



# Rip Rap

## May Meeting

**When:** Wednesday, May 6  
**Where:** JR Ranch, Hudson  
**Dinner:** 6:30  
**Program:** 8:00 Marty Engle

### President's Lines:

At times, we need to take a step back, acknowledge that we are doing a good job and making a difference in the issues we have decided are important to us. A few specifics to illustrate the point:

Anyone who hasn't walked the length of the old Mounds Dam flowage should make a point of doing so. The lower portion is much more scoured than I would have imagined and the potential for good trout water extends far upstream. I am continually amazed at the earth's ability to reclaim itself.

Many people thought that the battle for a local trout crew would be long and arduous, but it turned out to be much easier. Many of the details are still being worked out, but the Lower Chippewa Basin has been granted a crew dedicated to working on our trout streams (see p. 2).

The video project is on a fast track. Andy Lamberson and Kent Johnson have done an excellent job of maintaining what I initially thought was a rather aggressive timeline. We received a check from National TU which will fund most of the project. Andy and Kent continue to pursue other sources to finance the remainder. They both deserve a great deal of appreciation from the chapter.

John Jacobs and Mike Alwin are heading up what is sure to be another successful Kinnickinnic River Spring Clinic. I would encourage anyone who is interested to become involved. (see p. 2). There is a role to suit everyone, from teaching entomology to serving sandwiches.

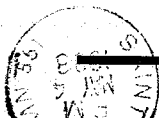
I think everyone in the chapter can feel very proud of what we've accomplished. We are making a difference, and at times the results are quite tangible. We are doing a good job.

Sincerely,

Tony Stifter, President

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## Kiap-TU-Wish Bulletin Board...

### Marty Engle speaks...

At the May meeting, our local fish manager answers questions about the condition of our trout streams, outlines management techniques and plans for the future, and gives an overall report on DNR doings. Perhaps he will have suggestions for a meaningful Winter project, or some preliminary reports on impacts on trout streams due to the early season. Maybe there are studies showing increased trout populations in the Willow Race because of the structures we installed last year. Come and learn.

### Trout Crew Funded...

On April 17, Jim Holzer confirmed that the DNR has approved 1.75 full-time positions for the next two years. The two positions are for a Trout Project Coordinator and a Heavy Equipment Operator. Materials and equipment will be leased shortly, and project proposals sought. Kiap-TU-Wish should work hand in hand with these people, and documentation must be kept to validate the request for renewal when the present funding ceases.

### MPD Cleanup...dirty work, but great rewards.....

April 11th, the following members showed up at the Rattle Bridge: Brent Sittlow, Kevin Cooley, Andy Urban, Rich Lindholm, Chuck Goossen, Tony Stifter, as well as Marty Engle and his two boys Lee and Jeff. The morning was spent picking up endless pop and beer cans, bottles, tires, fishing rods, bobbers, a panfish basket, carpeting, a fish house stove, and various other rubbish. Three sunken boats emerged at various angles from the sediment. Earlier in the week, DNR crew had spread some oats as an initial cover crop in open areas. Marty and Chuck finished the job by hand broadcasting seed in more inaccessible locations.

The stream already looks great. There is still some sediment in the stream bed up by the County E bridge, but just down stream the gradient increases and much of the old river bed is exposed. There's lots of rocks and rubble, and many limestone shelves. Further down, the river enters the canyon where the dam was located. There, most of the river bed has washed down to the bedrock. This section of the Willow shows great potential as trout water. Only time will tell.

### Education Committee Hard at Work...

On May 30th, a group of volunteers from Kiap-TU-Wish will begin teaching another generation of trout anglers to love and care for the lovely Kinnickinnic River in River Falls, Wisconsin. The volunteers will do this by instructing in the fine art of fly fishing, providing supper and taking the students fishing on the river. This project is the culmination of the Education Committee's goals, which are to educate the community and inform and involve the membership. This will be our fourth year of hosting this clinic for the people of River Falls and it's a guaranteed good time. Volunteers who have worked on this project in the past will tell you they had a great time introducing new people to the sport and teaching them the rewards of trout fishing.

We're still accepting names to add to our cadre of helpful and talented volunteers. You may wish to serve as a proctor during the casting instruction provided by Bill Hinton or as a guide for the evenings fishing, sharing a rod and a fly or two. You may wish to help with the evening meal by helping prepare, serve or cleanup. Or you may wish to provide a dozen or so flies to fill up the students' boxes. Whatever effort you can provide will be greatly appreciated.

If you are interested in volunteering for the event, or serving on the Education Committee, please call Mike Alwin at Bob Mitchell's Fly Shop (612-770-5854), or Jon Jacobs (715-386-7822) for more information.

