

Creel Notes from the



P.O. Box 639, Mercer Island, WA 98040



April, 2012



President's Riffle

Anticipation.

This is not just the title of a Carly Simon 1971 hit (has it been that long?), this is one of the factors of fly fishing that I enjoy most.

I enjoy the anticipation of starting a new adventure. When I went to Lone Lake in March, I had heard of successful fishing at Lone Lake, and I anticipated the same thing, a day of successful fishing. As it turned out, I caught the biggest trout I have ever landed at Lone Lake at that event.

I like the anticipation of the plans and preparation for going to the fishing location. I like anticipation of the stops that occur for coffee and bagels.

I like the anticipation of that first cast, correcting a defect in my cast that I thought about all of the way home from my last fishing expedition.

I like the anticipation of the conversation on the trip to the destination and the return trip home. **Don Barton** and I went to Lone Lake together in March. We were able to discuss a variety of topics on both legs of our trip. It was a comfortable conversation. I anticipate the conversation at lunch time break. I think this type of conversation is a joy of fly fishing and of being in a club such as the WFFC.

I anticipate that "Just One More Cast" feeling at the end of the day. That sense that at the last minute I might tag just one more trout.

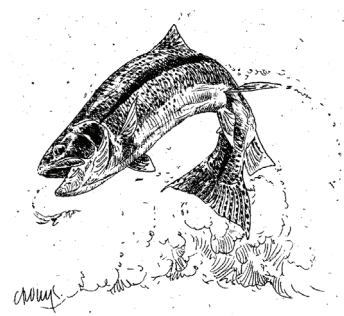
Is it the sense that just around the bend, I will someday connect with a lazy lunker in that backwater just to the left? Is it the chance that finally I have tied on the correct fly in the correct size? Is it the off chance that for just once my cast will be just right and land in the proper location and is followed by a perfect drift?

I anticipate the drive up the grade on the way to Chopaka, and I anticipate the last part of the trip with the first glimpse of the lake.

I anticipate the next WFFC meeting, seeing various members, friendships I have been able to cultivate over the years with members, and sharing the wonderful conversations that flow with the lubrication of fishing tales. I think that social aspect of sharing with the members of this wonderful club is a treasure to me.

I always anticipate that someday I will have a perfect day of fly fishing. Until that happens, I know I will have had some pretty marvelous days, not perfect, but marvelous none the less. I hope you anticipate something similar.

Mike



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This Month's Speaker: Denny Richards

For the past 30 years, Denny Richards has had opportunities to fish and guide anglers over some of the most challenging trophy trout waters in the Western United States. His simplistic approach and techniques on presentation have accounted for browns over 20 pounds, cutthroats to 15 pounds, and rainbows in excess of 19 pounds.

Over 250 days a year are spent doing what he loves best: guiding, writing, tying flies, conducting fly fishing schools, and field testing and developing tackle manufacturers' products. His newly developed Crystal Creek Series graphite fly rods by Diamondback are being compared to the top rods in the industry.

As a consultant to the Cortland Line Company, Denny has designed new stillwater fly lines for fishing lakes and reservoirs. His Zone Card enables anglers to better understand which lines, patterns, and retrieves are best for the depths where trout prefer to feed.

As a professional fly tier, his suggestive patterns have appeared in various outdoor magazines and are on display at Cushners Fly Fishing Museum in Florence, Oregon. Based on past reviews, his books and companion videos are now considered the "bibles" for fly fishing lakes.

When he isn't fishing or guiding, he spends many hours creating new fly patterns, and studying trout behavior, their habitat, and the various insects found within their environment. His knowledge and ability to teach others were a prerequisite to establishing his fishing schools/clinics, which have become a priority for anglers seeking the ultimate from their stillwater angling experiences.



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Club Aims and Purposes

The purpose of this club shall be:

1. To improve and increase the sport of Fly Fishing in the State of Washington.
2. To promote and work for the betterment of trout streams and lakes.
3. To encourage and advocate the conservation and increase of trout, steelhead, and salmon in state waters.
4. To promote a campaign of education against pollution in streams, lakes or Sound waters of the State of Washington.
5. To encourage and assist others — particularly young persons of high school age—to become fly fishers and true conservationists.

