



A Publication of the Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter of Trout Unlimited
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MARCH MEETING INFORMATION

There will not be a speaker at the March meeting; only business. The annual chapter business meeting will be Wednesday, March 4, at Bob Smith's Sports Club. There are four board seats to be filled: Hans Jung and Kyle Amundson are up for reelection. Randy Arnold has agreed to stand for Andy Lamberson's remaining one year term. Gary Richardson is stepping down so we are looking for a replacement for Gary. There will be a discussion of the year's expenditures, projects, officer's status and a Treasurer's report. 2009 project plans will be discussed. Please bring any issues you wish to discuss, also. See you at 6 for dinner and 7 for the meeting.

Greg Dietl



**KIAP-TU-WISH
CHAPTER**



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**Make sure you visit the
Kiap-TU-Wish booth at the
Minneapolis Great Waters
Expo March 6, 7 & 8**



Expo Update

In the last issue of Rip Rap I had the incorrect dates for the Great Waters Fly Fishing Expo. The correct dates are March 6, 7 and 8. We're doing ok for volunteers but still need help on Sunday the 8th. There will be discussion of the booth staffing at the March meeting. If you want to volunteer please send me an email or give me a call. You can work any hours you want.

Chapter member update

In February, 2008, Bob Diesch broke his leg while working on brushing at Pine Creek. I'm pleased to report that Bob is doing well. It has been a long healing and physical therapy process but he is greatly improved and able to fish, wade, ambulate and is back to work. Not only that but he is on the Board of Directors and attended the State Council banquet in February. We are very grateful for Bob's recovery and for his commitment and strong contributions to the chapter.

Randy Arnold to join the board

Andy Lamberson's move to Winona has left a board position open and Randy Arnold has stepped up to serve the remaining year of Andy's seat. Randy is a dedicated chapter member who has put a tremendous number of hours into volunteer projects. And, you all know the story of the DNR mulcher.

The chapter, board and officers welcome Randy to the board and thank him for his ongoing commitment to the chapter. Andy remains a chapter member and webmaster for which we are very, very grateful.

Gary Richardson stepping down from the board

Gary Richardson has decided to step down from the board of directors. He was up for reelection in March so we will be seeking a new board member. Gary has stated he will continue to be active in projects and provide photos of projects. Gary has been a consistent photographer for the chapter. His photos have appeared in Wisconsin Trout and Rip Rap. Thank you, Gary, for your term on the board and for your continuing work for the chapter. If you are interested in joining the board to fill this vacancy please contact me or any board member.

Parker Creek bushing

At this writing, work on Parker Creek was anticipated to begin on February 28. This should be an intense brushing project. The area has been described as "boxelder hell". I hope to have more information at the March meeting. Watch the website for updates.

Pine Creek update

We should have one more summer of work on Pine Creek. Once again, all plans for continuing the project were not complete at this writing. We have money, rock, timbers and the DNR. Plans are to continue upstream. More to follow...

Welcome to new chapter member

Welcome new member James Tatzel.

Chapter President

My term as chapter president expires in March. There is not a replacement on the horizon. I will hang on as a lame duck. This has been a very rewarding, challenging and busy three years. It has definitely been a growth experience for me. I cannot say enough about the chapter's commitment to the mission of coldwater conservation. Any volunteer organization requires a core group of volunteers to keep it strong and effective. This chapter has an incredible core group that has built an outstanding legacy of action and accomplishment. It is also vital that new leaders and talent be recruited. We have seen active new board members step up and join the fray with fresh ideas and commitments. Believe me I understand the time and energy it takes to become active and involved, especially with all the family and work commitments we all have. I just want to say thanks to all of you who have made this chapter as strong and committed as it is and have built the legacy since 1972.



By the time I put together next month's issue of RipRap, there is a very good possibility that I will be a daddy. Actually, my wonderful wife, Connie, is due to give birth right around the time that next month's issue is supposed to be ready to go to the printer. Because of this, I am trying to get all my ducks in a row, so to speak, and am planning to start working on RipRap a week early, just to make sure I have sufficient time to get it done in time. If Connie has her way, though, the baby will be born at least a week earlier than the official due date of March 21st, and she would say the earlier the better. She is getting through her first pregnancy beautifully, but it is very apparent that she is ready for it to be over as soon as possible. Because of this, I am asking anyone who might be interested in making a submission for next month's RipRap to send it to me no later than Friday, March 13th. That way I can work on things whenever I have some free time, and I will be sure to get it all done and sent to Bob on time. Thank you for your assistnace regarding this matter!

