



Rip Rap

March Meeting

When: Wednesday, March 3
 Where: JR Ranch, Hudson
 Dinner: 6:30
 Program: 8:00 Annual Business Meeting

President's Lines:

That cold, raw Sunday afternoon following my football team's ultimate defeat, my Weimaraner and I made the short drive to the former Mounds Dam impoundment area. The recent snows had covered most of the newly installed rip rap. Large boulders and rock piles stood at intervals along the bank, looking out of place on the flat bottom of the former pond. It was hard for me to imagine what this fresh new river stretch would look like come spring. In the light of the Packer's loss, it was hard to think of anything positive...anything at all.

But this winter trek, breaking a new trail with my snowshoes, brought to mind all of those 'trail blazers' in our chapter that made this new stretch of river possible. As I passed through the quiet landscape, the murmur of water moving under the ice canopy, I wondered what surprises were in store for those who will fish this stretch for trout for the first time in seventy years. Regardless, it has been returned to its wild, free-flowing state, the way it was intended to be.

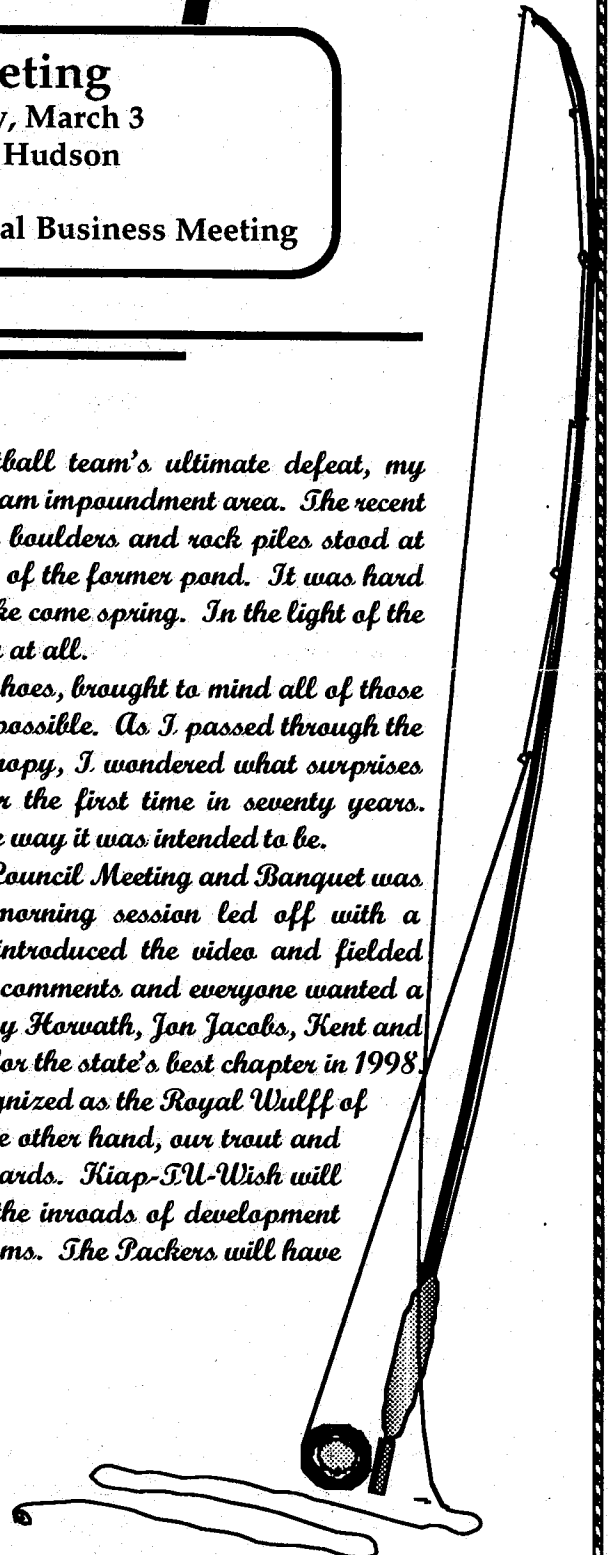
On a warmer note, I'd like to report that the recent State Council Meeting and Banquet was a major success for the Kiap-TU-Wish contingent. The morning session led off with a presentation of "A Storm on the Horizon." Kent Johnson introduced the video and fielded questions after the showing. The meeting buzzed with gracious comments and everyone wanted a copy to bring back to their own chapters. That same evening, Gary Horwath, Jon Jacobs, Kent and I accepted the Wisconsin Trout Unlimited Silver Trout Award for the state's best chapter in 1998. Each of our members should be proud of the fact that we are recognized as the Royal Wulff of

