



*-Meetings on third Thursday of the Month-*

## Planning Meeting for 2009-2010 Slated for July 16

The club officers and advisors are making plans for next years programs and activities. In order to maintain the interesting and informative programs that we've become accustomed to, takes careful planning and thought. The only way to sustain a quality program, that meets the needs of all members, demands advance planning and timely execution of those plans. It not only needs to account for the wishes of the membership, the costs of those programs, but with the experience of the officers and advisors by weighing in with what has worked and what has not worked in previous years. Currently, we have a template that seems to be working pretty well but it's only by stepping back and taking a close look, from time-to-time, that we can assess our future path. One of the best ways to stay healthy is to communicate with the members, in an open and candid way. There are many paths through which to communicate with those working on our plans. The web-site provides a quick and accurate way to find our club activities and events. It is well maintained and has photos, archives, a forum, and a "contact us" section. There is also a "members only", password-protected section, as well. Another means of communicating is via this newsletter. It is through the newsletter that the members are informed of current events, recent programs, interesting features affecting our sport, and anecdotal stories about the fly-fishing world. To continue with our planning process the following info is being provided to our members:

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### Special points of interest:

- PFBC reports that survival rate of deeply hooked fish is higher if line is cut and left to heal rather than removed
- PFBC reports that it has increased the size of stocked fish by 30%
- Next meeting on Thursday Sept. 17
- There are no club meeting in July and August

## Stream Report—Lil' Lehigh

If you haven't fished this stream you should approach it with two important elements intact; your *humility* and your *thinking cap*. It isn't a very forgiving place and shouldn't be the place you pick to bring a beginner. Even though there times when you can get lucky and throw a bad cast or two and get by with it; generally speaking it's a stream where you pay for your mistakes. The resident trout that live here have seen it all. For the most part you'll need to go with some very small flies- a #18 midge can be off from the naturals by a factor of three or more. And you'd better learn to *reach cast* before you go, too. But armed with some extra caution and a proper approach there are times when you'll be able to catch some good trout. I've been able to hook three trout on three casts in this stream before and, also, go home without a single catch, on the not-so-good days.

If you fish the *Heritage* section, right near the hatchery, you'll find plenty of trout to fish over in a fairly short distance (about 1 mile). Most people that fish this section don't cover much ground. This is partly do to the no wading regulations that apply here, and partly because you'll get transfixed by a raising trout or two who will do one of what I call a *head-fake rise* – that's when they'll do what looks to be a very deliberate rise and turn away at the last second. If you react to

this you'll likely find your fly and leader heading directly toward your face at near-sonic speed. You'll be OK because you'll likely be wearing Polaroid's anyway; to see down into the deep pools.



*A Club Member on the Lil' Lehigh*

It's important to fish the right flies here, as well. It's not that these are the only flies that will work here but you can benefit by starting off with some proven winners. A quick stop at the Little Lehigh Fly Shop will avail to you what's called the Fabulous Five (Al's rat, Henryville Special, Lehigh crane flies, fur ants, and Griffith's Gnats) to which I would add Douple's Honeybug (green worm), a deerhair cricket, and the epoxy ant (described in this issue).

You're going to want to use the best

leader material you can get your hands on! This is really important for a couple of reasons: 1) you're going to want to fish with very fine leaders on this creek. To me 5X is huge! 6X isn't much better.

These fish can spot a leader a mile away so you're going to want to go as small as you can go without getting into the twisted leader range. Even some of the big terrestrial flies won't twist your leader if they're symmetrically tied. Don't be afraid to take a pair of scissors to the fly, if necessary to even it up. The trouble begins when you hook a big native trout on a 7X and he heads for his favorite cover. Only constant pressure and a prayer or two will do any good.

Having said all of that, I would pause a second and tell you that this stream is a real *gem*. It's a shining example of what can be done when a municipality recognizes what it has and works to protect and nurture its holding. Don't forget to soak in your surroundings while you fish here. You can lose track of time and forget that you're only a couple of hundred yards from the hustle and bustle of route PA309. Only God could have created such a *sweet* piece of trout water – it's up to us to assure those who follow us know how important it is to use it wisely.

## Rod Rohrbach gave Little Lehigh Presentation at June Meeting



Our June meeting finished the club-year for us on a high note. Guest speaker, Rod Rohrbach, gave an excellent presentation about one of our favorite trout streams – the Little Lehigh; including all of its plusses and minuses, and its changing “moods”. He

pulled no punches in explaining that most failures in fishing the Lil' Lehigh come from a careless approach. He took the time to tell us what works and what doesn't, and went to great lengths to emphasize what a great resource this stream is

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## No Closed Season—yes or no!

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Pennsylvania is blessed with a myriad of *special seasons* which give the trout fisherman and, especially the fly fisherman, the option of having virtually no *closed season*, whatsoever. So why is there even an issue? What could be wrong with such a *perfect* program? Unfortunately, most things in this world relate to money – in one way or another. The same is true in this case; many of the decisions are cost related. Having lived and fished in a couple of states with no closed season I can say that the lack of an “opening day” can be a blessing. Culturally and traditionally, a *season* is deeply ingrained in the way we think about our sport here in PA. Financially, it draws in revenues to the state coffers that sustain the program for the entire year. So what could be wrong with an event that attracts hordes, draws in millions, and withers and dies? Well, as with most good things there comes a cost – true here as well.