President **Mike Wearne** got the meeting started with a hurrah and huzzah with the celebration of **Greg Crumbaker**'s return to good health and to tonight's meeting. From there he moved on to guest introductions, of which there were many. Then a cloud settled over the club with the sad news of the passing of long-time members, **David Ishii** and **Marve Young**. I knew them both, David as a bookseller and baseball fan. One day before a Mariner's game, I walked into his Pioneer Square shop and saw a poster by an artist I collect, Tina Hoggett. The poster advertised a show of her collections of Negro League ball-players wood cuts. I commented on the artist and what art of hers I had collected and before I could ask him the price, he'd already started rolling it up as a gift. Marve and I first met at the High Lakes trip in Wyoming's Wind River Range. We set up our tents in the same area and fell into a nice rhythm of cooking together and sharing dishes. If you know Marve, then you know I was the winner in that equation. While cooking, we traded whiskey and stories, or I should say, I shared whiskey and he shared the stories. I'm a good listener and that skill came in handy over the course of subsequent trips to the Wenaha in Oregon and Beartooths in Montana. He made every campfire special with tales of treating patients on the Reservation and then trading a few choice chops on the piano with jazz blowers in SE Alaska.

Bill Neal then got the chance to finish off the season's awards with the Gordy Young Life Time Ser-

vice Award, after much praise to the man who has taught us all something: **Don Simonson**. He said, and I quote, "Our recipient became a member of WFFC in 1970. Among numerous positions with the club, he served as President in 1994 and prior to that served as Secretary and Treasurer....[then] President of the WFFC Foundation Board from 1996 until 2009...In the late 1990's, our recipient took over as Chairman of the Education Committee, involved in casting and fly tying...." and the list goes on and on.

Don graciously thanked the crowd, insisting humbly that others deserved the honor more. If you can name anyone, let me know.

Our speaker, April Volkey of www.flygals.com.ca, writes, guides, and explores the river systems of BC. Speaking to a knowledgeable audience, she managed none the less to get a few ohhhs and ahhs from her opening video and subsequent shots of enormous wild fish. Punctuated with strong opinions on maintaining wild systems and hatchery managed systems, April, a polished speaker, moved into her main topic, swinging flies. A firm believer in the wonders of swinging, she has refined her approach through years (for a 28 year old?) of casting.

Her advice can be boiled down to: start at your ankles, start closer to shore, start at the head of the run, and get those fish everyone is missing. Through some strong graphics, April "guided" us on a couple rivers and showed us water we are missing.

April fishes for excitement, not relaxation, so she likes to catch big fish. To do so, she puts her "puzzle" together from a dozen or more pieces potentially in play. Unable to demonstrate all the factors in play without a real river at her feet, and unable to handle the rush of veterans who had their check books out for guide service, she worked off some good photos and short videos to give a few discreet pieces of advice:

- Murky water brings steelhead close to shore, fish the close water in cloudy water.
- Keep your rod tip down and fish the whole swing before moving to your next perch.
- Dries first, then wets, then sink tips.
- Strip over the good water.
- Use a 6" soft loop in your stationary hand to take the shock of big hits.
- With dead drift dry flies, don't set the hook too quickly.
- Double-handed rods let you fish closer to the shore, which is where the fish are.



Rocco Maccarrone and Don Simonson

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(Continued from page 3)

- We tend to fish too deep with sinking lines, so lighten up.

April moved on to flies and showed us her versions of the famous Intruder pattern, which is a bit smaller version she calls the “min-truder”. She even brought a tank to show one in motion, and gave a great view of what the poor sucker sees before hook up.

She finished the presentation with a short talk on Swinging Etiquette: don’t come in below, don’t statue (unless you are over 70 with rebuilt knees), don’t crowd, and don’t helicopter into any run she’s walked two hours to. Give her a call at 1-888-359-4259.

