



Rip Rap

November Meeting

When: Wednesday, Nov. 5
Where: JR Ranch, Hudson
Dinner: 6:30
Program: 8:00 KRLT Update
 Rick McMonagle, Executive Director of the Kinnickinick River Land Trust, speaks of challenges and successes in preserving an ecosystem. (See pg. 2)

President's Lines:

I would like to thank everyone who took the time to contact our Representatives, The Governor, or George Meyer at the DNR office in Madison regarding our concerns about the priority watershed funding. We definitely had an impact, and the funding seems to be in good shape for the time being. Individual initiative won the day. Kudos to everyone who wrote and Thanks Again. (see pg. 6) One of our greatest strengths as a chapter is our ability to quickly organize around the local issues that have an impact on water quality, and present our position to people in Wisconsin state government in a manner which is based on facts and makes sense.

I would recommend that everyone who has E-mail access write a short note to Andy at the web site so that he can maintain a complete copy list of online members. This represents just one more tool we can use for quick communication. Of course we will continue with phone calling and letter writing to the membership.

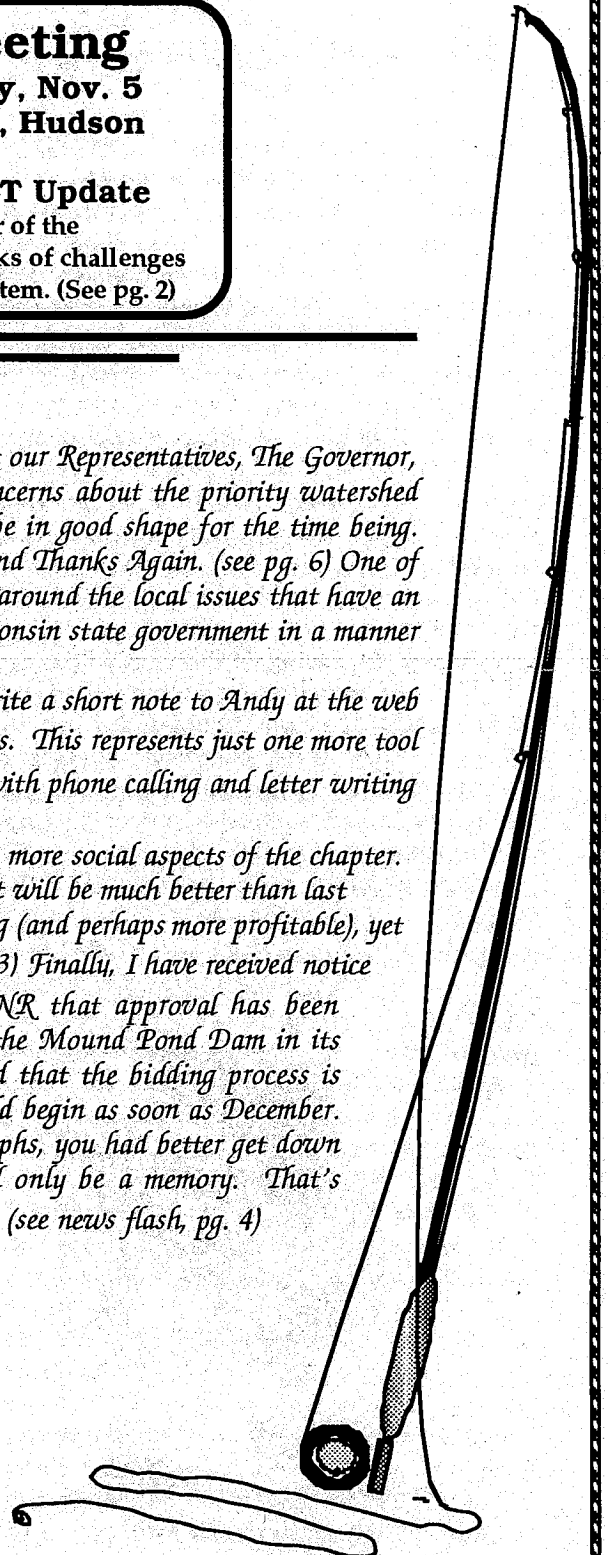
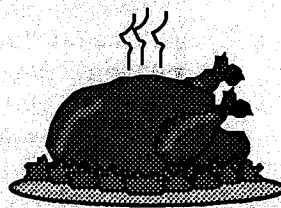
Now it is time once again to turn our attention to one of the more social aspects of the chapter. I have been given the official notice that this years Christmas banquet will be much better than last years. Also, efforts have been made to make the banquet more exciting (and perhaps more profitable), yet retain the quaint character that everyone seems to appreciate. (pg. 3) Finally, I have received notice

