



## FEBRUARY MEETING INFORMATION

BY GREG DIETL

### Welcome Back Andy Lamberson!

Long time chapter member, former President and webmaster Andy Lamberson will be the speaker at the February membership meeting. This will be a bit of a homecoming for Andy since work took him to Winona, MN. Andy's presentation is titled "River Rat". Join us for what will surely be an entertaining discussion of warm water fishing opportunities in the backwaters of the Mississippi River around Winona. There should be a lively discussion of species, tactics, and fly patterns; and, a great opportunity to see and talk with Andy again.

**Bob Smith's Sports Club, downtown Hudson,  
Wednesday February 3, 6 PM for dinner, 7 PM for  
meeting and presentation.**



### KIAP-TU-WISH CHAPTER



### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

MEETING INFORMATION	1
VICE PRESIDENT'S LINES	2
SCOTT'S SCOOP	3
FLY TYING CORNER	4
HOOKS & TIPPETS	5
WINTER SEASON	6
TROUT CREEK	7

**Check out all the good  
things inside this issue of  
RipRap!**



# VICE PRESIDENT'S LINES

BY GREG DIETL

## **Chapter Booth at the Great Waters Expo**

The Great Waters Expo will be held March 26, 27 & 28, at the Sheraton Hotel, Bloomington, 494 and Hwy 100. The chapter will have a booth on the main floor. We need volunteers to staff the booth. We will need help with Friday, 3-26 set up, staffing Friday, Saturday and Sunday and take down on Sunday. Please contact me [grdietl@hotmail.com](mailto:grdietl@hotmail.com) if you want to volunteer or have questions.

## **Rush River Cleanup 2010**

The annual Rush River Clean Up is scheduled for Saturday, April 24. More details will follow but, if you want to help please contact Sarah Sanford at [rushclean2010@yahoo.com](mailto:rushclean2010@yahoo.com). Mark your calendar!

## **Welcome New Chapter Members**

Dave Clausen-Amery, WI

Peter Henry-Amery, WI

Jake Macholl-Amery, WI

Steven Schieffer-Amery, WI

Loren Teig-Amery, WI

## **Volunteers Needed!!!**

### **Annual call for volunteers:**

The chapter has approximately 240 members. We have 7 board members, a president, vice president, secretary and treasurer. We have a webmaster and newsletter editor. All of these positions are held by volunteers. Volunteers are the lifeblood of the organization; without volunteers we would not exist. I am asking that you think about making a commitment to the chapter and our mission. There are many opportunities and the chapter is lacking in the areas of education, membership recruiting and retention. Board members Hans Jung, Randy Arnold and Tom Henderson have been working hard to assess our chapter volunteer needs. Please contact Randy, Hans or Tom with questions or suggestions.

## **March Business Meeting Announcement**

The annual chapter business meeting will be Wednesday, March 3, Bob Smith's Sports Club, downtown Hudson, 6 PM dinner, 7 PM meeting. There will be board elections, discussion about expenditures, projects, officers' status and a Treasurer's report. Please bring any chapter issues you want to discuss.

## **Parker Creek Update**

There will be work on Parker Creek this winter and spring. Nothing is scheduled yet. Watch the website for project updates...

## **Fly Box Raffle**

If you haven't purchased your fly box raffle ticket yet you will have another opportunity at the February meeting. A \$20.00 ticket could win you a life time supply of flies. The goal is 100 tickets at \$20 each to earn the chapter \$2000. We will sell tickets at the February and March meetings and at the Expo. We hope to sell them all by the close of the Expo and hold the drawing at the April meeting. This is a great opportunity to win an outstanding collection of flies tied by fellow chapter members who donated to the cause. We are not yet half way to the goal.



Today is my mom's birthday. Usually I can tell it's getting close to my mom's big day because the air temps start to take a big dip and settle out at approximately minus-25. You see, my mom was born during what has historically been the coldest week of the winter up here in the northland. She seems to get a rather diabolical joy out of that, possibly because she was born in Kansas, but probably because she knows her kids will have to bundle up and trudge out in the frigid air no matter what. I mean, we can't not celebrate our mom's birthday, can we? We have never let the cold temps derail our celebration of her, even in the coldest of years. Mom won't get the usual joy out of our misery this year, though. Oh, we'll still celebrate; in fact we have plans on getting together at one of our favorite restaurants this Saturday so we can all scarf down their famous walleye baskets. But I don't think the temperature will pose much of a threat. It seems like we've already been through the cold part of the winter, and the annual February thaw has turned in to a mid-January thaw. I'm not complaining, though. The faster we can get done with winter, the faster spring will be here with its warm air, green grass, and inviting trout streams. Personally, I've had enough of winter this year. It seems to me that this year the temps have been colder, the snow drifts have gotten deeper, and my back muscles have gotten sorer.

