



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

MAY, 2011 VOLUME 4, ISSUE 9

Restoration, Improvements and Preservation through Research and Projects

MAY MEETING INFORMATION

**Marty Engel, Wisconsin DNR fisheries biologist
will be presenting :**

**Exploring Statewide Patterns in Stream Electrofishing
Catch per Unit Effort under the Category Regulation
System.**

Winner
Bollinger Award
Best Newsletter
2010

Sure, it sounds like a mouthful, but Marty will make it fun and interesting. He always does! Every year Marty joins us at the May meeting, and it is always one of the best-attended meetings of the year. Get there early to make sure you get a good seat.



We look forward to seeing you Wednesday, May 4th at Bob Smith's Sports Club in downtown Hudson. Dinner is available in the meeting room starting at 6 PM and the meeting begins at 7 PM.

Kiap-TU-Wish meetings are held at Bob Smith's Sports Club, the first Wednesday night of the month. The May meeting is on the 4th. Dinner begins at 6 PM, Meeting to follow at 7 PM.



I hope you all have had a chance to get out during the early season. Please watch the web site for information concerning work days for Parker Creek and Pine Creek. It looks promising that we will receive the funding required to finish Pine Creek.

May's meeting will once again feature Marty Engel, our local DNR fisheries manager. He will discuss results from electro-shocking and ideas on our current regulations.

Welcome new members Kevin Pankow from the Baldwin DNR, and Bill Sandve from Spring Valley.

KENT JOHNSON STEPS DOWN FROM BOARD

BY GREG DIETL

After 21 years as an elected member of the Kiap-TU-Wish Board of Directors, Kent Johnson decided not to stand for re-election when his term expired this winter. Kent was first elected to the board in 1990 and served through February, 2011. Kent's value to the board and the chapter cannot be overstated. His work with the City of River Falls, along with that of Gary Horvath and Andy Lamberson, is a model for what can be accomplished by a volunteer conservation organization and a municipality coordinating to establish an award-winning storm water management program. These accomplishments were the result of science, diplomacy, the investment of many hours of personal time and a passion for the protection and conservation of the Kinnickinnic River.

Over the years, Kent has spent hundreds of volunteer hours monitoring the Kinni at his established sites. He has established similar monitoring sites on Pine Creek and continues to gather data on conditions of the creek throughout the reaches of the chapter's restoration project. Kent was instrumental in obtaining a USFWS grant for the chapter to fund the macro invertebrate studies on Pine Creek that he is conducting.

A guiding principle in Kent's efforts has been to collect and analyze data to determine the long term impact of stream restoration projects. That is, to what extent does the money, time, labor and collective effort put into restoration have on cold water flows, temperatures, bug populations, trout populations and the establishment of healthy watersheds? His monitoring efforts and data collection have become models for watershed monitoring pre-and post stream restoration projects. Kent has extended his volunteer efforts and is working with TUDARE in establishing long-term monitoring processes for other restoration projects. Kent is also a member of the Kinnickinnic River Land Trust Board of Directors.

In December, 2006, the chapter awarded Kent its Silver Trout Award "for his outstanding contribution to conservation of coldwater streams, their watersheds, his 15 years as a Kiap-TU-Wish board member and for the tremendous work he has done with the City of River Falls."

Further, Kent is not going away! He will not be on the board, but he will be continuing to conduct his monitoring, work with TUDARE, the City of River Falls, and the KRLT. He will continue to offer his guidance to the future of the chapter.

The current Kiap-TU-Wish officers and board members extend their thanks and gratitude to Kent for his 21 years of service as a member of the board. Please take the time to thank Kent for his 21 years of service to the chapter.



Once again, we have come to the end of another year of RipRap and Kiap-TU-Wish meetings. I hope you enjoyed reading through all of this year's issues as much as I have. Just like all of the others from this year, this one is crammed full of good stuff. Read through every square inch of it, and I think you will be highly entertained, and probably learn a thing or two.

Like every year, I will encourage you, if you find yourself becoming inspired by your summer trout fishing, put your thoughts to pen and paper, or get them on film, or even recreate them with brush and paint, and make a submission to RipRap for next fall. I love to see people's creative sides coming out, and it really is a thrill to see your work on the printed page. Send me whatever you've got to scott@yes-tech.com. I look forward to getting them.

Have a great summer, fish to your heart's delight, and I'll see you in the pages of RipRap next September!

KRLT DIRECTOR LEAVING TO TAKE MPCA POST

BY JONATHAN JACOBS

In a letter to members dated March 10, 2011, KRLT President Dan Wilkening wrote, "Executive Director Nelson French will be leaving KRLT at the end of this month to take on a new position with the Minnesota Pollution Control Agency in Duluth, Minnesota."

