

## President's lines

By Gary Horvath

As a demonstration of their conservation ethic, the Chapter Board engaged in some recycling by electing me Chapter President. To those who don't know me I have been involved in Chapter activities since 1989, serving on the Board and as President in the mid 1990s. I would like to thank the Chapter Board of Directors for having faith in my ability to lead the Chapter. I hope that there is still a little tread on the tire.

Our Chapter, like any volunteer organization, has ebbed and flowed. During the last couple of years, I have observed the division that has slowly crept into the Chapter over how best to respond to the myriad threats to our local streams. While this was hard to watch, it shows how passionate we feel about protecting these precious resources.

Any strategy to protect a river requires that a variety of tools and initiatives be employed. Our chapter has relied, and continues to rely, on members who use their skills and interests to push forward various initiatives that will lead to river protection. The difference between today and 1987 is the variety, speed and voracity of the new threats. The rate at which new issues and challenges arise spotlights the shortcomings of a volunteer organization's ability to match those whose "business" results in negative impacts to the streams we all care about.

To meet the challenge, the Officers and Board will take stock of all issues and opportunities that are facing us today, at a meeting in May. I hope we can come to a consensus on the list of tools and strategies for river protection we will bring forward to the membership. Regardless of which strategies are identified, it will take the efforts of the entire chapter to have measurable successes. One thing I'm convinced of is we will need to ask you for more of your time, labor and money if we stand a chance to stave off the loss of our streams. If you have an interest in or even entertained the idea of, serving as a Chapter Officer or Board member, please contact me or any other chapter official.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank **John Koch** for his outstanding leadership while serving as Habitat Coordinator. John is giving it a rest after single-handedly leading many successful habitat efforts for the chapter. John's leaving makes the Chapter Habitat Coordinator position vacant. If you are interested in serving in this important position, please contact me or any other chapter official.

Lastly, please plan on attending this month's meeting to hear what our Senior DNR Fisheries Biologist **Marty Engel** has to say. It is always interesting and informative and I hope to see you there.

Gary Horvath

## New board elects officers

By Jonathan Jacobs

Greg Dielt of Oakdale, MN and Eric Forward of River Falls, WI were elected to three year terms on the chapter's Board of Directors at the March business meeting. Ted Mackmiller of Hudson, WI was re-elected to a two year term on the board. They join current members Craig Aschenbrenner, Kent Johnson, Bill Lovegren and Corey Mairs.

At a meeting held Monday, April 4, the newly constituted board elected Gary Horvath of River Falls, WI President, Greg Dielt Vice President and Brent Sittlow to the offices of Secretary and Treasurer.

Please join RipRap in congratulating these gentlemen and in thanking them for their efforts on behalf of the chapter's cold water conservation efforts.

## Clinic details set

By Michael Alwin

The Chapter's annual fly fishing clinic is scheduled for Sat. June 5, from 1:00 to 9:00 pm. The wheels are spinning as you read this, so if you want to be involved contact me now.

The committee's goals are:

1. Educate the community.
2. Inform and involve the membership.

Our intent is always to show the citizens of River Falls what a unique resource they have and to encourage them to take the steps necessary to save it. We do that by introducing them to the sport of fly fishing for trout. It's always Fun. Not only do our students rave about the clinic, but the members who share their time with the students have a good time, too.

We need folks to serve as mentors and guides for a day or half day. We need some folks to help serve supper and clean up afterward. We need folks to donate some flies for the event. If you have an interest let me know. (Editor's Note: Mr. Alwin can be reached at Bob Mitchell's Fly Shop in Lake Elmo, MN. Phone 651-770-5854)

## Fly tiers wow crowd

By Jonathan Jacobs

Chapter members owe thanks to **Mark Bolton, Scott Hanson, Dennis Hook, Jay Rogers, Brian Stewart, Bill Stieger** and **Edd Twigg**, all of whom did a great job at the Dry Fly Dick Frantes fly tying demonstrations at the April

meeting. They were talented tiers who were gracious with advice and generous in sharing technique. Mark showed us what a dedicated newcomer to the hobby can do; Scott cranked out first class parachute flies; Dennis Hook took us back to the some of the sports roots with soft hackle wet flies; Jay tied incredibly lifelike mayflies with unique "paraloo" winging; Brian tied attractors, including Stimulators ties with snowshoe rabbit's foot fur; Bill tied traditional Catskill-style flies and Edd cranked out some great damsel fly nymphs.

