

## **HOLIDAY CONSERVATION BANQUET: Sign Up Now Or Suffer The Consequences**

*By M. Edward Alwin*

John Van Vliet, writer, publisher, traveler, raconteur, shameless name-dropper and Dave Whitlock's best friend, is our featured speaker at this year's edition of the Kiap-TU-Wish Holiday Conservation Banquet. John's best work always involves a little history lesson mixed in with his outdoor adventure and last year was no different. In the summer of 2004 John spent 120 days touring Canada by rail, fishing as he went, meeting characters and visiting historical venues. John is a wonderful story teller and he will share his experiences and his photos with us that evening.

Save this date: **Thursday, December 8**. The venue is the redoubtable Tartan Park and the festivities will begin with a social hour at 6 pm, dinner at 7 pm with the program following dinner. The banquet menu features roast loin of pork with apple chutney and Queen's Breast of Chicken with wild mushroom cream sauce and cornbread stuffing. The dinner includes a classic garden salad or Caesar salad, wild rice pilaf with dried cherries and pine nuts, parsnip potato puree, a medley of fresh seasonal vegetables and will be capped by a mixed berry cobbler and coffee for dessert. The price of this fundraising dinner and event is \$35, which includes a ticket for the door prize. Call Bob Mitchell's Fly Shop (651/770-5854) or Jon Jacobs (715/386-7822) to make your reservations. Our recommendation is that you do it sooner rather than later because 1) the room's capacity is limited to 110 and 2) there is a surcharge if you register late or walk in without a reservation. **The deadline for reservations is 5:00 pm on Monday, Dec. 5th.**

The group of individuals laughingly referred to as the Banquet Committee is busily going about the business of soliciting, sorting and organizing donations for this year's collection of **bucket raffles and the silent auction**. Attendees, hangers-on, sycophants and interested conservation minded individuals are encouraged to donate items to our fund raising efforts. These items could include books, artwork, fishing tackle, a flourless chocolate cake, furniture, computers, mobile homes, a BMW convertible or anything else you think somebody would want. Please remember that this is our chapter's major fund raising event of the year so give generously. Donations may be dropped off at Bob Mitchell's Fly Shop in Lake Elmo, MN until Dec. 6th.

Finally, the group of individuals laughingly referred to as the Banquet Committee wishes to inform the membership that we are not too proud to accept additional volunteers into our fold. We need folks to help set up the auction and bucket raffles and help with auction checkout at the end of the evening. Please call Mike Alwin or Jonathan Jacobs to volunteer.

*M. Edward Alwin is the stuffy, preppy alter ego of long-time K-TU activist Mike Alwin, the proprietor of Bob Mitchell's Fly Shop in Lake Elmo, MN*

## Figments and Fragments

# Wilderness Walleyes

By James R. Humphrey

Minnesota has more than 10,000 lakes, a source of pride and a slogan for license plates. A satellite count of ponds, manmade impoundments and honest lakes takes the number to beyond 25,000. All of the lakes contain fish, and the grand prize among Minnesotans is the toothsome walleye, the finest finny food in the universe. You may keep your Mahi-mahi, tuna and Copper River salmon.

The walleye is pursued with passion, purpose and purple prose in the piscatorial periodicals. Whew!

However, fishing for walleye is as dull as ditchwater; the fishing procedure bores more than watching golf on television, or listening to candidates on the stump. You sit there in a boat, dangling a lip-hooked minnow over the gunwale; then you fall asleep. Periodically, someone lifts the anchor and the boat motors to another "hot spot." They are all hot-spots, especially if you have a paid guide.

Which reminds me of a trip to the immense Canadian lake, Nipigon, located somewhere north of beyond. The guides from a resort several distant miles brought their clients to our bay where our party of eight lived spartanly on a launch. Our friendly Native American guide took us on a half-hour cruise to the other folks' bay, a known hot-spot.

But I digress. On a different trip to the Superior National Forest in northern Minnesota I found myself dozing and drowning a minnow. We moved often without moving a walleye from hook to stringer. We had beer to assuage our thirst, becalmed as we were on a silver sea under the bronze hammer of the sun.

I popped a beer and sat, thinking I think, with curved aluminum spinner-like thing in my fingers. That was the olden days when the pop-tops broke free of the can and we could fashion belts and chainmail by linking them. Aha! I think I thought ... "spinner-like." It consumed a moment to link the transformed bit of aluminum into the monofilament a few inches above the minnow. In less than a trice I pulled up a fat and succulent walleye. And so we fished with homemade spinners, and feasted and fested on shore, where the golden fillets were prepared by our compatriot and master chef, Henry from Racine.

