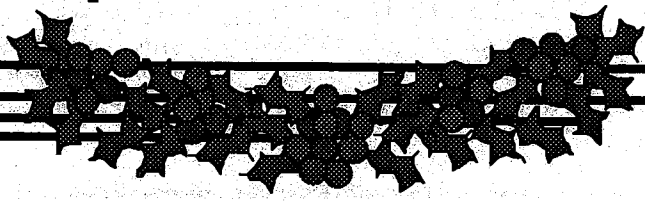




# Rip Rap

## Holiday Banquet

**When:** Wednesday, Dec. 2  
**Where:** JR Ranch, Hudson  
**Social hour:** 6:30  
**Banquet:** 7:30



### President's Lines:

*It was gratifying to hear Duke Welter speak so glowingly of our chapter's successes at the November meeting. From the perspective of the State Council of Trout Unlimited, Kiap-TU-Wish is doing an outstanding job, finding original and creative ways to help protect the resource. Other chapters look to us as leaders in the field. Of course, this is all due to our outstanding membership, which has championed many projects and carried them to completion. Right now, we seem to have more ideas for future projects than we have willing individuals to help carry them out. Consequently, many projects, particularly those that are 'time sensitive' get left undone. We can do more to protect our local trout water. I am as bad as anyone else with New Year's resolutions, but maybe we could all try to take a more active part in chapter activities.*

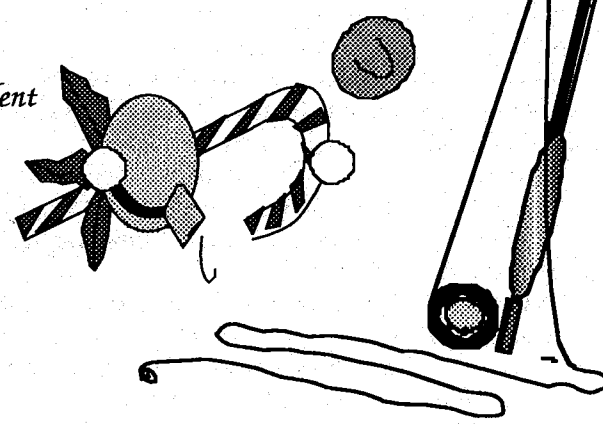
*There is some good news in the DNR Trout Crew saga. Duke Welter reported that the authorized personnel positions had almost been filled and a crew should be in place by the time heavy equipment can operate safely next Spring. I am anxious to confer with the Ojibseau Chapter and DNR representatives to plan upcoming trout crew projects.*

*Those of you who are anxious to wade around in the water, snow, weeds and mud this winter, please give me a call. Although the chapter has no official winter brushing project this year, we need to form a standby group to work closely with the DNR trout crew. The brushing projects in the past have made a significant improvement to the upper Kinni, and those popular Saturday morning work sessions should start up again once the DNR gets its permit squabble with the County ironed out.*

*I hope to see you all at the Holiday Banquet...a great evening of entertainment, food and fun!*

*Sincerely,*

*Brent Sittlow, President*



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## Kiap-TU-Wish Bulletin Board.

### Last Chance to sign up for the Holiday Banquet

You may still call Mike Alwin at Bob Mitchell's Fly Shop at (651) 770-5854, or Jon Jacobs' home at (715) 386-2278 to reserve a seat at the Kiap-TU-Wish Holiday Banquet. The cost is \$20.00 per person. Committee members Karen Stifter, Brent Sittlow, Jon Jacobs, Mike Alwin, and John O'Malley have selected a menu with a choice of entrees: Baked Chicken with Champagne sauce, or Sliced Roast Beef. Vegetables include baby red potatoes or rice pilaf, and salad. For dessert, there is a choice of cheesecake or the JR Ranch's own creation, the delectable Yule Log. This is Kiap-TU-Wish's largest fund-raising event of the year, and everyone has a great time. There will be a showing of our new video, with a 'guided tour' by Cathy Wurzer, who wrote the script, and Dennis Behr, who did the filming. If you have items for auction, they are urgently needed as well. Old fishing tackle, trout flies, hunting equipment, sporting books, waders, clothing, or almost anything that needs a new home is welcome. Bring your wallet and do some Christmas shopping at the auction. At a Holiday Banquet auction table a few years ago, I bought a lovely Spanish leather hard-side gun case for a take-down double for under \$100.00! Wow!

### Skip's Loose Threads...

Creeping change in fly patterns hinders accuracy

I have thousands of flies. Most of us that tie don't take the trouble to salvage hooks from useful trout patterns, we just put a new hook in the vise and start over. Each year I tie a whole new series of flies for my own use, based upon the successes of patterns from the past, enhanced with what I hope will prove to be improvements for the future.

Once upon a time, I captured insects and brought them home for study. I viewed each of them closely under a binocular microscope I bought at the Science Store in St. Paul. Then, I blended dubbings, selected thread colors, decided on proportions, found suitable winging material and hackle and tied the ensemble up neatly on a hook of the appropriate size and shape. I still do that occasionally, but more often now, when I need to replenish my supply, I look at the ones in my fly box. When I can't find the same dubbing blend I used when the fly pattern was new, or exactly the same hackle, I substitute something that's close. **That's not imitating insects, that's imitating the imitations.** Well, over the years, like the story that gets whispered around the room from person to person, the fly pattern changes, usually for the worse. The total package still looks good, but the colors and proportions are just enough different to matter to the fish.

