



RIP - RAP



Editors: Ken Hanson & Skip James

WISCONSIN TROUT UNLIMITED
CHAPTER OF THE YEAR

May 1996

KIAP-TU-WISH CHAPTER OF TROUT UNLIMITED

Notes From The President:

Another fishing season is upon us and just in time. A year ago I was feeling down and a little hopeless given all the lumps the environment took in the budget bill. This year I am again optimistic about the future of our coldwater resources in western Wisconsin.

The Kinnickinnic received priority watershed status despite some efforts to kill it. Another successful brushing effort on the Kinni was finished this spring and plans for the Willow monitoring station and stream improvement project are moving forward. I was especially pleased at the turnout at the April 10th Mounds Dam open house at the Willow River State Park.

As I nervously stood outside the Nature Center, I imagined every car that pulled up was loaded with repair fanatics. But to my great delight, the opposite was true. People with faces I recognized streamed through the door and voiced support for removal. I want to thank all those who turned out to this important meeting. You can take great pride in the fact that if the dam eventually comes out, it will be because of your efforts. Thanks again and have a great season.

Gary



A PASSION FOR TROUT

The following is from an article that appeared in the April 1996 issue of National Geographic magazine, "A Passion for Trout" by Cathy Newman. Used with permission.

"The 130-mile long Big Blackfoot River starts with a slide down the west slope of the Continental Divide in Montana. It slows into meanders through flats, then quickens and hugs the east flank of the Garnet Range before yielding to the Clark Fork near Missoula.

For all its loveliness, there are ugly scars. Twenty miles above the mountain hamlet of Lincoln, where the Blackfoot begins, I stepped over a creek that bled yellow acid-drainage from played out Mike Horse mine.

APRIL MEETING NOTICE

WHEN: Wednesday May 1st

TIME: Dinner at 6:30

Meeting at 8:00

WHERE: JR Ranch

WI DNR Area Fisheries Manager Marty Engel will give his annual presentation to the chapter. Marty's presentations are always well attended so please come early.

Hope to see you at dinner.

It is an old, festering wound. In 1975 heavy rains blew out the earthen dam that held tailings from the mine. Waste tumbled into these streams that fed the Blackfoot. Cadmium, lead, and zinc -mining by-products- leached, killing all juvenile trout and nearly everything else in four miles of river.

Eighteen years later, toxics had spread 46 miles downstream, degraded the river, and reduced numbers of native trout. It wasn't just the mining. It was stream banks stripped bare and trampled

by cattle, mountains clear-cut by logging, overfishing. The river was hurting. Thanks to friends like the Big Blackfoot Chapter of Trout Unlimited, it is healing."

This is what could happen to the Yellowstone River and many of the streams that are in Yellowstone Park if the proposed Noranda gold mine that is planned only three miles from the Park border on public land. This would be many times larger than the Mike Horse mine which would increase the danger to the Park and its ecosystem. This well could apply to the Wolf River and the proposed Cranston Mine.

Submitted by Vern Alberts

Mounds Dam Update

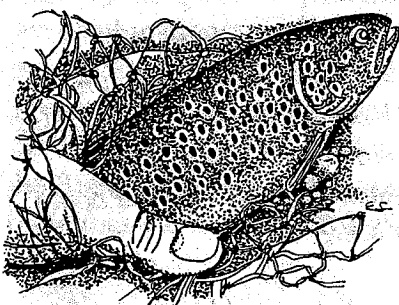
The April 10th open house at Willow River State Park was a success for those favoring removal of the Mounds Dam. The vast majority of those in attendance favored removal of the aging structure. Early indications, are that the DNR will move forward to the Building Commission with their recommendation for removal. Chapter members are encouraged to write letters to members of the Building Commission describing the benefits of dam removal. In your letter, please stress the significant cost savings now and in the future that will stem from dam removal. Please take moment to write the members of the Building Commission at:

State of Wisconsin
Building Commission
P.O. Box 7866
Madison, WI 53707

Wisconsin Building Commission
Members:

