



— FRIENDS OF LEFTY KREH —

Effort Underway to Place Lefty Statue in Frederick

By Seth Denbo

I first heard the name Lefty Kreh not long after I started fly fishing. When I got the bug (and a box full of imitation bugs), I scoured the internet to find resources to help me learn the knowledge and skills it takes to be a good angler. I found Lefty’s casting videos, books, and learned about his “four principles of fly casting.” I found out that he’d been the sport’s foremost ambassador, a pioneer of saltwater fly fishing, and an innovator whose “Lefty’s Deceiver” streamer pattern had been

immortalized on a commemorative stamp. But it wasn’t until a few months later, talking to the owner of a local fly shop, that I discovered that the world’s most famous fly fisher was a Maryland native, born and bred in Frederick.

When the journalist Tom Brokaw coined the phrase “the greatest generation” — describing Americans who were born in the early years of the 20th-century, grew up during the Great Depression, and fought in

or worked to help win World War II — he could have had Lefty in mind. Bernard “Lefty” Kreh was born in Frederick in 1925. His father taught him to fish, but died when Lefty was only six years old. To help provide for his three younger siblings Lefty fished in the Monocacy River and hunted in the woods around Frederick, bringing home food and selling the catfish he’d caught. After graduating high school in 1942 he was drafted and fought in Europe during the final years of the war, participating in the Battle of the Bulge.

After returning to Frederick at the end of the war he worked as a civilian at what was then called Camp Detrick, where his job allowed him ample time to fish and earn extra money as an outdoor writer and a guide. While bass fishing on the Potomac in 1947, the famous outdoor writer and fly fisher Joe Brooks introduced Lefty to fly fishing. The rest, as they say, is history.

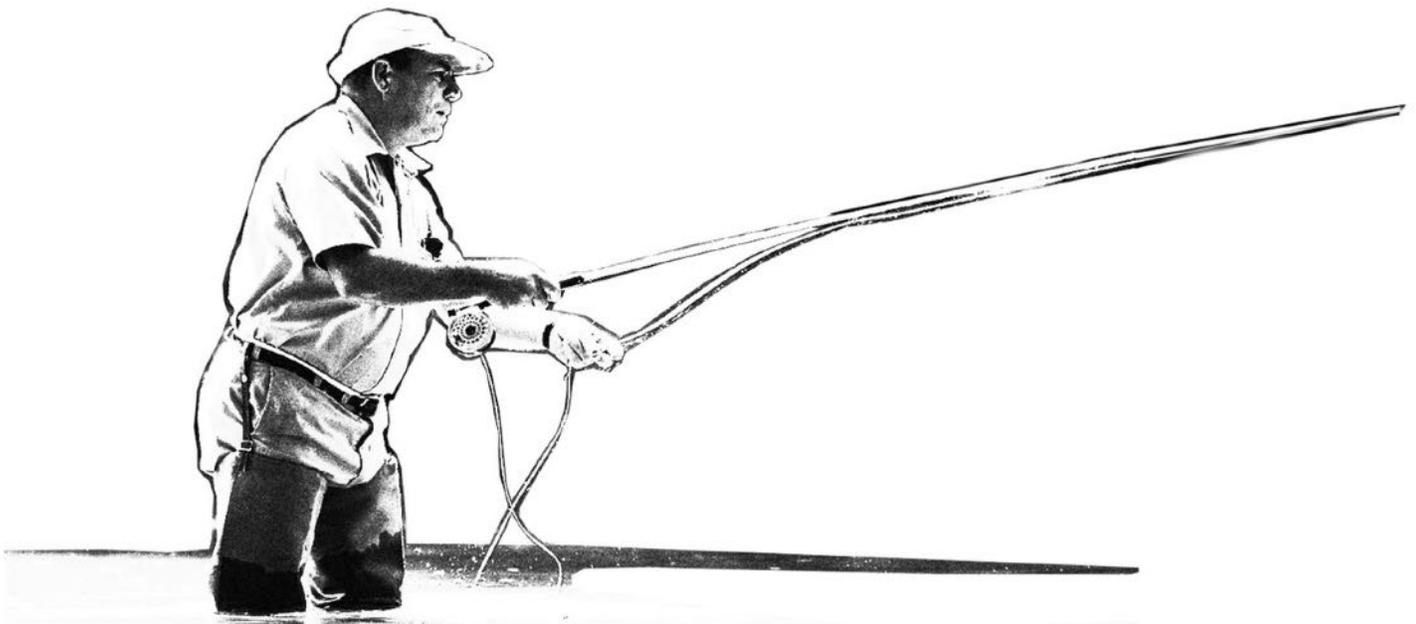
Lefty guided presidents, wrote over 30 books and many articles, founded conservation organizations