Wilkening continued, "Nelson has been an outstanding leader at KRLT as demonstrated by our accomplishments over the last 3 years. Together we have raised over \$6 million for the \$7 million Protect the Kinni Capital Campaign protecting 1,000 acres of critical land, broadened our reach in the community through a variety of community events, and revised our strategic plan resulting in the identification of defined priority conservation sites and an emerging watershed focus for KRLT." "In addition, KRLT was the first WI land trust to receive accreditation from the Land Trust Accreditation Commission, the Gathering Waters Conservancy 2009 WI Land Trust of the Year, and elected by its peers as River Falls Chamber of Commerce and Tourism Bureau 2009 Non-Profit of the Year."

Wilkening concluded, "While Nelson will be missed, KRLT is a strong organization with a terrific history that will continue to work on its mission of working with the community to protect the natural resources and scenic beauty of the Kinnickinnic River Watershed. The Board of Directors is actively working on a seamless transition and will be searching for a new Executive Director who will work with all of us to continue to move the organization forward."

KIAP-TU-WISH BOARD MEMBERS & CONTACT INFO

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JIM HUMPHREY TURNS 90!

BY JONATHAN JACOBS

Jim Humphrey was born in 1921. A little math will tell you that means that Jim celebrates his 90th birthday this year. When the Kiap-TU-Wish board became aware of this, chapter president Kyle Amundson asked how we might recognize it. Rashly, as it turns out, I said that I would be happy to write about this momentous event. I'm still happy to do it, but it's proven to be a remarkably difficult task. Good old-fashioned sloth is a major component here, as it always is, but there's more to it. For one thing, Jim is a dear friend and the thought of pushing this little birthday note beyond "acceptable" and up to "good" frankly frightens me. Lurking deeper in my subconscious is, I'm sure, the near-paralyzing fear that Jim could do this several orders of magnitude better than I will. I am going to face up to that fact right now and plunge ahead.

It's important to say first that Kiap-TU-Wish extends its birthday best wishes only in part because Mr. Humphrey is a hale fellow well met whose ninety years on the planet represent quite a feat. We honor Jim because of his ceaseless work on behalf of trout and Trout Unlimited. He's written eloquently for RipRap for the last two decades and before that was the editor of the Twin Cities Chapter's newsletter. He has provided both publications with reams of clear, sensible, informative and expertly crafted prose. This was work, by the way, which he could have sold to outdoor publications. He chose instead to make it his gift to us.

Most people know of Jim because of the wonderful guide book he co-authored with Bill Shogren. Wisconsin and Minnesota Trout



Jim Humphrey heading out to a favorite spot



Streams was originally published in 1995. It sold well enough and long enough to warrant the publication of a second edition subtitled “A Fly-Angler’s Guide to More Than 150 Rivers and Streams.” A couple of years ago well over 20,000 copies of this book had been printed and it remains in print today. The book has a strong conservation message throughout and has wonderful sections on entomology, equipment, tactics and streamside ethics. Despite being billed as a guidebook, it is not a “kiss and tell” effort that lays bare the details of your favorite stream. Instead, it tells us why – and only roughly why – we might want to visit streams we’ve all heard of anyway and perhaps causes us to look at streams with which we are already familiar in a new or different light.

The most remarkable thing about the book, though, is the quality of its prose. Most guidebooks are written by folks that one suspects are far better anglers than they are writers. Jim is an expert angler and yet he’s a better writer than angler. Joe Paatalo, on his podcast with Chris Silver, once read a passage from the Humphrey-Shogren book. I quoted the same passage in an article I wrote about Jim for Midwest Flyfishing. It’s a perfect example of how the book set a new standard for guidebook writing. Here it is again

Trout were sipping midges or miniscule mayfly emergers on the glide above the river ford, but the browns were indifferent to every artificial, no matter how artfully presented. Dusk crept from the willow thicket toward river’s edge and a wraith of mist formed over the stream.

At 9:09 PM precisely, bats began to circle the run below the ford. The river had become a sheet of pale watered silk. A scimitar of moon slashed the tops of pines. Some nocturnal beast padded through the woods, invisible. A great blue heron beat upstream on the hunt for rising trout, its wings like damp sheets flap-flapping. Under the quarter light – moonlight and starlight and afterglow – exactly at 9:14 PM the first Hex wig-wagged from the darkling stream. The emerging duns that followed were pale green, long green woolly worms with outrageous wings. They writhed in the film for 20 or 30 feet. When they rose, clumsily fluttering, they skipped again and again like an overloaded plane trying for liftoff.

I’ve written on and on about Jim the writer and Jim the trout conservationist, but far more important to me is Jim the man. He is, first and foremost, the consummate gentleman, always smooth, but never – never – slick. He’s lived a life that could serve as any man’s guidebook to living right and living well. That life has featured a long marriage to the woman he was meant to marry, loving children, a successful career, adventures here and abroad and friends glad to have Jim’s company. Through the years Jim has faced personal and medical challenges with a dignity and perseverance that we all can admire.