chapters in Wisconsin. On the other hand, our trout and resources don't care about awards. Kiap-TU-Wish will need to pick up the pace as the invasions of development advance on our precious streams. The Packers will have to pick up the pace too.

Sincerely,
 Brent Sittlow, President

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Kiap-TU-Wish Bulletin Board...



Election of Officers at March Meeting...

Our chapter will hold its annual business meeting on March 3. The election of two board members will be held. Both Andy Lamberson and Kent Johnson have agreed to stand for reelection, but nominations are welcome from the floor as well. If you plan to nominate someone, please make sure they are willing to serve before you speak up. We will hear and approve Chuck Goossen's Treasurer's report for the year as well. Additional business will include a discussion of the upcoming Wisconsin Conservation Congress Meeting followed by questions pertaining to the early catch-and-release trout season. We have also tentatively scheduled Dave Hausmann of the Wisconsin DNR to field fish and game law questions that may arise during the discussion. Dave also followed the Parker Creek episode from beginning to end, and may have some comments and facts on that very publicized fish kill in our watershed.

Video Project...

Perhaps the most exciting and useful project ever to come from Kiap-TU-Wish chapter is our new film: "Storm on the Horizon." Just as beautiful as the famous "Way of a Trout," it has a much more important message. It has power...to sway votes, to win hearts and minds, to change the way development happens in our region and across the world.

It is not simply a tool to help preserve the Kinni. Its validity for all cold water resources means that its usefulness is global. Perhaps the next version of the film will be in French or German, Russian, or Chinese. Our film may save the life of a stream in Denmark or Japan, in India or Chile.

A new Video Implementation Team has been founded. It will meet Saturday mornings and discuss the next phase of the video project. How will the film be distributed? How many copies will be made, a hundred or a million? How do we get it shown to the widest audience? Do we enlist help from other organizations like National TU, Sierra Club, National Wildlife Association, The Nature Conservancy, etc. How do we get copies to the Boy Scouts, 4-H, summer camps and schools?

Want to join the discussion? The only pitfall is thinking too small. If you're interested in adding your 'two cents,' call Brent Sittlow at (715) 386-0820, or Andy Lamberson at (715) 386-7568. Or you can contact them at our web address: kiaptuwish@hotmail.com.

Aquatic Inventory Project Funded...

At their last meeting, the Board of Directors of the chapter decided to fund the Kinnickinnic Aquatic Inventory Project. This two-year program, proposed by Professor Clarke Gerry of the UW River Falls Biology Department, will produce an inventory of aquatic invertebrates in the Kinni and its tributaries. This baseline data will be extremely valuable as the river faces threats to parts of its ecosystem from various sources. Kiap-TU-Wish is contributing \$950 to partially fund a student-assistant for the first year's work. Our participation in the project will probably be renewed for the second year after evaluation of the results of year one. Professor Gerry is a Kiap-TU-Wish member and is donating his time and travel for this effort. One of the benefits of this study to fly fishermen will be a wonderful hatch chart.

Project Work Crew...

Our chapter has had a two-year setback from our normal winter streamworks activities. However, as the proposed DNR trout crew becomes a reality in the near future, we may be in a position to have work days this Summer or early Fall. If you'd like to be part of the Kiap-TU-Wish "On-Call" work crew, please let us know, by mail, by phone, or by contacting our e-mail address.

