



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

FEBRUARY, 2013 VOLUME 6, ISSUE 6

**Restoration, Improvements and Preservation through Research and Projects**

## **FEBRUARY PRESIDENT'S LINES**

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BY KYLE AMUNDSON

### **Chapter news**

It was great to have Kent Cowgill at our January meeting; his readings and humor were delightful. We will have John Sours speak about project work at our February meeting as we are currently reviewing stream restoration projects with input from both John and

arty.

The chapter will once again host a booth at the Great Waters Fly fishing Expo from March 22nd – 24th. If you would like to volunteer at the booth, contact any board member.

### **State Banquet**

The state banquet will be held the first weekend of February. The site is the same as last year, in Rothschild, a suburb of Wausau. The chapter will once again be donating a flybox with flies tied from chapter members.

### **National Banquet**

The national banquet will be held in Madison this year (September) and the state council is looking for volunteers, mainly for folks to set up auction items and collect money. If you are interested you can contact me for more information.

### **Project Activity**

Equipment has been moved to the County Rd W site on the Trimbelle for this year's project. Stay tuned as we will broadcast volunteer days for this project as well as for other small projects.

**Welcome New Members:** Will Rang (New Richmond), William Jurwski (St Croix Falls), Paul Nelson (Hager City), George Ibach (Elmwood) and Gordon Fern (Baldwin)

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



# FUNDING PROJECTS

BY MICHAEL ALWIN

**B**ack in the '80's, the Chapter's stream projects consisted of brush and timber removal, along with the removal of the occasional log jamb. We typically worked about six Saturdays a year during the winter and finished off with a chilli feed and a brush-pile burn in March. K-TU owned a chainsaw, a few large loppers, some hard hats and a couple of sleds to haul the tools to the site. We had a modest endowment in those days but seldom needed it because most of what we did relied on labor.

Sometime in the early 90's we needed some cash for a project that would have emptied our account, so Andy Lamber-son solicited donations and wrote at least one grant. His application was successful and was the start of a second stage of chapter projects, one in which we helped fund projects without necessarily supplying labor for them. In order to help fund those projects we had to generate more even grants and that meant making many more grant applications. At various times both Greg Dietl and Gary Horvath have spent considerable time successfully writing grant applications.

The projects we're involved in now are much more intensive; they require materials for building in-stream structures and the labor and equipment to build and place those structures. This is not cheap work and the amount of cash needed to bring these project to fruition is substantial. Over the last couple of years, Greg Meyer has written twenty-three grant applications and has secured fifteen grants, a 65% success rate. The application process is arduous and averages thirty hours per application. Which means that Greg has donated his expertise and about 690 hours of his time to these efforts. That's staggering. That's laudable. That effort deserves a gigantic "Thank You" from K-TU.



## KIAP-TU-WISH BOARD MEMBERS & CONTACT INFO

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# RUSH RIVER CLEAN UP

BY SARAH SANFORD

**EARTH DAY SHOULD BE EVERY DAY, BUT WE'VE GOT A SPECIAL EVENT THIS APRIL 20TH. THE 2013 RUSH RIVER CLEAN UP TAKES PLACE THAT DAY, WITH SIGN-IN BEGINNING AT 9A.M.**

**PLEASE MARK THIS DATE ON YOUR CALENDAR. THERE WILL BE MORE INFORMATION AS THE DATE APPROACHES. SHARE THIS INFORMATION WITH YOUR FRIENDS FROM OTHER CLUBS AND GROUPS, PLEASE. THANK YOU!**

## SCOTT'S SCOOP

BY SCOTT HANSON, EDITOR

I don't know about you, but I feel as though the month of January is just flying by. It's already the 23rd! Where did the month go? I have no idea why this January would be going so much faster than every other January that I have endured since my birth, but it is. Every other January has moved at the pace of a snail, but this January is going by cheetah-fast. And it can't be because I am nervously awaiting the birth of yet another child - my beautiful bride is not currently pregnant. It's definitely a conundrum.

No matter what the reason, trout fishing is getting closer and closer. And some of you may have already gotten out in Minnesota. That is something that I haven't done in several years, but there were a couple of nice days above freezing, just a couple of weeks ago, that made me think about grabbing my rods and waders and heading down south. One of these years I may actually pull the trigger and go.