One thing that gets my mind off of winter and on

to the dog days of summer is thinking about fishing for smallmouth bass. Smallmouth fishing usually takes place during the hot summer months, when the air and water temps are too hot for trout to enjoy. I can't wait for that! Andy Lamberson is going to be presenting at the February meeting, talking about his exploits fishing on the Mississippi River ever since he moved down to Winona a couple years ago. I'm sure he'll tell us about all the smallmouth bass he's caught, but he'll be talking about other species as well, like northern pike, walleye, and even some "exotic" species like gar. You won't want to miss this meeting.

I know this is a trout-based organization, but I'm going to stay on the subject of smallmouth, at least for now. The Fly Tying Corner is back after a month's hiatus, and this month brings us a new fly from my vise, the Skidmark. While it wasn't designed specifically to catch smallmouth bass, I have a strong feeling that it might very well be a good fly for just that purpose. It was actually designed to fool steelhead and salmon, which it did a passable job of this past fall during my annual outing. Next year, when there are sure to be more fish in the river (I hope), it will surely be the Next Hot Fly.

Hey, check out the rest of the great articles in this issue, head over to Bob Smith's to watch Andy's presentation, have a wonderful February, and we'll see you next month!



PHOTO BY ROB KOLAKOWSKI





I've been going on an annual salmon and steelhead trip for the past three years, and had the most luck while swinging big streamers. I know a lot of people swear by fishing with egg flies or big nymphs, but I've never had any luck with those techniques. So I keep going back to my streamer box. I have had some luck with big beadhead wooly buggers and egg sucking leeches, but my friend Randy consistently outfishes me with some bunny strip flies of his own invention.

In the fall of 2008, before our trip, I tied up a whole slew of bunny flies and double bunnies that I thought looked great, but they all proved to have way too much bunny fur on them, so they soaked up what seemed like half the water in the river and weighed about 10 pounds each. Needless to say, they were quite unruly to cast. I needed to devise a fly that was more closely related to Randy's flies, in which he uses a bunny strip, but not so much that they become waterlogged.

Flashiness is usually a good thing for steelhead flies, too, and I wanted to incorporate some flash in to the body of my new fly. So one night while I was working at Bob

Mitchell's, I found some really flashy stuff called Palmer Chenille, and I decided to try it out. Turns out, the Palmer Chenille makes a nice, full body that has some girth to it, which is perfect for what I was looking for. The rest of the fly is just lead barbell eyes in appropriate sizes, and a bunny strip lashed down over the top of the body, zonker-style. The bulky body really pushes a lot of water, and the single bunny strip really pulsates and looks good in the water. I used my new fly a lot this past fall, and had great luck with it. All of the hookups I had over that weekend were on my new fly, so I would say it was a success.

I showed my new design to the guys at the fly shop, and they all thought it looked good. I have Ron Kuehn to blame for the name, though. The first sample I showed him had a black bunny strip over a pearl Palmer Chenille body, and he immediately exclaimed, "You should call it a Skidmark!". Well, despite many hours, okay it was actually just a few minutes, of trying to come up with a better name, I decided to stick with the Skidmark. At least it's fairly memorable, so people should have an easy time remembering it. Here's the recipe:

## Scott's Skidmark

**Hook:** Tiemco 7999, Gamakatsu T10-6H, or other salmon hook, size 2-3/0

**Thread:** 6/0 in Black

**Tail/Wing:** Bunny strip in black, purple, fuchsia, pink, olive, chartreuse, yellow, or blue

**Body:** Palmer chenille in pearl, chartreuse, or gray.

**Eyes:** Lead barbell eyes in appropriate size

*Notes: Tie on the barbell eyes first with figure-eight thread wraps. I usually put some lead wraps on directly behind the eyes, as well. Then move the thread to the bend of the hook, lash down the bunny strip there, tie in the palmer chenille, and move the thread in front of the barbell eyes. Wrap the chenille forward in tight wraps and tie off as close to the eyes as you can. Pull the bunny strip over the top, tie off, and trim. Make a neat head and finish with head cement or some Hard As Nails finger nail polish. Done.*