## River Restoration committee has new members

By Jonathan Jacobs

Joining Ted Mackmiller on the chapter's River Restoration Committee are new members Bill Lovegren and Dan Bruski. The committee focuses on water quality issues, particularly the benefits derived from restoring rivers to their free-flowing state. The members of the committee welcome your questions, comments and support.

## Trout stocking kaput

By Jonathan Jacobs

According to an Associate Press report, the state of Wisconsin will discontinue its trout-stocking program this year and next, saving the state \$400,000. More than 100 lakes and streams will go unstocked and trout production will be cut by 880,000 fish. The state's hatchery program has an annual budget of \$2 million. Cutting trout production will cut 10% of that expense. DNR sources say that this action is part of an effort to eliminate a projected overall state budget deficit of \$3.2 billion.

## Hearings votes tabulated

By Jonathan Jacobs

Voters at the Wisconsin Conservation Congress Spring Hearings gave resounding approval to three of the four questions that most specifically concerned statewide trout angling and conservation issues.

The statewide total on Question 53, which asked, "Do you favor allowing access to the public along waterways up to the ordinary high water mark?" was 2,958 "Yes" and 1,151 "No."

Question 54, which asked, "Do you favor increasing the inland trout stamp fee to \$10.00 per year?" failed narrowly on a vote of 1,862 to 1,917.

Question 55, which posed the slightly different question, "Do you favor increasing the inland trout stamp fee to \$10.00 for residents and \$12.00 per year for non-residents?" passed on a vote of 2,069 to 1,689.

Question 56, which asked, "Should the DNR seek added legislative authority to be able to deny high capacity wells that could have adverse or undesirable impacts on wetlands, fisheries, ground and surface wells?" passed overwhelmingly, 3,505 to 581.

## K-TU supports Tiffany Creek restoration

By Jonathan Jacobs

The St. Croix County Land Conservation Department is applying for a WIDNR Targeted Runoff Management Grant to aid in the restoration of Tiffany Creek as it passes through the St. Croix county fairgrounds in Section 26 in the Town of Glenwood. The stream in this stretch has been impounded, drained, ditched and has severely eroded banks. The grant (\$100,000 to \$120,000) will restore ½ mile of Class I brook trout stream.

Kiap-TU-Wish board of directors, in a letter to the DNR signed by chapter president Gary Horvath, expressed support for the project. In part, the letter said:

The implementation of best management practices (BMPS) such as shoreline habitat restoration, stream-bank rip-rap, bank shaping, and establishment of riparian buffers is greatly needed on this stream. While our interest is in improving the health of Tiffany's trout fishery, we also recognize that these practices will also limit sedimentation and phosphorus loading to water bodies further down the watershed. Among these bodies are the popular Tainter Lake and Lake Menomin.

Our chapter's Executive Board urges you to strongly consider St. Croix County's grant request. Tiffany Creek has the potential to become a regional recreational resource. This project will greatly enhance Tiffany's cold-water fishery and provide water quality benefits to its receiving waters.

## Get the lead out

By Rick McMonagle

The Minnesota Office of Environmental Assistance is sponsoring a program to exchange your lead sinkers, split

shot, jigs, etc. for non-toxic tackle. The exchange is NOT one-to-one, but they say that they give you a good assortment of items. The closest one to western Wisconsin is on Thursday, May 6 from 2-7 pm at the Gander Mountain store in Woodbury. You can hit MOEA's web site for others. Spread the word!

