



The Drift: Words from our President.

Project work: As of mid September, John Sours' DNR crew is finishing up the last project work of the season. Work was severely hampered by all the rain we had this summer. By late August, about 1600 feet of the total project length of 1800 feet had been completed, including seeding and mulching. Subsequent rain caused some erosion, but it should be repaired by now. What a year.

Maria Manion has continued writing grant requests for the 2015 project on the upper Kinnickinnic River. We've been calling it the "red cabin site" but maybe should come up with a new name, since the cabin is gone. On September 10, volunteers Tom Schnadt, Sarah Sanford, Mike Alwin, and Tom Henderson assisted a half dozen DNR folks with electro fishing, aka "shocking." We netted and counted only brown trout, most of them between 9 and 15 inches. Very few smaller. It was a humbling experience: with that many fish in the water, why can't I catch more?

Next regular chapter meeting: The October 1st meeting will be held at the Valley House, located a couple of miles north of North Hudson on highway 35. The speaker will be Mike Dvorak, wildlife photographer. I expect to learn to take better photos, including any fish I happen to catch. Members who came to the September meeting all seemed to feel that this venue is a bit out of the way but otherwise a good location: plenty of room, good food (from the menu), and reasonable prices.

Amery area: We will have a special meeting in Amery, at the Village Pizzeria, on Monday, October 6th. Dinner at 6:00pm, program at 7:00pm. We hope to obtain a list of trout stamp purchasers in that area, and invite them. Perry Palin will talk about fishing and will display some wooden rods he has made. We will also discuss the possible culvert replacement project.

Banquet: Mark your calendar for December 4th, Lake Elmo Event Center.

Future Programs. We still need a speaker or program for our November meeting. All others are planned.

Enough said.

~ Tom Henderson

The KIAP-TU-WISH CHAPTER's
almost monthly publication

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The October 1st meeting is at the Valley House, 6 miles north of Hudson on WI State Hwy 35.

The Valley House
1237 Hwy. 35, Hudson, WI 54016
715-549-6255

The photo above was taken by Maria Manion sometime this past summer. Although she doesn't remember the date, she does remember the high numbers of butterflies, low numbers of tricos, moderate numbers of crane flies and early morning sun as it peeked over the horizon on her way to the river with a K-TU angling friend.

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The Namekagon River: the best and worst of times

{Words :: Images} Jonathon Jacobs

I thought I wanted to try to tie together multiple threads in this essay. I was going to write about bioregionalism, Wisconsin rivers and some fish with which I have interacted. I may still do that someday, but the more I thought about the separate topics and my own experiences, one river began to stand out both by its presence in all the threads and as a critical component in who I am as an angler and who I've become as a person.

I am talking about the Namekagon River, which flows generally westward for roughly one hundred miles from its headwaters in Lake Namekagon northeast of Hayward, Wisconsin before debouching into the St. Croix River a few miles east of Riverside, Wisconsin. Its entire length lies within the St. Croix National Scenic Riverway. There is surprisingly little development along its banks and there are long stretches with none. It has a distinctive north woods look throughout, its water the color of "tawny port," in Jim Humphrey's terms. Running

through mostly through sandy soils and with minimal row cropping in its watershed, it's not often that the river is substantially off color.

In the stream mileage above the impoundment in Hayward, the Namekagon is a storied, albeit unusual, trout stream. In fact, Tom Andersen, one of our chapter's charter members, once described it in a talk as "this big, weird warmwater river with trout in it." When I first fished it years ago, there were some rainbows stocked to supplement the feral brown trout population, but the 'bows are long gone. It's not unusual to see river temperatures well into the upper seventies (Fahrenheit) in the summer months. The browns apparently retreat to spring holes and cooler tributaries then and one presumes that's where they spawn as well. Brown trout are tough critters wherever they're found, but Namekagon browns seem doubly so, both in survival ability and fight when hooked.

Jonathon Jacobs photo



The Namekagon: a wild & unspoiled place

The National Park Service won't do work on the river that might benefit the brown trout as the fish are seen as an invasive species. There's always loose talk that the park service might attempt brook trout restoration, but between the beating the river took in logging days (log drives tend to rip out banks, widening and shallowing a stream) and the specter of climate change, I don't think even OPEC oil money would be sufficient to pay for the work that would be required to restore a reproducing brook trout population in the main stem of the river.

Lake Hayward, an impoundment and heat sink on the river in Hayward, puts an end to any pretense of the Namekagon as trout stream. From the dam in town to the St. Croix, it's a true warmwater stream with the typical complement of walleye, smallmouth bass, northern pike, muskellunge and sturgeon present, along with various species of forage fish, including the largest redhorse suckers I've ever encountered.

