

# RipRap

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

VOLUME 1, ISSUE 8

MAY, 2008

## MAY MEETING INFORMATION

### Marty Engel to Speak at May meeting

DNR Fisheries Biologist Marty Engel will be the guest speaker at the May membership meeting. Marty is the Fisheries Biologist for the WDNR for western Wisconsin. Marty's presentation this year will be looking forward at what he sees as the most promising potential stream projects in our area over the next five plus years. He will speak on what the criteria are for evaluating these streams and discuss the factors he assesses when looking at a stream's potential for habitat work. Marty is a scientist and brings his science to assessing these projects. This will be a valuable presentation to veteran and newcomer alike. Marty's presentations are always excellent and very well attended so come early to get a seat and good information.

This is the last meeting until September so please join us at Bob Smith's Sports Club, downtown Hudson, Wednesday, May 7, 6 PM for dinner and 7 PM for the presentation.  
- Greg Diel



Marty Engel and others working on a stream survey in western Wisconsin

Photos courtesy of Marty Engel



#### INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

MEETING INFO	1
PRESIDENT'S LINES	2
SCOTT'S SCOOP	3
WOODCUT FUND-RAISER	4
2008 RUSH CLEANUP	4
THE PLAN	5
FLY TYING CORNER	6
A FLY BOX STORY	6
SCUDS	7

## PRESIDENT'S LINES

BY GREG DIETL

### April Meeting

The Dry Fly Dick Frantes fly tiers drew a near record attendance at the April meeting. We had nearly 50 members in attendance. Thanks to all the tiers who helped celebrate the arrival of Spring and gave excellent demonstrations of their art: Tony Stifter, Gabe Schubert, Jim Thompson, Scott Hanson, John Koch, Jonathan Jacobs and Andy Lamberson.

### Pine Creek

There will be a lot of work on Pine Creek this summer. Work should begin in early summer. Keep an eye on the website for work night schedules. Most likely work will be on Tuesday evenings. If you haven't participated in this project yet, you will have plenty of opportunities this summer.

### Looking Forward

The chapter is looking forward to a busy summer of volunteer work on Pine Creek. The Pine Creek project should be finished this year. As this project winds down, we need to plan for future projects. Marty Engel's presentation this month will help the planning process. The chapter has been involved in some excellent projects over the past few years: Tiffany Creek, South Fork of the Kinni, Eau Galle, Rush River and Pine Creek. Marty should be able to give us some good project ideas to plan for over the next few years.

### River Falls City Engineer Receives Award

Reid Wronski, City Engineer for River Falls has been selected as American Public Works Association Manager of the Year in Water Resources for the year 2008. The chapter extends congratulations to Mr. Wronski for this well deserved award. In February, the chapter wrote a letter of support for Mr. Wronski. Mr. Wronski has devoted an exceptional effort to implementing progressive and effective storm water management practices that protect and enhance the Kinnickinnic River. Mr. Wronski's commitment to the Kinni is exemplified by his professional and technical expertise, leadership, innovation, customer service and dedication to community service. Thank you, Mr. Wronski for your exceptional work in protecting the Kinni, one of the finest coldwater resources in Wisconsin and the Upper Midwest.

### Brent Sittlow Steps Down as Treasurer

Brent Sittlow has stepped down after serving as the chapter treasurer for 10 years. That is an extraordinary commitment to the chapter and its financial affairs. On behalf of the chapter, the Board of Directors and Officers, we extend our thanks to Brent for his years of service. Hap Lutter was elected by the board as the new chapter treasurer.

### Something To Think About

"We have reached the time in the life of the planet, and humanity's demands upon it, when every fisherman will have to be a riverkeeper, a steward of marine shallows, a watchman on the high seas. We are beyond having to put back what we have taken out. We must make holy war on the enemies of aquatic life as we have gillnetters, polluters and drainers of wetlands. Otherwise, as you have already learned, these creatures will continue to disappear at an accelerating rate. We will lose as much as we have lost already and there will be next to nothing, remnant populations, put-and-take, dim bulbs following the tank truck."

From Thomas McGuane, *The Longest Silence: A Life in Fishing*,  
Alfred A. Knopf, 1999

### Rip Rap and Website

Thanks to Scott Hanson and Bob Bradham for an excellent first year as Rip Rap editor and printer. Thanks to Andy Lamberson for our excellent website and for keeping it current.