from Dan Koichi at the DNR that approval has been granted for the removal of the Mound Pond Dam in its entirety. I also understand that the bidding process is complete and demolition could begin as soon as December. So if you want any photographs, you had better get down there. Because soon it will only be a memory. That's something to be thankful for! (see news flash, pg. 4)

Tony Stifter, President

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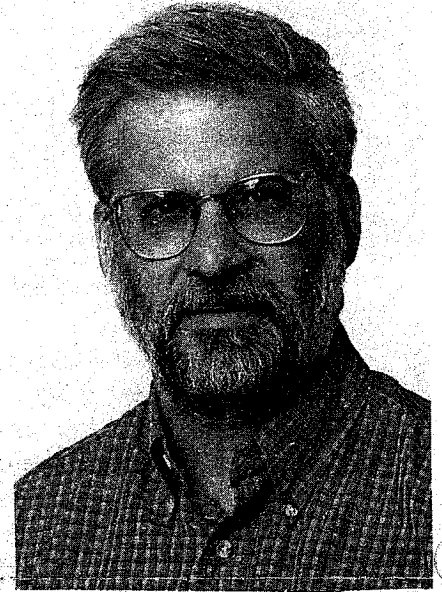
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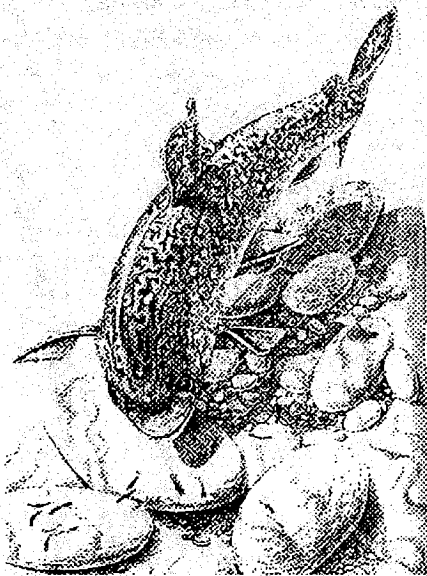
Rick McMonagle outlines challenges and successes of the Kinnickinnic River Land Trust...

Land trusts are booming! They tell us that a new land trust is formed each week somewhere in the United States. Here in Wisconsin there are over 30 land trusts, and across the water, the Minnesota Land Trust is up and running. This whole land trust concept of face-to-face conservation work with private landowners is an essential part of the spectrum of the conservation of our natural resources. Land trusts make agreements with private landowners to permanently protect their lands. It is these personal, one-on-one interactions that blend the hopes and dreams that individuals and families have for their lands and the mission of a land trust to protect many acres. It is the exact opposite of the heavy hand of big government commanding you to do such and such with your land. It's all about motivated landowners and a capable land trust reaching common goals for the future health and welfare of this precious river in this small corner of America. Land use issues are the hot topic of debate in the River Falls area. The local newspapers, coffee shops and town meetings are abuzz with discussions and debate. To develop, what to develop and where to develop are the questions. The loss of prime agricultural land, impacts on water quality and the change of the rural nature of the area are some of the major issues.

