

# Creel Notes from the



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



May, 2010



## President's Riffle

I'm sitting in the Florida Keys as I write this month's riffle. What a great place completely different from Seattle in every way, except for the mad avid fly fishermen. It was a great day for me this year.

After three separate trips to the keys to fish with **Capt. Keith**, I released my first ocean-side tarpon. Sight-casting to these fish in skinny water with a 40- to 70-foot cast is as close to the pinnacle in fly fishing as one can get. I have been dreaming of this catch for 30 years, and it was with great relief that I saw the fish take the fly, feel the line go tight, and then the great run and leaps into the air. It was not a large tarpon compared to the beasts that were swimming by daily, but it was a good first fish, somewhere in the 50- to 60-lb. class.

We had another interesting meeting in April. I apologize for not getting to the fishing reports at the meeting. Unfortunately, there was a motion made on the floor that took up the rest of the evening. The motion asked that we suspend the bylaw requirement for members to be present at a meeting for a vote to change a bylaw, and have a one-time suspension to allow mail-in votes. That motion was voted down, and later discussions did prove the suspension of a bylaw is the same as a change and would require a 30-day notice and 2/3 vote. There was a letter presented to the board by a number of past presidents at the May board meeting. The letter asked that the board withdraw the upcoming vote to change the bylaw to no longer exclude women from the club. The board had a lengthy discussion about the letter, then voted unanimously in favor of proceeding with the vote. The letter has been posted on the member's only bulletin board for members to read and comment on. I encourage every member to look over the contents of the bulletin

board. I will post my response to the letter there. The Creel Notes is not the place for this discussion.

I will tell you that the number one goal for the board has been to find a great conservation project for the club. We have interviewed three organizations that have great local projects here in Washington at three separate board meetings. Every one of these organizations will not work in partnership with the WFFC, period. The reason for this is they cannot or will not work with a gender-specific club. The board is continuing to interview conservation organizations to find one that will work with us. This is what I meant when I said that this policy is getting in the way of the pursuit of the Aims & Purposes. For more, please read the bulletin board. I would like to thank the committee that worked so hard on the gender issue: **Roger Rohrbeck, Richard Embry, Chapin Henry, Ron Dion, Bill Deters, and Jim McRoberts**. They took on a huge task and finished it thoroughly and quickly. We will have a vote in June to change the bylaws to no longer exclude women from the club, and if it passes, it will open the doors for the club to new opportunities. The board is also taking steps to further define what it means to bring a guest to a meet-

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ing. We are not a social club and members should only bring guests who have a great interest in fly fishing. This change to the operating procedures is being worked on this month.

Grab your rod and go fishing!

Ed.

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## May Meeting—Chad Jackson (WDFW Fish Biologist): “New Fly Fishing Opportunities”

Chad has a B.S. in Fisheries Management from the University of Idaho, and 13-years experience managing both inland and anadromous species for WDFW. He has spent most of his career in Region 4 as the inland fish biologist for King, Snohomish, and Island counties; as District Fish Biologist for the anadromous fish in the Snohomish and Stillaguamish watersheds; and currently serves as the District 5 (Grant and Adams Counties) Fishery Biologist.

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## Gender Bylaw Change Vote at June Meeting

The club will be voting at the June 2010 meeting on whether or not to allow women fly fishers into the club. The revision is to delete the word “male” in Article II, Section 1, “Qualifications for Membership”. All other proposed changes are to make the document gender neutral, such as replacing “Chairman” with “Chair”, or deleting the word “he” or “his”. The entire document with proposed changes is on the Web site in the Members Section.

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## The Creel Calendar

**Chopaka Lake**, May 29<sup>th</sup> through 31<sup>st</sup>.

**Jimmy Green Memorial Fly Fishing Fair and Expo**,  
Sat., June 20<sup>th</sup>

**Home Waters Ribbon Cutting, Take-the-Day-Off-of-Work  
Party/Outing**, Tues., July 20<sup>th</sup>

## Creel Notes

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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 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.

# REPORTS

## On the Fly by David Ehrich

I missed the March meeting, so I can't make a fair comparison, but the air seemed lighter for the April affair than the February brouhaha. It was a pleasure to get out from underneath the cloud of our version of the gender wars. And just to make it clear how special the meeting was, honored friend and member, **Les Johnson**, wheeled in for drinks and a visit with fishing partners past and future.

Our President, **Ed Sozinho**, started off by calling the meeting to order, wasting no time in introducing **Captain Keith**, who drew our attention to a handy list of upcoming speakers and introduced the night's speaker, Dave Delisi from Twin Bridges, Montana, to talk about "Bamboo: From Shoot to Rod."

