



# RipRap

A Publication of the Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter of Trout Unlimited

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## DECEMBER MEETING INFORMATION

At the February, 2008 membership meeting Scott Thorpe gave a presentation on "Helicopter Fishing Headwater Streams in Alaska". Scott guided for Talaheim Lodge on the Talachulitna River in the summer of 2007. His presentation on his experiences fishing and guiding for trout, char, grayling and salmon using helicopters to reach very remote waters was very entertaining and the banquet committee thought an encore presentation was in order. Scott returned to Alaska this last summer and will be presenting his second year's experiences at this year's banquet. Scott is well known as a Lake Superior steelhead fisherman and has fished extensively in the US, Canada and the UK. His presentations are excellent; don't miss this one.



**SCOTT THORPE**



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## PRESIDENT'S LINES

BY GREG DIETL

### PINE CREEK UPDATE

A chill wind blew across Maiden Rock Bluff on Saturday, November 15. There were snowflakes in the air and the temperature was below freezing. Thirty or more volunteers showed up at 8 AM at Maiden Rock Bluff's prairie restoration site at an event sponsored by the West Wisconsin Land Trust to harvest seeds to sow at the Pine Creek restoration site. WWLT staff members Bill Hogseth, Rick Remington and Rick Gauger demonstrated how to identify prairie flowers, grasses and other plants and how to gather their seeds. Volunteers wandered through the prairie with buckets and gathered seeds. Now, this involved stem stripping, shaking, rubbing, and picking (it takes a lot of seeds to fill a 5 gallon bucket!); all with gloves off and the wind swirling in all directions. Note: I did not fill my bucket, but did get it about a third full.

Volunteers returned their caches to the staging area around 11 AM where the seeds were mixed in garbage cans with dirt and additional purchased prairie seeds. We then headed back to the Pine Creek site and the American Legion Post where lunch was provided by the land trust and hosted by legion members. It was warm inside the post and the chili and sandwiches were well received. We hiked back down the road to the work site. Groups of volunteers formed lines and sowed the prairie seeds over the entire area of this year's work. It will probably take 3 years to see the results of the day's work. To paraphrase Rick Remington, it takes great patience and faith in nature to restore prairie sites. If all goes well, this site will be a showcase of stream and prairie restoration.

Volunteers were from Fairmount Minerals, West Wisconsin Land Trust, Kiap-TU-Wish, Clear Waters Chapter and Maiden Rock neighbors. Soon to be new member Greg Olson brought his children and members of his Cub Scout troop. This whole project continues to be an outstanding collaborative effort. Thank you to the West Wisconsin Land Trust for organizing and sponsoring this event and to the Legion Post for hosting the lunch.

If you haven't been to the Pine Creek site you should make a point of getting over there and, while you are at it, take a hike up Maiden Rock Bluff.

### TU WEBSITE

Trout Unlimited's website has been significantly updated and is worth a look: [www.tu.org](http://www.tu.org). They have a new Member's Marketplace site where you can purchase TU logowear through Orvis and other merchant links offering merchandise with a percentage of your purchase donated to TU. You can now get personal checks, mailing labels and personalized ID cards with TU logos.

The site has articles and links to TU and environmental issues all over the country. It is an excellent site to visit periodically while waiting for your quarterly Trout magazine. It may be a website where you can do a little holiday shopping, also.

### WELCOME NEW MEMBER

The chapter welcomes new member Chris Zimmerman



## See you at the banquet.

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## SCOTT'S SCOOP

BY SCOTT HANSON, EDITOR

If my calculations are correct, we have less than 35 days to slog through before the winter solstice, when days start getting longer again. I look forward to that day almost as much as I look forward to Christmas. Even though January days are the coldest of the year, you might notice that I have an extra spring in my step, since I know that Spring is on its way, as witnessed by the extra minute or two of daylight each new day brings. So, if the winter blahs have taken over your psyche, don't despair. The trees will start to bud and the birds will begin their chirping in no time. Then we'll all be back on our favorite trout streams trying to catch those wily fish.