Parker Creek Update

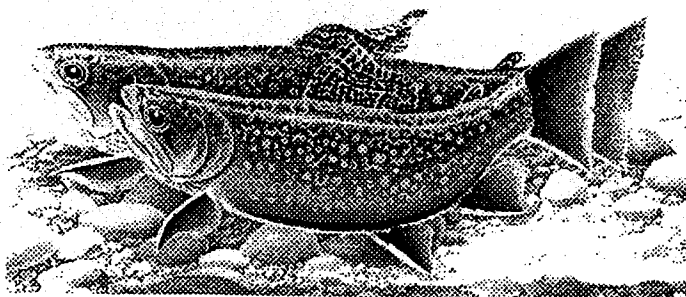
by Skip James

Last May, a disastrous fish kill occurred on Parker Creek, a tributary to the Kinnickinnic River. Over fourteen thousand trout were destroyed when liquid manure, pumped as fertilizer onto the fields of farmer Eric Swenson, were washed by torrential rains into a dry run leading to the creek before it could be incorporated into the soil. After a huge outcry from TU and other conservation organizations, the DNR cited Swenson for negligence and Eric Johnson, St. Croix County Attorney, brought charges against him. The case was settled on January 14 with a plea bargain: Swenson agreed to pay \$200., adopt and put in practice a nutrient management plan, and to establish grassy buffers along the waterways on his property. The nutrient management plan and the buffers will be maintained under the yearly inspection of the St. Croix County Land and Water Conservation Department. Swenson's no-contest plea does not imply guilt or liability for damages. Swenson's reaction to the settlement: "I still have my doubts whether I'm really responsible for this, but I agreed to it because it was financially feasible for me. I guess everybody is going to get something out of it."

Not everyone was happy, though. There is general agreement among DNR personnel that the bargain struck with Swenson may not do enough to protect the Kinni from future similar mishaps. The agency pushed hard for same-day incorporation of liquid manure, rather than the forty-eight hours allowed in the settlement. Compensation for the lost trout, estimated at \$18,500., certainly would have sent a stronger message than the \$200 recovered. It remains to be seen whether the DNR will use this case in efforts to lobby for stricter standards statewide.

Tim Pople, project manager for the Kinnickinnic Priority Watershed, was more sanguine. He is trying to educate farmers in the valley about ecologically sound ways to manage their wastes. "Farmers are an independent lot," he said. "If the outcome of the Swenson case had been seen as punitive, I can tell you that his neighbors wouldn't allow me on their property. The key to changing farming practices is access, education and cooperation. Swenson's dairy operation is not the only 'accident waiting to happen.' There are alot of dry runs out there." Pople has spent the last two years building consensus among landowners, environmental groups, developers and other interests for a comprehensive plan for the preservation of water quality in the Kinnickinnic River.

Are there any lessons to be learned here? The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources is the designated agency to enforce the rules concerning fish and game. It's recent politicization makes enforcement more difficult when regulations conflict with agricultural or other interests with powerful lobbies in Madison. If it pushes too hard, its budget gets cut, or it loses personnel or funding for projects. Under present circumstances, 'getting tough' with farmers isn't going to translate into a cleaner river. Combine that with the dogged determination of farmers to preserve their independent way of life, countering apparent threats to their control over their property by environmental groups like TU, and it may be more realistic to try a gentler tack. The carrot works better than the stick. If the Kinnickinnic Priority Watershed plan is adopted by St. Croix County, the stage will be set for conciliation, not confrontation. We need informational tools, like Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter's new video: "Storm on the Horizon." Perhaps Eric Swenson's farm, with its best-practices waste management system and its vegetative buffer zones, will become a model for his neighbors, after they listen to Tim Pople explain how improved water quality benefits everyone. If that happens, those of us who love the Kinni will be very happy indeed.



Experts Unlimited

by Kenyon Scheurman

It was a Friday night in late May and I was excited! Tomorrow would be the day of the annual Kiap-TU Wish Fly Fishing Clinic. The clinic is held each year in a large park that is almost in my back yard. When I woke up Saturday morning, my aspirations for the day diminished rapidly; it was overcast and raining. Even so, the day was sure to be filled with hours of fun fly fishing instruction that ranged from equipment to casting, life cycles of aquatic insects and their imitations, and even ways to protect the rivers we love. Not to mention story after story of fly fishing adventures from experienced fly fishers that love the sport as much as I do. That, however, only describes the first half of the eventful day. The second half was to be spent actually fishing the Kinnickinnic River, a well known trout stream that gracefully flows through my home town of River Falls.