The Kinni could be adversely affected by these developments and the KRLT is keeping close tabs on the situation. The river is like a barometer of the health and well being of the landscape. Our work is an integral part of land protection efforts--what happens on the land happens to the river. (excerpt from KRLT Newsletter, by permission)



Rick McMonagle,
Executive Director,
Kinnickinnic River Land Trust



Thanks to Clinic Workers...

The third annual fly fishing clinic conducted by Kiap-TU-Wish in River Falls in May was an unqualified success. It is due to the incompetence of this writer that thanks and kudos weren't handed out in a more timely manner. More than a dozen volunteers helped make the event memorable for the students, but three in particular deserve mention. Many thanks to **Jon Jacobs** for filling the role of head teacher, directing activities and keeping things on schedule. Many more thanks to **Joan Bruski** and **Karen Stifter** for feeding all of us. How they did it and remain calm is a mystery to me...

Mike Alwin

Kiap-TU-Wish Bulletin Board...

Holiday Banquet News...

The smashing, sensational Kiap-TU-Wish Holiday Banquet is scheduled for the evening of December 3. The planning committee, headed by Karen Stifter, has arranged a splendid dinner featuring carved roast beef, baked chicken with champagne sauce, accompaniments, coffee and dessert.

The program promises to be another in a long line of high quality entertaining speakers. We can't tell you who it is, but you'll regret missing a storyteller of this caliber.

The auction is our only public fundraiser for the year and you're an integral part of it. We need you to contribute your treasures to this effort: books, tackle, objets d'art or any other cool thing. In addition, the committee (Karen Stifter, Julie Sittlow, Mike Alwin, Jon Jacobs, Rich Lindholm John O'Malley), is planning a few surprises to make the auction even more entertaining. All donations to the auction are greatly appreciated as well as tax deductible.

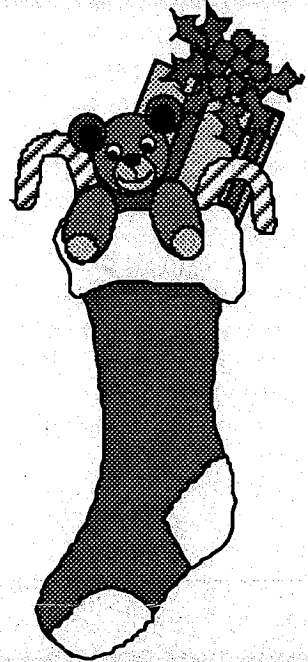
Auction items can be delivered to Mike Alwin at Bob Mitchell's Fly Shop, 3394 Lake Elmo Ave. Lake Elmo, MN, or to Jon Jacobs' home: 703 Summer St. Hudson, WI. Try to get them in by December 1st.

For Reservations call:

Bob Mitchell's Fly Shop (612)-770-5854
Jon Jacobs (715)-386-7822

Holiday Banquet Info

When: December 3
Where: JR Ranch
Cost: \$20 / person



Chuck Goossen took this photo of Kiap-TU-Wish members stocking trout fingerlings in the Lower Willow River September 23rd. From left to right: Randy Bremnes of the St. Croix Falls Hatchery, Herb Lundberg, Jon Jacobs, and Bob Bradham.

News Flash? Engineers are lowering the water level behind the Mound Pond Dam. It's coming out...NOW!

On Saturday afternoon, Sept. 25, it appeared as if the water level in Mound Pond had been lowered about 18 inches. The draw down is only about 6 inches a day to avoid stirring up too much silt downstream. When it's completed, the dam will be brought down with explosives and the concrete and iron residue removed from the site with heavy machinery.

Walking upstream from the group camp, I heard a hawk whistle and watched an eagle circling overhead. There'll be some easy meals for the birds as the lake level drops. Up to fifty feet of wet mud was visible between the vegetation and the water. Most of the fish will probably wind up in Little Falls Lake. That could mean good ice fishing this Winter...