and was an advisor to many others. He was a conservationist, photographer, television personality, educator, writer, and editor. Lefty was also a lifetime member of Potomac Valley Fly Fishers, and some of our fellow club members knew and fished with Lefty. Talk to any of them about him, and the admiration and affection is unmistakable.

A group of members, led by PVFF President Andy Mekelburg, has founded the **Friends of Lefty Kreh** with the goal of building a statue to commemorate Lefty and honor his association with Frederick.

Over the next few months, issues of this newsletter will have features on various aspects of the project including: the sculptor Tobias Mendez, the planned educational efforts, and some of the celebrities and fly anglers involved in making this happen. We hope you’ll want to read to learn more about Lefty and his legacy, and donate to honor the life of this legendary local sportsman. To donate and learn more, visit:

www.friendsoflefykreh.com



The Friends of Lefty Kreh

Beginner's Fly Tying: Black Ant

By Don Fine

The fly pattern chosen for our June fly tying class is the 'common' black ant. Ants are among the group of terrestrial (i.e. land dwelling) insects which fish like to eat.

You might ask why. Because ants are packed with protein, making them a natural food for all kind of freshwater fish. At our June 21st

Beginner's fly tying class we will tie two ant patterns, one simulating an ant floating on the water surface and the second simulating a drowned ant.

Both patterns can be fished as a single fly, in combination, or as a 'dropper' behind and below another floating fly pattern. An ant is always a good fly to pick on a warm summer day when uncertain



about what the fish are feeding on. Another point to consider: while most ant imitations are tied in black, also consider carrying a couple tied in red to simulate red ant species. We never know what color or pattern the fish might key on.

We will meet in Room 207 at Trinity Church at 7:00 PM on June 21.

Advanced Fly Tying: Miller Wet Fly

By Larry Forte

At our Advanced Fly Tying gathering on June 15th at 7:00 PM, Ray Ouellette will show us how to tie the Miller Wet Fly. This is ideal for fishing the Potomac and Monocacy rivers this summer.

We will meet in Room 108 at Trinity Church. For those that prefer to join us via ZOOM, no problem. We will have a Zoom hook-up at the church for folks. Interested? We would love for you to join us. Just let me or Don Fine know. You can sign up on our website or you can email me at

lbforte@verizon.net.



Are You Up for the PVFF 3-Fish Challenge?

By Larry Forte

Are you up for a fly fishing challenge? The club will have a 3-Fish Challenge for club members starting June 1st and concluding on October 15th. The challenge is simple. **Catch 3 or more freshwater species in ONE day with a fellow club member.** Complete the challenge and you will be recognized at the Annual Banquet on October 29th.

The PVFF member who catches the most unique species will be the BIG winner and will be awarded a BIG prize at our banquet in October. In addition to the big prize, the winner will be bestowed with all club bragging rights for the year! As the old MasterCard commercial would say – That is priceless!

There are only a few rules to follow. For all fish entered in the challenge, you must use a fly and

provide the name of the fly, the fly size used to catch each fish, and the location where you caught the fish.

Given the history of fisherman and their ability to tell fishing tales, you also must fish with a club member so that your day's catch is verified. A picture would be nice, but is not necessary.

Examples of freshwater fish species 'for the challenge' may include (but is not limited to) the following: brown trout, rainbow trout, brook trout, golden trout, smallmouth bass, sun fish/blue gills, largemouth bass, crappie, catfish, white chub/fallfish.

Join the PVFF 3-Fish challenge. There is a simple form to complete which you can download from the home page of our club website or you can send me an email (lbforte@verizon.net) and I will email you a copy. Good luck and happy fishing!



PVFF Annual Picnic – June 14th

Join us on June 14th at the Catoctin Creek Nature Center (2929 Sumantown Road, Middletown). This is a family event. Bring kids, spouses, whatever – all are welcome!