I spent the morning in the garage finding rain gear and getting my fishing tackle in order while I listened to the pitter-patter of rain on the roof. I wasn't about to let a little rain keep me from going on a fishing trip, especially this one! It got to be about 12:30, only a half hour before the clinic was to start, and the rain began to let up.

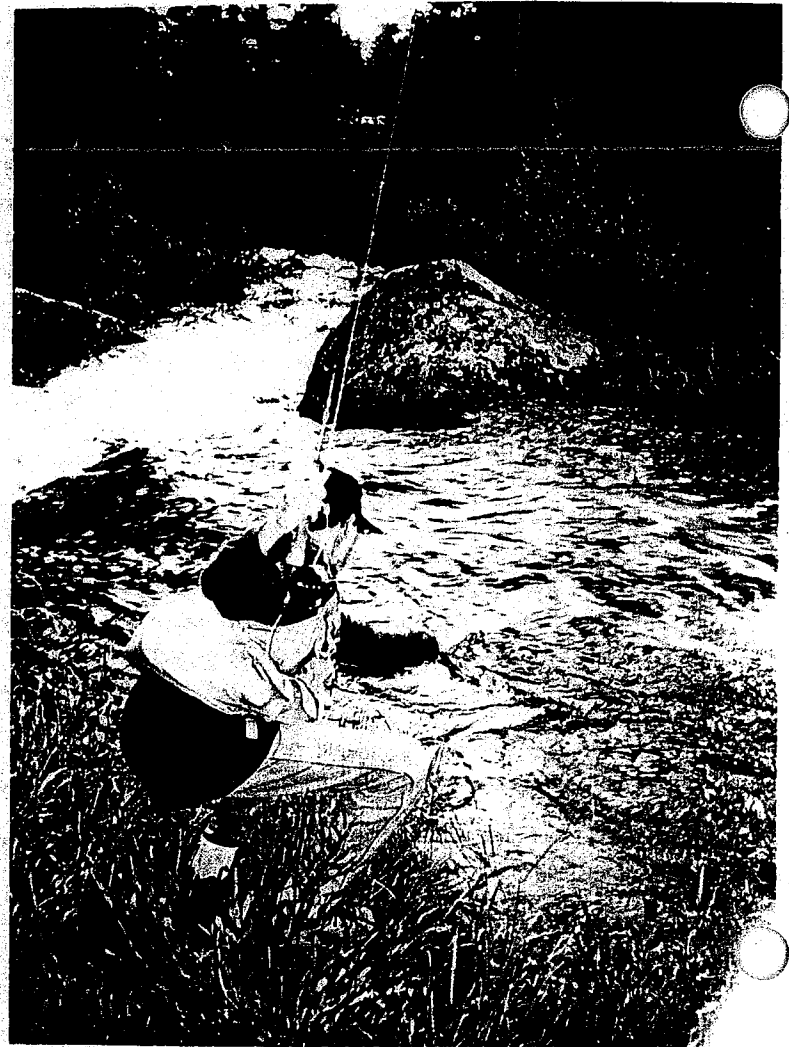
As I walked the half block to the park, the rain slowed to a mere drizzle. I reached the designated shelter and set my things down in a corner. I was shy at first since I didn't know anyone there. I soon was lured out of my corner by the familiar sounds of fishermen telling stories. These yarns had been stretched into heroic tales that involved fish exaggerated to such size that it was hard to conceive there ever was a real fish to begin with. As I walked from one group of fishermen to the next, I came to two conclusions: a good fishing story can lure anyone out of a corner, no matter how shy they are, and all fishermen speak the same language. 'Fish talk' is truly universal.

Once everyone had arrived, the instruction began with how to assemble a rod, reel, backing, line and leader into one working unit. Although I had brought my own outfit, there were many who did not. Fortunately, the instructors had come prepared with plenty of loaners for newcomers. The demonstrations were clear and easy to understand. It was great for beginners and a good refresher for a 'veteran' like me.

By this time, the rain had stopped completely and there were even signs of the sun coming out. The group was now led out to the grass where we were given a demonstration of a simple fly cast. We were then cut loose to practice casting with our own rods. There were plenty of instructors to help us with our casting for the next thirty minutes. This alternating cycle between instruction and hands-on practice was the pattern for the afternoon. We would spend time in the shelter receiving demonstrations on the life cycles of aquatic insects (live specimens), their imitations, knots that we should know, and ways we can help protect the rivers we love to fish. Then, we would practice our casting on the grass. The techniques ranged from the simple pick-up and lay-down cast to the more challenging roll cast.

