

# Member Spotlight: Fall 2014

## Get to Know John Smith, BWA's New President!



I grew up in north central Florida, and my parents (both from the Philly area) encouraged my education in sciences. I loved fishing, and our neighbor kept a boat on the St. Johns River and invited my brother and me to hit the river on weekends all through middle and high school. Manatees, birds, spiders, alligators, turtles, bobcats, coons, blackwater swamps, crystal clear springs, fog, lots of fog, more fog. What memories. I have always been interested in aquatic biology, and eventually headed to Tampa to earn degrees in biology. I met my wife Jeri there. She was a student in my animal physiology lab (but I waited to ask her out until the end of the semester and the grades were submitted. I gave her a C). On our first date, I handed her the deep end of the seine net and as she sank into the muds of the mangroves...we fell in love. We went here and there for 30 years working at various universities around the country, ending up in Stroudsburg at ESU.

I direct the Pre-Medicine concentration in the Biological Sciences at ESU. My principle efforts are in teaching physiology courses, a core set of knowledge and skills required for many biomedical fields. My own research has centered on how hormones work. There are so many chemicals that are found in the environment that mimic hormones. These chemicals cause hormonal effects, like inducing growth, changing reproductive patterns, altering development, and more. In our waterways, they feminize male fish, and masculinize female fish. See a problem yet?

The BWA offers me the privilege to work with an organization devoted to protecting water resources, and the unique landscape of the Poconos, to make sure that everyone understands how vital open space, riparian buffer zones, best practices in water treatment, constant monitoring of water quality, and education are to ensure the high quality of our water resources. Our local economy is built on the presence of high quality waters. We depend on it. The BWA is devoted to protecting it. If you are not yet a member, I hope you will join us in celebrating this, our 25th anniversary year of successes by joining the BWA. We need your energy, your voice, your expertise, to continue our efforts. Hope to see you on the Brodhead and all its tributaries.