Senator Carol Buettner
Senator Fred Risser
Senator Brian Rude
Representative Clifford Otte
Representative Robert Turner
Representative Sheryl Albers

Gary Horvath



Volunteer Needed

To Distribute "Consider Proper Release" Information

The Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter is seeking an individual to act as coordinator for the distribution of the "Consider Proper Release" educational material provided by the Wisconsin State Council. The "Consider Proper Release" program is an attempt to educate all types of trout anglers on the proper techniques of releasing fish. The State Council would like to see this information widely distributed to all fishing license sales outlets. If you might be interested in this task please see Chapter President Gary Horvath at the May meeting or call him at 715-425-8489.

Gary Horvath

Donations of Fly Tying Material Wanted

For River Falls Middle School

If you have any extra fly tying materials or tools, please consider donating them to the Meyer Middle School in River Falls. Middle school instructor Ray Donatell is teaching a "fishing facts" course this summer for students aged 12-14.

As part of this class, the students tie flies before angling on the Kinnickinnic and other area streams. Mr. Donatell stated that vises, scissors and bobbins, along with any miscellaneous materials would be greatly appreciated. You may drop off items at Mitchell's fly Shop or call Chapter President Gary Horvath at 715-425-8489 to make other arrangements.

Gary Horvath

Upper St. Croix Planning Needs Public Response

To Insure Its Protection

The National Park Service has released a draft management plan for the Upper St. Croix River. Four alternative management plans have been described and are open for public comment until May 12. The alternatives range from opening the Upper St. Croix to heavier amounts of development and use to planning for protective measures. The Upper St. Croix includes the upper river starting at St. Croix Falls and all of the Namekagon. The Upper St. Croix has stronger protection clauses in its legislation than the lower St. Croix River.

You can contact the nearest Park Service Center to get a copy of this plan to read and respond to, in writing, by May 12. Copies can be found at the National Park Service Centers in Grantsburg (612-629-2148), St. Croix Falls (715-483-3284) and Trego (715-635-8346). Call for a copy to be sent to you. Call the St. Croix Watershed Network office at 612-333-5424 for more information.

Gary Horvath



RIVER FALLS CLINIC SET

The Kiap-TU-Wish Education Committee has two stated goals: 1) Educate the public, 2) Inform and involve the membership. The Committee is excited to announce the 2nd Annual Trout Fishing Clinic on Saturday, June 1st.

Sponsored jointly with the River Falls Parks and Recreation Department, the clinic will last a full day, from noon to 9:00PM, and will train students in flyfishing, ecology and stream stewardship. Our goal is to get students emotionally involved in the sport and active on protection of the Kinnickinnic River.

Chapter members are asked to donate their time and expertise in two ways. First, we need volunteers to act as teachers/mentors on June 1. This assignment is pure fun...helping someone get started in a lifelong pursuit of trout. We'll be presenting each student with a leader, fly box and flies, and your contribution of flies will ease the chapters costs. Call Bob Mitchell's Fly Shop to volunteer (770-5854).

Mike Alwin

Trout Concert at the Phipps a Great Success!

As concert goes milled around the lobby of The Phipps Center for the Arts in Hudson last Sunday afternoon, performers in fishing vests, hats, and other assorted gear mingled with them, looking at the fine exhibit Kent Johnson put together about the temperature monitors and storm water plan, Andy Lamberson's web page on a laptop, or the incredible footage of a trout being stalked by a heron in *The Way of the Trout*. The Kinnickinnic Valley Land Trust was there with a fine exhibit, photos, and brochures, and Mike Alwin and Jon Jacobs taught fly casting to all comers on the lawn outside. A fly tier put the finishing touches on a Mickey Finn, while children stared at the bright colored deer hair and his fast moving fingers.