*Jim Humphrey is the co-author of Minnesota and Wisconsin Trout Streams. He lives in Oak Park Heights, MN and is a featured contributor to RipRap, whose readers are getting a pre-publication look at "Figments and Fragments"; excerpts from Mr. Humphrey's forthcoming book, which he says will be "anecdotal, discursive and far ranging."*

## "Kinnickinnic Special" leads auction

By Jonathan Jacobs

The "Kinnickinnic Special", a two piece, two tip seven foot rod from the shop of Minneapolis craftsman and K-TU member **Dave Norling** ([www.davenorling.com](http://www.davenorling.com)) headlines this year's Holiday Conservation Banquet auction. Mr. Norling's rods blend traditional standards of craftsmanship and finish with a crisp, modern action. The lightweight, hollow-built rod is equipped with components from independent craft shops D & C Trading, who supplied the cork, Rush River Rods, who supplied the reel seat hardware and ferrules, and Snake Brand Guides, who supplied the guides. The Cordura covered rod case, which is embroidered with the phrase "Kinnickinnic Special" is from Bardole USA.

This year's auction promises to be a stellar one all the way around. Sporting artist **Bob White** of **Whitefish Studio** ([www.whitefishstudio.com](http://www.whitefishstudio.com)) has donated a print, as has **John Koch** of **Trout Lily Studios** ([www.troutlilystudios.com](http://www.troutlilystudios.com)). Artists **Jennifer Bruski** ([www.turningleafstudio.com](http://www.turningleafstudio.com)) and **Sarah Sanford** are participating as well.

An unusually fine selection of books will be available this year, primarily due to a most generous donation from the library of noted conservationist **Al Farnes**. Perhaps the most intriguing volume is The Ghost Tree Speaks, a book of poetry published in 1964 by Richard Dorer, the Minnesota forester responsible for the creation of the state forest in southeast Minnesota that bears his name. There's also a copy of Charles Ritz' seldom-seen A Fly Fisher's Life. There are other classic titles from such authors as Ed Zern, "Sparse Grey Hackle", Leonard M. Wright, Jr., Ernest Schwiebert and Ray Bergman.

Angling-related items are, it nearly goes without saying, a major component of the auction. In addition to Mr. Norling's rod, there are rods by Lamiglas, Orvis and Redington available this year. **Mr. Farnes** has also donated a fine selection of reels, led by two Hardy Marquis/Scientific Angler's System reels. The five-weight Marquis comes with an extra spool, while the nine-weight System reel has two extra spools, one of which is spooled with a WF7 floating line. There's also an interesting little Heddon copy of a Hardy LRH Lightweight. There are reels, courtesy of **Tom Andersen**, from Scientific Anglers and Lamson.

The world's cutest outboard motor, a dainty 2 horsepower Evinrude and an electric trolling motor will be available at auction. There's a Simms vest, an Arctic creel, and the usual rich assortment of flies and fly tying materials. And it's still October, folks. There's every early indication that this years auction could be a record setter. Please, as Mr. M. Edward Alwin (The hippie-anarchist counterbalance to I. Lewis Libby?) notes in his front page article, please participate by both attending and contributing to this remarkable event.

*Jonathan Jacobs is the soon to be Editor emeritus of RipRap.*

## Rick Remington is November speaker

By and adapted from the West Wisconsin Land Trust web site by Jonathan Jacobs

Rick Remington, Director of Land Programs for the West Wisconsin Land Trust is the featured speaker at the Wednesday, November 2<sup>nd</sup> Kiap-TU-Wish Chapter meeting. Mr. Remington joined West Wisconsin Land Trust in September of 2002. He manages all aspects of the land program, which includes land protection, management and restoration of owned properties, and stewardship of conserved properties.

West Wisconsin Land Trust is a regional land trust. Founded as the Wisconsin Farmland Conservancy in 1988, its original mission was to promote land conservation on family farms in Wisconsin. In 1996, the organization expanded its mission to include the preservation of other kinds of land: forests, wetlands, rivers and lake shores, bluffs and prairies. It assists individual landowners in developing protection plans for their property, and provides technical assistance to local community groups or smaller land trusts in completing land protection projects. An active member of the statewide Gathering Waters land trust network and the national Land Trust Alliance, as a founding member of the Blufflands Alliance, the group focuses its work on the blufflands region and the tributaries of the Mississippi and St. Croix rivers. West Wisconsin Land Trust serves the counties of Barron, Bayfield, Burnett, Buffalo, Chippewa, Douglas, Dunn, Eau Claire, Jackson, Pepin, Pierce, Polk, Rusk, St. Croix, Sawyer, Trempealeau and Washburn in western Wisconsin. You may visit their web site at [www.wwlft.org](http://www.wwlft.org).

The West Wisconsin Land Trust plays an absolutely critical role in the protection of Pine Creek, a Class I brook trout stream in southeastern Pierce County. Kiap-TU-Wish is currently involved in an effort to secure funding for the restoration of this creek, which suffers from the effects decades-long intense grazing and the legacy of ill-typical land use practices from the mid-nineteenth century onward. Learn more about this project and the other fine work the trust does by attending the November meeting.