There are dozens of things that need to be done around our house to get ready for the upcoming baby, but the one thing that I've been working on that I'm most proud of is a mural that I painted on one of the walls in the baby's room. It took me all of my free time, what little free time I had, for the better part of a week to get it painted, and it was a lot of intricate work with a paint brush, which I've never been a big fan of, but now it's done, and I'm very happy with the results. Below is a photo of the wall for you to look at/criticize. Hopefully the baby will like it once he or she knows what's going on. Connie has warned me not to get too attached to it, because she says that in five years or so our child will want it repainted. Personally, I will do everything I can to ensure that our child loves fish and ducks and all the other things that live in the water, so hopefully my artwork will be saved for as long as possible. At least I will always have these photos to remember it by.

Take a look at all the articles in this issue, try to get out and get some fishing in during March, I'll keep you all updated as far as the baby is concerned, and I'll see you next month!



To the left is a photo of the entire mural that I painted in our baby's room. Below is a close-up of one of the trout in the mural. Photos by the Editor.



DISTANCE CASTING

BY JONATHAN JACOBS

I enjoyed Andy Lamberson's article on winter tackle repairs in the February issue of RipRap. I am never as up on maintenance issues as I ought to be and Andy gave me several solid tips.

Andy suggested cutting double taper trout lines in half right out of the box. That's an excellent idea. I've tried to swap a used line end for end on a spool and, as Andy noted, that doesn't work out well. Then, Andy wrote this remarkable paragraph:

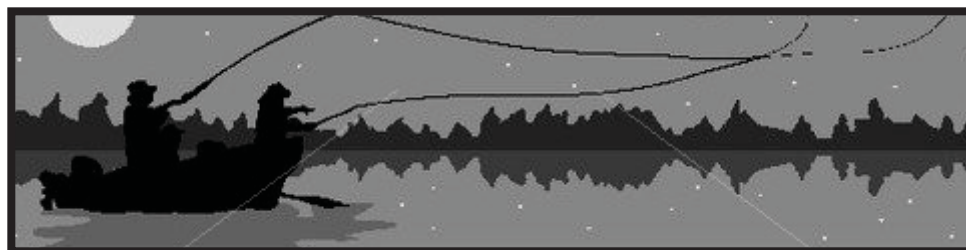
The other advantage of having only ½ a fly line on your reel is that it forces you to maintain a realistic distance from the fish! Our sport is called fly FISHING...not fly CASTING! If there is one major tip I could give to a new angler it would be to learn how to get closer to your fish, NOT how to cast further. There is NO way you can control your presentation effectively after a long cast. Even worse, as you get older it does you no good to make a long cast because you can't see your fly!

Now, I learned a long time ago that it's unwise to pick an argument with someone smarter than oneself, so let me say firmly right now that I agree with Andy. Stalking skills are critical and trying to mend a fly line across multiple currents is an exercise in futility. Believe me, I can attest that Andy is right about the limitations of aging eyes. Thus, the following is, shall we say, merely a divergence, on this one point: There is real value in being able to cast longer, whatever that might be. In years of observation on the water and in the "back yard" at Bob Mitchell's Fly Shop I've never seen anyone who could cast long who couldn't cast well close in, while those who are inaccurate or sloppy close in can never cast long. There are too many folks who can't do well at any distance, in part because their casting lacks the precision of form and timing that develops with mastering distance casting.

I understand that most trout are caught within thirty feet of the angler, but there are times (such as in high sun on glassy water) when casting both crisply and gently to a greater distance is most worthwhile. Too, knowing how to double haul can help you overcome a headwind and can leave you less tired at the end of a day's fishing. The same skills used in distance casting can help you cast a heavily weighted nymph or sodden streamer without hurting your shoulder, elbow or, for that matter, the back of your head (where an errant zonker might imbed itself when a loop tails or drops). Most good distance casters develop the habit of watching their back cast. An angler can put that habit to use when seeking to avoid streamside shrubbery, regardless of the distance involved. Fostering the development of distance casting skills will also serve you in good stead when you head off to the salt or to steelhead and salmon waters.

I used the word "gently" in the preceding paragraph. That's because the best casters I've seen (Andy among them, by the way – he's an excellent caster at any distance) throw an entire fly line with fluidity and grace and not with any particular display of power or effort. The rhythms of a distance cast are pleasing and relaxing, so even though our sport is indeed fly fishing, establishing those rhythms and honing your skills can provide both pride of accomplishment and increased pleasure when you are out on the water.

If you would like to learn more about distance casting, there is plenty of good instruction and educational material available. If you're the autodidactic type, there are several DVDs on the subject. If you learn better by means of personal instruction, you might consider looking up the fellows who cast at the dome in Stillwater on a regular basis or you might ask around at your local fly shop, where the manager can likely put you in touch with someone who'll be happy to help you.