Final Fall portrait of the Mound Pond Dam, (photo by Tony Stifter)

KTCA's Cathy Wurzer outlines Kiap-TU-Wish video project...



News Night Minnesota's anchor woman, Cathy Wurzer, has accepted the chapter's commission to produce a video showing the damaging effects to cold water resources from unbridled development and thermal pollution. Weaving quotes from a wide spectrum of experts together with footage of the Kinni and Nine Mile Creek, a formerly vital trout stream in the Twin Cities, the fifteen minute film will show the many threats to rivers and point out ways to mitigate and protect against damage. The project is designed to both inform and motivate politicians, community leaders, landowners, environmental groups and developers to take a new look at the benefits of preserving a living trout stream. The tone of the video will not be anti-development but will emphasize sustainable development. The stewardship of various environmental groups (such as TU) will be highlighted as well. Beautiful wildlife photography and original music will heighten it's impact. Ms. Wurzer's own media company, Palisade Productions, will produce the film.

Cathy's interest in the Kinni goes well beyond journalism. She is an enthusiastic but intermittently successful fly fisher, having taken basic courses at Bob Mitchell's Fly Shop. For anyone interested, she is looking for guides to help her find more fish next season.

Fund raising to pay for the project has already begun. It is hoped that most of the cost (\$10,000.) can be borne by grants from non-profit foundations that focus on environmental concerns.

Skip's Loose Threads....

An heretical utterance concerning dry fly hackle

When I began fly tying at the age of eleven, there weren't many fly tying books around. A book by J. Edson Leonard entitled *Flies* was available, and soon after I started the *Family Circle Guide to Trout Flies* came out. Schwiebert's *Matching the Hatch* was four years away and Atherton's *The Fly and the Fish* came out the year I got my first fly rod, but it was printed only in a limited edition for the Angler's Club of New York. That same year, Bus Grove's *The Lure and Lore of Trout Fishing* appeared, with a chapter on tying, and the imprint of my rubber stamp inside the cover has my New Jersey address on it. My bible in those days was Bergman's *Trout*, a copy of which I received as a Christmas present in 1950, when I was nine. I had read the library's copy almost into decrepitude and nagged my dad shamelessly for months before the holiday for one of my own. Those were the years when the arrival of the Heddon catalog, and the Payne catalog, the Abercrombie and Fitch catalog and the Sears Roebuck catalog were the highlights of a boy's dreary, wet winter, and a sure harbinger of Spring, and the opening of trout season in the Poconos.

All these books suggested that good hackle was hard to get, and the best hackle for tying dry flies was the longest, stiffest, most web free feathers available. Of course, dry flies in those days meant Catskill style, basically copies of Halford's British designs with stiffer tails to float on our more rambunctious streams. Stiff hackle was necessary to support the fly 'on its toes' as LaBranche used to say. Nowadays, of course, we have no-hackle flies, soft hackle flies, parachutes, thorax ties, upwings, downwings, palmers, all of which seem to float pretty well without the help of seriously steely hackle fibers.

But the stiff hackle dictum seems to still govern feather selection, particularly among beginning tiers. Of course, most are taught to tie Catskill style first, with an Adams, a Cahill, or a BWO. The proportions of dry flies still reflect the Catskill school of the Dettles and Art Flick. The most expensive hackle available at fly shops is, of course, extremely stiff, long and web-free. Lots of fisher folk use the classic ties and they work well, particularly on free stone streams. But our current, enlarged repertoire of floating imitations that don't depend upon hackle for flotation should cause us to pause a moment and reexamine the knee-jerk mantra that dry fly hackle must always be stiff.