## Skip's Loose Threads, or how not to take your own advice...

Bill Stieger called me the other day to trade stories about early season fishing. I explained that I'd only been twice, to the Quarry Road stretch of the upper Kinni, and I'd had mixed results the first day, and great results the next. I told him how much fun it was to watch my puppy Java get acquainted with moving water. Yes, I said, the seven and a half foot Heddon Featherweight casts like a dream with a four-weight silk line. And by the way, how's your recently acquired Jenkins? We got into discussion about Caddis hatches, how early they were, must be because of the early Spring, etc. etc., what did you catch fish on, what time of day, that sort of thing. He said he'd had good luck with a #18 Henryville Special, one of my favorite flies, so I told him the following story, which only goes to show that I should have read the article I wrote for this column last month BEFORE I went fishing, rather than recall it afterwards. It's not about the Henryville Special, either. The following is a pot-bellied paragraph from my fishing log. (Just so you know...I don't often punctuate properly when jotting down stream notes.)

April 28 Kinni 11:15am, bright, sunny, temp 65, no breeze. Took Java for her first fly fishing trip. Immediately, with that big, feathery tail of hers, she picked up enough burrs to plant a field. And to think that most of those seeds will wind up in my yard! Seem to be Caddis hatching. Fish lunging in riffles, taking more quietly in slower water. Used #18 Weilenmann CDC caddis on 5X. No luck with risers in tail of the pool. First fish never rose again after my fly floated over him. The second riser came up to look, laughed, and rejected me. Maybe there's something else hatching at the same time. Ah, little dark Mayflies. Picked out a #20 Baetis dun, refined leader point to 6X, and floated fly over nearest riser. Took an eight incher. Java's practicing her ferrying technique, then racing around on the bank. I've got to keep an eye on her so she doesn't wander out on the road. Fly isn't floating properly, which means I didn't dry it properly. Sort of scraggly looking, it's floating on its side. Where is that dog? Oops, that one must have taken the fly while I was looking about for Java. A little better. All of eleven inches. Moved up in the run and switched to #16 Little Green Thing soft hackle. Fish take it pretty confidently in slower water. Maybe it's my age, but it's sure hard to see that thing out there. I've moved upstream a little so that my casts now go into bubbly water and I can't see my fly. I've also waded into shallower water, so Java can actually stand next to me rather than doggy paddle behind me where she gets tangled in my fly line. Of course, as soon as she can stand on her own four feet, I get inundated with the spray when she shakes herself. Change to #18 Weilenmann Caddis again. This fly I can see! It works, too, although I can't catch the fish in slow water with it. Moving up to the fastest water in the riffle, even the Weilenmann Caddis is hard to see, even for the fish. Not many hits. Change to Parachute Adams, #18. Java creeps close to my knee when I unhook a fish, watches it slip from my fingers and lunges after it. Right now, she's looking intently into the water as if she expects to see one of those brightly spotted things swim under her nose. The Adams is the ticket for the quickest water. That white wing really shows up, and the fish take it eagerly. Got to quit, it's almost 1pm and I've got a rehearsal at 3. Spread the blanket on the back seat of the car, but upholstery is soaking from Java's residual water. At home, dry the dog and the seat at least from a state of wetness to only dampness. Good day, sixteen fish.

This log entry reveals not only what went on, but illustrates the value of keeping records in understanding the reasons for angling success or lack of it. I thought about my day on the stream as I drove to work, and it dawned on me that I could have avoided changing flies so much if I'd remembered to fit the fly to the water type, as I so firmly stated in my last RipRap article. Caddis adults were present only in the fastest water. Those that hatched successfully had already flown away before reaching the moderate currents farther downstream. Only cripples and duds made it to the slowest water. Of course, in order to catch the quick pupa or adults, the trout needed to lunge wildly in the swift water, but could take their time in the slower reaches. Sparse, realistic emerger patterns are much easier to fish in slow water. You can see them, or at least know where they ought to be. In this environment, the trout take a long look, and these more exact imitations fool fish. The degree of sophistication of the pattern is not so necessary when the trout has to make a split second decision to grab a meal on the fly, so to speak. This plays out in my ability to see and fish effectively in quick water. I can fool trout with less exact patterns, ones with white wings, or other bushy visible features, like an Elk hair wing. In retrospect, the Caddis was truly the *mouche du jour*, but it took three different kinds of imitations to fish a thirty yard stretch of stream.

In fishing as in life, we should learn from our mistakes. I hope all of you get to spend many memorable hours astream in the quest of trout this season. Save a few photos for Fall issues of RipRap.



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<http://www.spacestar.com/users/lambcom/kiap.html>

## RifRaf...

### Opening Day, Three hundred and fifty years ago...

Charles Cotton wrote this poem amidst the terrible scourge of Bubonic Plague which killed more than one fifth of the population of London in the space of three months. Even through all that sorrow and death, he could feel refreshed by looking forward to fishing his Kentish streams in the Spring.



*If the all-ruling Power please  
We live to see another May,  
We'll recompense an Age of these  
Foul days in one fine fishing day:*

*We then shall have a day or two,  
Perhaps a week, wherein to try,  
What the best Master's hand can do  
With the most deadly killing Fly.*