Happy 90th birthday, my friend!

NEW BYLAWS TO BE ADOPTED AT THE MAY MEETING

Kiাপ-TU-Wish has posted a set of draft chapter bylaws on its website for your review. TU National has instructed chapters to review their bylaws to ensure they contain language which protects TU’s tax exempt status. A set of model bylaws and a comparison guide which shows mandatory and alternative language provisions were developed to assist chapters in bringing their bylaws into compliance. All chapter bylaws need to be updated with the mandated language by late fall 2011.

Chapter Secretary Gary Horvath has merged our current bylaws with the model language and the new bylaws were reviewed at the February 21st Board meeting. Please take the time to review the new bylaws posted on the website at: <http://www.kiaptuwish.org>. A vote for adoption of the new bylaws will occur at the Chapter meeting on May 4th.



HOW I ALMOST DIDN'T BECOME A FLY FISHERMAN

BY GREG OLSON

It frightens me to think this, let alone put it in print, but here goes: I almost never became a fly fisherman! No, it's true! Having taken up the sport only three years ago, I can't imagine life without it, but if not for a brother-in-law who insisted I try it, you would not be reading these words today. Why the 38 year fly fishing abstinence? Let me explain.

From 4th grade through junior high, I fished pretty much everyday in the summer months around Hudson. Once high school hit, I started working, which caused fishing time to plummet, something I still struggle with today. The fishing year would start with jigging minnows for crappies and perch around the old railroad bridge pilings, as soon as they absorbed enough solar radiation to melt the ice around them on Lake Mallalieu. Next the sheepshead action would heat up below the biggest Mallalieu Dam. If only one dam gate was open, a ton of split shot and nightcrawler cast into the seam between the current of the open gate and slack water of the closed gate would produce a fish every time. Our personal fish count would often pass 100 fish in an afternoon, which were collected by Russian immigrants fishing along side us. They claimed they tasted great pickled, something that I took their word for, although they offered some samples. These were the only fish we kept, or in this case, gave away. We were ardent disciples of Al Lindner and the In-Fisherman. The only thing that could trump a fishing excursion, or rather delay it, was watching the In-Fisherman TV show. Our limited time spent reading was relegated to the In-Fisherman magazine. Both Al and Ron Lindner had confessed the sin of their fish hog past and we were sure not to repeat their mistake. In fact, the In-Fisherman catch and release stickers proudly adorned our tackle boxes. Lake Mallalieu largemouth bass caught on crawlers gathered from the lawn of the old Hudson Courthouse at night after a good rain were also caught and smallmouth bass were extracted from around the rip rap on the Dike bridge in downtown Hudson using #5 Rapalas and Heddon Tiny Torpedos. Nearby, some epic battles were fought in Hudson's lakefront park, fishing with canned corn for carp. A carp that topped 20 lbs (we had a Zebco Fish DeLiar), once melted the drag on my reel, but I still landed it on 4 lb test.

We also fished for trout on Trout Brook not far upstream from where it enters Lake Mallalieu. You cannot get there today through the woods like we did, since development has fenced it all off, but that, perhaps, is a rant for another issue. My friends and I read that the best trout fishing was early or late in the day, and since the evenings were given over to Little League baseball, that left the early morning. This meant waking up at 4:30 am, completing my paper route (I am dating myself here, younger readers. Back in the day, papers were actually delivered by kids on bikes, rather than adults in cars), and meeting up with friends: Matt, Chad, and John, before hitting the stream.

We fished for brown trout with small spinners and Rapalas, and if these failed, a worm thrown upstream into a riffle and dead drifted into the head of the pool usually guaranteed a fish, though it was often a chub, sucker or carp rather than a trout. We were always careful to set the hook if we noticed the slightest twitch in the monofilament, so to always hook the fish in the lip. In those years of fishing Trout Brook, I only gut-hooked one trout, a 10-inch brown that was quickly dispatched and dressed. My family was in shock that I actually returned from a fishing foray with a trout to eat.

