

Badger Fly Fishers



Newsletter

May 2015

Many learned to fly fish at old schoolhouse

Historic property is now on the market

It's fitting that the book, *A River Runs Through It*, likened fly fishing to a religion. Because it was an old schoolhouse, which doubled as a church on Sundays, that became a fly fishing school, in part because of the interest generated by the subsequent film.

Built in 1906, just outside of Ontario, Wisconsin in Vernon County it was operated by the Wesleyan Church for over 60 years as the Mount Pisgah school and church.

After having a couple of other owners, the property, which is surrounded by Wildcat Mountain State Park, was acquired in 1990 by Bill Hurrell, who found himself in need of a new direction after the stock market crash in the late 80's left him without a job.

The building was in need of repair by then, but work began by the previous owner left it ideally suited to be transformed into a residence, but still leaving the open space of the old schoolroom intact.

That undivided area is now the upstairs living room which also connects to a large cloakroom which was a later addition. The cloakroom still has one of the original blackboards in it. The rest of the living quarters are downstairs.

Starting in the early 90's Bill ran the Kickapoo Flyfishing Workshop from the location for almost twenty years. Everything was provided including a learning experience that consisted of three night's lodging, classroom

instruction, casting instruction and personalized instruction on the close-by Billings Creek, as well as the west fork of the Kickapoo. Two sessions per week were given.

After the trout season he would also guide fly anglers for southern Wisconsin smallmouth. This was in addition to being a Montana hunting guide too.

With the interest in fly angling having past the boom years, Bill's marriage, a new job and a move to New York, he has put the property up for sale. While he misses this great trout fishing region, he has embraced the change, and now new history will be made at the old country schoolhouse.

Anyone interested in this unique property can contact Bill at billchurrell@gmail.com



A message from Nancy Winters

President
Bob Harrison
(608) 233-7480
twoperfectdogs@yahoo.com

Vice President
Gene Knutson
(608) 238-1674
bjknuts1@facstaff.wisc.edu

Treasurer
Mike Phillips
(608) 873-4521
phillips7550@sbcglobal.net

Secretary
Lynn Langenfeld
lynn.langenfeld52@gmail.com

Board Member
Walt Stevenson
(608) 231-3163
wrs@plantpath.wisc.edu

Board Member
Bill Engber
(608) 238-4374
engber@orthorehab.wisc.edu

Board Member
Tom Smith
(608) 204-9903
t.e.smith@charter.net

Board Member
Dan Johnson
(608) 233-6518
johnson7@tds.net

Board Member
Michael Rock
mrock@ingleliving.com

I want everyone to know that on Saturday, August 1st, between noon and 5:00 P.M., Steve's children, Melissa and John, and I are having a party at my house to celebrate Steve's life.

This party is the one thing Steve made me promise I would do in his memory. I know it is right in the middle of fishing season and on a Saturday, but I am hoping that I am giving you enough notice that you might be able to stop by at least for a short time.

Also, per Steve's instructions, "There will be no light beer or young whiskey." I am adding, "no spiced rum."

Please let me know if you are coming so I can plan for food and beverages. You can e-mail me at ncarolwinters@gmail.com or call me at 608-524-6348 or on my cell at 608-963-3186.

BFF picnic planned for June

Mark your calendar now for Saturday, June, 20th. We will hold our picnic at Dane County's Donald park. We will also offer a casting clinic by Brian Ramsey from Viroqua, owner of the Driftless Region Master Fly Casting & Angling School.

Check out his [website](#), and read his impressive biography, and you won't want to miss this opportunity. Look for the details in next month's newsletter.



The Badger Fly Fishers Newsletter is published monthly. Articles, photos, information, and calendar events for the newsletter are encouraged and should be submitted by the 1st day of the month of issue to: Dan Johnson, 426 Glenway St., Madison WI 53711. If possible. Word files sent to:

Next Meeting:

Third Monday of May

Monday
May 18th



Dr. DeWitt is an emeritus professor in the Nelson Institute, University of Wisconsin, Madison.

He has internationally recognized expertise in Land Stewardship and Wetlands Ecology and Stewardship. He is actively involved in the analysis of ground water resources helping local governments and communities maintain groundwater flows to springs and wetlands.

During the past eight years, his research has involved the groundwater systems that supply Lake

Waubesa and its wetlands. This has furthered our understanding of ground water systems that sustain the quality of Lake Waubesa and the entire Yahara chain of lakes.

The scientific principles involved and data acquired, is widely applicable to the ecology of spring fed streams, lakes and wetlands in many geographical areas. The ecology of spring flow is critical to our conservation of cold water resources as well as lakes and wetlands.

Events Calendar

May 18th **BFF Monthly Meeting**
Note: This is the 3rd Monday!

June 20th **BFF Picnic and casting clinic**
Donald Park

The Badger Fly Fishers' meetings are normally held on the fourth Monday of each month. **The Wisconsin Smallmouth Alliance** meets on the third Tuesday. Both groups meet at the Mapletree Restaurant on Highway 51, in McFarland, Wisconsin.

Programs begin at 7:00 p.m., dinner at 6:00 p.m. Visitors and guests are always welcome.