From there we enjoyed committee reports. Highlights include the Dry Falls Outing on April 14-16. Jim McDonald briefed us on the new signup protocol to get better estimates of attendance. We need to let STC know the Wednesday before the meeting a reasonable number to cook for. Just as a case history, 48 returned the email in the affirmative; 62 showed. Let’s get on it, boys. He needs emails to the affirmative only. Email now, pay later if you don’t want to pay on line. A little planning will help everyone.

I lost track of the committee reports because one member made a private issue into a public one, and got me so angry, I decided it wise to shut the keyboard. Following my own advice, I will deal with this privately. But in general, for those who long to see younger members flocking to meetings, public scolding is not a real positive way to end a meeting. Who wants to add more gumpiness to what should be a recreational event?



April Vokey

Final 2011 Awards Recap

by Bill Neal, Awards Committee Chairman

We are now done. All awards for 2011 have been presented, despite weather and other delays. Here is a final recap, supplementing my report in the February *Creel Notes* and the commentary by **Rocco Maccarone** in his February meeting summary in the March *Creel Notes*:

Empty Creel Award, to a member for service to the club, presented to **Hugh Jennings** for his long-standing leadership and work on the WFFC Foundation. Shortly after his receipt of the award, Hugh had these comments:

“I want to thank all who were involved in nominating me for the Empty Creel award. I am very honored to see my name added to this trophy. This prestigious award, which was first given in 1941, is the most historic of all the WFFC awards. I knew most of the men whose names are on this trophy. It is very humbling to be included with all the distinguished names that preceded me.

I was too shocked at the WFFC meeting when my name was announced to make a proper acceptance speech. But I can assure you that it is a tremendous honor which I will cherish for the rest of my life.”

Tommy Brayshaw Award, to a member for service to the community, was presented to **Greg Crumbaker** for his sustained work in supporting and carrying out numerous programs to benefit those who are disabled or otherwise disadvantaged. [We are all very pleased to have Greg back with us after his illness.]

Half-Assed Award, to a member for various and repeated acts of “half-assedness”, was presented to **Mike Wearne** at the Christmas Party by the recipients for 2009, **John Schuitemaker** and **Hugh Clark**.

Letcher Lambeth Angling Craftsman Award, to an individual residing in Washington, Oregon, or British Columbia for significant contributions to the knowledge, art, philosophy, and techniques of fly fishing was presented to **Bill Kindler** of the Olympic Peninsula Fly Fishers. The presentation recognized Bill for his extensive work with disabled and injured veterans

and others, including the utilization of his skills as a master wooden boat builder in training and guiding veterans in the construction of a cedar strip Rangeley fishing craft, as well as being a “true gentleman” like the award namesake Letcher Lambuth.

Andy Award, to a member who has “suffered most cruelly from the vagaries of Murphy’s Law”, was not presented for the year 2011.

Ladle and Hammer Award. A special award presented to **Dave Schorsch** for his outstanding efforts in revitalizing the club outings and helping to complete the Home Waters on-site structures.

Gordy Young Life Time Service Award, to a senior, active member of the club who has contributed significantly to the aims and purposes of the club through sustained service and leadership, particularly during the years prior to presentation, was presented to **Don Simonson** for his many and continuing years of service to the club, particularly as an educator in teaching fly casting and tying. This award is not regularly presented and is not expected to be. Prior recipients are **Gordy Young**, **Gil Nyerges**, and **Pete Baird**.

Wet Socks Award, initially an award to poke fun at a member who departed an outing early because of inclement weather, but which has evolved into one to recognize those who have persevered in fishing or attempting to do so despite the weather, was presented to **Ron Little** for enduring extreme cold on a Methow River fishing adventure.

Finally, we again recognized **Walt Swanson** for earlier winning the 2011 *Boyd Aigner Fly Tying Competition*. The 2012 Competition is underway and judging will occur at the April members meeting, with the members serving as the judges.