4 PM: One-Fly contest. Check in at the pavilion before you go, and you have two hours to fish with one fly. We will be there early so you can be on the water at 4 PM, but you must be off the water by 6 PM. Whoever catches the most fish gets bragging rights and a trophy. It really is only ONE fly. You lose it in the trees or it breaks off due to that massive trout – you're done. Come on back, we'll have food and drinks waiting.

5 PM-8 PM: Food, drinks, fellowship. There will be burgers and hot dogs, special chicken, and drinks. Plates, plasticware, cups, and ice will be there. We ask that anyone coming bring a big bag of chips, cookies, desserts, salad, or whatever you'd like to share with the main course — but in a pinch we'd rather have you there empty handed than not there at all. Relax and enjoy food and friends at the park.

6:30 PM: Casting contests. Accuracy, distance, and overhang/hazard casting will be our three events. We will have club rods available. For the accuracy and overhang/hazard challenges, use your own rod if you wish. For the distance event – you must use a club rod. There will be trophies for the winners.

Questions? Call Dennis Allen, 301-606-7998, or email redwombat34@gmail.com.



2022 Casting Clinic

By Andy Mekelburg

We had a great turnout for our annual casting clinic, with almost 30 of our members in spring-perfect weather. Bill Ruland and his associates from the Antietam Anglers Club did a fine job of working individually with everyone on casting basics, improving casting techniques, and demonstrating

some new tricks (such as the Billy Ruland “bow and arrow” technique). We welcomed a number of new members, as well as a number of new fly fishers. The key now is practice, practice, practice. The June picnic features the one-fly contest, so we’ll see who learned the most!

Mentor Program Volunteers Needed

Our mentor program is geared toward helping folks that have little or no experience in fly fishing. Volunteer mentors provide customized instruction, both on and off the stream, in all areas of fly fishing and introduce new members to club activities. The overall goal is to recruit more club members and produce capable, self-sufficient fly fisherman who will become long time club members and contribute to club activities. If you have a good base of fly fishing knowledge that could be of use to a beginning fisherman, please consider volunteering to be a mentor. Sign up today on our website at pvff.club/mentor-program/ — Kevin Haney

Meet a Member: Rachel Bernard

Column coordinated by Mike
Holland

How long have you been fly fishing?

For about nine years, since I was age 11.

What type of fly fishing do you like the most?

I like all types and would love to explore everything, but I have a soft spot for trout fishing because the variety of presentation styles and techniques are nearly infinite. Plus, trout take you to beautiful places!

What is your favorite water to fish?

Anywhere that is pretty ☺.

What is your best fly fishing memory?

When I was fishing the surf at the OBX (Outer Banks of North Carolina) on a family vacation, and I noticed a flock of birds feeding over an area of baitfish with bluefish feeding heavily underneath. It was about 50+ yards out, so I swam out with my 9 weight and a set of pliers and once I got to where I was close enough to the pod of fish, I was also treading water! So, while trying to keep my head above the water, I cast my fly into the feeding frenzy and pulled out several bluefish – all while swimming!



Rachel Bernard

What is your favorite fly?

I love a Chernobyl Ant of any size during the summer for trout.

If you could only fish with five flies, what would they be?

I'll only include some of my favorite trout flies here because the list would be too long: (1) a Graboid Leech; (2) my secret Scud pattern; (3) a

special ginger-colored Jig Bugger; (4) a Pheasant Tail; and (5) a cream Soft Hackle.

What advice do you have for others?

Fish whenever you get a chance and keep your equipment in the car – you never know when you'll drive over or near some good water!

What is your bucket list fly-fishing trip?

I would love to do an offshore trip in Palm Beach, Florida

When did you join the club?

In 2015.

Do you have any memories of past club events or members you would like to share?

For a young angler starting out, PVFF served as such a wonderful environment in which to learn fly fishing. In particular, I remember the days before I took my first trip to Montana; several PVFF members brought me books, maps, and shared tips to help with my trip.