Another way to hurry along the arrival of spring is to come to the Kiap-TU-Wish Annual Holiday Banquet on Thursday December 4th at the Tartan Park Clubhouse. There you will be able to regale your old friends with tales of your fishing trips from the past year, learn about new places to go, find some new piece of equipment to use next year, and maybe even find something that your loved one might enjoy. Of course, there will be a delicious meal from the chefs at Tartan Park, and a wonderful presentation by Scott Thorpe showing off his beautiful photos from his time in Alaska. The stories that will be accompanying the photos will keep you glued to your seat. This is Kiap-TU-Wish's biggest opportunity of the year to raise some much-needed funding, so come on out and join the fun. For more info on the evening, read Jon Jacobs' article on page 4.

Jon has another article in this issue of RipRap, in which he writes about a favorite fly of his, the Gartside Sparrow Nymph, in the Fly Tyer's Corner. Make sure you check that out. Speaking of the Fly Tyer's Corner, I'd like to thank everyone who has been nice enough to send in fly tying articles this year. It really has helped me out during my monthly time crunch, and also has enabled me to keep a few of my flies secret. I will gratefully accept any more fly tying submissions any of you might have, so, please keep them coming. Of course, all other submissions will gladly be accepted also.

Make sure you check out all of the other articles in this Holiday issue of RipRap, and hopefully, I'll see all of you on December 4th at the Holiday Banquet. Have a Merry Christmas, and a Happy New Year!



## KIAP-TU-WISH OFFICERS

President	Greg Dietl	(651) 436-2604	grdietl@hotmail.com
Vice President	Kyle Amundson	(715) 549-5326	kamundson@mmm.com
Secretary	Gary Horvath	(715) 425-8489	magshorvath@comcast.net
Treasurer	Hap Lutter	(651) 646-6639	ldlutter@yahoo.com
Board Member	Bob Diesch	(715) 246-2272	bob@etestinc.com
Board Member	Gary Richardson	(715) 248-3699	baddog@pressenter.com
Board Member	Hap Lutter	(651) 646-6639	ldlutter@yahoo.com
Board Member	Kent Johnson	(715) 386-5299	jjohnson@pressenter.com
Board Member	Hans Jung	(651) 257-1532	jungx002@umn.edu
Board Member	Kyle Amundson	(715) 549-5326	kamundson@mmm.com
Board Member	Andy Lamberson	(651) 261-8277	andrewlamberson@hotmail.com
Webmaster	Andy Lamberson	(715) 441-3535	andrewlamberson@hotmail.com
Newsletter Editor	Scott Hanson	(651) 343-6837	scott@yes-tech.com

## SIGN UP NOW FOR THE DECEMBER 4TH HOLIDAY GALA!!!

BY JONATHAN JACOBS

**Kiap-TU-Wish** will roll out another edition of its holiday conservation banquet on **Thursday, December 4** at Tartan Park in Lake Elmo, MN. This year's guest speaker is Scott Thorpe, our good friend who threw over his career in architecture a couple of years ago to become an Alaska fishing guide. Scott is a first rate photographer and story teller. His tales from the wilds of The Last Frontier will entertain and delight you and your guests.

The social hour and silent auction begin at 6 PM. Dinner will be served at 7 PM and Scott's presentation will follow that.

Tartan Park continues to refine their always delicious menu. This year the entrees are Chicken Charonnay and carved Baron of Beef. There are salad, vegetables and potatoes on the menu, but best of all, there are Tiger Brownies and coffee for dessert.

The point of this evening is, as always, to provide our members and their guests with an opportunity to celebrate both their friendships and their common interest in the restoration, improvement and preservation of local trout streams. To that end, there will be some light-hearted fundraising at the event. This year's showcase item is a Sage Smallmouth Bass outfit (4 piece rod, case, reel and the special line Sage developed for use with this unique rod) provided through the good offices of local Sage representative and K-TU charter member Tom Andersen. There are more rods, a handheld GPS, a boat ride and a particularly nice collection of books this year. Among the books is a 1939 edition of G.E.M. Skue's *Nymph Fishing for Chalk Stream Trout*, a touching donation from the estate of the late Al Farnes.