I want to thank the other members of the 2011 Awards Committee: **Pete Baird**, **Chuck Ballard**, **Dick Brening**, **Ron Dion**, **Kris Kristoferson**, and **Don Simonson**, and **Bob Burdick** for his help with the 2012 Boyd Aigner Competition.

Idaho’s Big Lost and Wood Rivers – Oregon’s Owyhee River *by Chapin Henry*

On March 28th, my son and a friend headquartered in Sun Valley for a day’s fishing on the Big Lost, two hours east of Ketchum, and two days on the Big Wood River.

The Big Lost was in great shape producing 16' to 20' rainbows on size 18 and 20 nymphs and size 20 dry flies. In some places, the fish were ready to spawn in shallow water, making sight fishing an interesting challenge.

The next day on the Big Wood, we waded several areas between Ketchum and Hailey, using size 14 Copper Johns and flashback pheasant tails. We landed rainbows up to 18" that were in great shape. Friday night it rained hard causing the river to rise and become cloudy. Despite the conditions, we did manage a few fish.

Sunday we arrived at the Owyhee in southeastern Oregon around 11:00 am to find the river very low at 100+ cfs and a milky color. Surprisingly, even with these conditions we had good fishing. We landed rainbows and browns to 23" on everything from size 20 nymphs to size 12 skwalas. We fished from above the tunnel to the park below the dam. After spending the night in Baker City, Oregon, we made the six-hour drive to Seattle.

It was a good trip with a nice variety of fishing on three rivers.

WWU Fly Fishing Event and Haig-Brown Retrospective

Steve Raymond is exploring the literary legacy of Roderick Haig-Brown in a presentation entitled “Return to the River” at Western Washington University on Aug. 3rd, from 1 to 3 pm. In addition, WWU will be serving light refreshments, providing tours of the collection that include books recently donated by David Ishii, and in general provide what they hope is a nice chance for members of the area fly fishing community to gather and share stories. See the flyer on page 9 for more information.

Seafair U.S. Navy Club Activity *by Mike Wearne*

This is an activity scheduled for August 4th on Seafair weekend. I have discussed the general plan for the activity with the WFFC board, and I believe it has been discussed at a general membership meeting.

The proposal I made to the president of Seafair was that WFFC would sponsor a day of fly fishing for the U.S. Navy personnel who are visiting the Seattle area during Seafair. Beth Knox, who is the president of Seafair, was thrilled with the idea. She spoke to the Navy and they are on board with the idea. I have subsequently emailed and spoken with Command Master Chief Brian Schell concerning our proposal. He was enthusiastic about it.

Basically the plan is that we would collect Navy personnel who are interested in spending a day fishing on the morning of Saturday, August 4th, and take them fishing. I am suggesting that at least part of the group can fish at Rattlesnake Lake and possibly a second group can fish on the Snoqualmie River. Then, at a predetermined time, we will reassemble for a picnic of burgers, dogs, and fishing tales.

There are, in my opinion, several benefits to the club. The first and foremost benefit is the potential for good publicity. I want to make sure the news media knows all about this activity. Secondly, it will revive the tradition of the annual club picnic. My concept of this event is that family members will participate in the day's activities, in particular the BBQ picnic. I am not saying that the wives will do all of the cooking. What I am suggesting is that this is an opportunity to involve family members including children and grandchildren in a club activity.

At the end of the day, I think it would be particularly classy if we presented each member of the Navy with a "takeaway", i.e., a small box of flies. This means that club members will need to contribute a collection of basic flies to be distributed.

In my discussion with CMDCM(SS) Brian Schell, he indicated that we may get some Navy personnel who are permanently stationed in the Puget Sound area. This has the potential of attracting new members to our club.

What I am asking of members is to set aside that first weekend in August, tie some flies, and join in a WFFC activity that has the potential of being a regular event.

At the present time I am acting as a committee of one. I need some help on this little event. Please call me if you have questions. Thanks.