The Fish I Didn't Catch

By Seth Denbo



On the club outing to Smith Creek in April, I caught several fish. The morning began with a fallfish, and I ended the day with the first bluegill I've ever caught on a fly rod. In between I pulled in some nice rainbows on caddis pupa I'd tied myself, missed a few takes, saw some wildlife — a couple of herons and an osprey gliding

over the fields, a pair of scampering muskrats, a water snake rippling across a pool, a turtle sunning on a log — and had a great day out with club mates on a beautiful spring creek nestled in the Shenandoah Valley. Pretty much everything one would ask for out of a day on the water. In fishing terms, it was a more successful day than I had a year

ago on the same stream. Maybe I'm improving as a fly angler, or maybe I was just luckier. It's tough to know.

But a couple of fish that I didn't manage to catch taught me some valuable lessons and were more memorable than those that ended up in my net.

Heeding Mike Holland's suggestion on a good spot, I caught the first rainbow in small pool overhung with branches. After the maneuvering required to fish that section with the inevitable lines and flies tangled in the trees, I headed upstream to find more open casting room. In a wider section of the creek, which had two long pools separated by a shallower gravel bar, I hooked what may have been the biggest fish of the day.

After setting the hook and feeling the tug of a big trout, I realized I'd need to play the fish carefully. When she felt firmly on, I eased off and let her run; when she slowed I fought her a bit. She took off again, so I eased off. I followed all of the recommended fighting techniques: staying downstream of the fish, keeping the rod bent, using side pressure. After a short back-and-forth battle, she crossed over the gravel bar to the deep spot near the far bank, stopped, shook her head, and was off.

What did I do wrong? Maybe nothing. I know from reading and watching videos that more capable and experienced anglers than me lose fish. But this felt like I had made a mistake. So the lesson I've taken away is that I was too concerned about the fish breaking off, and as a result I wasn't firm enough. With a big fish on light tippet, it can be a tricky line to walk. But trying to keep the right balance will be on my mind next time I manage to hook a substantial trout.

After an excellent lunch, thanks to Mike and Andy, I headed upstream again to a section of the creek I recalled from last year. Flat, shallow, and clear, this stretch had intimidated me, but now that I've gained

a little more confidence I wanted to give it a try. In a channel where the gravel bottom is visible between the abundant aquatic vegetation characteristic of spring creeks, another large trout was holding near the bottom. Occasionally he would chase off a smaller fish, but mostly he waited, slowly moving sideways or upward to intercept some food that the current brought his way. On a couple of occasions I saw him rise and take something off the surface.

I spent a long time casting to him: watching his behavior, looking for signs about what he might be eating, and trying out different flies and approaches. It was an opportunity to work on my presentation and to see if I could figure out how to entice him to take my fly. A few times he appeared to show interest in one of the various nymphs I drifted by him, but never enough to open his mouth. After a while, I decided to give him a break, and I headed off to fish with the others for a while. But later, on the way back downstream to the car, I couldn't resist giving him another try and see if he would come up to the surface, but had the same result as earlier.

This lesson I'm still trying to figure out. Should I have gone smaller or bigger? Tried different flies? Was there something wrong with my drift? Or was he just too savvy to take my poorly tied imitations of his everyday fare? I've no way of knowing. And this is part of what makes fly fishing at once fascinating and frustrating. Since taking it up a couple of years ago, the uncertainty is a huge part of what has made this pursuit so compelling.

So next time you're out enjoying a day on the water and don't get the results you'd hoped for, don't give in to discouragement. Think about what you learned, work on improving your skills for the next time, and remember how challenging fly fishing can be. But most of all have fun. Incidentally, that bluegill put up a really good fight.



Project Healing Waters: Mossy Creek Invitational

By Andrew Frutiger

The Mossy Creek Invitational (MCI) has been held in Bridgewater, Virginia, since 2008 to raise funds in support of our 200+ programs nationwide and the injured and disabled veterans they serve in their communities. The MCI is graciously hosted each year by Robin and Bob Fitch and is one of PHWFF's premier fundraising events while also serving

as a fun fly fishing competition. PHWFF veteran competitors for the Mossy Creek Invitational are drawn from PHWFF programs nationwide and each veteran is paired with a sponsor angler and a professional fly fishing guide from Mossy Creek Fly Fishing for a full day on Virginia's famed Mossy Creek. This year, the Frederick Chapter of Project Healing Waters is sending four of our veterans to compete in this remarkable event.

For those of you that may not know, Mossy Creek is one of those bucket list streams. A classic limestone



creek with highly experienced trout, tons of vegetation, fast runs, and deep troughs. To add to the fun, there is no wading on Mossy Creek. We are currently reviewing tactics and fly patterns for our veterans so if anyone has fished Mossy Creek, any thoughts would be greatly appreciated.