*(Tied with a brown bunny strip and Root Beer colored chenille, this might make a good smallmouth fly)*



# ERRANT THOUGHTS ON HOOKS & TIPPETS

BY JIM HUMPHREY

You have read the works of the Masters: Halford, Skues, Hewitt, LaBranche, Bergman, Wulff, Sid Gordon, and other fly-fishers more recent. It is a marvel how many theories and practices have been enumerated, illustrated, and put to practice on stream and in print.

George M. L. LaBranche in his 1914 book, *The Dry Fly & Fast Water*, after examining all the evidence from his experience, listed in order of importance the elements necessary for the successful presentation of an artificial dryfly to a trout. (His discursive writing style is also catching.) He said that the placement of the fly in the feeding lane or within the trout's circle of interest is of first (1) importance. (2) Is the action of the fly upon the water--dead drift, egg-laying hop or bounce, or spentwing. (3) Size of fly. (4) Form or shape. (5) Color. We will have to assume that he meant first to differentiate between a downwing caddis and an upwing mayfly.

His relegation of color to a distant five will test the conviction of anglers who demand the "urine-stained belly fur of a female fox" to finish their Hendrickson which replicates the male of one of the early Ephemerellas.

LaBranche's succession has much to recommend it, although I wish there were some way to asterisk size. Several masters have noticed that a mayfly always appears larger in the air than in hand, due to the halo effect of light passing through wings and tails. Their advice is to use a smaller fly.

You may argue the merits of LaBranche's order of importance around the campfire or over a cocktail table at the end of a day. I am left with a haunting question: Why will any trout accept anything with an obvious hook in it that is attached to a tippet that must look like a towrope? Why would a trout discriminate between the categories and sizes of flies, yet ignore the black or blue hue of the hook and the glint and size of a tippet?

LaBranche and Hewitt, and no doubt others, experimented with unattached flies tossed on a feeding lane that were immediately taken by trout that had ignored a fly attached to a tippet. LaBranche was even

thoughtful enough to break off the barbs on one of his experiments. Many fly-fishers have often seen trout feed on free floating naturals while ignoring the artificials.

Does the color of the hook make a difference? Do gold or bronze hooks attract trout as does the tinsel of a Gold-ribbed Hare's Ear? Do black hooks repel? Are tinted leaders preferred by discriminating trout? Should you tie flies on undersized hooks? It seems to me that experts are marvelously adept at gliding over these questions. I leave it to you to solve the enigmas. If you do, let me have the answers. I would like to write a book about it.

(Addenda: (1) I detest down-eye hooks, especially on tiny flies. Down eyes narrow the gape. Gary Borger, in an article in *Fly Fisherman* demolished the theory that the down-eye acts as a hinge to better set the hook: the pull on the hook is always parallel to the shank. (2) I have noted elsewhere in my writings that live scuds swim with a straight body and the legs extended like oars, so why do we tie scuds on bent hooks? Out of water, scuds do curl in the hand like cocktail shrimp. A recent magazine article recommended bent hooks for midges too. Beats me.





# WINTER SEASON

BY SCOTT THORPE

The last few years, I've been fishing my way through the dead of winter on the Whitewater River, down by Elba Minnesota. We get up in the dark, stoke up on coffee and drive south along Highway 61. The sun comes up as we drive along Lake Pepin and count eagles perched high on snags, seeking the sun's early warming rays. Then we turn south along Minnesota State Highway 75 from Weaver, the only unpaved highway in the State. The sunlight reflecting off the ice and snow on the frozen Dorer pools is dazzling, but I avoid sunglasses. I purposely let the rays soak into my eyes, and try to feel the subtle heat that portends spring. We always stop at Whitewater Park headquarters to buy an annual state park sticker. The ranger is friendly and lets us pull on our neoprene waders in the comfort of a heated building. No sense in starting out cold. A few of those

charcoal pocket heaters tucked into your mitts and boots seem to make a difference.