Instead of fishing, I implore you to read through this fabulous issue of RipRap. Greg Olson has sent in an ode to his dog, Butch, who recently succumbed to cancer. It will be sure to pull at your heartstrings.

I am also re-running an article from the late Jim Humphrey which ran in these pages exactly three years ago. Mr. Humphrey was a huge blessing to me when I first took over the editorial duties of RipRap, sending me CDs full of articles, as well as regular emails with works he had just completed. It's about time I include some of his work.

Have a great February. See you next month!



# BUTCH

BY GREG OLSON

Today I lost a best friend, my black lab Butch. We said that when he stopped “being Butch” it was time. He had stopped eating. He hadn’t kissed me in two days, and kissing is one of his great joys in life. The cancer in his chest would not stop. It had to be an unseen, internal force that stopped Butch; he was so tough we often referred to him as a tank. External forces such as attack dogs, bears, bees, otters, and rusty barbed wire fences had little effect on him. As for me, I had my own internal forces working against me. One can make light of the ancient Greeks for believing the heart is where love originated and was contained. And yet, when the “greatest dog in the world” will no longer eat, has trouble breathing due to the cancer ravaging his body, and you know it is time to say goodbye, the ache you feel in your chest sure seems like your heart is breaking.

This story starts fifteen and a half years ago. My soon-to-be wife, Kathy, and I noticed an ad in the Star Tribune that stated “Labs for Sale” in Hampton, MN. My mom would not allow dogs in the house, so my childhood pets were rabbits, cottontails actually, that stayed outside. Not to offend any hardcore rabbit people, but raising rabbits is not as much fun as having dogs. I was excited to get a dog(s) sometime after the honeymoon in a month, so we thought we would take a drive and “just take a look.” Of course that didn’t quite work. This farm in Hampton had two litters born a day apart. There were eighteen puppies tumbling about the farmyard. The minute we got out of the car, a yellow female pup ran up to Kathy and started to chew on her shoes. Of course this is the lab my wife had to have, since she “was so darn cute.” Thus we wound up with Sundance. Deciding this dog should have a playmate, we inquired if this dog had any brothers that were not spoken for. There was one and he wanted nothing to do with us, as numerous attempts to engage him were met with a sleepy yawn as he would retreat back to his pen to resume his nap. Undaunted, we added this black lab, Butch to the family. Now I had been reading up on how to select a good pup and the suggestions included things like flipping the dog on their back and seeing if they were submissive. Nowhere did I read to choose the dog that chews on your shoes or choose the dog that will have nothing to do with you. This is most likely because once you get the dog home they will continue to chew on shoes and even a couch cushion.

At this point I could go on and on about Butch and Sundance’s exploits, who at times could rival their namesake gunslingers for mischief and mayhem. But, I won’t, and right now, the editor of RipRap, Scott Hanson, who graciously publishes my ramblings, is breathing a sigh of relief, but is still wondering if this has anything to do with trout fishing.

Well, not much really. With Butch’s love of water, I never did take him trout fishing. To have him sit on the bank while I fished would be like asking an alcoholic to tend bar while staying sober; it just seemed like cruel and unusual punishment. Case in point, one scorching, hot summer day Butch bolted from the house when one of the kids opened the door, ran through the neighbor’s garage and flung himself into their pool. Evidently, the neighbors laughing, shouting, and splashing had made him crazy from the heat. He did love fishing however. He would patrol the shallows of our lake for hours, submerging his eyes to better locate his prey. Then he would pounce on sunfish. Never did I see him have any success and yet summer after summer he would keep at it. This quality of fruitless persistence made him the perfect partner for our grouse hunts. Autumn after autumn, I would miss almost every bird the dogs flushed, and they would shoot me a glance that said, “Geez, you missed again.” But they always put their noses to the ground to hunt up the next bird. For the first couple of years I went steelhead fishing, with hour after hour, and day after day of fruitless casting, I would often console myself with the image of Butch trying to catch sunfish, and our similar success rates.