Your donations to the auction are important, too. We suggest you look about the manse with a weathered eye toward what you might donate. Should your inventory reveal a cast-aside numbers-matching Hemi 'Cuda, an idle Vincent Black Lightning, an up-on-blocks Raymond Loewy-designed Avanti, a surplus Breitling Navitimer, a Purdey firearm with which you've grown bored, an Albrecht Dürer engraving that doesn't match the drapes or an Eames chair and ottoman set that's gathering dust in the family room, consider donating those items. Absent those things, you might consider donating homemade chocolates, a dozen elegantly-tied flies, a gently used graphite rod or any fine handcrafted item unrelated to angling. You can burden the banquet committee by bringing your donation the night of the banquet, or you can provide surcease to those beleaguered wretches by dropping off your donation in advance at Bob Mitchell's Fly Shop. If you can't drop off your donation in advance, please consider arriving early the night of the banquet. We can always use help in setting up and organizing.

Before you can participate in the event that is sure to be the highlight of the winter social season, you must call Mike Alwin at 651/770/5854 or Jonathan Jacobs at 715/386/7822 no later than noon on Monday, December 1 to make your reservations. Bucking any inflationary trend, the price for your ticket remains \$35. To attract a more diverse crowd and because we're a bunch of sentimental old softies, the price of a second ticket for your significant other has been reduced to a bargain-level \$30. If you present a Utah driver's license at the door, we may even provide reduced price tickets for additional significant others. Attendance is limited to 110 and the price at the door will be \$50 per ticket.

At press time, registrations are lagging, which causes the committee heartache. Please relieve the committee's collective angst by making your reservation forthwith.





## WEIRD FISH TALES

BY SARAH SANFORD

**The** brown trout on a river not far from here were going berserk over my Elk Hair Caddis. It seemed like every cast drew a strike. I was releasing a fish while holding the fly rod between my knees and putting my hemostat back onto my vest when the breeze took the fly and dapped it on the water a couple of times. All of this happened within a few seconds, but all of a sudden I found myself hooked to a trout with my rod still between my knees. Sometimes I can't believe how hard it is to catch a trout, especially when I think back on this moment when I wasn't even trying.

On a day further back in time, my husband and I were jig fishing for walleyes. We were wading near shore since we didn't have a boat. There was just not much happening. At my feet, a small turtle was battling the tiny waves. Each 6 inch swell would flip the turtle onto its back. Between waves it would right itself and begin to swim away, only to be flipped again.

Since this was much more interesting than the fishing, I looked more carefully at the little painted guy and noticed that he had a leech stuck into the flesh of his "armpit". As a small mercy, I pulled the leech off the turtle and threaded it onto the jig in place of the little rubber skirt. I set the turtle on shore and tossed the jig out into the water.

A couple of casts later, a huge fish grabbed the leech and hooked me into a fight that eventually broke my fishing rod, and burned my fingers as the line screamed out. Each time I would gain some line, the critter would go for another tour. I was wearing out when my husband wrestled the 20 pound carp to shore by pulling line in hand over hand, while I reeled up the slack as fast as I could. He had to pin the thing between his ankles to get the hook out of those fleshy carp lips. Ugh!

Now I was as pleased as Miss Patty's Pig, but none of the other anglers on this walleye fishing opener (practically a religious holiday in Minnesota) could even manage a thumbs up. Eventually I stopped trying to brag about my big catch, even to grocery clerks and waitresses.



Photo by Paul Brown



## FLY TYING CORNER: THE GARTSIDE SPARROW NYMPH

BY JONATHAN JACOBS

**Here's** a fly that I like for at least three reasons: One, it catches fish. Two, it's easy to tie. Three, the pattern comes from the clever mind of one of my heroes, the redoubtable Jack Gartside.

We'll get to one and two in a bit, but now a little about the fly's inventor: Jack Gartside is one of the most innovative tiers working today. He's also an absolute madman angler and a true character. He was a high school English teacher in the Boston public school system until it began to interfere with his fishing. He threw that career over to become a cabbie, working only as much as he needed to, while coming and going as his fishing called out to him. Back when Cathy and Barry Beck operated their fly shop, Gartside appeared on the cover of one of their catalogs. He was pictured while angling aboard an inflatable giraffe, his idea of a whimsical and inexpensive substitute for a float tube. In the photo caption, the Becks wrote that they worried about Gartside because he would often travel to shaky third world Caribbean destinations with little money and few resources and sleep on the beach while exploring the local angling. For more information about Gartside and a great deal of useful information and even more entertainment, including interestingly Photoshopped "French" postcards, visit his website, [www.jackgartside.com](http://www.jackgartside.com)

