

Outdoors in the Twin States

By Larry Osmer

Spring Safari New England Style

The Upper Andro Anglers Alliance in conjunction with the Bethel Inn Resort and Bethel Area Chamber of Commerce graciously hosted the New England Outdoor Writers Association annual (NEOWA) Spring Safari. The three day event included a whole host of activities including turkey hunting, fly fishing, kayaking, golfing, hiking, sporting clays and just about any outdoor activity one could expect in the picturesque area of Bethel, Maine.

Opening day of my safari adventures started with an early morning turkey hunt along the scenic Sunday River. Local guide Dan Thrall who owns and operates Antlers & Anglers Guide Service (www.antlernanglers.com) got us into the woods at 3:30 am and once day break hit the action was unlimited. We spent two mornings in the woods and even though I did not connect, Dan put plenty of opportunities before me. Part two of opening day included a float stock-



ing trip with the Upper Andro Anglers Alliance (www.upperandro.com) from Gilead to Bethel. Since 1998 the UAAA has stocked 40,000 brown trout throughout the Androscoggin River and the organization is committed to the sustenance of the Upper Andro. Please visit their website for plenty of helpful information including maps, events and membership.

Prior to our visit guide Dan Thrall reports on some tremendous

brown trout he and his clients have been catching. The Upper Andro is famous for holding both browns and small mouth bass when the summer sun is at its worst. My wife Maryellen had a very successful float trip with Dan and we enjoyed the entire day drifting down this peaceful river. It's very common while drift boat fishing to drop anchor or even wade in midstream while testing a variety of flies at that "perfect hole". Without the dedication and hard work of the UAAA who knows what the state of the river would be today, but thanks to their efforts, the fishing was great.

It's also important to mention the private screening of "The Good Life" that was presented by Carter Davidson of Gray Ghost Productions. I have watched countless fishing programs and thought this was superb. It features a whole cast of fisherman like Lefty Kreh as well as local fisherman and guide Luke Gray. Eastern brook trout, saltwater stripers, peacock bass, and northerns complete the adventures East from Labrador to the Florida Keys with multiple stops in between. Check it out by visiting www.ggpfilms.com you'll be glad you did I promise!!

While planning this trip it was very important to me that my wife, Maryellen, be in attendance. Lord knows I have plenty of days and weeks spent away in the woods without her so it was about time we could do this together. The itiner-

ary set forth by the NEOWA was perfect. The early morning hours were spent in the serene turkey woods while Maryellen found her own serenity at the spa. Afternoons we spent together fly fishing or kayaking and evening fun included a nice dinner at the Bethel Inn and walking along the country club trails. Bethel provided us with all kinds of activities without traveling great distances while we were there. One afternoon we decided to walk to the local shops and wondered into Mt. Mann Jewelry Shop. I will be the first to admit this is not my kind of shopping, but this shop is truly unique.

Owner Jim Mann spent a significant amount of time discussing the fine gems in his shop. As I casually listened while browsing he caught my full attention. Not only does Jim create truly artistic work, he actually goes to the mine and mines his own gems. This unexpected find was fascinating and Maryellen was thrilled to the limit as she is a collector of crystals. -So here's the next deviant plan- A fall hunt with Dan while Maryellen mines for crystals and at the end of the day a nice dining experience at the Bethel Inn Resort.

You too can plan your own local safari in Bethel and we are planning to do so again in the fall, or next spring. There is something for everyone in one great destination and we can't wait to go back. Thanks again to all those who made the experience for Maryellen and I most pleasurable including, the New England Outdoor Writers Association, Upper Andro Anglers Alliance, The Bethel Inn Resort, Mt. Mann Jewelry and of course the awesome guide service of Antlers & Anglers.


Larry Osmer was born and raised in New Hampshire and loves the outdoors...especially chasing trophy bucks. Larry works in the construction business. His passion for the outdoor lifestyle is immediately evident when you talk to him. Larry has been a regular contributor to the gazette and I am very pleased he has agreed to contribute on a monthly basis. Larry can be reached at Larry@theoutdoorgazette.com

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