The two rivers that form Trout Brook, the Willow and Race, had better fishing, but were not as accessible to our North Hudson homes, so we saw few other anglers, none of them regularly, except for a lone fly fisherman. The only thing we had in common was that we regularly fished the same water. We were in 4th grade; he appeared to be in his seventies. We wore cutoffs and old sneakers and fished with light spinning tackle, and he was a very well appointed fly angler, someone that would look very at-home on an English chalk stream. Fly fishing was something I had wanted to try, as I watched Larry Dahlberg fish for various species with a fly rod on the In-Fisherman TV show, but none of us knew anyone that practiced the craft. We would work upstream and this fly fisher would always be coming downstream. During the first few encounters, we said hello and inquired about his luck. He would glare at us from time to time and did not return our hello. We met once at one of our favorite pools. After my friends and I had each caught a fish, we agreed that we should let the fly fisherman have a crack at the pool thinking it would be cool to see a trout caught on a fly. I piped up that we never had much luck in the riffle he was fishing above us and that he should try our pool. He apparently took this an invitation to blast our inferior fishing methods, with such insights as "any moron can catch fish with worms" and



that we were “killing all the trout.” We stayed in the pool, albeit with our ears burning and our tails between our legs as he stormed around us to continue fishing downstream. After a few minutes, enough time to convince ourselves that we were not quitting due to our tongue lashing, we called it a day. On the ride home we found our courage, and had quite a few choice comments of our own. Most were to the effect of “elitist snob”, but in much cruder language. We never talked to him again, always gave him a wide berth after his outburst, and none of us expressed any interest in fly fishing after that.

By high school, I had saved enough for a boat with a 4 hp outboard and now my friends and I could escape the confines of the shoreline. Bass, northerns, and walleyes pursued with spinning tackle were the only fish worth pursuing. The boats and motors gradually got bigger, fish finders were incorporated, and the lures got more expensive. Then a few years ago my brother in law from Mankato demanded I learned to fly fish with him on the Kinni and Rush. I was taken by surprise, since in the 10 years I had known him, he had hardly acknowledged my presence during the few times a year we got together. I had my reservations, but eventually gave in. I soon found out that his “teaching” me to fly fish wasn’t completely altruistic, in fact I was being used as an excuse for him to shirk duties at home “to teach poor Greg, who desperately wants to fly fish.” His instruction consisted of him handing me a fly rod, telling me to watch him cast for five minutes, and telling me to head downstream away from him to try my luck. I spent the next few hours freezing in a cold drizzle, untangling my leader from streamside vegetation, and setting a record for wind knots in a 9 ft leader (72 knots. I know I could have broken 100 if he would have given me a 12 ft leader). I caught nothing, and yet I had a great time. The past came back to me, standing in moving water, surrounded by woods and meadows, the sounds of water and wild-life (not Jet Skis and lakeside lawnmowers). I couldn’t believe I had stayed away from trout fishing for so long. The rhythmic (in my case more spastic than rhythmic) casting motion of the fly rod also greatly appealed to me. Forgive the pun, but I was hooked. A few years later and some fishing, casting, and tying lessons from Mike Alwin and other friends, and I can usually catch a few trout each outing if conditions are favorable, but am content to be out there just wetting a line. I have gotten my kids fly fishing and oftentimes my 11 year old son out fishes me, but in my defense he “calls” the best riffles, runs, and pools by name before we get to the river and he fishes so fast that I am left fishing water he has already covered. No matter, I was once a fifth grader that needed to catch fish in order for the outing to be considered a success, too. Thinking back to my bad experience with a fly fisher when I was eleven, I try to act friendly (well, I draw the line at tubers) to anyone else using the river and freely expense advice to anyone hard up enough to consult me, going as far to give them the “hot” fly that I have been catching a few on.

I suspect that the fly fisherman my friends and I encountered 30 years ago on Trout Brook is no longer with us. Any bad feelings I have had long ago faded away. As to his outburst, perhaps after slaving away at the same job for 40 some years, he did not feel all “warm and fuzzy” sharing this marginal water with four kids that had just slogged through the water he was about to fish. Perhaps in his lifetime he had seen these waters diminished by others keeping lots of fish and he suspected us of doing the same, just as I have witnessed Trout Brook compromised by increasing water temperatures in my lifetime. If I could encounter him today, I would like to ask him about Trout Brook: when he first started fishing it, the changes he has seen, and of course what the hot fly is. In any event, when I get to be his age, I suspect I will be a bit cantankerous too... if only to tubers.



During the final weekend of steelhead fishing on the Brule last year, the kids and I went out. It had recently rained and the clay banks were slippery. I took the kids’ rods, so they wouldn’t break, as they stumbled along. Later, when we crossed the river, I linked arms with them, so they could make it safely across. As I stood in the river watching them cast, I wondered if the day would come, hopefully many, many years in the future, when they will help steady me along banks and stream crossings. Ideally, the steelhead run will be ten times greater than it is now, and I will be watching my grandchildren just as I watch my children now.





CHECK US OUT ON THE WEB:

WWW.KIAPTUWISH.ORG



DON'T MISS THE MAY MEETING!!!

May brings us our annual visit from Marty Engel of the Wisconsin DNR. Come see what Marty has to say about our local trout waters.

Wednesday, April 6th

Dinner at 6PM

Meeting at 7PM

The deadline to make submissions for the September issue is Wednesday, August 24th.
Have a great summer!