The cost here has two parts; one is *financial* (to administer such a program), the other is *social* (what do the people want?). The financial burden is huge! To run such a giant program it is necessary to first subdivide the state into eight districts. Each district is assigned a Commissioner (appointed by the Governor) and an additional two at-large commissioners to cover boating restrictions. There are 13 state hatcheries and some co-op hatcheries, as well. It’s no wonder that when the April 2009 agenda for the PFBC commission meeting (held at Seven Springs Mountain Resort in Somerset County) was published, out of the four hours allotted for the meeting, one hour was allotted to the endangered Salamander Mussel, the Rabbitsfoot and Snuffbox with

amendments to add Sheepnose and Rayed-bean – leaving 10 minutes allotted for wild trout streams. (**Ed note:** I thought they were a *Fish* Commission not *snails* and *salamanders*). Regardless of the financial drain and the reasons involved; it comes down to how you allocate your resources and what you have left over when you’re done. Unfortunately, the way things work out it’s just a few crumbs by the time the bureaucracy chews up things.

The social side of this issue is even more complicated. You hear things like “why change the trout season- it screws up everything” or “I’ve always planned my trip upstate around the Opening Day of Trout Season” (as if you couldn’t still go at that time – maybe even with less trouble getting accommodations). However, there *is* something exciting about the start of a *season*, whether it’s baseball, football, or trout season. It encourages planning (sometimes half the fun), invites a call to old friends, and brings people out of “hiding” after a long winter. It draws you to pull out your waders and give them another check. It requires you to test your leaders with a firm but cautious tug. It compels you to thumb through your favorite fly pattern books and try to figure out which “killer” patterns you’re going to tie up next.

But there are some real “downers” that you have to assign to opening day, as well. Putting the blatant waste of resources aside; you are often faced with way too much fishing pressure, a shortage of legal parking spaces, an even more noticeable shortage of manners and sportsmanship, and an inexcusable increase in littering. We often wonder

where all of the “no fishing or trespassing” signs came from. Why are the landowners so selfish? You don’t have to look far to find a mess after opening day.

I’ll bet you think that I’m proposing to eliminate opening day – you’re wrong. In spite of all the things that I dislike about the whole arrangement I think it works! I think it is something that we just have to tolerate, ignore, or work around. It’s been many years since I’ve slept in the car, next to a creek – waiting for the official opening of the season. It’s been a long time in coming but I’ve learned that the best thing about trout fishing in PA is you have *choices*. If you don’t like the crowds then *wait until they are gone!* They won’t be there for long. Let them spend their money for all of those things they think they need and provide funds to the Commission. For the quiet fly-fisherman, if you don’t mind a short drive, you can find a place to fish any day of the year. The quantity of fish may not be there but every now and then you might meet up with a hold-over or two.

How do I spend my opening day? I usually take one or two of my grandkids to the Upper Merion Township Trout Rodeo (yes, with a can of worms) and watch the smiles on their faces when they catch their first trout – priceless!

-editor

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## Rod Rohrbach gave Little Lehigh Presentation at June Meeting (continued)

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and how it needs our protective eyes placed upon it. Looking back over the 2008-2009 club-year it’s good to reflect on the club’s accomplishments and high points. It’s always great to have in the “big name” fly

fisherman from time-to-time, but it’s equally great to benefit from the enormous knowledge-base of a local “master” like Rod. Our collective “thanks” go out to Rod for such a *first-rate* program and for sharing his life-long fishing experiences with some *brothers (and sisters) of the angle*.

Next time you’re in the area, visit Rod at his shop that is situated right on the banks of the creek. He’s a great source of fishing info and gives the club members a discount to boot.

## The Epoxy Ant—a good choice for Summer Trout

It's not clear that you can actually say that you "tie" this fly but it's an effective summertime pattern that should be included in your terrestrial fly-box. It's a very simple pattern and it can bring up some "holdover" trout when nothing else will. The fly consists of only three materials; heavy tying thread (size 3/0 suggested), black crystal flash, and five-minute epoxy. All you do to tie this pattern is use your tying thread to build up a segmented body at the back and the front of the hook. Tie in a few strands of crystal flash on both sides of the hook and go mix up some five-minute epoxy. Use a toothpick or match stick to pick up a good-sized drop of the epoxy and touch it on to the hook to form a shiny shell. Re-

peat at both ends of the hook to create the segmented look that you're



*The Epoxy Ant*

looking for. It can be a little trickier than it sounds because you want just the right amount of epoxy to go on the hook. It's best to do a bunch of these flies at a time because the epoxy dries fast and you'll mess up about one out of four that you try to make. Its worth it though, when a

big holdover brown rolls over on one of these you'll be glad that you have more than one in your vest because you'll likely break your leader on the first "lunker" you hook. I like to tie it in a carpenter ant size because they're likely to fall into your favorite trout stream at any time over most of the warm-weather months.