I probably first became aware of the Namekagon while hanging out at the late Tom Helgeson's old Bright Waters fly shop in South Minneapolis in the early 80s, but it was reading Jim Humphrey's article about it in Fly Fisherman magazine a couple of years later that convinced me I had to try the trout water above Hayward. It took much longer for me to hit the river's lower stretches, but I've since covered nearly all of the mileage below Hayward.

I enjoy a road trip as much or more as the next fellow, I admit. Even at that, I have a hard time explaining how the drive from my house to the

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Hello Maria.

I have been a long time Kiap person but have moved to Red Lodge, MT. The last supporting thing I can do for the club is have you drop me off the mailing list to save the postage! Perhaps you could put a blip in RipRap to let my friends in the club know why I'll miss your future events. I hope someone will step up and bid high on the plate of brownies at the holiday banquet. I have enjoyed eating the whole plate on my drive back to Hopkins for 20 something years.

Best Regards, Bill Schuessler

Editor's note

As I type, I'm sitting in a cabin at Cottonwood Camp on the Bighorn, waiting for the slushy snow to stop and temps to rise a few degrees. We've committed ourselves to a day without fish, but not to a day without socializing in the fly shops and saying hello to folks we see only once or twice a year. Funny how people tend to remember each other — and sometimes the finer points of their lives such as dogs, jobs, children or the new Abel reel purchased on a previous year's trip. Anyway, the same is

true for Kiap-TU-Wish. Since starting as editor, I've received correspondence from current and past members, asking me to pass along some news to their Kiap-TU-Wish friends whom they see but once a year. The following is a note I received recently from Bill Schuessler who challenges Kiap members to bid high on those brownies he'll no longer be here to enjoy.

~ Maria

Speaking of the holiday banquet. . .

The K-TU Banquet Committee has set a date for this year's **HOLIDAY CONSERVATION BANQUET**. And the date is.....(drum roll).....**THURSDAY, DECEMBER 4!**

After last year's exceptional banquet the Committee is diligently working to ensure that this year's banquet is at least as good and hopefully tops last year's effort.

The venue this year, as last, is the Lake Elmo Inn Event Center in Lake Elmo, gateway to Lake Wobegon.

Here's what you can expect at this year's soirée:

- an exceptional dinner experience
- excellent table side and bar service
- an exciting presentation by StarTribune columnist, Dennis Anderson
- an unbelievable selection of merchandise in the bucket raffles and silent auction



You will have a fabulous time, so mark the date now on your calendar, smart phone or tablet.

**Next RipRap deadline:
Friday, October 10.**

RipRap is always on the lookout for writers, photographers, story suggestions, etc. Please feel free to shoot me an email, tap me on the shoulder at chapter meetings, or even send me a bona fide letter. Any way you choose, have your material, comments or suggestions to Maria Manion by the second Friday of the month for submission. manion.maria@gmail.com

Maybe you'll be inspired after this month's chapter meeting with photographer Mike Dvorak, and realize that you have a photo you want to see in print. Send it to us! If of suitable size and fit, we'll feature it on RipRap's front page to remind us of the resources we're working to conserve, protect and restore.

Notes From the Field: a shocking report from the Kinni

Led by WI DNR Fish Manager Marty Engel, a survey crew made up of DNR professionals and volunteers from Kiap-TU-Wish conducted an electro fishing expedition on a cold and windy September 10th. The area shocked was the site of the 2015 K-TU winter project, known as the Red Cabin site, and the purpose was to gather population data prior to implementation.

While the survey data is unavailable at this time, it was apparent that there are quite a few trout in this reach. One ignorant wag suggested that if more than a hundred trout were found he'd be surprised. According to Marty, trout populations in the upper Kinni might be down by as much as 50% due to a drought over the last two years which decimated the last two year classes. Rest assured that there are many times the hundred forecast by the aforementioned lout and many of the larger trout look extremely healthy, with deep bodies not usually seen on the Kinni.

Located on North River Road, the 2015 winter project no longer has a red cabin on the premises. However, it does have a small parking lot, courtesy of the DNR, and the river sports an appealing meander close to the lot...and a couple of very deep holes to which this writer can attest. Now that the site has been measured and the population tested, the trees to be removed will be marked this fall and the timbering and stream work will begin in December or January.

Besides Marty, the professional crew working on the shocking were Matt Andre, Barb Scott, Kyle Kuss and Kevin Grand. K-TU volunteers were Sarah Sanford, Tom Henderson, Mike Alwin and Tom Schnadt. Many thanks to all.

