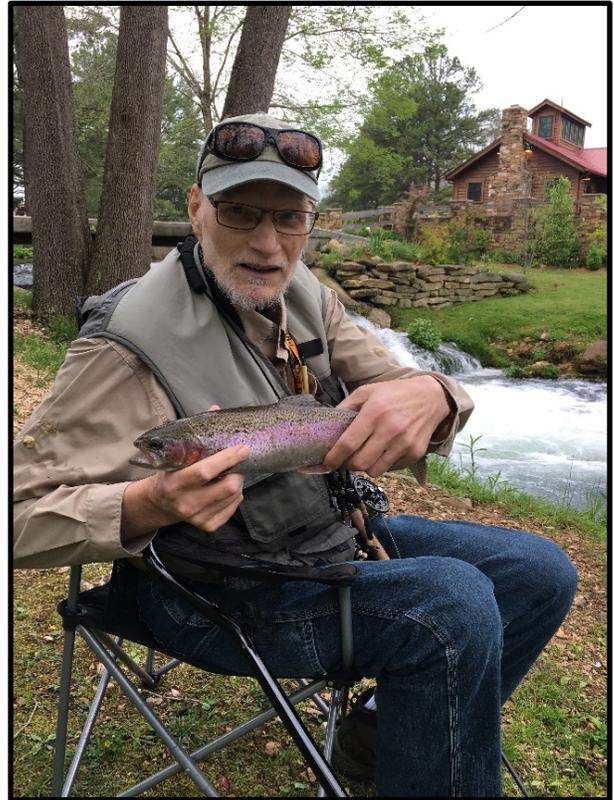


Reel Recovery Retreat 2019

As some of you may know I am currently battling a reoccurrence of cancer which I had thought I had overcome 4 years ago. Well from April 22 – 24 I attended a Reel Recovery Retreat at Westover Farms near Steelville, MO. For those who may not know Reel Recovery is an organization that helps men who battling cancer or who have recovered from cancer. It is for any men whether they know how to fly fish or not. Below I will try to tell you of my experience as best I can.

The retreat consisted of sessions of what they called Courageous Conversation and time for fishing. The first day started in the late afternoon with getting some paper work out of the way. After dinner we had a group session of just the participants to introduce ourselves and tell a little bit about ourselves and our experience with cancer.

The second day started with breakfast. After breakfast we had another discussion session. After that was time to fish. Each participant was assign a stream buddy who would rig your fishing gear. Net your fish when you caught one. Get your flies out of the trees next to the stream and anything a good fishing guide would do. I had rigged my own fishing rod for how I wanted to fish the stream. All of the stream buddies were great. We had a morning session and afternoon sessions to fish. I had fair success fishing. I think this was because I was limited in moving around along the stream than how I would have normally.



I was fortunate to buddy up with several members of Ozark who had volunteered their time to be Stream Buddies for the retreat. Most of them have been doing this for several years and should be commended for their willingness to do so. I would like to thank the following buddies from Ozark: Steve Garnett (thanks for the ride down there and back and help with all the gear), Steve Antonic, Terry Hildbrand and Mike Swederska (I showed you there were fish in that run). I would also like to thank Marty for his help along the stream (Next time I will try to keep all the brush tangles on our side of the stream.)

My take away from the retreat was the amazement of the number of volunteers who gave up their time to be a stream buddy, coordinator or just help out getting gear together, help with meals and so on. It also was a time to get my mind off of the cancer and enjoy the outdoors. Whether I was fishing or just sitting in a lawn chair listening to the stream go by. I was also able to relate some of my frustrations with the treatment and loss of mobility and activity with others who are or have experienced the same. I would recommend any cancer survivor or someone going through treatment for cancer to attend this retreat if at all possible.

Dan Ehlmann, Secretary, Ozark Fly Fishers



Reel Recovery offers fishing retreats for adult men in any stage of treatment, recovery or in full remission from all forms of cancer. The Retreats are completely free to the participants; Reel Recovery provides all meals, lodging and fishing equipment. For more information about Reel Recovery, and to learn about possible volunteer opportunities with the organization, visit their website at <http://reelrecovery.org/>