fishing in the pond before the picnic begins.

Dinner provided by BUFF includes:

- Fried chicken
- Coleslaw
- Potato salad
- Watermelon
- Dessert
- Chips
- Soft drinks

The park features a large stocked pond with crappie, bluegill, catfish, carp, and bass. BUFF has reserved the picnic shelter adjacent to the pond. There is also a walking path around the pond, along with convenient parking and restroom facilities nearby. Picnic tables are available at the shelter, but members may wish to bring a lawn chair for additional seating.



Committee Corner

2027 Fly Fishing Expo Planning Team

While the 2027 Greater Cincinnati Fly Fishing Show seems far off – it will be Saturday, February 6th, 2027, planning the show is pretty much a year-long activity. The planning team has started working on the show. Our team is a small group, but we work together to make the show happen. We have several team activities that we need to fill as some of our past team members are stepping down. If interested, please reach out to our team co-chairs, Tom Bachey (513-543-4056; h2oguy@fuse.net), or Ken Mandel (513-675-8488; kengmandel@gmail.com). We would be very happy to have you as part of the group.

2027 Banquet Committee

We are seeking a member (or members) to take on the Banquet Chair position, along with volunteers to serve on the planning committee. This is a great opportunity to get involved, bring new ideas to the event, and help continue its success. Planning the banquet is very much a team effort, and there are many ways to contribute. Past committee members will be available to help ensure a smooth transition.

If you are interested in taking on a leadership role or joining the banquet team, please reach out to Bryan Tudor (513-827-5437; bryan.tudor@yahoo.com) who can provide more information. Your involvement will help carry this important activity forward.

BUFF 50th Anniversary

Yes! BUFF was founded in 1977, so 2027 will mark our 50th. A lot has changed over half a century. Cari Vota and Bob Miller have offered to organize a team to work on ideas and plans for a celebration. We are looking to form a small team for the project. Nothing has been set regarding type of event, location, program(s), etc. That will be what the team will work on. If interested, please contact Bob Miller (513-378-6904; bob.miller@altagila.com) or Cari Vota (413-476-7112; vota@zoomtown.com).

Committee Opportunities

Interested in getting involved with club events? We have great opportunities for club members to volunteer on teams that plan club events and activities. These include planning for BUFF's 50th Anniversary as a club, planning for the 2027 Fly Fishing Show next February, and planning for the 2027 BUFF Banquet held in March. Volunteering for these activities is an excellent way to contribute to BUFF and enhance your experience and enjoyment with the club.

Committee Corner (cont'd)

Stream Quality Monitoring Update

After failing twice due to rain and high water, we were finally able to accomplish the Caesars Creek LMR monitoring on June 4th.

The water was still a bit high and fast, which added to the challenge. These recent conditions contributed to lower numbers of macroinvertebrate specimens. During our assessment, the water temperature was 62 degrees and our overall cumulative index value (CIV) was 18.

Since a CIV of 17-22 is considered "good" and 22 or above is "excellent," this was not a bad score considering the recent conditions.

Thanks to Gary Begley and John McGinnis for helping on short notice.

Also, on the third attempt we managed to complete the SQM on 4 Mile Creek on June 8th. The water was back down to a reasonable level and the flow was safe. We talked with a couple of spin fishermen passing by and they were catching some smallmouth.

The scoring system on 4 Mile uses a different

methodology than the LMR survey utilizes. (0 - 12 scale). Despite the somewhat still stained water conditions, we found a healthy diversity of bugs. Net spinning and cased caddis dominated the count but mayflies, beetles and a few stoneflies were present. We scored an 8 which is in the 'grey zone'. Considered neither acceptable or unacceptable water quality. The percentage of midge, worms and blackfly larva held us back some. Our next SQM on 4 Mile is scheduled for July 22nd. We are looking for someone to take over this 4 Mile SQM in 2027. We will train you and help if you're willing to take over eventually.

The site of our **Bass Island LMR** monitoring is still experiencing construction issues. We're hoping the July 18th event will happen as planned.

You can sign up for any of these events on our web site. They're a great way of learning your bugs and making the flies you tie look more realistic.

Tom Britton & Tim Cassani

BUFF Library

The listing of library holdings is now on the website. You can search the list, but the system does not allow us to 'check out' books on-line. Once you identify the item, or items, you want, send an email to info@buckeyeflyfishers.com. Include your name, and the titles and 'serial numbers' for the items.

Dave Smith will be notified, and he will bring the items to the next meeting. Returning items is simple. Just bring them to an upcoming meeting where Dave will collect them. If you have a question, reach out to Dave Smith (dksmith6973@yahoo.com).