~ Mike Alwin



K-TU volunteers & DNR crew gathering trout population data

Kiap-TU-Wish Board Members & Contact Info

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{The Namekagon River from page 2}

Namekagon continues after all these years to charm me as it does. There's something about the transition from suburban to rural to woodsy or from coulee country to farm country to north woods that I just love. Wisconsin's small towns are better kept than those in many other states. You can't go wrong buying fuel from the friendly ladies at the Kwik Trip in Cumber-

I've read that in a Native American language Namekagon means "Place of the Sturgeon," but my extensive angling experiences make me think it more likely means "River that is exceedingly fickle." It's been the best of times and it's been the worst of times for me throughout the river, sometimes all in one trip.

Even though the fishing is generally somewhere between tough and

but, as I approached the bridge pool, caddis began to pop out of the water and fish appeared out of nowhere to chase them. I did more business in the next half hour than I had all day. There were several reasons for this. First, fishing often improves when evening approaches. Second, the Namekagon is jam packed with trout food of all kinds. The fish can afford to be picky eaters, but it helps to be there when the caterer serves the banquet. I had a

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land, or by spending a few minutes shopping for gourmet jerky at Louie's Finer Meats in that same city, or by having a meal at the River Street Café or Piller's Poor Boys in Spooner. Up in Hayward, after a stop at Hayward Fly Fishing to see K-TU friends Larry and Wendy, you can mosey across the street for some world class ice cream at West Dairy, or wander down to Angler's Bar and Grill, where you can sip on a beer and marvel at the taxidermy.

impossible, there's a good deal to be learned by fishing for trout there. One of my early lessons was that timing is everything. I used to take long day trips there at least once in the spring and once in the fall, more often when I could. Once, after an exceedingly tough day with little to show for it, I was a little late in getting back to my car, which was parked near a bridge. The river had been barren all day long,

similar experience one day in the early catch and release season when the day warmed and small, pale caddis showed up at mid-morning. On that day I caught fish in a little tub between some log bridge pilings and a little alder-covered point.

The first trout that I ever caught that seemed large to me came from the Namekagon. It wasn't huge, but it was

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photo courtesy of Gary Horvath

{Words} Michael Alwin

Vern Alberts

On August 7th, long time K-TU member Vern Alberts died; he was 93. Vern came to the chapter in the '70's and his support for the chapter never wavered. He was active on stream improvement projects, supplying his labor on our brush and timber cutting work and donating hard hats to the project crews. Vern served on the executive committee as chapter treasurer for about a decade and in his retirement donated books, tackle and his original wood carvings to our silent auction. His notice in the Star Tribune called him a true steward of the environment, an assessment the chapter can attest to, and called for memorials to be directed to the Kiap-TU-Wish chapter of Trout Unlimited.

The photo to the right is vintage Alberts. One of the oldest gentlemen on site, Vern was frequently the critical person in special projects. He designed and built most of the bunkers for the stream temperature monitoring apparatus. In the photo, Vern's working on the original installation of monitoring equipment on the Kinni.





Hook :: Size 6 Daiichi 2571 Salmon Hook
Body :: Otter's Soft Milking Egg
 — 6mm Transparent Chartreuse
Thread :: UTC 70 Denier
 — White
Veil :: Otter's Egg Veil
 — White
Blood Spot :: UTC 210 Denier
 — Red (heavy thread)

b's blood spot egg

With steelhead season right around the corner I found myself stocking the pegs full of egg yarn and I starting thinking of other egg patterns and other materials on the market. Though I am at the far opposite from someone who would be able to expertly know what the right fly to fool any Great Lake run trout would be, I just thought it would be fun to play around with some of these other materials.

While this pattern might not be as fast to tie as a yarn egg, it is still super easy and pretty fun. The Otter's Soft Milking Eggs stay really pliable and are amazingly lifelike. While you can still tie this fly without the addition of the UV resin, it really makes the red thread more pronounced and makes a great profile inside the transparent soft egg.