If you have any questions or would like to participate in any of our upcoming fly tying sessions at Fort Detrick, please reach out to me at any time at andrewfrutiger@yahoo.com or go to our Facebook page at *Project Healing Waters — Frederick Chapter*.

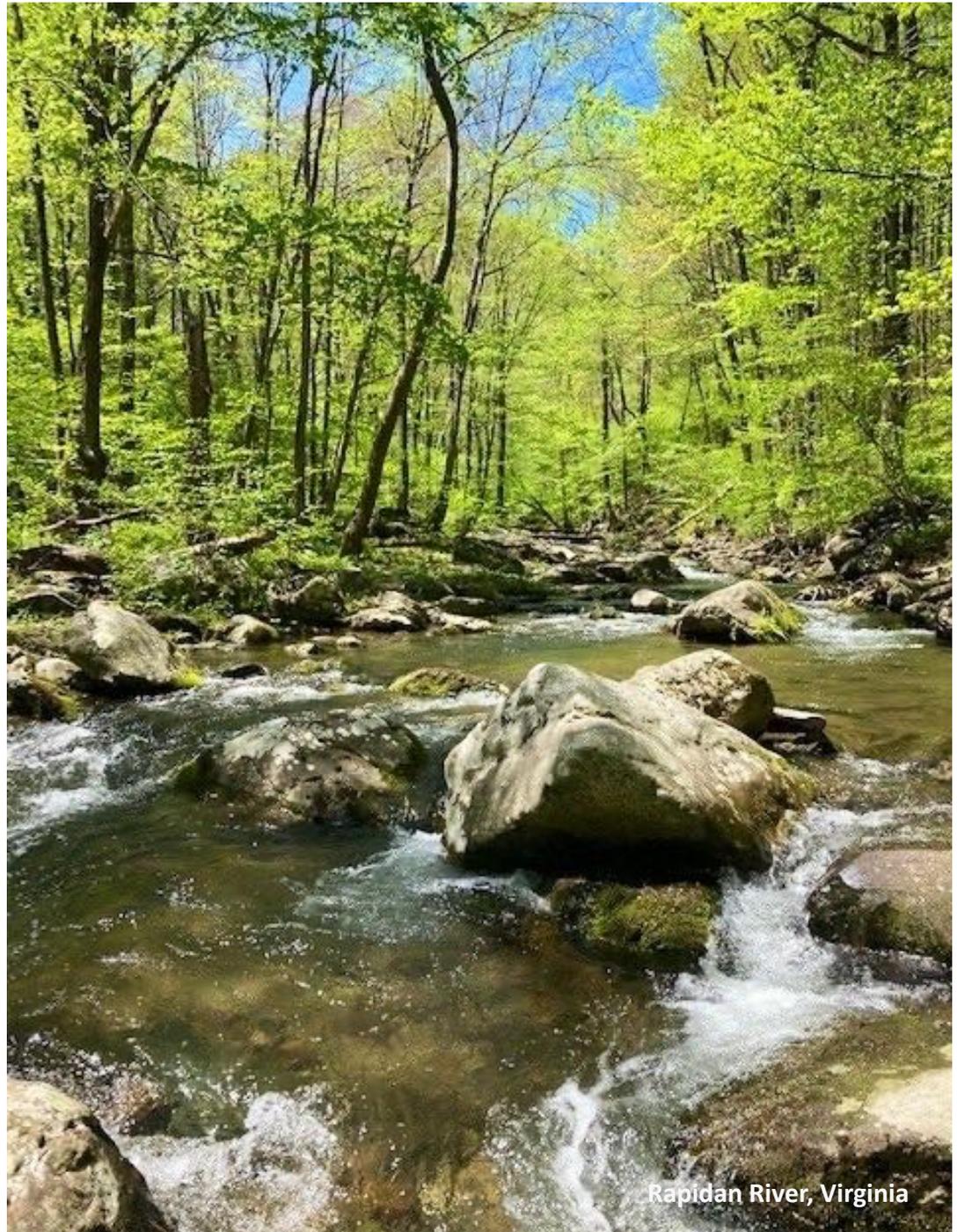
A Rapidan River Brookie

By Mike Holland

Fishing the Rapidan River for a native brook trout had been on my bucket list. I am thankful to say that I have recently had the opportunity to fish that famous water.