The reason we tie flies, rather than buy them at Bob Mitchell's is not because we can tie better than the pros at Umpqua or Dan Bailey, but because we can imitate local insects more closely. (Yes, it's cheaper, too.) When your carefully thought-out fly patterns begin to lose their effectiveness, remember that it may be due to subtle changes in the pattern, something I call 'Pattern Creep.' There are some ways to avoid this.

Keep a written description and a sample of each fly in a small, cellophane or plastic envelope, like a sandwich bag. Include all the details of the pattern, and note the exact name and number of the dubbing, a sample of a hackle feather, correct size hook, piece of thread, etc.

Label your dubbing blends with numbers and use the numbers in your pattern specs. I use a loose-leaf binder with plastic business-card sheets to hold samples of dubbing blends. You get ten to a page with the system I have. If you want to separate floating dubbing from absorbent dubbing, use DF#, or WF# to distinguish between them.

I have over a hundred hackle necks and saddles. Rather than trying to remember the exact shade of dun I used in a particular pattern, I number the necks with a magic marker. (On the skin side, of course.) It's much easier to record the use of #42 hackle, then to pick the right slightly barred, dark rusty dun from the four possible necks I might have used the last time I tied that fly. Winter's a great time for puttering around with supplies. Fight Pattern Creep! Get Organized! Catch More Fish! Merry Christmas!

## RifRaf...

### Making Sense

by Perry Palin

In the October RipRap, Bill Stieger confessed to a harmless insanity for cane rods. In the November issue, Jon Jacobs attempted a rebuttal, but fell far short. Jon's message takes a swipe at Bill's preference for cane, but he never tells us why graphite is better. Is it because he can't think of any reasons? I currently own half a dozen graphite rods, and about ten of bamboo. 'Tomato-stake' quality rods can be found in graphite as well as cane, and I have suffered with examples of both.

Most of my fishing is done on the small to medium streams of Wisconsin, whose challenges and opportunities are familiar to all. The better bamboo rods, with their moderate actions and forgiving casting strokes, fish better for me than any of the stiffer graphites I have used. Fine cane rods are still 'state of the art.' How should we measure which rod is better for any of us? I like fishing with bamboo rods, but that's too subjective. Does it matter if we catch fish? I am an obsessive record keeper, and my records show that I catch more fish, and larger ones too, with bamboo rods. Maybe we don't have to catch a lot of fish to have a good time, but why not use the stuff that works best for us?

In 1998, I had my most satisfying fishing results using red Cedar rods I have carved out of left over house siding. Does this make Cedar better than bamboo or graphite? Maybe not, but the self-study of carving and using that material has taught me more about rod actions, short and medium-range casting, hooking and playing fish than any school I could have attended. It doesn't matter what rod we use, as long as we know why we use it, and have the casting skill to bring out its best qualities. For my money, cane rod fishermen seem to be more in touch with both the potential and limitations of their equipment than those using plastic rods.

Jon's automotive analogy is an interesting one, but it fails. I had the opportunity to 'test drive' Bill Stieger's Jenkins cane rod last Summer, a very sweet eight-foot five-weight...caught a fish with it, too, a small one. This is not an interesting but outmoded 1932 Cadillac Roadster, but rather a brand new Dodge Prowler, completely at home on the road, doing its job with efficiency and panache. And if it doesn't come with an eight-disc CD player, that's not what those Honda Civic drivers notice when the Prowler rolls on by.

Jon thinks that "outmoded cane' rods are "incredibly overpriced." The workhorses of my collection are Joe Tschida five-weights, expertly restored by Gordy Seim, and I bought three of them for less than the price of a single mid-priced graphite rod. Furthermore, a decent cane rod will appreciate in value over time, whereas a graphite stick loses its resale value almost instantly. I have sold a few bamboo rods, all for more than the purchase price. One of my cane rods was acquired from the original owner eighteen years ago. I fish with it sometimes, I like it, it's still in near-mint condition, and it's not for sale. But I have seen the same make and model offered in used rod lists for thirty to forty times what I paid for mine. Meanwhile, I can hardly give away a used graphite rod. It's the graphite rods that are expensive, Jon.

I wrote at the top of this piece that Bill confessed an insanity for cane rods. I was wrong. Bill is making more sense all the time.





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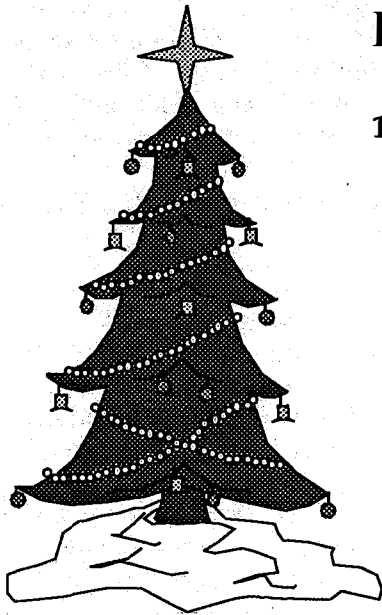
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**DEADLINES**

Jan. 12/15/98

Visit our Website for Stream Reports and Conservation News  
<http://www.spacestar.com/users/lambcom/kiap.html>

## **Eight Great Reasons to attend the Kiap-TU-Wish Holiday Banquet!**



1. Support Kiap-TU-Wish financially by making a reservation.
2. Witness the world premiere of our own video, introduced by writer Cathy Wurzer and videographer Denny Behr.
3. Enjoy a sumptuous feast.
4. See who gets to curl up with Karen Stifter's beautiful, handmade quilt
5. Find a truly great bargain at the auction table
6. Get to paw through and haggle over everyone else's fishing junk
7. Meet the spouses of your significant other fishing buddies.
8. Telling Tall fishing tales gets easier after a drink or two.