Halfway through the clinic we took a short break to eat an excellent meal donated by Kiap-TU-Wish chapter of Trout Unlimited and generous area businesses. Then we packed up our gear and headed for the river which runs just below the park. There was about one instructor for every two students. All afternoon, I had my eye on Bill Hinton, a real veteran from Stillwater. As far as I could tell, Bill was the casting expert on the grass. When we went to the river, I got to fish with him. He sidled up the bank of the river that I never would have guessed housed half a dozen fish (that's not counting the other half dozen I couldn't hook even after they swallowed my fly and half my leader.) Bill coached me through every cast. He'd say: "Lay a roll cast just a foot above that second rock," After it took me several tries, as well as endangering Bill with my inexperienced roll casts, I finally placed the fly in the correct spot. The fish

(continued on next page)



Ken Scheurman

would be there! I was truly amazed. I thought to myself, "this man is a fishing wizard." Needless to say, this is where I learned the most. The day could not have ended more beautifully. I caught half a dozen fish, learned some fly fishing techniques that could never be measured by the number of fish caught, and had enough fun to last the whole summer.

This annual Kiap-TU-Wish Fly Fishing Clinic is a way for some people to see if fly fishing is for them. For others, it is a way to get closer to a sport they have always admired from afar. For me, the clinic has become a tradition. I have attended for the past three years, and I have learned new things each time. That's the great thing about fly fishing...there's always more to learn.

Kenyon Scheurman might be a likely candidate to help with this year's clinic. He attends school in River Falls.

Spring Fishing Clinic Date Set...

This year's event will be held at Glen Park and the Kinnickinnic River starting at noon on Saturday, May 22. As always, the clinic needs volunteers: instructors, fly tiers, guides, food servers and cleanup crew. Since each participant receives a box of flies to fish with during the evening session, the chapter needs all its tiers to donate effective Kinni flies. So, if you're tying a bunch for your own use this spring, why not tie an extra dozen and donate it to the clinic. We also need instructors in casting, knots, stream lore and entomology, wading safety, equipment maintenance and water quality preservation. If you want to make a difference in someone's life, (see the previous article), this is a wonderful way to do it. Besides, it's really fun. To volunteer your services or flies, call Mike Alwin at Bob Mitchell's Fly Shop (651) 770-5854.

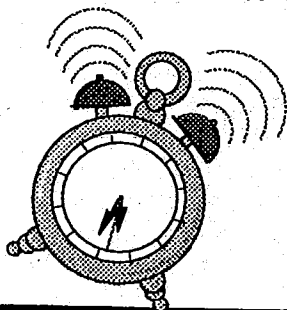
Call for Fly Tiers...

The April meeting of Kiap-TU-wish will be devoted to fly tying. Everyone's invited to bring their equipment and materials and tie up some "kinni killers" as well as share their wisdom and expertise with other chapter members. If you want to embarrass yourself by volunteering to be one of the 'experts,' call Brent Sittlow at (715) 386-0820, or Jon Jacobs, at (715) 386-7822.



Keep those cards and letters coming!!!

If you didn't attend the hearing on February 18, or have yet to submit a letter of support for the Kinnickinnic Priority Watershed plan, you still have time to do so. If approved by St. Croix and Pierce Counties, this plan could mean up to \$7 million of grant money from the state for implementing projects to reduce sediment and nutrient loading, to support impervious surface planning, and to reduce groundwater pollution. It takes a little time and effort to write a letter, but it means so much. Don't put it off. WRITE NOW!



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Skip's Loose Threads....