Then, rather than fishing tales, I would like to tell you some of the things that Butch (and Sunny) have taught me. I had a long string of footloose and fancy-free days in college and graduate school, answering to no one but myself. Two weeks after picking up Butch and Sunny, I got married. I now had a partner. There had to be give and take, compromise



and someone else to consider before making decisions. In another two years there would be children and even more loss of freedom. The dogs eased my transition. Being able to go out after work and return home at whatever hour was replaced with "sorry boys, but I have to get home to let the dogs out and feed them." But in exchange for that loss of personal freedom, I got so much more in return from them. The dogs' happy dance they performed every time I got home never got old. No matter how bad my day was, it was impossible not to smile with that reception.

Butch also showed me what courage meant by protecting his family no matter what. When Butch was only 6 months old, we were all hiking and I stepped on a ground bee nest. Kathy and I called out to run away, which we did in haste. However, I heard barking behind me, looked back, and there was our baby Butch, standing his ground, barking at the swarming bees. I ran back and scooped him up, brushing and slapping the bees off us. His face and ears were so swollen we were worried we would lose him, but after a short nap he was good to go again. When a neighbor's German Shepard broke his chain and had Sunny pinned to the ground by her neck, it was Butch that reached her aid first, enduring multiple bite wounds to his head. One night when my wife was running at night with the dogs in our neighborhood, a male stranger appeared and ran alongside them, asking if my wife wouldn't like to come back to his place. She declined saying she was married and to leave her alone. When the guy persisted and my wife's voice cracked in fear, now yelling to leave her alone, our two dogs, who we always joked would greet a house burglar with tail wags and kisses, transformed before my wife's eyes into vicious attack dogs, snapping and lunging at this guy, making him flee. They never displayed that kind of behavior before or since that incident, but somehow they knew what needed to be done. Later, when we had



young kids, playing on an empty beach in Ashland, WI, I noticed what I thought must have been someone's Newfoundland emerge from the bushes on the steep rip-rapped shoreline. It started running straight for the kids. From the park bench where Kathy and I were sitting, we would not be able to intercept it in time. By the time I realized it was a black bear, Butch and Sunny had already ripped the leashes out of our hands and ran full speed, barking at the bear. They got in between the kids and the bear, which turned tail and hid amongst the bushes again. I assume the bear came into the park at night to do some dumpster diving, was caught by the sunrise, and took to hiding. Why it came out at midday and was coming at the kids I have no idea, but I am so glad I never had to find out.

As years went by, Butch also showed me how to grow old gracefully. He never asked for plastic surgery and his grey beard and whiskers highlighted his distinction and wisdom. He and Sunny used to cover all of Lakeland or Afton State Park with their daily walks, but fifteen year old joints do not allow for that. However, Butch knew that it does no good to stay indoors regaling oneself with remembrances of long days afield. Butch knew it was good to still get out a couple times a day and if one can cover only a neighborhood cul-du-sac, so be it. There is still "game" to track and mailbox posts to sniff. Never dwell on what you can no longer do, but what you still can. It took them forever to cover a block (and still does for Sunny), but cover they did, meticulously, and still got the same enjoyment as if they romped ten times the territory. Last year noticing this behavior, I went back to some stretches of the Kinni that I have fished countless times, but this time I really slowed down and looked at it with fresh eyes. I was amazed at the number of fish I had been missing. I didn't cover nearly the water, but wound up catching many more fish, fish I had previously splashed on by.

Butch lived for today. Yesterday is in the past and tomorrow might not happen. So many people say they are going to "start living" on the weekend, on summer vacation, or upon retirement. Tomorrow is not guaranteed. The person falling asleep in the opposite lane during your morning commute is not making any promises. One never knows when one's number is up. Butch knew what was important in life. It was friends and family, and he asked only to be in their presence. He would follow me to whatever room I was in. When we all left the house, he would know when the bus or the cars were scheduled to return and would watch in the backyard or by the glass doors leading to the deck. At the end, when it was painful for Butch to get up and move, I would try to do everything in the living room, where his favorite bed was located.