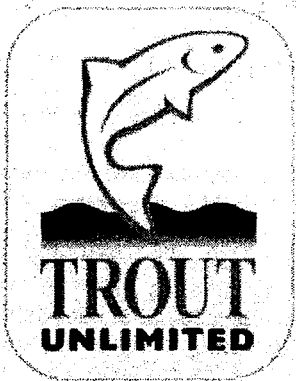
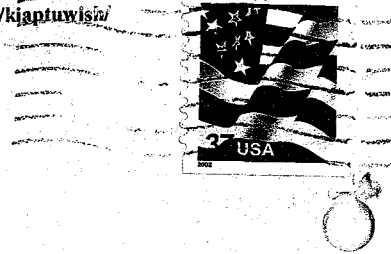
Kiap-TU-Wish holds monthly meetings from September through May at Bob Smith's Sports Club, 601 2<sup>nd</sup> Street in Hudson. Dinner in our meeting room is available at 6 PM and the meeting begins at 7 PM. A map and directions to the Sports Club can be found on the chapter's web site, [www.lambcom.net/kiaptuwish/](http://www.lambcom.net/kiaptuwish/).

## Praise and Thanksgiving

Editorial by Jonathan Jacobs

Does anyone remember the television series *Northern Exposure* from the early 1990s? The colorful, quirky characters, the snappy dialogue, clever plotlines and Alaskan setting made it one of my all-time favorites. In an episode that aired in November of one year, Joel Fleischman, the dazzling urbanite exiled to the remote Alaskan town of Cicely to pay off medical school debt, drops his hard-bitten New York City persona for an instant and reveals that Thanksgiving is his favorite holiday because "anyone can be thankful," regardless of religion, ethnicity or political leanings. True enough, but I'd amend that to say that everyone *should* be thankful. I take it for granted far too much of the time, but I'm thankful that I live in the United States, which despite its myriad problems and failings, is still the finest and freest country on the planet. Among our failings is a powerful tendency to use up our rich and abundant natural heritage in a shamefully profligate manner. In counterpoint to that, however, I am thankful that there are folks out there like you who are willing to work so hard on the protection and restoration of that heritage, most particularly its coldwater resources.

When things go right for me, I go on vacation in the last week of September and close out the inland trout season in a fish-until-I-drop tour of western Wisconsin, which has some of the finest scenery and trout streams to be found anywhere in the nation. I did that this year and it was a great restorative. On Saturday, September 24, I had the pleasure of angling with my old friend Mike Edgerly on an almost eerily clear stretch of the Rush River. The clear water didn't last. You may recall that the skies opened up that Saturday night and dumped several inches of rain in the area. The trout streams near my home in Hudson were blown out on Sunday, so I drove northeastward and fished the headwaters of a pretty little brook trout stream that had been spared the deluge. I drove home through Glenwood City and took a quick look at Tiffany Creek. The quick glance planted a seed and I swung by there again the next day. It was well into the afternoon of a beautiful fall day by the time I arrived at the St. Croix County Fairgrounds, through which the creek runs. I cast a Royal Coachman onto its pellucid waters and caught in a matter of minutes three or four brilliantly colored native brook trout, one of the most beautiful animals in all of creation. I marveled at the bank hides, in-stream structure and miniature plunge pools that provided homes for these wonderful char. Until very recently, this watercourse was nothing more than a tiny, boxelder-infested ditch. However, thanks to some intense efforts by the Wisconsin DNR and the backbreaking labor of many of you, it's now a miniature trout stream. The restoration should hold up for decades. To be blunt, I'd had my doubts about this project and until I caught that first fish, I'd been thinking to myself, "What kind of goofballs put themselves through something like this?" My answer to myself: "The very best kind of goofballs, those willing to give of themselves for the benefit of future generations of both trout and people, your friends from Kiap-TU-Wish, whom you ought to be thankful to have." I am. Happy Thanksgiving.



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**MEETING SCHEDULE:**

NOVEMBER 2, 2005: RICK REMINGTON, WESTERN WISCONSIN LAND TRUST  
THURSDAY, DECEMBER 8, 2005: HOLIDAY BANQUET AND AUCTION; JOHN VAN VLIET, SPEAKER  
JANUARY 4, 2006: JONATHAN JACOBS ON SMALLMOUTH BASS FISHING  
FEBRUARY 1, 2006: BRAD BOHEN, GUIDE AND AUTHOR, OF CABIN LIFE OUTFITTERS, HAYWARD, WI  
MARCH 1, 2006: ANNUAL BUSINESS MEETING  
APRIL 5, 2006: DRY FLY DICKINSON'S FLYTIES  
MAY 3, 2006: WISCONSIN DNR

**DEADLINE FOR DECEMBER RIPRAP: FRIDAY, NOVEMBER 25**

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