*Rick McMonagle of River Falls, WI, is the Executive Director of the Kinnickinnic River Land Trust.*

## Raffle results

By John Koch

I was Duke's Welter's guest Thursday night at the Ojiblean Chapter of Trout Unlimited annual banquet. In amongst a great meal, Bill Shogren and Jim Humphrey's wonderful slide presentation and more types of raffles and drawings than a person can keep up with, the winners of the Jay Johnson Bamboo rod/Hardy reel combo and the Dick Prine Redwood strip canoe were drawn.

The canoe winner was Ojiblean member Mike Swenson and the bamboo rod/reel winner was Dr. John Miller of Wayzata, MN.

Congratulations to the winners; thanks to all who participated and helped further habitat restoration projects in Western Wisconsin by their donations, and thanks to all those who helped with their donations of craftsmanship and time.

*(Editor's Note: Financial results were not available when this issue of RipRap went to press.)*

## Water library launched

From the Jan/Feb 2004 issue of Littoral drift

As part of the Year of Water, UW Sea Grant helped create Wisconsin's Water Library. This is a free, online resource created for all residents of Wisconsin. The library contains almost 30,000 volumes on groundwater, ponds and landscaping, wetlands, water conservation, fish and fishing, and exotic species, including dozens of educational videos and much more.

Materials from the library are available for loan throughout the state, free of charge. Users can search the collection or browse the recommended reading lists on a variety of topics and borrow up to five items for four weeks at a time. The online library also includes a help feature called "Ask a Librarian."

Library staff will send materials to lenders' local public library through the Wisconsin Libraries Delivery Network.

Lenders simply pick them up and return them at their local library.

The project is an effort of the UW Water Resources Institute, the UW Water Resources Library, the UW Sea Grant Institute, the UW-Madison Libraries and the Wisconsin Academy of Sciences, Arts and Letters.

To find out more, visit the library at [www.aqua.wisc.edu/waterlibrary](http://www.aqua.wisc.edu/waterlibrary).

## The Golden Stonefly

By Clarke Garry

There is one particular Kinnickinnic River stonefly that stands out as one of my favorite subsurface insects to encounter. It's not the biggest insect, the most colorful, nor the most common, but it has special appeal because of a unique combination of features. First, it's in cold, running water. Second, it inhabits rocky, cobble bottoms. And finally its large size (up to 30 mm) and general appearance (rich brown body color with cream markings) make it especially distinctive. I would describe it as a beautiful insect, but that may be an eye-of-the-beholder issue.

The stonefly is *Paragnetina media*, called by many the Golden Stonefly and by others the Embossed Stonefly. The species is a member of the family Perlidae, a group with the rather unspecific common name, "Common Stoneflies." *P. media* can be found regularly, year around in the lower half of the Kinni, but it isn't present in large numbers. And larvae are consistently present in the stream because two or three years are required to complete development. Borger (1980), speaking of adults, notes that "... anglers may be unfamiliar with the large stoneflies (including *Paragnetina*) of their area (because) these species are all nocturnal."

Immature stoneflies (order Plecoptera) can be recognized by their three pairs of segmented legs, developing wings (called wing pads), two long, thin abdominal appendages, and no gills on the middle abdominal segments. Perlids have finely branched gills ventrally on all thoracic segments and gills are totally absent from abdominal segments. (It may take a closer look to determine this; the absence of abdominal gills precludes identification as a Giant Stonefly). Finally, *Paragnetina* has a complete row of fine spines across the back of its head. There is only one species in this genus in Wisconsin, so the determination of *P. media* is rather direct.

Where the Giant Stonefly larva, with its ominous (big, dark, angular) appearance, is an herbivore-detritivore, *Paragnetina* is a true predator in the stream ecosystem. It feeds

on mayfly and midge larvae, as well as other small arthropods, actively searching among substrate rocks and debris. It, in turn, becomes vulnerable to feeding by trout because of its: 1) exploratory feeding behavior and 2) movement which makes it more likely to become part of the stream drift. Additionally, larvae are exposed to predation during migration to streamside rocks and bank structures for emergence, a typical stonefly behavior. These nocturnal adult hatches occur from May through July in our region.