We always catch a few brown trout and maybe some rainbows, usually on tiny scud nymphs. Every now and then if it is sunny and still, there is a midge hatch and the browns key on them. It's quite a sight to see a school of trout nosing up to pluck midges from among wisps of swirling vapors in 20 degree air temperatures. A tiny Griffith's gnat or size 22 parachute Adams sometimes does the trick. The rising fish usually only lasts a few minutes, and to catch a brown trout or two on a dry fly completes the day.

We usually break around noon for lunch at the Elba House, savoring their sirloin tips or fried chicken, with the American fries. The salad bar is well stocked, including chocolate pudding and I wrap up my lunch with

a bowl of it. If it's really nice out, then we might plan a little streamside smorgasbord, with a couple of cheeses, some olives and various hard salamis.

Then it's back to the river for a few hours, or maybe head over to a different branch. In these short days of winter, the sun soon slips behind the bluffs and the temperature plummets. Almost immediately, the light becomes a muted collage of grey and white. The guides begin to ice up horribly and casting becomes impossible. We trundle back to the truck in the black, snow crunching under our feet. Our Labrador, Cricket, always runs ahead. Dogs always know quitting time is soon followed by dinner, so he is eager to close the day.



PHOTO BY SCOTT THORPE



# TROUT CREEK RESTORATION

FROM WWW.WWLT.ORG

A coalition of partners has come together to initiate the restoration of Trout Creek, a small stream north of the City of Alma. Alma Rod and Gun Club spearheaded the project to jumpstart a trout stream restoration program in the coulee country of Buffalo County.

This project would not have been possible without the foresight of Barry and Carol Johnson, on whose property this segment of Trout Creek is located. The Johnsons recently conveyed a stream bank corridor easement to the West Wisconsin Land Trust, which enabled access to stream restoration funding. The easement held by West Wisconsin Land Trust permits the partnership to conduct stream restoration activities, and allows the public the right to fish along the stream corridor.

"Trout Unlimited's Driftless Area Restoration Effort (TUDARE) is excited to be one of the partners involved with the Trout Creek project, restoring habitat for our native brook trout," said Jeff Hastings, project manager for TUDARE.

The Trout Creek watershed is relatively small, only ten square miles in size, from its headwaters that are located east of Nelson to its confluence with the Beef (Buffalo) River east of Alma. The quality of many of western Wisconsin's trout streams can be improved through restoration, which stabilizes the stream banks, reduces soil erosion and provides cover and spawning habitat for brook trout. The objectives of stream restoration focus on narrowing the stream channel, increasing stream depth and decreasing the water temperature.

"All in all, the restoration effort will leave behind a healthier stream and a more productive fishery," declared Bill Hogseth, West Wisconsin Land Trust stewardship manager. "I'm excited to see everything that will benefit from the restoration - aquatic insects, frogs, dragonflies and turtles - a lot more than just trout."

Funding for the restoration work was made possible due to several public

and private sources, including members of West Wisconsin Land Trust, USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service, Trout Unlimited, Alma Rod and Gun Club, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Buffalo County, Wisconsin DNR Conservation Aids Program, Nelson Rod and Gun Club, and in-kind contributions from Reglin and Hesch Construction, Inc.

West Wisconsin Land Trust is dedicated to preserving western Wisconsin's natural character, saving wild and scenic places. Since 1988, the Land Trust has conserved over 25,000 acres of farms and natural areas throughout 18 counties in western Wisconsin. West Wisconsin Land Trust is a member-supported land trust, and its 1,000 members are key to helping protect land, water, and wildlife habitat through their financial commitment and volunteer involvement. To learn more about West Wisconsin Land Trust, call (715) 235-8850 or visit their website at [www.wwlt.org](http://www.wwlt.org).







CHECK US OUT ON THE WEB:

[WWW.KIAPTUWISH.ORG](http://WWW.KIAPTUWISH.ORG)



## **DON'T MISS THE FEBRUARY MEETING!!!**

Andy Lamberson, a self-proclaimed River Rat, will be presenting about his exploits while fishing the Mighty Mississippi down near Winona. Check it out, Wednesday February 3rd, 2010 at Bob Smith's Sports Club

Dinner starts at 6PM  
Meeting begins at 7PM

Deadline to make submissions for the  
March issue is Wednesday,  
February 17th. Have a great month!