Dave started off with a question: How many club members have fished with a bamboo rod? Many hands went up. Builders? At least a dozen members have built rods from bamboo. When he asked who preferred bamboo to graphite, a couple hands went up.

Sweetgrass Rods, a splinter group from Winston, makes 90% of their rods in bamboo. With eight contractors, Sweetgrass can build around 200+ rods per year. Builders tend to share the production and many hands build each rod. They have a two-year waiting list. They cost from \$2000 to \$2500. One



*David McBride is inducted at the April Meeting*

of these beautiful rods will be available at next year's Christmas party.

Dave took us first to the cane forests in the Tonkin area of SE China. Surrounded by steep cane groves, Aiza is a small town in the midst of the world's most valuable cane. The cane grows to full width and height in one season, then matures for three more years to harden the power fiber in the wind and the elements. Most of the pieces are 30 or more feet and of such quality that B and C grades are used for rods to build of the highest quality, according to Dave.

The cane arrives in Twin Bridges in 12' lengths. They cut these pieces in half and leave them to acclimatize to local conditions. If you look at a cross section of the cane, the denser fibers ring the outside, with the pithy stuff toward the middle. After the cane is split into eight wedges, split the length of the piece, the cane nodes are removed and then the pieces are milled into usable sections. This can be done with a hand plane for builders with more time or one can use a carefully calibrated jig. The cane is planed to a 60° taper (for a hex) with these jigs.

Glenn Brackett, the owner of Sweetgrass Rods, sorts carefully through the pieces to ensure quality. The pieces are glued, wrapped in string, and cured for six or more months. Next, the rod makers remove the string, remove the natural enamel and prepare for sanding. The enamel is removed because it is slick and makes it difficult to finish. Also they want to get to the all-important dense fibers.

Time to cut. Based on their formulas, the glued rods are measured for width and cut appropriately. Fitting the ferrules is more a matter of art than glue. They use nickel. The cork is put on piece by piece, glued, and then turned on a lathe. Now it's time to finish. Add the winding check, guides, wrapping, and then various coatings. Now the rods hang for a few weeks, then reel seats and jewelry are added along with all sorts of signatures.

Why build a rod in bamboo? If aesthetics matter to you, these rods are beautiful. The casting has power if you slow your arm movement down, so like the entire process, bamboo asks the angler to slow life down and wait for what makes life worth living.

After the break, the meeting got down to business. **Fran Wood** announced the sad news of **Walt Walkinshaw's** passing last Friday. Fran took the

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opportunity to remember Walt and his long participation in our club. Walt was 93. He had been sponsored into the club by **Letcher Lambuth**. Several club members remember fishing trips over the years. Fran remembered Walt's work as an environmental lawyer. Friends can celebrate Walt at the Seattle Arboretum for a memorial service on June 2<sup>nd</sup> at 4:30.

**Keith Robbins** briefed us about our July 20<sup>th</sup> ribbon cutting at our Home Waters on the Yakima River. As of this moment, members will board a bus from Seattle and then Issaquah (RSVP June 20<sup>th</sup>) with a mid-morning arrival on the river. Members can hire one of five boats (and guide if desired) from Red's, meet everyone back at 5 for slicing ribbons, chomping on tacos, and a tour of our new construction. All details can be handled on the WFFC home page. You are welcome to hire your own guide, bring your own boat, or brave the high water.

**Bill Neal** finished some old business from the January Awards night with an award to yours truly for, stated briefly, "reasonably accurate and witty reporting." I'll take that praise any time.

Voting commenced for new member **Dave McBride**. He didn't have to wait long for the result and the lecture and gift of "real" flies by the venerable **Gil Nyerges**. Welcome to the club, David.

That wrapped up the business part of the meeting as far as Ed was concerned, but **Chuck Ballard** had other ideas and took the opportunity to move, for the good of the order, that future votes to change the charter be done by mail to make sure every member gets to vote. **Ed Sozinho** thought the motion out of order because protocol requires that any attempt to amend the bylaws must be posted in Creel Notes before the next meeting and also require a 2/3rds majority. In order to please everyone, Ed suggested Chuck's motion be discussed and voted on, and if discovered to be out of order at the board meeting, then the vote would be disallowed, otherwise the vote would be respected. Discussion ensued about the motion and the process, some of it relevant to Chuck's motion while other members dusted off their soap boxes. Ed put a stop to that and the motion came to the floor. The motion failed.

Fishing reports were preempted by the above debate, but a round of applause was shared for the excellent Dry Falls outing. Thirty members found various ways to scare fish out of waters deep and shallow.