**President's Lines Continued on Page 3**

## SCOTT'S SCOOP

BY SCOTT HANSON, EDITOR

**This** is the last issue of RipRap for the 2007-2008 season. I've had a great time being the Editor this past year, and hope that you've enjoyed reading it as much as I've enjoyed putting it all together. It's been a huge learning experience for me as I've figured out what works well and what doesn't work all that well. I think that it's starting to look pretty good now, and I appreciate all of the feedback that I've gotten throughout the year. I will continue to listen to any ideas or concerns that any of you might have regarding the layout or composition. I am very appreciative of all the people that have taken time out of their busy schedules to write articles or send in their photos. I would like to thank the following people for their contributions during the past year:

Greg Dietl  
John Koch  
Jonathon Jacobs  
Chad Borenz  
Ron Kuehn

Sarah Sanford  
Andy Lamberson  
Scott Thorpe  
Robert Torres  
Al Sands

Gary Richardson  
Nick Westcott  
Paul Wright  
Bob White  
Joe Tomelleri

Mike Alwin  
Bob Diesch  
Hap Lutter  
Marty Engel

I'd especially like to thank **Jim Humphrey** for sending me his wonderful articles that have graced page 7 of each issue of RipRap this year. It was very comforting to know I always had a great article by a superlative wordsmith that I could use each month. Thank you!

I'd also like to thank **Bob Bradham**, who has taken on the task of printing RipRap each month. He's done a wonderful job with the printing, and he's given me great advice on how to make RipRap look as good as it can, and I thank him for that.

You may have noticed **Ron Kuehn's** name in the above list of contributors. Many of you know Ron because of his employment at Bob Mitchell's Fly Shop, where he has worked for many years. Ron is currently on his second tour of duty in Kosovo with his National Guard unit. Everyone at Bob Mitchell's is excited that he will be back home later this summer. Ron's first article for RipRap is on page 6 of this issue, in which he discusses one of his favorite flies, the Better Than Bleach. This is a wonderful fly that can really catch fish. Check it out. We have another first-time RipRap contributor in this issue: **Al Sands**. Al is a wily outdoorsman with lots of wonderful tales of his outdoor exploits. Check out his article on page 5.

Even though RipRap won't be published during the summer months, I'll still welcome any and all contributions in the form of articles, photos, or whatever. I'll be sure to get them in an issue next Fall. Send them to me at [scott@yes-tech.com](mailto:scott@yes-tech.com).

That's it for me this month. Have a great summer, catch lots of trout, and I'll see you in September!



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### President's Lines continued from Page 2

## Safety Training

TU volunteer safety training is becoming an important issue, especially safe chainsaw operation. With the assistance of the DNR, we would like to hold a chainsaw safety certification class in the fall of 2008. I would like to get an estimate of how many chapter members would be interested in participating in one of these certification sessions. If you think you would be interested in being certified in chainsaw safety, please let me know. If we get enough interest, we will arrange a class next fall.

## Welcome New Chapter Members

Mark Klandeman, John Standish and Jacob Darrah

**Please join us on Pine Creek this summer!**



## 2008 RUSH RIVER CLEAN UP WOODCUT FUNDRAISER

BY JOHN KOCH

Earlier this year, Sarah Sanford asked me if I would have the time to produce a woodcut for the annual Rush River Cleanup. Since the Rush is my "home waters" (so to speak...!), and the Cleanup is something I wholeheartedly support on many levels, I was only too happy to comply.

I'm proud to be able to offer two versions of "Recyclable Trout"; one with the text "reduce, reuse, recycle", and one without. Each print is of course a hand printed original woodcut print. I've chosen the traditional Japanese "*Moku Hanga*" (wood print) method of printing for this print series. You may order your print either framed or unframed, and each print is individually signed by the artist.