Youth Fitness Expo Volunteers Needed *by Dick Brening*

Volunteers and fly tying material donations are needed for a one-day youth activity in May. The WFFC will have a booth this year at the Youth-Fitness-Expo at the Conference Center in the Comcast Arena in Everett WA. The event runs for one day, Saturday, May 12th, from 9am until 5 pm.

At the Expo, we will have a hands-on fly tying booth for the participants to tie their own Woolly Bugger fly and a casting area to let them experience fly-line casting.

Help is needed for this event. Six to ten club members will be needed to man the booth and the casting area.

Please volunteer to help a youth tie a fly or cast a line.

In addition, material donations are needed for tying the flies. We need Marabou feathers, soft hackle feathers, and chenille, all colors, the brighter the better. Also, we need size #4 or #6 3XL hooks. The club will provide tools and vises, rods and reels.

To volunteer or donate materials, please contact Dick Brening, WFFC Youth Committee Chairman, to volunteer. 425-455-4514 or rbrening@me.com.

FFF Expo

The Washington Fly Fishing Fair is coming to Ellensburg, WA on May 4th and 5th. It will feature casting workshops, a casting demonstration by Steve Rajeff, fly tying demonstrations, a volunteer dinner, a banquet, and an auction. More information will be in the next issue of the Washington State Council Federation of Fly Fishers newsletter and on their Web site here.

Chopaka! *by Dave Schorsch, Outings Committee
Chairman*

Memorial Day weekend, May 26th, 27th, and 28th. Dry flies, sunshine, great food, lots of friends, more food, and more dry fly fishing!

This is our most heavily attended outing of the year for good reason! It's a beautiful place, with great fishing, and usually fine (if mixed) weather. Bring all of your mayfly emergers, spinners, and duns. You'll also need damsel nymphs, little black caddis, ants, and black leech patterns.

We'll camp in the big meadow on the lake, with canopies set up for sun or rain. The Saturday potluck happy hour/dinner is terrific, with the club grill set up for everyone to use. Bring your best appetizers and side dishes. The club will provide beverages, beer, and cheap fireside wine. Starts around 5:00. Bring musical instruments if you'd like, it's always a great nite around the fire.

Sunday is the group breakfast (not too early) followed by "the hatch" around noon. Fish all day and retire to the second Happy Hour featuring tempura hot from the wok, and cold brews. Another potluck is inevitable; way too much food. Don't forget the desserts!

Camping is "rustic", so bring everything you'll need, including water. Firewood is sometimes gathered by work party Friday or Saturday, but it doesn't hurt to bring some anyway.

For those who have never been: Chopaka sits above the town of Loomis, westerly of Tonasket, Washington. I can give directions to any who need them.

Hope to see you there! Dave Schorsch 206-227-6134

Elwha Photos

Here's a couple shots of the Elwha from a friend of Doug Schaad's..



On its way back...



Washington Fly Fishing Club
P.O. Box 639
Mercer Island, WA 98040
www.wffc.com

Stamp
here

April, 2012

Meeting Announcement



Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month at the Seattle Tennis Club, 922 McGilvra Blvd. E.

The Wet Fly hour begins at 5:30 PM and dinner is served at 6:45 PM.

This month:

Denny Richards on "Stillwater Presentations"

WWU Libraries Heritage Resources Presents:
Return to the River: Steve Raymond explores the
literary legacy of Roderick Haig-Brown



'Bob Headrick wading the North Fork of the Stillaguamish River'
Ralph E. Wahl Photographic Collection, Center for Pacific Northwest Studies,
Western Washington University, a department of *Heritage Resource*.

August 3, 2012
1-3 pm
Wilson Library 6th Floor

Light refreshments will be served
Tour of Fly Fishing Collection to follow

WWU Libraries Special Collections,
a department of Heritage Resources
516 High St.
Bellingham, WA 98225
<http://www.wvu.edu/specialcollections>
For more information call:
360-650-3193



Heritage Resources

Center for Pacific Northwest Studies — Special Collections — University Archives & Records Center
<http://library.wvu.edu/heritageresources>