When it was time for the music, everyone moved to the auditorium, where the stage was set with a grand piano, a harpsichord, chairs, music stands, and two hat racks, one at either side of the stage, replete with old bamboo fly rods, creels, nets, waders, and other trout fishing paraphernalia. After a short introduction by Skip James, in jeans and fishing shirt, poet Keith

Gunderson warmed up the crowd with evocative, and sometimes hilarious poems about trout, and fishing. His lighthearted manner set the tone for the afternoon, and everyone felt at one with the performers. Maria Jette, soprano and Mike Hipps, trumpet gave a stirring account of Handel's "Let the bright Seraphim" to the accompaniment of strings and harpsichord. Jette's voice was as quick-silver and limpid as a trout stream. Hipps, a member of the Minnesota Orchestra for many years, gave a masterly performance of the difficult, high solo trumpet obbligato. The strings provided a firm accompaniment to the soloists under the direction of James at the keyboard.

Two Spring songs for piano and voice by Dominick Argento preceded the rendition of Schubert's *Die Forelle* (The Trout), the song upon which the composer later composed a set of variations for strings and piano. Jette and James, this time at the piano, brought out the sense of awakening life in the Argento, and conveyed the lighthearted story of the fisherman's capture of *Die Forelle* with charm and grace.

Violinist Julie Ayer and violist Tom Turner, both Hudson residents, joined 'cellist Tanya Remenikova, Bill Schrickel, and Skip James for a performance of the variations from Schubert's *Trout Quintet*. Each voice had its turn with the tune, from Schrickel's gruff bass viol, Remenikova's sensual 'cello, Turner's mellow viola to Ayer's sweet violin and James fleet filigree. The final variation recalled thoughts of Maria Jette's performance of the song, the textless violin substituted for the voice.

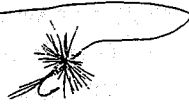
Poet Gunderson delighted the crowd with more poems, and the instrumentalists returned in full fishing regalia. Turner even wore chest high waders! The music was a spoof on the previous work, by Peter Schickale, otherwise known as P.D.Q. Bach, entitled "The Trite Quintet". The audience was reduced to howls of laughter at Schrickel's introduction to the work, and surprises and silly stage business kept everyone holding their sides until its conclusion.

Trumpeter Hipps joined Jette once more for the concluding chorale and Alleluia from Bach Cantata 51 "Jauchzet Gott in allen Landen", the stunningly

See Concert Page 5

Skip's Loose Threads

By Skip James



Nymphs, Weight, and Three Dimensional Drag

Even though it snowed last night, April 3rd, I can summon up the faith to say that Spring will come sometime soon, maybe as early as next year. I've been tying Hare's Ears, and PT's recently, in anticipation of early season, cold water trout fishing. I usually put some weight in these nymphs to make them sink quickly, but I am going to tie most of them unweighted this year. You see, I recently viewed an aquarium in which the owner had cultivated several species of insects. He removed a mayfly nymph with tweezers for me to admire, and then dropped it back in the water. It spread all its legs, and descended very gracefully to the bottom. I dropped one of my last year's weighted Hare's Ears in the same tank. It sank like a stone, not at all like the natural.

Most nymphs are found in fairly shallow water, riffles, stream margins, weed beds close to the surface. When they become detached from their surroundings, they drift downstream, pulled this way and that by irregular currents. Each stone on the bottom creates its eddies and pockets of calm, the water at the bottom moves much slower than the water at the top because of friction. Free drifting nymphs speed up, slow down, stop for awhile, rise, fall, even go backwards! If you think drag on the surface is a problem, in only two dimensions, imagine what it's like underwater, in three.

The problems become even more difficult when the nymph is an artificial, joined to an angler through rod, line, and leader. Cast upstream, as the nymph begins to sink into slower levels of water, the line and leader on the surface move downstream faster than the nymph, pulling on it, forcing it to rise. The tuck cast, which puts the nymph in the water slightly downstream of the leader, allows the nymph to sink freely until the slack in the leader is used up. Mending the line removes some of the pressure as well.