This pattern doesn't float very well but it doesn't really matter all that much. This is one of those patterns that is often taken just as it hits the water or just a few seconds later. Worried about your inability to "lay down" the "perfect" cast? Don't be—this pattern is one that wants to draw some attention when it hits the water! Stay alert!

-editor

## Back Casts—the Club Year in Review (2008-9) (cont)

*(Continued from page 5)*

that included Gary Borger, Rod Rohrbach, Jake Markezin, Mike Heck, Mark Sedotti, Ken Tutalo, Steve Wascher, and Don Douple—to name a few. While some of the names may be less familiar than others they all gave very well prepared presentations and were very approachable by the club members.

2009 has had no shortage of field events including "Learn to Fish Day", "Cast & Blast", and "Stick

Day", as well. There were also trips to Colburn, PA, the Upper Delaware, the Brodhead Creek, and Resica Falls, not to mention some salt-water and Montana excursions, to boot.

Further rounding out the offerings available to Main Line Fly Tyers members are the off-site classes for fly tying and stream tactics.

Additionally, we have continued to publish local stream reports on the Little Lehigh, Tulpehocken, East

Brandywine, Valley Creek, Neshaminy Creek, and French Creek.

In an effort to keep our members fully informed we have included some book reviews in the monthly newsletters that are written by our members and, therefore, are honest and candid reports from everyday guys and gals who express their opinions about the books in question.

Here's to next year's activities!





## MAIN LINE FLY-TYERS

Greater Plymouth Community Center  
2910 Jolly Road  
Plymouth Meeting, PA 19462

Club Officers:  
President: Frank Howard  
Vice Pres.: Mike Ebner  
Treasurer: Jim Costello  
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submit newsletter items and suggestions to:  
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We're on the Web  
[www.mainlineflytyers.net](http://www.mainlineflytyers.net)

## Driving Directions:

### From Pennsylvania Turnpike (I-276)

Take Exit 333 (Norristown - old exit 25). At the end of the ramp, turn left onto Plymouth Road. At the light, turn right onto Germantown Pike West. Continue approximately one (1) mile, through four (4) traffic lights (not counting the left hand turn light at Sandy Hill Road). At the fifth light, turn right onto Jolly Road. The Community Center is on the right at 2910 Jolly Road.

### From Blue Route (I-476)

Take exit for Germantown Pike West (Exit 20). Continue on Germantown Pike west for approximately one (1) mile, through five (5) traffic lights (not counting the left hand turn light at Sandy Hill Road). At the fifth light, turn right onto Jolly Road. The Community Center is on the right at 2910 Jolly Road.

### From Route 202

Follow Route 202 to Germantown Pike. Travel EAST on Germantown Pike, through five (5) traffic lights. At the next traffic light, approximately half a mile, turn left onto Jolly Road. The Community Center is on the right at 2910 Jolly Road.

*Meetings held on third  
Thursday of the month  
starting at 7PM*

## Back Casts—the Club Year in Review (2008-9)

It's been an interesting and eventful year for everyone in the club. Not only have we had some great presentations but we've continued to sustain a membership that is involved and interested in the sport, in general, and the club, in particular. More than any other sport this one takes on an almost pseudo-religious form and occupies a small corner of one's soul. For the genuine fly fisherman there are few things that approach the level of love and dedication that many find in this sport/hobby/art. Fly fishing has a very high rate of *infant mortality* especially my those who think that they can master this sport in a single afternoon at Orvis or LLBean's *Learn to Fish Schools* or by casting on the front lawn with a qualified instructor at your side. These are

excellent schools but some things (fine wines and good cheeses) take a little extra time.

This sport can not be *crash course* taught or *force feed* to an unwilling student. No one can teach you about *humility* or *self control* better than a trout. The club officers and planners know about these characteristic and design the year's activities accordingly. That's why our programs are structured based on the needs of our members. From the monthly guest presentations, to the action packed outings, our member's needs are filled according to the level of achievement that they are trying to attain. From the greenest beginner to the seasoned masters there is something for everyone.

For MLFT this year has been no

exception, when it comes to keeping abreast of the member's needs and desires. Right from the beginning we've provided instructional classes that show people fly tying fundamentals, and then move on to advanced tying techniques. Stream strategies are taught and hands-on methods are also employed.

Once the season opens the approach shifts for classroom to the field where students begin to "get their feet wet" (literally) and begin to find out about the real-world heartaches.

It's been a year that's had a generous supply of guests to inform and entertain the club members. We've had an impressive number of well-informed and knowledgeable guests

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# THE SOURCE

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CONTROVERSIAL SUBJECTS AND OPINIONS ARE BETTER ADDRESSED IN THE WEBSITE "FORUM".

THE EDITOR REQUESTS THAT ADVERTISEMENTS BE SUPPLIED IN THEIR FINAL CONFIGURATION AND EMAILED AS AN ATTACHMENT SO THEY CAN BE DOWNLOADED AND DIRECTLY INSERTED, AS RECEIVED.

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