

South Bristol Fish-n-Game Club Newsletter 2026

~In Memory of Hans Schmitt~

Hello everyone, and welcome to 2026. May it be good for all of you! This last year was full of reorganization, dinners, and some relocated Club events. We have been resilient in many ways over the years and have adjusted very well this year. We are solid!

First, I would like to talk about the 44th Annual Canandaigua Lake Trout Derby. Being on the committee for 24 years and deciding, along with Chairwoman Lindsay Morrow, to step down and dissolve the derby. We did just that by liquidating all our money assets and splitting them up three ways, with all the proceeds going to the Naples Hospeace House, Camp Good Days & Special Times and Mercy Flight. Shortly after making that decision, Life member Jon Betrus called me and said, "I don't want the derby to stop, so I will step up and make it happen this year." And so, he did with a new committee of mostly Club members, like Paul Baxter, and they did a spectacular job. Our new beneficiaries, **Naples Hospeace House and Light Hill Hospice in Canandaigua, received proceeds of \$7500 each.** One thing the **Club** has never done before is receive a donation from the Derby, which was **\$2,500.** We are the third beneficiary and will use that for our **NYSDEC camperships** in 2026. The committee is looking forward to this year's derby and will start working on it this month. Thank you for keeping it alive. If you're interested in being on the committee, you can contact Jon at (585)-478-6149.

Second, after the committee changed for the Derby, we also had to find a new location for the weigh station and ceremony event at the south end of the lake. Thanks to Smith Boys Marina and the manager Shannon, we were able to relocate there as the south end weigh station. It worked out great, and we have already reserved a spot for June 6th & 7th, 2026. Thank you so much to Smith Boys Marina and Shannon.

Third, the prize-winning fish was a 21.16 lbs. laker caught by Naples resident Paul Yacuzzo. With that fish, he won \$1,000 and a free mount by Whitewater Taxidermy/Randy McConell from Prattsburg. Paul received his winnings at a new location for the Trout Derby closing Ceremony across the street from the NYS Boat Launch, in the little park, which worked out very well. Both Lindsay and I were happy to see the tradition of the long-time standing Trout Derby live on! My hat is off to Jon & all who were involved!

On a sadder note, we lost Lifetime member Johannes W. "Hans" Schmitt. He was one of the earliest members who put on our original on-the-spit Pig Roasts. Wonderful, wonderful meal and good times had by all back in the day. Hans was always good for a great smoked trout, crackers, and cheese platter at most dinners he attended. He is sorely missed and was one of the "Good Guys" active in the membership. His passing was not easy for me and many who knew him.

Our dinner schedule last year had a new addition with the purchase of a new stove/double oven that is a great asset for the betterment of our dinners. The old one was still operational but needed to be replaced. Thanks to Jay Mitchell and his great persistence, as he worked relentlessly on getting this new stove purchased, installed, and calibrated. Looking forward to this year's new lineup of dinners at the Club...dates and details will be coming soon. With that, we have a new Dinner Czar, Julie Woloson, who has taken over this appointment of being responsible for the organization of each dinner. Thank you Julie for stepping up for the Club, and thank you Jay for your time and persistence in getting the job done!

While I'm on appointments, we have Kevin Regan and Guy Rogers taking over as bar managers. I held that position in 2024 for a year. This past year, I really needed someone else to step up; they did, and are doing a bang-up job of making sure we have just enough beverages and supplies for all our meetings and dinners. Also, we have a new Buildings-n-Grounds manager. Scott Francisco has taken the reins, handling all the responsibilities of that position. Right now, he has been working on the replacement of our kitchen cooler/refrigerator (only 5 yrs old) that died last month. They don't make 'em like they used to. Thank you, goes to all!!

Our famous Chicken BBQ was in a new location at Bristol Mountain this year. Thanks to Dan Fuller for allowing us in his front yard. We did 200 dinners per day again and sold out by 2:30 PM both days. Great new location with lots of traffic and parking if needed. We had to move our large container storage unit that held BBQ inventory, clay target supplies, signs, coolers, etc., this year. The storage unit was sold to a Club member (in good standing), and we turned around and purchased a 16' enclosed trailer. Guy Rogers was the mastermind behind the idea; it worked out very well to have a mobile storage locker/unit. Fitting and organizing everything in it took a few months to get right, but it worked out very well. Thank you to all involved in that transition.

As most of you may know, we also changed the location of our 2nd Saturday Clay Target Shoot this past year. Thanks to Guy Rogers again, he has opened his property for this event, making for big turnouts. Guy and Eric Douthit organized and managed it, with the help of other club members. They would like to expand it to include fishing in his pond as well. Thank you for keeping the recreational sport of shooting alive. It's greatly appreciated and needed today!

I would like to recognize a couple of people now. Brooks Lyon has passed the baton to Glenn Parker 100%. Brooks has been doing our membership management and Club communications for many, many years (maybe 20?). I would like to thank him for those years of reaching out to the membership and informing us of the events, dinners, or anything that was going on and needed the membership to know. It is a critical part of the Club's functional being and he did a great job. Thank you! Next, I would like to thank Jeanne Parker for her talent in flower gardening over the last two years. The Club is just a little nicer with the flower bed brighter and prettier. Thank you for taking the time and Thank You Peter Bills for donating all the flowers! Also, thanks go out to Meg Fuller for upgrading/updating our Club website. Along with Glenn Parker, those two will be working on the site to improve and, as time goes on, add new options based on membership input.

So, this past October, the Club held its annual elections. The results were as follows: President-Stephen Cowley, 40th year (1 yr. sentence), Vice President-Glenn Parker, 2nd year; Treasurer-Gene Lewis, 23rd year; Secretary-John Manser, 3rd year. These officer positions can be time-consuming, and their contributions every year are greatly appreciated. I would like to mention that Glenn and John also take care of the Event/Dinner Coordinating and Volunteering Coordinating. Both guys do a great job of getting the job done!

Well, in keeping with all the above, we have had discussions about the future of the Club. None of us are going to get out of here alive, right? So, we decided to have a small committee (John Manser and me) to form a 2026 volunteer strategy to attract new/different volunteers from our membership list (new members who haven't volunteered yet, we know who you are). Also, thoughts for membership strategies to attract younger crowds (how do we do that?). Well, the 2nd Saturday Clay Shoot is one. Keeping the Trout Derby alive is another way to try to get new, younger folks involved in our mission at the Club. And lastly, a succession plan for the long-term. Where do we want to be in 10 years? Who's going to run the place? We are well, but we need some new blood to make our goals happen. We've accomplished a great deal over the decades, and I/we want it to keep the Club very much alive and thriving for the future.

Sincerely,

Stephen M. Cowley
President