Some thoughts on Caddis and their imitations

I stopped in at Barnes and Noble the other day, the one on Snelling Avenue in Roseville, more for a cup of coffee and a siesta in a comfortable chair than to look at books. The day had been somewhat hectic, and I needed a breather. After finding a puffy armchair with an ottoman, I sank into the welcoming softness with a sigh, and wondered what would happen if I fell asleep there, unnoticed by anyone until closing time. I thought about asking a salesperson to check on me from time to time...to wake me up if it got past 6pm, but that seemed to me to be imposing. The potentially dire personal consequences of missing a concert caused me to forget about relaxing and I got to my feet. I have never been known to sleep while standing upright, (unlike some people I know). Over to the sport book shelves I went, looking for fly fishing titles. And there I spied Caddis Super Hatches, by Carl Richards and Bob Braendle (Frank Amato Publications, 1997), just the book I needed to go between LaFontaine's Caddisflies and The Caddis and the Angler by Larry Solomon and Eric Leiser. What, I wondered, had been discovered in the last year that was new and that would make me totally successful during those sometime frustrating evening Caddis-fests on the Kinni.

The earliest American Caddis books dealt mostly with how to accomplish a lifelike silhouette, since most Caddis imitations up to that time were basically tied like Catskill Mayfly imitations, including the ubiquitous Adams, the dry Hare's Ear, and the Grannom, among others. Solomon and Leiser (1977) were concerned with wing shape, delta-wing, hair-wing, etc. Al Troth invented the Elk Hair Caddis in the late '70s, which neatly summed up just about all the new ideas current at the time. Leonard Wright's book, Fishing the Dry Fly as a Living Insect (1972), made the point that fishing a Caddis imitation with motion, the 'sudden inch' was definitely superior in some situations to the dead-drift technique. Gary LaFontaine's monumental work on the subject (1981), with its underwater studies of trout interacting with Caddis flies at various stages of development, brought out the idea of 'triggers' that the fish seemed to key on. He mentioned the silvery bubble of air in which pupa rise to the surface, and the same sort of quick-silver globule of air carried underwater by egg-laying females. Of course, like most things in fly fishing, this was not an original discovery. It had been observed and written about in the '50s by Wisconsin author Sid Gordon. His ground-breaking studies of flies and their imitations, How to Fish from Top to Bottom (1955), describes a method of imitating that flashy air bubble with silver tinsel. The literature of the wet fly, from ancient Scottish sources to Dave Hughes' recent book on the subject, enumerate the various combinations of materials that can effectively imitate the Caddis pupa in the film and during its ascent from the bottom. Jim Leisenring's flies and the method for fishing them that bears his name were designed to mimic Caddis flies. Sylvester Nemes writes convincingly of soft-hackle imitations fished dead-drift in the film, or on the swing during Caddis hatches. Finally, there have always been Caddis imitations that have proven worthy of respect that come out of no particular 'school', like the Henryville Special.

So what have we learned from the literature to this point? First, wing silhouette of the emerged, dry Caddis imitation is important, whether made with elk/deer hair, mink guard hairs, hackle fibers, CDC or poly yarn. Second, movement of the dry imitation does not diminish its effectiveness if done with a certain decorum. Third, that the most significant trigger for underwater imitations is that shiny, mercury-like bubble of air, and the material to imitate that best is Antron fibers, either used in dubbing and well picked out, or as a sheath over the thinly dubbed body. Fourth, that imitations meant to swim in the film can be most realistic if tied with soft hackles from various game birds.

The greatest value I derived from my new book: Caddis Super Hatches, was the hatch charts themselves. The major Midwest hatches (as well as the Eastern and Western ones) are set out in a format that makes it easy to decide what to tie, what to expect on the stream, and how to fish the various imitations based upon the particular genus' habitat and habits. If one wants more detail on a particular species, that's in a different spot. Finally, the major hatches are color coded to represent their importance.

This evening I think I will tie some modified Adamases. To imitate adult, hatched Caddis, I'll forego the tail, mix my gray muskrat dubbing half and half with clear Antron yarn, and include a swept-back wing of rolled mallard breast feathers. I'm also going to make a soft hackle version with the same body and grouse hackle to fish in the film. In a size 16 or 18, twitched over the surface or on the swing, do you think they'll work? Wanna bet?

Bif

Raf...



Apology Accepted
by Perry Palin

Waiting for March 1st: The Willow Race

In the January Rip Rap, Jon Jacobs apologized for giving the impression that he had in an earlier issue denigrated Bill Stieger's preference for split cane as a fly rod material. From this quarter, I say: apology accepted.

Writing only for myself, I will say that not ALL the people I have met who choose graphite over more natural rod materials are "yuppie jerks." Only some of them seem to be. I don't think Jon is one. And I appreciate his live and let live attitude, allowing me and others to choose something else over graphite.