Cumberland River Fly Fishing

By Tom Bachey

On Monday, June 8th, Harry Pass and I fished the Cumberland River with Jim Sauerheber of Cumberland Valley Fly Fishing. We drove down Sunday evening, the night before, and made the obligatory stop at Buc-ee's on the way down. I am enamored with the Texas Cheesesteak Burritos from Buc-ee's!

We arrived at the Union Chapel Lodge that night and found an elementary school that has been refurbished into a very comfortable place to stay. Jim had let us know that we would be putting in at Winfrey Ferry which is just a few minutes from Union Chapel Lodge.

Jim had been a couple of minutes ahead of us at 6:30 AM, Central Time, and we began by discussing how Jim wanted our rods rigged – what weight leader and tippet. Both Harry and I decided to use our own rods rather than what Jim could provide, only because we are comfortable with our gear, although Jim will provide a wide array of gear, if needed. As we put the boat in the river, the water level was not low but there was little or no release scheduled from the dam, so the water levels would only drop as the day wore on.

Harry became my wind block as we headed upstream to the first spot Jim wanted us to fish. The temperature hovered in the low 60's but being on the river with fog meant that I had the comfortable seat as Harry faced the wind. We did encounter pockets of warm air and cold air due to the fog but nothing we couldn't handle.

Jim had rigged us up with white mop flies and caddis under an indicator and would vary the

depth depending on the spot. Harry landed a couple of fish before I got going, both of them at least 16" and fat, healthy, vigorous fish. I finally started landing some fish and quickly had landed 5 and missed 3. Then, the rain, or at least sprinkles, sometimes heavy, started after 8:30 AM. Jim moved us up and down the river throughout the trip, going through a given run several times if we caught fish. Throughout the day, almost all of the fish were at least 16" or larger, with Harry and I landing 17" and 18" fish routinely. Harry and I both had a fish or two close to 20" but not quite and all of the fish appeared big, fat, healthy and with a lot of fighting spirit. Some of the fish fought above their weight, acting like 22" fish at times. Both Harry and I landed one brook trout, and his was close to 12". All the other fish we landed were rainbows, no browns.

At the end of the day, I ended up with 22 fish and Harry had 14, so I call that a good day! As always, Jim kept us moving from spot to spot, and did his best to put us on fish. If the river level had been a little higher, we may have landed more but I certainly enjoyed the opportunity to float the Cumberland and spend time with Harry and Jim. Jim is an excellent guide and always takes out where he puts in, which is convenient for both Jim, as a guide, and for anyone fishing with him. I highly recommend fishing with Jim and I recommend staying at the Union Chapel Lodge if you go down in that area.

Fishing the Muskegon River

By Ken Mandel

On June 21st & 22nd, Haruko and I had an opportunity to spend 2 days fishing on the Muskegon River with Kevin Feenstra. Those who have attended club meetings will likely remember Kevin's excellent presentations on this river for both great information on fishing, and his fantastic nature photography. Kevin is a fantastic guide and an extremely knowledgeable naturalist. 'If you have not attended a meeting where Kevin presents, you owe it to yourself to do so – you will not be disappointed.

The Muskegon is one of the largest of the Michigan rivers. It arises from Houghton Lake in northern part of the state, and it flows southwest for over 300 miles, emptying into Lake Michigan, at the town of Muskegon. Kevin primarily guides on the lower river below and above Croton Dam.

On this trip, we fished from just below Croton Dam to above the town of Newago, covering over 7 miles of river on each day. Kevin has a jet boat, which enabled us to move up and down the river. We've both fished this section of the river, on prior occasions with Kevin. It is never repetitive, as the fish that are present, flies one uses, and river conditions vary, and that directs what one targets and technique.

Fantastic' is the best way to summarize our experience fishing with him on this trip. This year we were past dry fly season, and Kevin rigged us with a 'wet fly' pattern. We fished 2 tandem flies which mimicked insects which would be floating or rising in the water column. We used 5-wt rods, with the rig being a floating



line with a weighted leader. Flies were tied to the leader with 5X tippet. I'd say the total leader rig was 12' long. It's purpose was to quickly get the flies down in the water column, but not put them on the bottom. We'd cast across the current and let the flies drift toward the back of the boat. Most of our hook-ups came at the end of the drift; a quick tug was the indication of a strike. The flies were fairly small – size 14 – 16. Most were Kevin's patterns that he has developed for the river and conditions. Rather than just drift the river, Kevin would take us to different areas where we'd fish for a while and then we'd target someplace new.