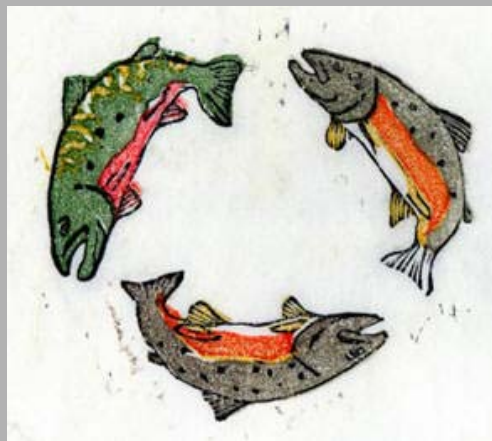
Your purchase will be directly supporting the cleanup: 75% of the proceeds from the sale of this print series will be donated back to next years Rush River Cleanup.

\$30.00 unframed, \$50.00 framed

To Order: <http://www.troutlillystudios.com/cleanUp.html>



*Editor's note: John informed me that sales of his woodcuts have already raised almost \$300. If you want to help raise funding for this very important project while at the same time getting a wonderful piece of artwork that would look great in your den, contact John through his website. Thank you!*



## 2008 RUSH CLEAN UP IS A SUCCESS!

BY SARAH SANFORD

We had an excellent clean up at the Rush River Clean Up on April 19th! Of course, tons of stuff were collected from the Rush River, and we wish that was not necessary. Of the 165 people who signed up, 148 signed in at the Ellsworth Rod and Gun Club. Winner of the weirdest find award was Greg Dietl, president of Kiap-TU-Wish, who found a wedding garter in the river. His prize was a genuine Gilbert Creek Box-elder Boot Rest, crafted from wood taken down at Gilbert's habitat improvement project last year.

Volunteers from around the region enjoyed a dry, if cloudy morning, devoid of the rain that kept me up part of the night worrying about having to cancel the event! Members of Twin Cities Trout Unlimited, Kiap-TU-Wish (Hudson, WI), Wisconsin Clear Water TU (Menomonie) and Hiawatha TU (Rochester, MN) were joined by volunteers from the Eau Galle Rush River Sportsman's Club, Laughing Trout, Fly Fishing Women Of Minnesota, Fly Anglers Guild of the Upper Midwest, and Keeping Youth Involved.

***2008 Clean Up continued on Page 5***



## THE PLAN

BY AL SANDS

**Out** of nowhere it strikes. I read a magazine article, or I see some piece of fishing equipment on my perpetually cluttered fly tying table, or something just clicks in my head and all of a sudden I have a Plan.

It is foolproof and I become a totally driven fly fishing madman that must see this plan executed. It is a Dr. Jekyll & Mr. Hyde condition that will strike me about a half dozen times a year. Once I have a plan, it is the only thing that matters. If my plan is successful I will catch the most, largest, or highly selective trout. I will become a legend among my peers or possibly invent a new technique that will be named after me.

My latest plan included some lead core line, a certain deep pool on an unnamed river, and the "perfect" fly. If I presented this fly just right in the early morning, success would be mine. There had to be at least one huge, wise trout hanging out in the depths of this pool. I had the plan that would find his weakness and he would be mine!

I spend hours preparing leaders with different lengths of lead core, checking and re-tying knots, and ensuring that all equipment is ready to go. Like a mad scientist in his lab I am hunched over my vise concocting the perfect fly for this specific location. I find ways to improvise when missing the "right" color dubbing. When I realize that I don't have any Lemon Wood duck flank I dye some mallard in my coffee. I scour through magazine articles, websites and maps. In the late night darkness I take a few practice casts in the backyard to find which combination of lead and monofilament I could cast the best. By 4:00 AM I truly feel ready and armed with a surefire plan.

It was time.

I had planned the route I would take; I planned where I would enter the water and where my first cast would land. I moved into position and waited. I let my surroundings settle down and looked for fish. I made the first cast, not flawless but it would do. Retrieve. Nothing. The second cast was better but still the retrieve provided nothing. Then it happened.

In the Army we were taught to have a plan and to have contingency plans. We were taught to write, give and understand operation orders, warning orders, and fragmentary orders. Plan, plan, plan and plan some more. We were also told that the first thing to go to hell is the Plan.

It happened, a single rise. The Plan went to hell. A 9ft- 6x leader and size18 BWO parachute replaced the lead core line and "perfect" fly.

I had a new Plan.