The Brooks Method, in essence holding as much line and leader out of the water as possible during the drift, works only in very deep, turbulent water, since the line of drift is so close to the fisherman. He usually used a full sinking line, as well. Dave Whitlock advocates a very short, stout leader, and a heavily weighted nymph. Personally, I've never been able to understand the rationale for his technique. Gary Borger weights his nymphs only slightly, preferring to add split shot when necessary. Gary likes compound tippets, a very short (6"-8") tippet of 4x or 5x tied to a long (4') piece of 2x material to withstand the

abrasion that bottom bumping entails. The split shot goes on the 2x. Skues fished his nymphs within a foot of the surface, in the placid weedy corridors of the Test, to fish he could see feeding. His tippets were the finest he could obtain. Jim Leisenring used the upward welling of the nymph to convince trout in the Brodhead that they were hatching. Guessing the location of his quarry, he planned his drift so that the fly would rise up in front of the fish. He used only unweighted nymphs and soft hackles. All these master anglers have devised methods for presenting a nymph on the bottom upstream of their position with minimal drag, and they all work.

But nymphing is very productive when the nymph is fished just below the surface as well. During a hatch, many fish will feed on the ascendant nymphs rather than the duns, and if all my imitations are weighted, I can't mimic this behavior very well. Likewise the water below a riffle will have many nymphs at all levels of the current, swirling around in the turbulence. They do not immediately reach the bottom, but only when the water calms down. And we all know how many fish wait for dislodged nymphs just below riffles. Unweighted nymphs are the ticket here as well. Trout don't chase caddis pupa on the bottom, they do it within an inch of the surface. Earlier in the hatch, one can get down with shot, but if the fly is weighted, it's useless when things get frantic on top. The Leisenring lift is almost impossible to accomplish with a weighted nymph, because of the high water pressure required to lift it from the bottom. A trout would find a rising nymph under these circumstances highly improbable, and would probably duck under the nearest rock in fright. For bottom fishing, split shot used several inches (8-12) above the nymph will allow the artificial freedom of movement, while isolating it from upward pressure, which will be exerted on the split shot, not the fly. For all these reasons, I'm tying my nymphs without weight this year. I'll let you know how my experiment worked out in a later column.

A brief word about strike indicators...I have used fluorescent chartreuse poly yarn for indicator material for three seasons now, and it wouldn't give it up for anything. You make a simple slip not in your leader, put the yarn through it and tighten up the knot, cut the yarn at an appropriate length, frizz out the ends and apply floatant. You can make a pea size indicator, or one that is two inches high. It will always float with the ends up for excellent visibility in either sunny or overcast conditions. When you want to remove it, simply pull out the yarn, and tug on the leader. The knot will come out. No sticky stuff on your leader, or bits of styrofoam to clutter the banks. See you on the stream!

REELS REBUT

Can you stand a few more paragraphs on reels? In his column in the February Rip-Rap, Skip James made a number of sweeping generalizations about the modern fly reel which deserve a response, and here it is.

Let me begin by establishing the reasons for the various improvements in reels. The early single action fly reels were stamped from cheap metal. The frame assembly consisted of a back plate, a spindle and a series of posts around the circumference to which a flange or outer rim was attached. The failure of these reels was that if you dropped it the frame was easily distorted, rendering the reel useless. In this style, the Pflueger Medalist is the most durable and enduring, though weighing in at 5.4 ounces for a model which would handle a #6 line and backing.

The next stage in reel development was die casting. Casting eliminated the need for connecting parts to assemble the reel. For the first time, frames were solid one piece affairs which were less inclined to bend or distort when dropped. Though not exempt from damage, they were more durable than their predecessors. Coupled with higher capacity and a modest weight reduction it's easy to see why cast reels are now the industry standard, even though they don't hold line any better and the drag doesn't work any better. The die cast reel is now the standard for two reasons: less hand finishing and greater durability. Generally, they weigh around 4 oz. for a model suitable for a #6 and backing.