Over the two days, we both landed a good number of fish. Haruko's were all rainbows, most in the 9" – 12" range. I had a similar catch of rainbows, and added 2 larger brown trout - in

15" range. At this time of year the river is also beginning to hold smallmouth bass, which come in from the lake. On the first day we spent a short time fishing a small streamer rig, and I landed one smallmouth. As summer progresses, they get to be more abundant, though the river remains cool enough to sustain its trout population. The river, as most Michigan rivers, is stocked, but there is a significant holdover and breeding population of trout as well.



Haruko and I both enjoy the nature associated with fishing a river, and we were not disappointed. We saw several bald eagles, many osprey (which nest along this stretch of the Muskegon), kingfishers, blue and green herons, and other waterfowl and other wildlife.

Aside from being a great guide, Kevin offers up an excellent cooked lunch. It was a nice mid-day break and good time to relax a bit. We stayed Newago. It is convenient to the launch areas we used (10 minute drive). We stayed in the Muskegon River Inn, a small (6 room), boutique hotel in the middle of the town. You can walk to a few places for dinner. It's an excellent place to stay and we highly recommend it

For contact information –

Kevin Feenstra – Feenstra Guide Service (www.feenstraguideservice.com). Phone: 231-652-3526; email: info@feenstraguideservice.com.

Muskegon River Inn (www.muskegonriverinn.com). Phone (Heather-co-owner): 307-690-4960. Email: info@muskegonriverinn.com. I recommend booking by calling the hotel directly. You get a much better rate than by booking on line through a 'booking service'. Heather's partner, Jay, also guides on the river.



Three Rivers Fly Fishing Club – Sad News

From Ken Mandel

I am sure that a number of our members are familiar with the Three Rivers Club which is located in Fort Wayne, IN. About 2 weeks ago I had a call from Ron Dixon, Treasurer and a board member of Three Rivers. Ron shared the very sad news that they had come to a decision to close the club. I was very surprised to hear this, as they had about 100 members.

The issue and problem, as Ron explained it, was that he and about 4 others who had led their club's programs and activities for many years wished to step down. However, they could not get anyone from their membership, not a single individual, to step up and take on club leadership and support roles. It was a very sad, and to me, a disheartening call and discussion.

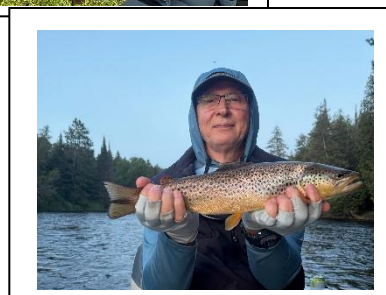
The news that Ron Dixon shared with me struck a bit of a chord. Though BUFF has

about 350 members, we also struggle to get members to take on roles and responsibilities. As we often say at meetings and other gatherings, "we are a volunteer organization". Activities, events, trips, etc., only happen because members volunteer to either organize them or help.

Volunteering to take on a role or responsibility, or to help with an activity, is critically important to sustain and grow our club. One does not need to be an expert! Anyone can build into a role. It is also very rewarding and enjoyable to be able to share our enthusiasm for this sport with others.

Please give consideration to getting more involved by volunteering for a team or activity. It is most often not much of a time-demand. I do not think anyone would regret getting more involved.

Your Pictures



BUFF Calendar

<u>Trip/Activity & Location</u>	<u>Dates</u>	<u>Trip /Activity Coordinator</u>
Veterans Fly Fishing White Oak Farm, Morrow, OH	Tuesday, July 7 9:00 a.m. – Noon	Brent Miller
Annual Picnic Miami Meadows Park Milford, OH	Wednesday, July 8 5:00 – 8:30 p.m.	Bob Miller
After Work Fishing Little Miami River Camp Dennison	Thursday, July 9 6:00 – 8:00 p.m.	Bill Krimmer
BUFF Board Meeting Springdale Community Center Springdale, OH	Wednesday, July 15 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.	Bob Miller
Women’s Fishing Day Trip Brookville Tailwaters, IN	Thursday, July 16 All Day	Cari Vota
Ohio Fly Tying Guild Online Zoom Meeting	Friday, July 17 6:30 – 8:00 p.m.	Gary Begley
Stream Quality Monitoring 3 Events/3 locations	July 18, 18 & 22 10:00 a.m.	Tim Cassani, Tom Britton & Gary Begley

Directions to July BUFF Picnic

Click on [link to Google Maps](#). Miami Meadows Park, 1546 OH Route 131, Milford, OH 45150.