FLY TYING CORNER: SKIP WET

BY SCOTT HANSON

The Skip Wet is one of the best selling, and most productive, flies that we sell at Bob Mitchell's Fly Shop. It is a remarkably simple and elegant pattern that catches fish throughout the year, but it is especially effective during the early parts of the trout season. It has been said that a person could fish successfully on any of our local trout streams from March through June with only two flies: a Skip Wet, and a Blue Dun Emerger, which was profiled in this column last month. Personally, I don't feel comfortable on a trout stream unless I have 6 or 7 fully loaded fly boxes in my vest pockets, but I do agree that the Skip Wet does a wonderful job imitating a huge variety of insects, and just looks "buggy", so it should take a prominent position in your fly arsenal.

The Skip Wet was designed by chapter member, and former RipRap Editor, Skip James, and is a tribute to Skip's ability to design great flies. This is a fly that can be tied with any mottled soft hackle that you have available, but at Bob Mitchell's we use hackle from a gray Brahma hen saddle from Whiting Farms. This hackle has a wonderful mottled look and makes a very attractive fly. The Skip Wet is best fished down-and-across like any traditional wet fly. As you are getting your fly boxes ready for the upcoming season, make sure you include a few Skip Wets. You'll be glad you did.



SKIP WET

HOOK: Size 14 Daiichi 1560 or other sproat bend, 1X long nymph hook

THREAD: Olive or Tan 8/0

RIB: One strand Peacock Krystal Flash

BODY: Fur from a Hare's Mask

HACKLE: 2 turns of any mottled soft hackle, such as Grouse, Partridge, or Brahma Hen

JOSEPH TOMELLERI

BY SCOTT HANSON

You may have noticed that the masthead of each issue of RipRap has included a different painting of a trout in the background. Each of these paintings have come from the brush of world-rekknowned fish artist Joseph Tomelleri. Before I ever published my first issue as Editor, I decided to contact Mr. Tomelleri to see if I could use some of his paintings in the newsletter. I wasn't sure how I was going to use the paintings, but I thought that it couldn't hurt to ask, and then I would figure out all the details later. I was expecting to find out that I would have to pay a licensing fee in order to use the images, which was something that I did not want to do. Instead, I was pleasantly surprised to hear that it would be okay to use Mr. Tomelleri's paintings for free as long as the newsletter was for a conservation-based organization. I think that these paintings have really helped to give RipRap a look of quality and sophistication. If you would like to see more of Joseph Tomelleri's paintings of fish from throughout the world, check out his website at www.americanfishes.com. While there, you can buy some of his fish prints, check out his original artwork, and you can read about all of the books and other projects that his artwork has been featured in. Be sure and check it out.



15 EARLY SEASON TROUT WATERS

COURTESY OF WISCONSIN DNR

The Wisconsin DNR recently published this list of 15 quality trout streams to try during the early catch-and-release season, or any time you might want to find a new spot.

Bearskin Creek, Oneida County

It has a good population of brook trout along with a few browns, and the early season is the best time to have it all to yourself. - John Kubisiak, fisheries biologist, Rhinelander

Blue River, Grant and Iowa counties

The Blue River in Grant and Iowa counties has had recent habitat work done, and it sits in a beautiful “coulee” in the driftless area. - Larry Claggett, coldwater ecologist, Madison

Little Willow Creek, Price and Oneida counties

Little Willow Creek in Price and Oneida counties is a small stream with a moderate-density, naturally reproducing brook trout population. It is off the beaten path and doesn't get fished overly hard. - John Kubisiak

Namekagon River, Sawyer County

The diamond in the rough is the Namekagon below Hayward. - Frank Pratt, fisheries biologist, Hayward

North Branch Pemebonwon River, Marinette County

If the early season trout angler wants to catch and release some nice brook trout, they may want to fish the North Branch Pemebonwon River downstream from State Highway 141. - Ronald Rohde, fisheries technician, Peshtigo

Peshtigo River, Marinette County

Anglers that desire an opportunity to fish a reach of river that has miles of scenic, undeveloped shoreline may want to direct their attention to the Peshtigo River upstream from County Highway C. - Ronald Rohde

Pike River, Marinette County

The Pike River between County Highway V and County Highway K is a wild river that has the width and character to provide opportunities for fly fishermen and women. – Ronald Rohde, fisheries technician, Peshtigo

Pine River, Waushara County

This river gets a nice hatch of blue quill mayflies. - Shawn P. Sullivan, operations supervisor, Wild Rose Fisheries Habitat Station

Pine Creek, Pierce County

Pine Creek near Maiden Rock is becoming one of the premier brook trout streams in Western Wisconsin. - Bob Hujik, fisheries supervisor, Eau Claire

Prairie River, Lincoln County

Generally fishing pressure is very light. Anglers could give the Prairie River downstream of County Highway J a shot. – Mike Vogelsang, fisheries supervisor, Woodruff

