



# On the Rise

NEWSLETTER OF TROUT UNLIMITED'S WOMEN'S INITIATIVE

November 2015



The "Trout Chicks" are bringing fishing and fun to women in Arkansas

## Trout Chicks: A New Group of Anglers Are Wading Into Arkansas' White River

There's a new group of anglers in Arkansas and they are loaded for trout!

At a TU river clean up event, a fellow female fly fisher approached Sara Thorne, Women's Initiative Chair of the Arkansas' White River Chapter, and told her she would like to see a group of women get together who actually fish!

Working with Dawn Schraeder, chapter secretary, the two women decided to give it a try, plan some simple events and see what happens.

Invitations were sent via email to all the ladies from the chapter's first fly casting women's event, the women on the chapter's membership list and members from another local women's fly fishing club.

On July 14th, a total of seven women attended the first event, a knot tying and casting lesson at a casting pond owned by a local fly shop.

One month later, on August 11th, the second Trout Chicks meeting

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### WI RESOURCES

VISIT [WWW.TU.ORG/WOMEN](http://WWW.TU.ORG/WOMEN)

Interested in starting or growing a Women's Initiative in your state or chapter? The WI resources online can help get you started!

From example invitations, to event planning documents with step-by-step guides—you'll find a host of support and tools.

### JOIN US ONLINE

#### "JOIN" OUR FACEBOOK GROUP

Nearly 900 TU members and leaders, anglers and more have joined our Facebook group for lively discussions and to share information, ideas and support.

Like us today:

- 1) Go to [www.facebook.com](http://www.facebook.com)
- 2) Search for "Women of Trout Unlimited" or use direct link [facebook.com/groups/48497943543](http://facebook.com/groups/48497943543)
- 3) Click "Join" and start talking!

## CONTACT US

*The Women's Initiative of TU is made up of women like you who care about our rivers and streams, are passionate about mentoring the next generation and enjoy getting out to fish as often as they can. Don't hesitate to reach out to us for help, advice or support!*

### CHAIR

**Kerri Russell—Arkansas**

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(479)640-8319

### VICE - CHAIR

**Kelly Buchta—New Jersey**

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### Secretary

**Jackie Jordan—Vermont**

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Find a Women's Initiative member in your state by contacting one of us, or visiting our resource page online at [www.tu.org/women](http://www.tu.org/women)

## RECRUIT MORE WOMEN INTO TU

Did you know that you can help us continue to grow and shape the face of TU by recruiting women like you to join us?

It's easy to do, and even better, [the women you recruit can join for HALF-PRICE! \(\\$17.50\)](#)

Simply send your fishing friends and gal pals to [www.tu.org/intro](http://www.tu.org/intro) where they can join online today.

Along with helping us grow our presence in TU, your local chapter will also receive a \$15 rebate for every new lady angler you sign up!

## FROM THE CHAIR

# New WI Best Practices Launched

Fall is one of my favorite times of the year with the arrival of cooler temperatures, colorful foliage, pumpkins, and great fishing!

It is also the time of the year of the Annual TU National Meeting. I always come back from this meeting energized and inspired after hearing from TU volunteers and staff about the wonderful things that TU does in protecting our coldwater fisheries!



Each workgroup of the [National Leadership Council](#) presents on their accomplishments from the past year. The WI Executive presented. One of our big accomplishments from the last year includes the development of the [“Women's Initiative Best Practices” document](#). We feel that this document will help designate the roles of the WI Workgroup, help facilitate chapters and councils to develop WI chairs, and facilitate improved communication from Chairs to the Workgroup.

Jackie Jordan and Kelly Buchta developed this document and did an excellent job presenting it at the annual meeting. A final version will be placed in the Tackle Box soon.

The WI Executive Team will also be working with Volunteer Operations and Marketing to develop a survey to tap women in TU on a variety of topics. The results of this survey will help us in developing a strategic plan, which will be accomplished prior to the next annual meeting.

We are encouraging chapters to reach out to regular members to promote the free family membership upgrade. Existing members can receive the benefits of a family membership and add their spouse/partner and youth in the household to their local chapter's roster for free at [www.tu.org/familymembership](http://www.tu.org/familymembership). Also don't forget to reach out to women to join TU through the half-price membership at [www.tu.org/intro](http://www.tu.org/intro).

Happy Fall and Tight Lines!

Kerri Russell

NLC WI Workgroup Chair

## Family Membership: What's in it for Everybody? What's in it for TU?

With a strong, accurate cast into its family membership pool, TU demonstrates priorities for inclusion, recognition, and community.

Currently at [www.tu.org/familymembership](http://www.tu.org/familymembership), a single, regular membership can be upgraded for free, allowing each family member to be listed on the local chapter roster and each to create a unique profile to engage in TU's online community, join discussion groups, access member-only content such as the digital version of Trout Magazine, and more.

This upgrade is emblematic of TU's

inclusive community – a community that welcomes all who help conserve coldwater fisheries, all who care about healthy watersheds, angler science, and fishing. This is TU's opportunity to welcome anyone in your family who previously has gone unacknowledged for their commitment to TU and our to our important work.

This is TU's opportunity to welcome everyone in your family. It is our chance to invite them to get involved, to participate fully in TU's whole community, and to celebrate and recognize their individual pas-



sion and commitment to our important mission!