- [1] Lay down a base of the white thread from behind the eye to about half way down the length of the hook shank
- [2] Take a clump of the egg veil fibers and pull them apart and stack them on top off each other making a clump that is a little over twice the entire hook length
- [3] Tie in the veil fibers at the halfway point right in the middle of the clump
- [4] Pull both ends of the veil clump to the rear of the hook and wrap the thread in front of the veil, put a half hitch in to secure thread, which should be right inside the halfway point of the hook shank
- [5] In the center of that space, make several wraps with the red thread. Then advance the white thread to tie off the red right behind the eye of the hook and tie off thread and cut it
- [6] Coat the red thread with drop of UV resin and cure (optional). Then put a small drop of super glue over the red spot of thread
- [7] Pierce the Otter's Egg with a needle or bodkin just below the center of the egg. Place the point of the needle on the egg of the hook and slide the egg off onto the hook
- [8] Start the white thread again behind the eye of the hook, pull one half of the egg veil forward and lash it down in front of the egg
- [9] Pull the veil material back and wrap the thread in front and tie off and finish the fly

If you have questions on this fly or materials, stop in at Lund's and ask Brian in person, or send him an email at brian@lundsflyshop.com

{The Namekagon from page 5}

orders of magnitude bigger than anything I'd caught previously. It grabbed my streamer very near the end of a long, rainy and largely fishless September day. On another trip in May, I was casting a woolly bugger down and across to a cedar sweeper when I heard a loud splash. In the daze that comes with a repetitive, monotonous undertaking, in this case a half hour of casting, I very slowly thought, "What was that, a beaver?" It was then that the rod doubled and I found myself fast to a nineteen inch brown. Thinking that lightning couldn't strike twice, I nonetheless commenced to cast repeatedly to the same sweeper. Perhaps five minutes elapsed before the splash, slow thought, doubled rod scenario played out again. That time the splash was caused by a twenty one inch brown that was one of the strongest and most stubborn inland trout I've ever caught. This was at about 9:30 in the morning and I thought that perhaps for once the Namekagon would be kind throughout the length of a day. I caught one more trout, an eight inch brown, before I quit late in the afternoon.

The lower warmwater part of the river has treated me in much the same way. On one float Greg Dietl and I managed to spot with our none-too-keen eyesight at least a half dozen muskies finning away in plain sight. Not a one could be inveigled to eat a fly or to even show any interest in doing so. On another swing through that same stretch, I cast to what was likely the largest riverine smallmouth bass I've ever seen. It followed my streamer at a distance of about six inches. I sped up my retrieve. The bass sped up, but maintained the six inch interval. I slowed my retrieve. The bass slowed. This went on until I suppose the bass felt too far from home, at which point it made a slow U-turn and swam back to its lie.

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That's the yin. The yang is embodied in the float trip that Greg and I took with Cory Andraschko out of Hayward Fly Fishing. It was about a perfect day as one can expect in the outdoors. It was June and the sky was a

“The first trout that I ever caught that seemed large to me came from the Namekagon. It wasn't huge, but it was orders of magnitude bigger than anything I'd caught previously.”

high, virtually cloudless blue expanse. It was warm, but not hot, with the hint of a breeze. We fished a stretch below Hayward that I'd not seen before. The river was falling and warming after a high water episode. The float began in a tight, shallow stretch. At one point the