Al Sands is a world renowned outdoorsman, currently living in the Upper Peninsula of Sri Lanka. Most recently he has been obsessed with hunting the Giant Yak of the Yangtze River Valley. This is his first article for RipRap.

### **2008 Clean Up continued from Page 4**

St. Paul resident and TCTU member Josh Nelson made chili and cornbread. Lunch was great and he was rewarded with a round of applause, many complements and a "King of the Kitchen" medal made of recycled tin and aluminum for his work. Josh's wife Julie and kids Jack and Zoe helped make cornbread at their home last night and continued to be his top helpers today in the Ellsworth Rod and Gun Club kitchen. John Koch of Spring Valley Wis., donated Japanese woodcut prints that he created especially for the clean up, raising over \$300 for next year's effort. For going the extra mile in this way, John was awarded an "Authentic Champion of the Rush" medal crafted of tin, aluminum and copper. Many thanks to all the volunteers. We also are grateful to the Eau Galle Club for the coffee and rolls; Whole Foods Market and Coleman Natural Meats for donating the bulk of our lunch; Wisconsin Clear Water TU for the soda; Midwest Flyfishing for promoting the event and supplying gift subscriptions; to the Ellsworth Club use of the clubhouse and for sending members to tend bar and to let us in veeeeery early in the morning.



## FLY TYING CORNER— BETTER THAN BLEACH

By RON KUEHN

Ron Kuehn is currently on his second tour of duty in Kosovo with the National Guard. He is scheduled to return home later this summer. He works part time at Bob Mitchell's Fly Shop in Lake Elmo, MN. Ron lives in River Falls with his wife, Sara, and his two children. This is his first article for RipRap.

A while ago I noticed some things that I really liked about certain flies and fly tying materials and decided to build a fly based on these qualities. I don't think that this is an original pattern, just one that works very well for me.

My reason for choosing the components of the Better than Bleach (BTB) boil down to this... they look cool. I have found that if I like the way a fly looks I fish it more often. The more often I fish a fly the better chance that fly has of being successful. I know plenty of anglers who keep their fly boxes stocked with Prince Nymphs and do very well with them. I hate Prince Nymphs. I don't know why, but I do. Because I hate them I don't fish them. Because I don't fish them they are not productive for me. It's simple logic: flies that look cool catch fish.

I tie this fly without any lead. It could be added but I prefer to add it to my leader if needed. Without the lead I can fish this fly fairly close to the surface either behind a dry fly such as an Elk Hair Caddis, or behind a very small strike indicator or small piece of strike putty.

Last year, Scott Hanson and I were fishing the Trimbelle together. I caught a nice 12" brown within my first few casts fishing a BTB. I decided not to mess with success and kept the fly on for the rest of the evening. At one point after Scott caught two very nice trout in a row, he challenged me by saying, "let me see you catch a trout in this rifle". My first cast went about three feet to the left of my desired target, I promptly picked up my line and laid the cast down right on target, after five feet of drift I announced "right about ...there" and down went the strike indicator. Never underestimate the power of a cool looking fly.



### BETTER THAN BLEACH

**Hook**— Tiemco 1150 size 14

**Bead**- black or gunmetal glass bead

**Thread**- 6/0 olive

**Abdomen**- Hareline Haretron Light Olive brown dubbing

**Rib**- black fine wire

**Thorax**- Hareline dark chocolate



Photo by Scott Hanson

## A FISH STORY, OR, A FLY BOX STORY

By GREG DIETL

So, in the spring of 2006, with a brand new vest with too many pockets and too many zippers, I was fishing one of my favorite spots on the upper Kinni. After a few fly changes, standing in the middle of the stream, I reached for my nymph/emergers box only to find one of the too-many pockets gaping wide open with nothing in it. I was consumed by that sinking feeling of having lost something—a whole box of flies, a System X box that floats. I retraced my route on hands and knees looking to no avail for the lost box. Figuring it had slipped into the Kinni never to be seen again, I gave up the search. I had taped an address label onto the box, but it floats and would be bobbing way downstream, so who would ever find it to read it?