Join me, and hundreds of other families who have now made TU part of their family as well.

Stefan Jackson—[sjackson@tu.org](mailto:sjackson@tu.org)

TU Diversity Consultant

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## Trout Chicks: Building A New Angling Community on Arkansas' White River

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doubled in size—an encouraging sign that the group was on the right track and the word had spread!

“Gadgets” were the focus of the group's attention that month at another fly shop on town.

The Trout Chicks plan to continue to develop an in-person and online community of lady anglers in the region and have launched a [Trout Chicks Facebook page](#) to keep in touch, share ideas and photos and support one another as the group grows.



The in-person events follow a simple and straight-forward approach. A 6-8 p.m. weekday evening meeting with a snack dinner provided by the chapter or a member pot luck.

Word of mouth is the main driver

of the group's growth as female members invite and bring their fishing friends into the fold.

To learn more about the Trout Chicks model, contact Sara Thorne at [emptycreel@yahoo.com](mailto:emptycreel@yahoo.com) or (870) 453-4212



## Bringing Outreach and Engagement to Women in Illinois

*Myra Coddens and Evelyn Adams from Illinois have been involved with the Women's Initiative Workgroup for many years. They recently ran a booth at Cabela's promoting women in TU and the half-priced membership. Visit the [Illinois Council website](#) for more information, articles and photos.*

### Myra Coddens

Learning to fish was part of our marriage vows (not literally but in spirit). My husband, Barry, is an avid fisherman and wanted me to learn fishing so that we would have an activity to share. So I started fishing nearly 36 years ago.

My first experience with fly fishing was on a small pond in College Station, Texas. We were visiting my brother, and he patiently took time to teach me the basics of casting. Over the past few years, I've practiced and improved my skills, but more importantly, I've met many women who share my passion for being outdoors, fly fishing, and protecting/improving our natural resources.

Living in Illinois, where there is very little trout water, we often find ourselves fishing in other states and targeting other species. I've caught steelhead, large and small mouth bass, pike, and several different 'pan fish' species on a fly. Wisconsin, Minnesota and Michi-



Myra Coddens, left, and Evelyn Adams from Illinois chair the state's Women's Initiative and share what drew them to YU and why they invest their time in our mission.

gan all provide great fishing opportunities. Illinois does not have a strong culture of [fly] fishing, so partnerships with local sporting goods stores and associated organizations (sportsman clubs, nature centers, schools) are key to our outreach. Though we are never too old to learn new skills, I find working with high school students a rewarding and worthwhile use of my time. We bring students to ravines along Lake Michigan to observe the environment, test the water, and release the trout raised in the classroom program. Capture the interest of the youth and they will become interested adults.

The Women's Initiative of Trout Unlimited is near and dear to me. As a woman who has spent her career in areas historically staffed by men, I have seen firsthand the im-

portance of encouraging women to engage in male-dominated sports such as fly fishing. I feel I have an obligation to support other women as they navigate the waters of learning to fly fish and finding friends to go fishing with.

### Evelyn Adams

My very first time fly-fishing was the summer of 2001 in Stanley, Idaho. We were out there visiting our daughter and staying in a guesthouse next to the Salmon River. My husband said, again, "why don't you try fly-fishing, Ev?" Since the river was right out the door, I said OK. I got my license, he gave me a quick casting lesson, waded into the river, teased a fish, caught a fish, and I was hooked! Can't believe that was 14 years ago!

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## WI Spotlight: Illinois' Women's Initiative Co-Chairs, Myra Coddens and Evelyn Adams

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Since then we have fished numerous rivers from the West to East coast and have included our grandsons frequently. One of my grandsons has said, "Grandma, you don't even care if you catch a fish, do you?" And he's right, just teasing the fish and being on or near the water is what I enjoy the most!

Two years ago I went to TU's annual meeting in Madison, WI to find out about the Women's Initiative. Two ladies from my area were also there. Even though we were very comfortable with our TU chapters, we decided to form a group to help other women who might want to try and/or learn more about fly fishing and conservation.

We planned a couple of classes with Cabela's and one fishing outing on the DuPage River. The classes were well attended and were a lot of fun for all. We did casting, equipment, fly tying, water safety, and talked about TU's conservation efforts. Fishing on the DuPage was a new learning experience in wading. No one caught a



Classes at Cabelas and other venues offer the perfect opportunity to talk up the TU Women's Initiative and to recruit new members using the half-price membership offer available online at [www.tu.org/intro](http://www.tu.org/intro).

single fish but we had a good time. Our WI group has been invited to a Women's Outdoor Weekend next spring at Max McGraw in Elgin Illinois to teach fly-fishing and fly tying. There will be other outdoor activities to try. Helping teach Orvis's 101 and 201 and BOW has been a great experience for me. You can learn the many de-

scriptive hints to help others with their casting. It's been very rewarding to see others enjoying their time learning a new skill.

This hobby has been so exciting! Ask anyone who fishes with me, it's impossible for me to stay calm and quiet no matter who catches the fish! I love it!

**Join the Movement! Become a Women's Initiative Chair for Your Chapter or Council!**

**(Yes, men are welcome to serve as initiative chairs, too!)**

**[www.tu.org/women](http://www.tu.org/women)**