The latest stage in reel development is the machined reel, which offers even greater durability. A machined reel is even less likely to break or distort if you fall on it or drop it on a rock, and that's why you buy it: Because it will handle more abuse. Skip correctly stated that the pull of a fish will not distort a fly reel and to further his argument, he stated that Ferraris and Porches run just fine on cast wheels. That's true, and the reason is that they're a cheap alternative to machined wheels, which is what the most high powered and expensive racing cars use.

Now, regarding disc drags, manufacturers have struggled for decades to produce a functional drag on a fly reel. The disc drag is the culmination of the struggle. They will stop a fish and they take no more

manual dexterity than would be used in palming the spool. Most anglers don't need one, but when you need it they're nice to have. If you can afford it, there's no reason not to own one. Skip stated, by inference, that the most efficient place to mount a drag is closest to the circumference. That's true, but the most practical place to mount them is close to the axel. Any loss in efficiency is compensated with larger pads. By all means, go out and look at the rotor and pads on your car. As far as the additional weight of the disc drag on your reel is concerned, the difference in weight between an Orvis Battenkill 5/6 with and without a disc is a mere 1/8 oz. I challenge anyone to tell the difference. If you can, I'll give you the reel. Furthermore, once you load it with fly line and backing, the additional weight of the disc becomes an even smaller percentage of the total weight and therefore becomes moot.

The long and short of it is that today, whether you spend \$30 or \$200, you get a better reel than you could a generation ago. The reason is that the industry is constantly trying to improve their products. Having choices is what is most important, because, while we all like nice stuff, we buy what we can afford. We choose equipment that enhances our sport, because we like the way we feel when we use it. Do you need a machined reel with a disc drag? No more than you need a vintage cane rod or a German sports car. But if you can afford them, they're nice to have. Right Skip?
Alwin

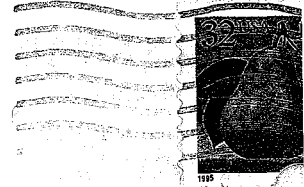
Concert continued from Page 3
intricate counterpoint meant as a metaphor for man's involvement with the environment, and thanksgiving for its wonders, including trout streams. As the sold-out audience departed, many said that they hoped this concert would be an annual event.

All the performers hoped that trout enthusiasts were entertained and uplifted by the music, and that music lovers learned a new appreciation of the trout streams that flow through their backyards. Kids were shown that 'the environment' is not just a rain forest in South America, or a dwindling species of monkey in Sri Lanka, but what lives in clear, cold, running water right here in Hudson and River Falls. Kiap-TU-Wish was well represented at this event, through its members participation, its fine exhibits, and the casting instruction provided by Mike and Jon. Our community

Continued on Page 6



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 TROUT UNLIMITED
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 HUDSON, WI 54016



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DEADLINES

SEP 8/23
 OCT 9/20
 NOV 10/25



Hints from the Back Room of Bob Mitchell's Flyshop

Ultra Fine Ribbing for Tiny Flies

Krystal Flash is composed of very fine, twisted, strands of colored mylar, the same stuff tinsel is made from. It is slightly stretchy, and provides a perfect color accent when used as ribbing over fine dubbings like muskrat. Wound the opposite direction over peacock herl, it both strengthens the herl body and provides added iridescence. Available in many colors, and very inexpensive, you can experiment with various combinations: herl and red KF, muskrat and pearlescent KF, hare's ear and orange KF, etc. When you tie with it, the twists come out, and it lies flat. It has almost no stiffness, and is easy to work with. On the Bighorn, almost all the successful midge larva imitations are ribbed with Krystal Flash. Try it!

Skip James



Twin Cities Chapter Begins Work On Eagle Creek

On April 20th, the Twin Cities Chapter kicked off a series of streamside workdays on Eagle Creek. Members picked up trash, cut brush and removed fencing from areas adjacent to the stream. TC/TU will be holding more workdays through the summer on this last remaining wild Brown Trout stream in the Minnesota River valley. Contact John Hunt at 832-2777 for information on future workdays and directions to the worksite.

Gary Horvath

Concert continued from Page 5

visibility was reinforced emphatically and positively, and we'll probably see some new members show up at meetings, too.

Skip James