Jump to the spring of 2008. I got a phone call from board member Hans Jung. "I have something of yours" he said, calling from Bob Mitchell's Fly Shop where he was at a tying lesson. "I found a fly box of nymphs and dry flies with your name on it on the upper Kinni and it is at the shop". Well, I'm stupefied—two winters, numerous rains, snows, floods, fishermen, and he found that box almost exactly where I dropped it. It was full of water but dried out nicely and almost every fly is intact (a few were a bit rusty).

Lessons: always put your name and address on your fly boxes; always zip up all the zippers on the vest with too many pockets; and, hope an honest guy finds the lost box and gives you a call. Thanks, Hans, the story is far more valuable than the box or the flies.



## SCUDS

BY JAMES R. HUMPHREY

**Scuds** are an aquatic life form, a crustacean of the Order Amphipoda. They are neglected in the literature of fly-fishing, perhaps because they lack the cachet of *Ephemera*, mayflies that remind us of the fragility and poetry of existence.

Scuds are little swimmers, usually not more than one-half inch in length, often called freshwater shrimp, not unreasonably, that crowd our streams and ponds, and constitute a significant portion of the trout's diet by mass or weight. The most common in many of our streams belongs to the Kingdom: Animalia; Phylum: Arthropoda; Class: Crustacea; Order: Amphipoda; Family: Gammaridae; Genus: *Gammarus*; Species: *G. pseudolimnaeus*. If remembering the scientific classification system is difficult, use this mnemonic: *Keep Protection Concentrated On Four Graceful Streams*. Fortuitously, they are the four that inspired a Trout Unlimited's chapter name: Kinni, Apple, Willow and Rush: Kiap-TU-Wish (ki/ap/TU/wi/sh). You may substitute the word "great" for graceful if you wish.

Scuds live and feed in the weeds, become more active at night or under overcast days. They are a major player in the nocturnal downstream drift. They swim straight-backed, not humped, using three pairs of fringed swimming legs, while five pairs of crawling legs are folded back out of the way. Jumping legs are located astern. The literature states that they swim on their sides, but when I observed them patrolling the Kinnickinnic at the Swinging Gate they appeared to me like many-oared rowing sculls moving toward some finish line. If you don't like the analogy to sculling shells, their movements may resemble the flight of arrows or javelins.

Scuds come in many colors: pink like cocktail shrimp, orange when they're not so healthy, gray, shades of green, and my favorite color—purple. If you pick one up it will curl in your hand, so anglers and fly-tiers sometimes tie artificials on bent hooks. Use straight shank hooks.

Artificial scuds, it seems to me, are often tied with bristly legs. Remember, the propelling legs move quickly like oars, and the crawling legs will show some movement, so make the legs of your imitations finer than frog's hair, and perhaps a tad longer than natural. Fish them deep dead drift, or in spurts at the edge or over weed mats; fish them into weeds if you dare. Trout have been observed thrusting their heads into weed beds to dislodge scuds and snails. I suspect that the potent Gold-ribbed Hare's Ear is often mistaken for a scud by foraging trout.

According to the comprehensive study of the Kinnickinnic River, *A Survey of Benthic Macroinvertebrates of the Kinnickinnic River of Western Wisconsin*, 2006, by Dr. Clarke Garry, the common scud is the *Gammarus pseudolimnaeus*. There may be others of that genus, and perhaps one other genus present, but scuds are scuds, and trout won't investigate their lineage.

Here is a description from one of my favorite books: *Field Book of Ponds and Streams*, 1930, Ann Haven Morgan, Professor of Zoology, Mount Holyoke College: "Amphipods are accomplished water acrobats and can climb, jump, swim or glide with equal ease. They are shaped like fleas with arched backs and narrow bodies, with climbing legs on the thorax, and swimming and jumping appendages on the abdomen." Lovely.



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.

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WE'RE ON THE WEB

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

Marty Engel from the Wisconsin DNR will be talking about promising stream improvement projects in western Wisconsin.

It's the last meeting of the season-DON'T MISS IT!!!

The meeting starts at 7 PM, but you can join us for dinner at 6 PM. See you there!

Wednesday, May 7th at Bob Smith's Sports Bar in Hudson.



## **HAVE A GREAT SUMMER FROM THE EDITORIAL STAFF OF RIPRAP!**

Let us know if you have an article you'd like to submit.

Deadline to make submissions for the September RipRap is August 20th, 2008