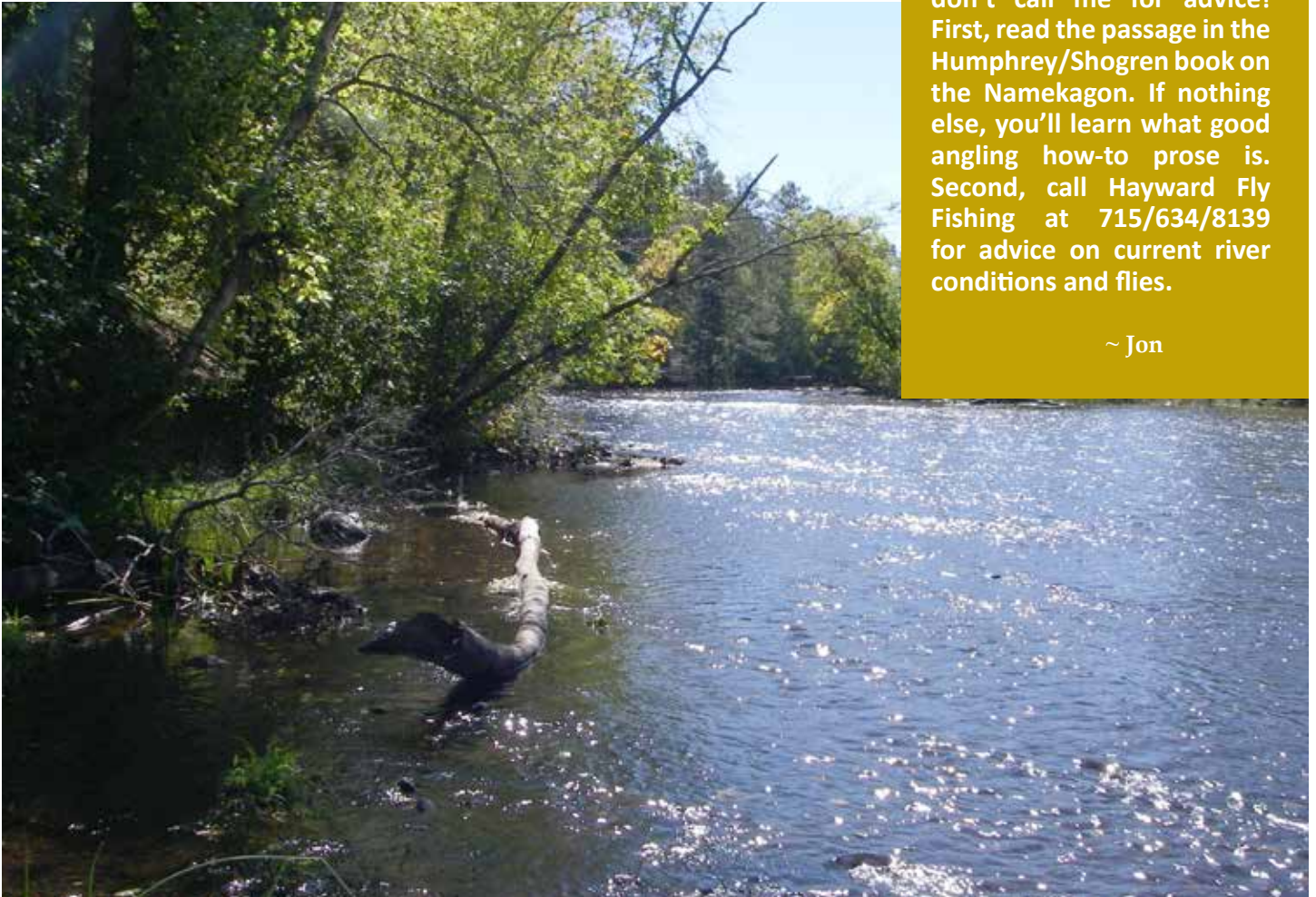
drift boat ground to a halt on the rocky river bed. Cory, who has forearms like Popeye's, put the oars down on the rocks and shoved. The boat lurched forward. This went through about four cycles before the boat reached deeper water, came free and floated. I was impressed. A bit later, Greg and I hooked

up to fish simultaneously. Guides, I've noticed, love doubles, and Cory was determined to get both fish in the net. He anchored up and strode out of the drift boat and into the riffled water, net in hand, as though he were walking down a sidewalk. He got both fish. Ah, to be young, strong and talented!

The character of the river changed soon after. I have always associated smallmouth bass with rock and boulders, but we were now floating a river that reminded me of a very large version of the upper Kinnickinnic. The banks were grassy or alder-lined and the bottom appeared to be mostly sandy. However, bass – numerous and sizable bass – lived in the shadows along the banks. Sometimes they would come out of nowhere to clobber a popper with no warning. More often though, they'd show up under the fly and drift along under it like a big brown inspecting a mayfly on a spring creek. The first time this happened I told Cory I didn't know what to do. “Twitch the fly,” he said. I did and the bass pounced. And so it went, nearly to the landing. It was a day for the ages. 🐟

If you go: For god's sake, don't call me for advice! First, read the passage in the Humphrey/Shogren book on the Namekagon. If nothing else, you'll learn what good angling how-to prose is. Second, call Hayward Fly Fishing at 715/634/8139 for advice on current river conditions and flies.

~ Jon



Jonathon Jacobs photo



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Check us out on the web:
www.kiaptuwish.org

DON'T MISS the
OCTOBER 1st MEETING!
at the Valley House

Mike Dvorak, a Twin Cities based photographer and angler, will be joining us on October 1st.



Mike & Moose with a Yellowstone Cutty

Dinner begins at 6PM (your dime).
The meeting begins at 7PM.

“A great amount of my life has been spent behind a camera and probably an even greater amount of my life has been fishing for trout. Having grown up in Dillon, Montana, on the banks of the Beaverhead and Big Hole rivers, I came to fly fishing at a pretty young age.

I arrived in Minneapolis in 1992 to attend college, after serving in the military and spending too many days in the Middle East, where there is a definite lack of trout streams. Since then I have traveled the nation and the world making images for numerous magazines and advertising agencies.

Over the past 22 years I have developed a style for photographing outdoor and specifically fly-fishing images. I look forward to sharing some stories and ideas with you at your October meeting. In the meantime, get out there and enjoy the last few days of the season. I'm headed to the Boundary Waters in search of trophy Brook Trout.”