Stoneflies, in general, are regarded as indicators of high water quality. They're an integral part of the EPT metric, a calculation based on the percentage of Ephemeroptera (mayflies), Plecoptera (stoneflies), and Trichoptera (caddisflies) present in a standardized stream collection. The higher the EPT value, the higher the water quality. In the HBI (Hilsenhoff Biotic Index), a standard metric of water quality in Wisconsin, stoneflies contribute significantly with low tolerance values of 0, 1, and 2 (based on a ten point scale, 0=excellent, 10=very poor) (Hilsenhoff 1987). For example, the Giant Stonefly, *Pteronarcys* sp., has an assigned tolerance value of 0 and one of the Little Yellows, *Isoperla slossonae*, rates a 2. The Golden Stonefly, *Paragnetina media*, has a tolerance value of 1.

It is of interest that this stonefly has been collected only at Kinni study sites 1 through 8, i.e., from Kinnickinnic Park (the first riffle upstream from the delta) to the reach just upstream from STH 65 bypass next to Quarry Road. This means that it does not occur, or is extremely uncommon, at study sites 9 through 17 (from the Quarry Road bridge through sites north of I-94). Presence-absence data is from my 1999 pilot study and multihabitat collecting for 2001. This distribution pattern is not an unusual one for the Kinni. It exists for other stonefly larvae and certain mayfly and caddisfly larvae, as well.

Stoneflies are valued as indicators of high water quality and are not found in poorly-oxygenated water systems or where stream pollution exists. We are extremely fortunate to have ten stonefly species in our watershed. I was once asked, following a talk I gave on Kinnickinnic River macroinvertebrates, what (in my opinion) would be the first insect(s) to disappear if the water quality of our river were to decline. Of course, specific causal factors would need to be considered, but my general answer to the question was the stoneflies, because these are predictably absent from degraded systems. Let's hope *P. media* and its plecopteran kin are present in the Kinnickinnic for a long time to come.

(Continued on page 5)

## References:

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*Clarke Garry is a professor of biology at the University of Wisconsin-River Falls.*

## Editor says, "Takk for nå."

By Jonathan Jacobs

That's Norwegian for "Thanks for now." The Editor is actually a good German boy, but in the spirit of the melting pot that is America, it seemed fitting to him to be a little multi-cultural as *Syttende Mai*, the Norwegian version of Independence Day, approaches.

As another publication cycle of RipRap goes to the archive, the Editor wishes to thank all of you who have patiently read RipRap over the last year and haven't brought him to task for the misspellings, grammatical atrocities, otherworldly punctuation, lapses of logic and good taste, dangling modifiers, bizarre paragraphing, split infinitives, Third World production values, dreadful clichés and run-on sentences that have become the hallmark of his tenure in the editor's chair.

The Editor further wishes to express his most sincere gratitude to those who have offered financial support to RipRap. This newsletter, he believes, is a key component in maintaining chapter spirit, cohesiveness and awareness.

The Editor offers genuinely profound thanks to those who have given him something to edit in the past year. Contributors to the 2003-2004 volume of RipRap include: **Michael Alwin, Eric Forward, Clarke Garry, Gary Horvath, Kent Johnson, John Koch, Bill Lovegren, Rick McMonagle, Sarah Sanford, Bill Stieger, and Duke Welter.** Their contributions have both enriched the pages of the newsletter immeasurably and prevented the Editor from babbling on at even greater length in a pitiable attempt to pad the page count.

The Editor suggests that you fish more this summer and that you work less. He cautions that you remain vigilant

about environmental matters, keeping in mind that venal little minds are not going to take the summer off from creating plans to endanger the health of trout streams.

Look for a post card in early September announcing the return of K-TU meetings. Publication of the full-size version of RipRap will resume in October.