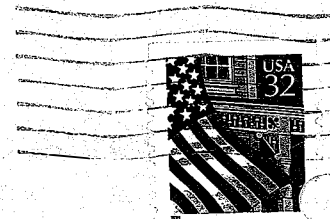
Stiff but resilient hackle was needed to float lightly dressed Catskill patterns. The old legends of fly fishing wanted their casts to 'cock' the fly on the water, suspended between the tips of the hackle and the tips of the tail fibers. Having fished with many a Catskill tie, I am usually able to achieve this proper attitude only once or twice with a fresh, well-dressed fly before it settles lugubriously into prone position. In my experience, the fish don't seem to mind much either way. Often, and particularly with Variant patterns, I had trouble hooking trout. I believe the stiff, oversized hackle pushed the hook away from any point of connection with solid fish flesh. Patterns such as the Usual, Haystack, Comparadun and No-Hackle use buoyant dubbing to float the fly in the film. Split tails act as outriggers to reinforce a natural upright stance caused by the weight of the bend of the hook. Parachute flies float just as well with soft hackle as with stiff.

Is there a benefit to substituting floppy, webby hackle for the stiff stuff in dry flies? For years, fishing writers have insisted that the mobility of hackle fibers and soft dubbings are triggers to trout, especially in nymphs and wets. Can these same qualities be exploited in dry flies? I can personally attest to the efficacy of soft hackle flies fished over fussy trout in glassy, slow moving water. The webby breast feathers used in these flies are tapered from stem to tip, like real insect legs. When wet, they move with every vagary of the current. I have recently started putting a clump wing of poly yarn or loop wing of Antron on these simple flies. That solves the visibility problem of soft hackles. The wing becomes a focal point for the angler and allows the fly to be fished in fast water as well as slow. Add a soft tail, perhaps a few pheasant fibers, or even a bit of Marabou to represent a trailing shuck. Do the flies float? You bet! Does the hackle obstruct the hook point? Never! Does the cost of hackle go way down? Yep!

I enjoy tying and fishing classic Catskill patterns. They look beautiful and continue to catch lots of trout. But I think it's time we rethink the function of hackle in dry flies and experiment with more mobile, less severely stiff feathers. There is nothing turgid about a Mayfly dun. On the contrary, all the body parts are loosely joined and have independent motion. Stiff hackle doesn't guarantee flotation. Furthermore, flies tied with stiff hackle, both Catskill and parachute, have an annoying tendency to twist leader tippets. The most compelling reason to incorporate soft hackle into dry flies, however, is it's lifelike movement. Let the trout be the final judge...but at least give them a chance to choose! Tie up some dry flies with soft hackle this Winter, and reevaluate your personal criteria for hackle quality in the light of 1990's fly fishing research rather than relying on the questionable assumptions of the 1950's.



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Rep. Joe Plouff speaks up for Priority Watershed program...

"The Priority Watershed program is vital for the protection and improvement of our waterways. When the 1997-99 State budget debate began, the Priority Watershed Program was facing a \$14 million shortfall in funding. Over the course of the last several months, a number of steps have been taken by the legislature to address that shortfall.... During Assembly budget negotiations, I initiated efforts within the Democratic Caucus to include \$5 million in additional funding...While the Assembly Republican leadership would agree to provide only \$2 million in addition funding for Priority Watershed, I continued to work with Sen. Alice Clausing. (She) was successful in including a budget amendment to provide an additional \$5 million for the...program. The budget bill passed with her amendment on Sept. 29... Furthermore, an additional \$2 million will be provided to the DNR for the Non-point Source Water Pollution Abatement program to fund cost-share agreements with farmers. With this added revenue, DNR estimates that watershed projects can be preserved....

I appreciated hearing from many area residents who contacted my office to relay their support of the Priority Watershed Program. Furthermore, I enjoyed the opportunity to meet with many local residents to discuss their plans and goals for watershed protection. Moreover, I was very impressed with the considerable amount of time and effort that many local residents invested in this important endeavor."

Sincerely,

Joe Plouff
State Representative
29th Assembly District

(Excerpts from a letter of September 30, 1997)