Jon mentions bamboo rods made by a number of companies, most now out of business. I don't own any of these rods. I have no experience with the products of these companies

Jon seems to be saying, though, that bamboo rods are expensive. Bamboo rods have been a bargain for me. Every bamboo rod I have ever owned was acquired for less than the retail cost of a new graphite rod. Every bamboo rod I have sold was sold at a profit, often after several years of productive and enjoyable stream use. My luck with graphite has not been so positive. I have been able to give away a few graphite rods, when the moon and stars were just right. Mostly, I can't give the damn things away.

I am not a collector of fly rods. Bill Stieger does not appear to be a collector of fly rods either. If others collect cane rods, "wheat-colored" or otherwise, and that appellation supports the resale value of tackle made with that material, so much the better. Those who choose rods of graphite should be so lucky!

I am an amateur in all of this. But I have many years of fishing experience with glass fly rods, over twenty years of fishing experience with a variety of graphite rods, about eighteen years of personal experience in using bamboo, and less than one season with cedar rods whittled from some leftover house siding. How are we supposed to evaluate one material *vis a vis* another? In my 'limited' experience, my records show that I've caught more fish with bamboo than with graphite rods, and more and bigger fish with cedar than with graphite. Maybe someone else will have other results, and that's fine with me.

Jon is right about one thing. We should spend out time and effort protecting the resource. Jon has worked tirelessly for Kiap-TU-Wish over the years and we should all thank him again for that. I have tried to do my part, filling my wicker creel with trash when I'm on the stream; making positive contacts with riparian landowners, along with a plug for the chapter; giving flies and TU brochures to landowners and other people I meet on streams; making modest donations for our silent auction, the spring fishing clinic, and for door prizes. But I can do more. I resolve right now not to edit or even check for spelling errorerers in this piece, and instead to spend the time tying a dozen Trico spinners, which I will donate to the chapter. I will flatter myself into thinking they're worth a dollar apiece, buy them back at that price, and send a check to the treasurer today.

Editor's note: Perry's flies are definitely worth more than a buck apiece!



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*Visit our Website for Stream Reports, Chat and Chapter News
<http://www.lambcom.net/kiaptuwish/>*

Not only did Kiap-TU-Wish win the
1998 Silver Trout Award

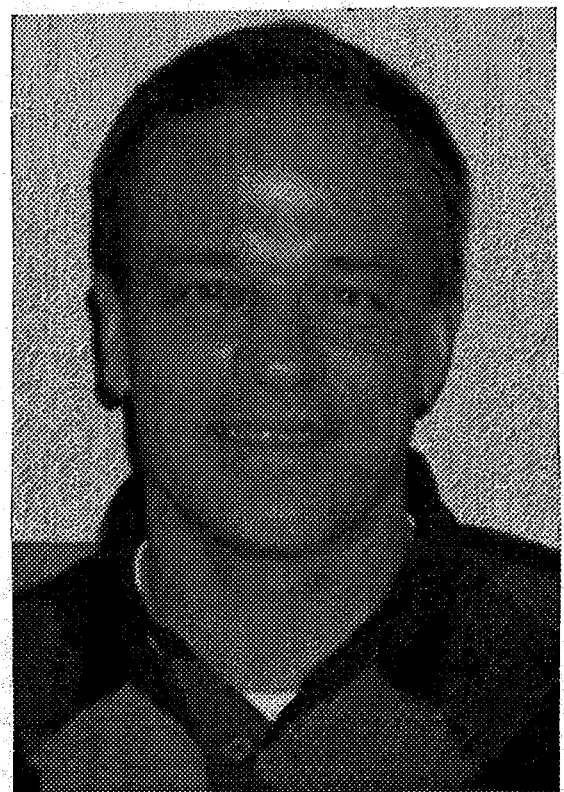
as the best chapter in the state of Wisconsin,
but our own **Kent Johnson** won the

**Water Quality
Leadership Award**

This honor is bestowed annually by St. Croix
County to the person who demonstrates
leadership in the prevention of non-point
source pollution and watershed
management.

Yeah, Kiap-TU-Wish!!!

Yeah, Kent!!!



Kent Johnson