Given my lack of great familiarity with the Shenandoah National Park, I decided to attend the Mountain Trout On-The-Stream Fly Fishing School that Murray's Fly Fishing in Edinburg, Virginia offers. The shop (murraysflyshop.com) was founded in 1962 by Harry Murray, who is renowned for his legendary expertise related to brook trout fishing in the Shenandoah Park. In fact, he literally wrote THE book on the subject, "Trout Fishing in the Shenandoah National Park."

Murray's offered eleven day-long schools this year, beginning in March and ending in mid-May. According to Harry's son, Jeff, who taught the class I attended, the window to fish the Rapidan begins in late February and ends before June. At that point, the water usually is too low to



Rapidan River, Virginia

effectively fish. Additionally, the brookies spawn in October.

As for the session I attended, it was conducted at the Graves Mountain Lodge (gravesmountain.com), a bread and breakfast in Syria, Virginia. It was a



A Rapidan Brookie

beautiful setting as the lodge was on a hill overlooking the Rose River, which guests can fish. It is stocked with trout earlier in the year but the fishing transitions to bass with the warmer weather.

There were five of us at the school and two guides. Jeff Murray showed us a PowerPoint that explained the hatches. He also discussed effective leader length, tippet, flies, knots, and techniques. The session helped improve my understanding of these important subjects. I particularly enjoyed the information he provided about Quill Gordons and March Brown flies, which left me with a new understanding of the differences between “duns” and “spinners.”

After a couple of hours, we drove up the mountain on Quaker Run Road. It is a very rough road and not for the faint-hearted as it is narrow, has very large potholes and protruding rocks, and not much of a shoulder; a low-centered vehicle is definitely not advised. In any case, after about 30 minutes, some white knuckles, and crossing two bridges, we reached a pull-out where we parked.

We spread out above and below the bridge and the guides took turns visiting each of us. I was using size

14 and 16 Mr. Rapidan dry flies with and without different droppers. While fishing alone, I was able to catch a nice native brookie on a brown stonefly I was using as a dropper. Over the course of the day, I missed a couple of brookies who rose and a couple who nudged my dropper. We were blessed with a beautiful day, and I enjoyed the sound of the water under a bright, green leaf canopy. I am thankful that I learned more about how to fish pools and cover all of the potential holding spots as well as the importance of keeping your line off the water to avoid drag.

If you are interested in participating in one of the Murray Fly Shop’s schools, it is advisable to sign up early as the sessions fill quickly. I signed up in August 2021. Classes to teach how to fish the George Washington National Forest are also offered, as are general guide services.

Finally, I would be remiss if I did not note that our club is home to some excellent brook trout anglers who can teach interested members a great deal in waters closer to home. For example, I have had the great pleasure of fishing Clifford Branch in the Catoclin Mountains with Peter Ring and he just led an outing to Fishing Creek.

Dennys Grizzle, Corvin Robinson, Dirk Vandervaart, and Peter Ring



Trip Report: Fishing Creek

By Mike Holland

On May 14, 2022, Peter Ring led an outing of four other club members to Fishing Creek. Fishing Creek is in Thurmont, Maryland. They fished for brook trout and had a successful and fun day.

A special thank you to Peter for sharing his love and knowledge of the waters near his home as well as his time and expertise in brook trout fishing. It truly is a treat, and an education, to fish there with Peter.

If you are interested in learning how to fish for brook trout and/or in the waters around Thurmont, you will want to participate the next outing Peter leads.

Last Cast

By Andy Mekelburg

As Seth Denbo described on the front page of this newsletter, Potomac Valley Fly Fishers has embarked on a project to build a statue of Lefty Kreh fly fishing in Culler Lake in Baker Park in downtown Frederick, Maryland. Lefty was a native son of Frederick: he grew up here and started his family and life in the city after the war. He turned his avocation of hunting and fishing into a vocation, as many of us dream. He went on to become a worldwide name.