Speaking of family, my Dad and Butch had a comical relationship. My father did not care for Butch's kisses, which seemed to make Butch even more determined to give him one. They often shared our couch when my Dad was over and if he was concentrating on, say, the Packer game on TV, Butch would slowly inch his way over and plant a big sloppy kiss on my Dad's cheek, which, despite his supposed dislike, made my Dad roll with laughter. I lost my father this past October after a long battle with dementia and Parkinson's, and he too was forced to live in the present. The past was forgotten, so much so that if I left for a minute and returned to Dad, he greeted me as if that was the first time he saw me that day. In his state of mind, he had no regrets from the past and he said he was always happy for another day, because tomorrow was not a given. In the nursing home, all the possessions he obtained were useless to him: the house, cars, money, etc. For my Dad, too, surrounding himself with loved ones was all that mattered.

Butch and Sunny had been using only one of the adjacent cul-de-sacs to our house for their walks the past few months, not wanting to go any further. However, despite dogs supposedly only living in the present, the day after we put Butch down, Sunny insisted on pulling us through 15 inches of fresh snow to the vet office (which she hates), but where she had last seen Butch the day before. She sniffed the front door for quite a while and looked up at me. I told her Butch was no longer here. I told her Butch was planting kisses on "Grandpa." This seemed to make sense to her; as she turned away and we trudged the half mile back home, back to our loved ones.



# 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.

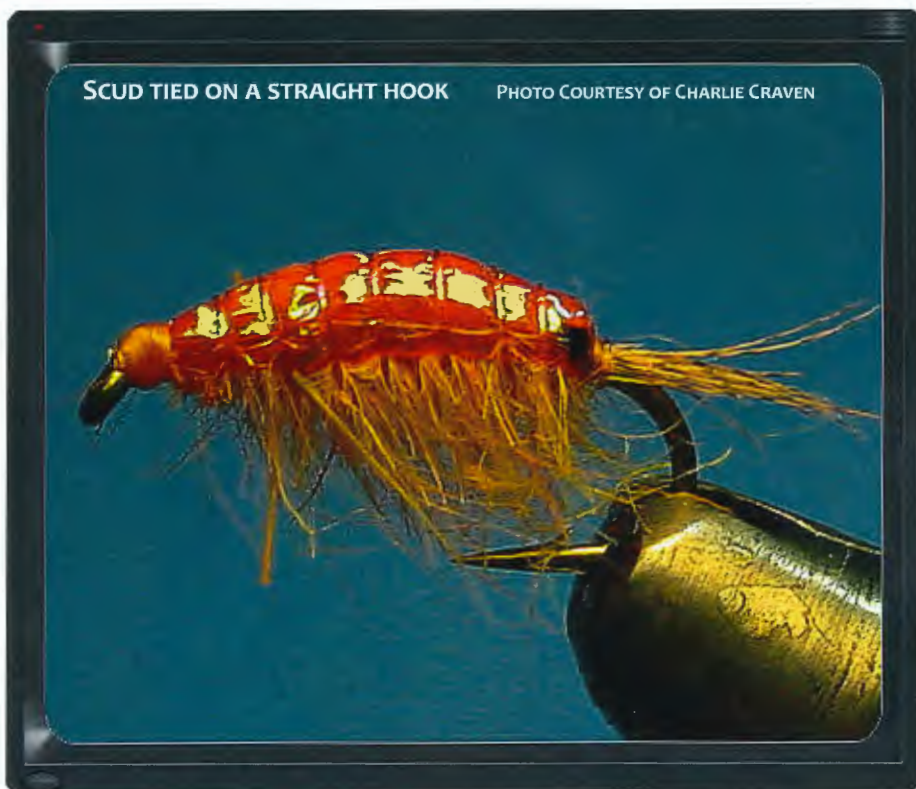
You may argue the merits of LaBranche's order of importance around the campfire or over a cocktail table at the end of a day. I am left with a haunting question: Why will any trout accept anything with an obvious hook in it that is attached to a tippet that must look like a towrope? Why would a trout 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 Berger, 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.





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

Wednesday, February 6th at  
Bob Smith's Sports Club in  
downtown Hudson.

The deadline to make submissions for the  
March issue is Wednesday, February 20th.  
Thank you!