South Branch Oconto River, Oconto County

The South Branch, Oconto River downstream from County Highway AA offers the angler an opportunity to catch brook and brown trout. - Ronald Rohde, fisheries technician, Peshtigo

Trempealeau River, Trempealeau County

The North, South and Main branches of the Trempealeau River offer both brook and brown trout, plenty of public accessible frontage, and trout habitat restoration work. – Dan Hatleli, fisheries biologist, Black River Falls

Upper Coon Creek system, La Crosse, Monroe, Vernon counties

The major streams are Timber Coulee, Rullands Coulee, Spring Coulee, Bohemian Valley and the Coon Creek. Trout numbers in these streams exceed 2,000 trout per mile. – Dave Vetrano, fisheries supervisor, La Crosse

Waupaca River, Waupaca County

Anglers should try the Waupaca River around County Highways Q or T. - Shawn P. Sullivan, Operations Supervisor, Wild Rose Fisheries Habitat Station

Wolf River, Langlade County

The early season and the month of May just may be the best time to trout fish on the Wolf River in Langlade County. - Dave Seibel, fisheries biologist, Antigo



The first rod ever offered to me for inspection in a Milwaukee sports store was a nine foot, heavy, heavy, bamboo bass rod manufactured for the beginner and low-end trade. It cost \$16. It was not an artifact created by that small coterie of craftsmen memorialized in the literature. It served me well over many years. I used it in a hunt for trout and other sport fish on other lakes, rivers and streams, but the Apple River of Wisconsin was where I caught and released my first brown trout.

My second rod was a Shakespeare, Howell process, fiberglass with a balsa core and a spiral wrap over. It was also slow and heavy, but it was the designated instrument to catch many rough fish, such as northerns and bass. I take that back. I love the explosion of a largemouth to a bass bug at the edge of lily pads and the aerial acrobatics of rock hard smallmouth on the Namekagon and St. Croix.

Other purchases followed as the need for another rod seized me. There was the six foot Fenwick, four-piece for California Sierra trout; the four piece, number #5 Sage for the Midwest. A Trout Unlimited banquet allowed me to outbid a friend for a seven foot two piece #3 Fenwick, constructed by Dorothy Schramm, a fly-fisher of note. I also own a seven piece #8 nine foot travel rod for Gulf Coast species. Last, but perhaps not really last, is a four piece Orvis #5 Trident. The thought that I might need a #4 four or five piece rod clouds my mind during the winter hours.



One can always raise a discussion on the dimensions and qualities of rods in any fly shop during the off season; sometimes even on the stream at the end of a fishless day.

Sometimes I argue with myself. A rod for all seasons on Midwest streams is a #4, three or four-piece, with a fast action, eight feet in length. Or maybe it is a #3 two or three-piece rod of seven-and-one-half feet, with medium action. I regularly use the Orvis, eight-and-one-half feet, with very fast action. I have preferred four piece rods ever since the Fenwick. Edward Hewitt, in his definitive work, wrote that his favorite rod was a four piece Leonard because it was easy to travel with.

A fast action rod is not universally admired, (although also preferred by Hewitt) particularly by anglers who are accustomed to the slower action of bamboo. If you own a bamboo rod, fish it, as a connection to the masters on the chalk streams of England and the storied streams of the East.

The fast action allows a fly fisher to load the rod quickly, and to shoot the line without the need for a succession of short extensions of line. How best to describe the action? If you power the backcast and shoot the line, you don't need to keep waving your rod in the air to extend the cast. A waving rod scares fish. A fast tip will break more easily than a stiffer action. "You pays your money and takes your choice."

A decent medium action rod may be priced under \$200, or as much as \$600. The more expensive rods are made with prettier bits and pieces--guides, handles, virgin cork, etc. A suitable rod should feel comfortable in your hand, so test it first in the fly shop's side yard or in the nearest park.

In some ways we have made too much of rods as precision tools, one for every circumstance. I confess that I have often mounted a spinning reel on the handle of a fly rod, using slip rings or tape to fasten the reel. Conversely, I have fly-fished with a fly reel mounted on a seven foot Airex spinning rod. The west coast Humphrey reel was a closed face spinning reel designed to be used with a heavy fly rod and monofilament for steelhead. With any combinations you must alter your casting stroke; not too difficult if you work at it.





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CHECK US OUT ON THE WEB:
WWW.LAMBCOM.NET/KIAPTUWISH/



DON'T MISS THE MARCH MEETING!!!

It's the annual Kiap-TU-Wish
business meeting
Wednesday March 4th, 2009
at Bob Smith's Sports Club
Dinner starts at 6PM
Meeting begins at 7PM
See you there!

Due to the impending birth of his first baby, the Editor is asking for any submissions for the April issue to be made by Friday, March 13th. Thank you for your assistance!