Calendar of Events

- June 3** Beaver Creek Outing, 12 PM
Meet at the Beaver Creek Fly Shop, Hagerstown, Maryland
View details and register on our website's Outings page.
- June 10** Catoctin Creek Outing, 11 AM
Meet at the Catoctin Creek Nature Center
Frederick, Maryland
View details and register on our website's Outings page.
- June 14** PVFF Picnic at 6:00 PM
Catoctin Creek Nature Center
Frederick, Maryland
- June 15** Advanced Fly Tying
7:00 PM
Trinity United Methodist Church
Frederick, Maryland
Room 108
- June 21** Beginner's Fly Tying
7:00 PM
Trinity United Methodist Church
Frederick, Maryland
Room 207
- June 23** Board of Directors' Meeting
7:00 PM
Trinity United Methodist Church
Frederick, Maryland
Room 109

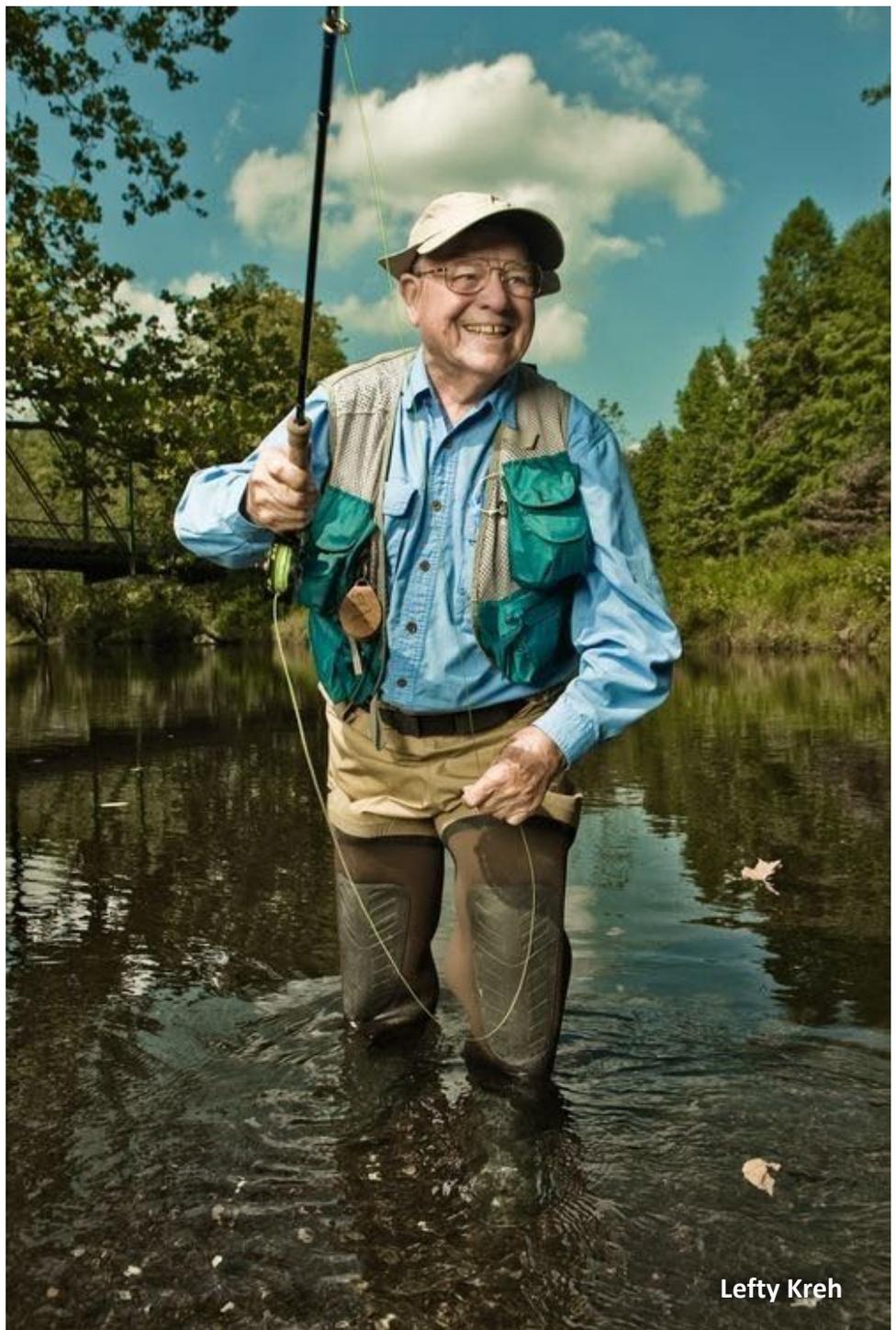
2022 PVFF Officers & Directors

- President.....Andy Mekelburg
- Vice President.....Kevin Haney
- Secretary.....Owen Davis
- Treasurer.....Dennis Allen
- 3 year Director.....Dave Dowiak
- 2 year Director.....Troy Kitch
- 1 year Director.....Kevin Lynn
- Past President.....Larry Forte