## Drift boat am a-coming

By Jonathan Jacobs

The Greg Tatman Wooden Boat drift boat kit donated to the chapter by former Twin Cities Trout Unlimited president Bill Schuessler is now in a secure workshop awaiting a crew to assemble it. The idea is that once a volunteer crew has finished the craft, the boat will be used in a fund-raising effort to benefit our conservation mission. We've begun to assemble a group of volunteers. If you would like to participate, please come to the May meeting. We'll have a short discussion about our plans then. If you are unable to make the meeting, but would like to participate, e-mail [turiprap@hotmail.com](mailto:turiprap@hotmail.com) and let us know that you're on board, as it were.

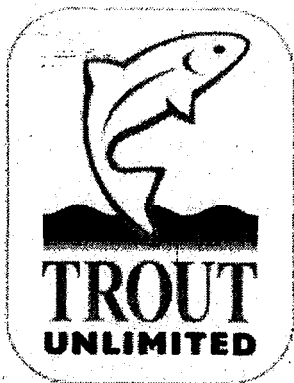
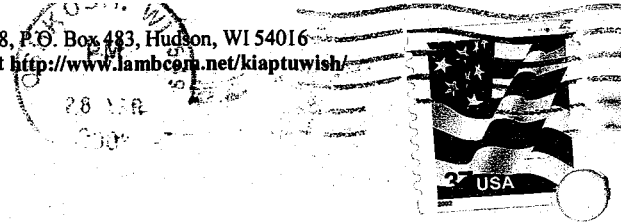
## How to be all wet

By Jonathan Jacobs

There's no question that a weighted nymph fished upstream under a strike indicator will catch a lot of fish. There's also no disputing that fishing this way will eventually ruin your dry fly casting stroke and cause you to become an angling automaton. I know this from personal experience. Over the years I've slung enough lead to line a nuclear reactor. Then, at the April meeting, Dennis Hook provided me with an alternative. Dennis tied pretty little wet flies. He said that he found fishing them both productive and relaxing. The sweeping, down and across presentations and slow casting pace are pleasant and effective, he said.

I went home and thought about what Dennis said. I eventually tied up a few "grouse and yellow" wets and whipped up a few smaller flies with a palmered peacock herl body and grouse hackle. I reasoned that the dark little fly might look like a *Baetis* nymph or a caddis pupa. I had no clue about the ancient yellow-bodied fly, but I figured that one ignores centuries of success at one's peril.

In short, they both work! Further, Dennis was right; they are relaxing to fish. Give them a whirl. You won't regret it.



**KIAP-TU-WISH OFFICERS:**

President: Gary Horvath 715-425-8489  
(gmhorvat@presenter.com)  
Vice President: Greg Dietl 651-714-1525  
(Greg.Dietl@ssa.gov)  
Secy/Treasurer: Brent Sittlow 715-386-0820  
(bsittlow@presenter.com)

**BOARD OF DIRECTORS:**

Corey Mairs 715-246-2834  
(mairs\_corey@hotmail.com)  
Greg Dietl 651-714-1525  
(Greg.Dietl@ssa.gov)  
Kent Johnson 715-386-5299  
(jjohnson@presenter.com)  
Craig Aschenbrenner 715-381-7242  
(cjaschen@msn.com)  
Bill Lovegren 651-645-0565  
(bill.lovegren@co.hennepln.mn.us)  
Ted Mackmiller 715-549-6775  
(rumackml@presenter.com)  
Eric Forward 715-425-2588  
(jccjacobs@presenter.com)

**RIPRAP EDITOR:**

Jonathan Jacobs 715-386-7822  
(turiprap@hotmail.com)

**MEETING SCHEDULE:**

**MAY 5: WISCONSIN DNR, MARTIN ENGEL SPEAKING**

**DEADLINE FOR SEPTEMBER RIPRAP: FRIDAY, AUGUST 21.**

**CHAPTER COMMITTEES, ONGOING PROJECTS AND CONTACTS:**

Kinnickinnic Monitoring: Kent Johnson, Project Leader  
Willow River Monitoring: Chuck Goossen, Project Leader  
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Publications: Jonathan Jacobs, Editor.  
Program Committee: **VACANT**  
Education Committee: Michael Alwin, Chair  
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