Gartside is said to have developed the Sparrow Nymph while living in a tent in Yellowstone National Park. To scratch together sufficient funds to keep body and soul together, he tied and sold flies out of the tent. He reasoned that no fly tying raw material could deliver more bang for the buck than a ringneck pheasant skin, which at the time he could buy for a couple of dollars in West Yellowstone fly shops. The fly, which imitates nothing specifically, has that magic ability to look like nearly any kind of trout food you might imagine. The weepy rump hackle and soft muddler-style head formed from an aftershaft feather create both profile and a disturbance in the water. I like fishing it down and across on a tight line. It's unweighted, so it rides high in the water column, where it might look like a fleeing minnow or perhaps a large pharate adult caddis. Then again, perhaps it simply looks like something that might be edible and might fish well dead drifted under an indicator. Gartside suggests it may even pass for a drowned grasshopper.



### Gartside Sparrow Nymph

**Hook:** Mustad 9671, size 8 (typical)

**Thread:** Olive or brown 6/0 Uni-Thread

**Tail:** Small tuft of pheasant marabou

**Ribbing (optional):** Fine copper or brass wire

**Abdomen:** Wapsi brown-olive Life Cycle nymph dubbing

**Hackle:** Pheasant rump feather, two or three turns tied spey-style and sized so that the fibers extend to or a little behind the hook bend.

**Head:** Pheasant aftershaft (sometimes called, incorrectly, I believe, a filoplume) wound Muddler style.

## THE ONE BOX

BY JAMES R. HUMPHREY

**Imagine** that you are marooned on one of the minor Islands or atolls of the 1200 mile Hawaiian chain. This one, too small to have been stolen and colonized by pale interlopers and pineapple growers, points sharply at the sky and is decorated by a mountain freshet that looks like a trout stream, speaks like a trout stream, and even smells like a trout stream. The climb to the summit would be a useless adventure, but before you were abandoned to your fate, one of the pirates let slip that many years ago brave scientists from the Hawaiian Department of Land and Natural resources (DLNR) had planted rainbow trout in headwaters of some mountain streams, perhaps even this one.

Jim Humphrey lives in Oak Park Heights, MN. He is the co-author of *Trout Streams of Wisconsin & Minnesota*. He is a regular contributor to RipRap.

The climb will challenge the stamina of a young goat, and even the patience of an old one. But you have to find food until rescue; besides, you are a Wisconsinite, a badger, if not quite a beaver.

(Yes, Virginia, I have received sworn testimony from two Hawaiian DLNR officers that rainbow trout were planted in the high streams of Oahu. We were fishing for deep sea stuff out of Honolulu, not in some dark bar where tall tales are common currency. Remember, Virginia, the Brits planted trout all over the world during the last 150 years, and the activity was catching with other anglers and fish managers.)

The climb will be debilitating, the end dubious, but you happen to be carrying a pack rod and reel, three weight, and a box of trout flies small enough to fit in a T-shirt pocket. You must shed weight for the climb so you discard surplus stuff for the ascent. You won't need the eight weight and accoutrements that you brought for the later trip to Christmas Island.

So, here's the question: What minimal collection of flies will you include in a tin Sucrets box? Let us call it the "One Box." One fly? Three? 10? 200? Your fly boxes are stuffed with flies you will never use, regardless of the provocation. Which three or four, or more, will keep you alive? I carry an Elk Hair Caddis and a Brown Bi-visible, and.....the others are secret. Heh, heh.







KIAP-TU-WISH

PO Box 483  
Hudson, WI 54268

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WE'RE ON THE WEB

[WWW.LAMBCOM.NET/  
KIAPTUWISH/](http://WWW.LAMBCOM.NET/KIAPTUWISH/)

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# ***Don't miss the December meeting!!***

It's Holiday Banquet time!

Join us THURSDAY December 4th at 6PM at the  
Tartan Park Clubhouse in Lake Elmo.

Join us for the Silent Auction, Dinner, and presentation by Scott Thorpe.  
Check out Jon Jacobs' article inside for more information. See you there!!!

## **MERRY CHRISTMAS FROM THE EDITOR OF RIPRAP!**

Let us know if you have an article you'd like to submit.  
Deadline to make submissions for the January RipRap is December 22nd, 2008