It wasn't just his innovations in technique and equipment or skill with a fly rod that set him apart, but his personality and devotion to sharing his love of the sport that set him apart. Having worked on this project for over a year, I have been amazed at the number of people who not only knew Lefty, but were life long admirers. The many people who he touched around the world through the humble art of fly fishing is an inspiration. The stories they have shared with me from their heart is witness to what Lefty meant to them and to others.

I'm asking you to contribute to building this monument and asking you to ask your friends. Donating is easy, just go to **www.FriendsofLeftyKreh.com** and you can donate via PayPal. This statute is more than honoring one person. As one of the early supporters of the club, many members knew him personally and want to give back to someone who shared his passion with them. To those who know of Lefty but did not personally know him, they see that this is a chance to honor someone who has raised the level of interest and technique about fly fishing. For those members who are just learning about Lefty, this statute is seen as an homage to our sport, giving back to the community, and an inspirational symbol to those who never picked up a rod to get out and enjoy the abundance of nature.

PVFF's values of Education, Conservation and Fellowship are exemplified by Lefty's example. Bob Clouser, who fished with Lefty regularly, shared his



Lefty Kreh

stories with us about fishing with Lefty. What I took away from that was not his skills, fame, knowledge and love of the sport, but that Lefty always kept in mind that the true joy of fishing is who you are fishing with. The comradeship that comes with sharing time together out in nature. That's what we are looking to honor and to have that here in Frederick provides an everyday inspiration. Many thanks for your consideration and support!

POTOMAC VALLEY FLY FISHERS

P. O. BOX 3001

FREDERICK, MD 21705

www.potomacvalleyflyfishers.club



FLY FISHERS
INTERNATIONAL



POTOMAC VALLEY FLY FISHERS
MEMBERSHIP and RENEWAL APPLICATION and LIABILITY RELEASE

Year _____

The purpose of the Potomac Valley Fly Fishers (PVFF) is (1) to promote fly fishing as the most sportsman-like and enjoyable way of fishing and the most consistent with the preservation and wise use of our resources; (2) to provide advice, suggestions and assistance to club members; (3) to publicize the best practices and techniques of fly fishing, fly tying, fly casting and other related subjects; and (4) to maintain liaison with other organizations of sportsmen and conservationists. By my joining PVFF voluntarily, I understand there are risks involved and will not hold the PVFF club, board of directors, and officers responsible for any injuries, accidents or death as a result of participation in the activities of the Club. I also grant PVFF permission to photograph me and/or my family at any activities and also to publish them in our monthly newsletter, at the meetings and any PVFF fly fishing functions.

Website: www.potomacvalleyflyfishers.club

The undersigned being in agreement with the above does hereby apply for membership/renewal in the Potomac Valley Fly Fishers.

Applicant's Name: _____ Date: _____
(Last) (First)

If family membership, other names: _____

Home Address: _____
Street City State Zip

Phone Number: _____ E-mail address for e-mailing newsletter _____

Applicant's signature: _____

Are you a Fly Fishers Int'l (FFI) member? Circle **Yes or No** **Yearly Dues:** ___ \$15 single ___ \$20 family \$ ___ Donation

How did you hear about PVFF? ___ Friend ___ Facebook ___ Newsletter ___ Fly Shop _____ Other

Interested in a volunteer position? ___ Officer /Board of Directors ___ Committee/Chair ___ Banquet ___ Trip Organizer ___ Teaching Fly Tying ___ Other Activities

MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO POTOMAC VALLEY FLY FISHERS. Mail your check with this completed form to:

David Dowiak, PVFF Membership
8920 Bloomfield Road
Frederick, Maryland 21702

Dues for calendar year Jan 1-Dec 31

Cash _____ Check # _____ Amount _____ Date _____
New _____ Renewal _____ Life _____