## Outings by Dave Schorsch

The early Dry Falls outing was a great trip! We had more than two dozen members and friends on the water and at happy hour. The weather was nice and the fishing was pretty good for this early in the season. A chilly morning and slow chironomid hatch gave way to a bright shirt-sleeves day and sight fishing to hogs on the shoreline. This angler managed to land a dozen by lunchtime, losing several more. Lots of nice fish, a 24-inch tiger trout being my biggest. **Mark Pratt** worked up a 25-inch brown among the monsters prowling the rocks. Occasional cries of "oh my God!" and "holy shit!" drifted across our end of the lake, resulting in happy-hour conversations about leader strength.

The happy hour/barbecue was a blast. Thirty steaks slid SLOWLY across the grill, while a bunch of friends consumed mass quantities of food and libations. Special thanks to the gals who brought great side dishes and desserts and to the guys who brought the gals. The appetizer selection ran from chips to smoked salmon to prosciutto-wrapped asparagus on the grill. Killer chow.

We also had several guests from the Whidbey Island fly club, who joined us after a work party at Lake Lenore. Check out their work on the new signs at the fish traps (north end of the lake, a great place to see huge cutthroat trout). We'll be joining them on other outings and projects, I'm sure.

Thanks to everybody who chipped in with the hauling, set-up, and take-down. All went smoothly, and fishing time was increased! I'm looking forward to the fall outing here, should be a blast!

### Las Vegas, April 25-28

Hot, fishing sucks here, no hatch on the Bellagio water feature. Odd women (?) handing out business cards, presumably for guide services. Directions to a good fishing spot were: go 600 miles north, turn left.....

### Lone Lake, May 1

This was a joint outing with the Whidbey and Port Angeles clubs. There was another great turnout! I didn't get an exact head count, but there were 24 vehicles at the boat launch area! The Whidbey folks hosted this party, and did all the cooking. The rain threatened all morning, but held off for the

most part. Having not fished the lake before, I was quite surprised! Fishing fairly large flies (bead-head black buggers and #8 olive usuals) on slow-sinking lines worked really well. Sandi and I had a fish on every five minutes or so, with doubles a couple times! About two-thirds were bright, recently planted fish; the rest were 15- to 18-inch holdovers! Wow, I'll be back! The lunch was well-attended, lots of volunteers lending a hand, and the canopies scared off the rain. A short ferry ride, and an hour's drive later, we were home. Got to do more of this!

### Chopaka Lake, May 29-31

The annual Chopaka outing is coming up Memorial weekend. There is no better place to experience a sunrise. The coyotes sing as the light comes down the side of Chopaka Mountain, letting you know it's time to heat up the coffee pot. No rush to get on the water here, the "gentleman's hatch" doesn't usually begin until 1:00, when the mayflies begin to emerge. Everything can happen here on the same day. Chironomid hatches, mayflies, damsels climbing on everything, best to bring all your flies. The weather is the same. The east slope of the Cascades can mean cold in the morning, rain at noon, and 80 degrees by midday. Or the reverse! Usually the weather's great, but bring everything anyway. (Pssst.. don't forget the black foam ants, size 12, but you didn't hear it from me...)

We'll be camping at the lake, which is a "dry" location, so bring water as well as firewood. We'll be hosting a happy hour Saturday around "5 ish-6 ish", and will have the club grill set up for everyone to use. The club will provide libations to help wash down the appetizers and side dishes everyone is encouraged to bring. BYOB if your taste runs beyond beer, wine, or pop. Sunday morning is a pancake breakfast (not too early) hosted by club volunteers who know when the fishing gets good. Sunday evening is usually when the tempura event takes place, also accompanied by club libations, and volunteer appetizers and side dishes. Depending on the weather, and the amount of lubrication involved, music has been known to break out around the fire. We're all volunteers here, so feel free to bring your banjo, harp, or kazoo, and join in! I play a mean wax paper/comb combo myself.

Sign up on the club web site, or call **Dave Schorsch** at 206-227-6134 or **Mark Pratt** at 425-

488-6689 for info. Don't forget to let us know what you can haul or help with to make this outing another success!

See you there!

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### WFFC Youth Presentation *by Paul Lesh*

At the request of Cub Pack 679 in Sammamish, WA, the WFFC Youth Committee presented an overview with hands-on participation of fly-fishing skills. Approximately 25 eager scouts (with their parents), ages 6-10, were treated to a one and a half-hour long presentation on April 15<sup>th</sup>.

The evening began with the presentation of the flag and scout business. After a warm WFFC introduction, **Paul Lesh**, Youth Chair, gave a brief introduction of the club and members present. The scouts watched the DVD on how to tie a fly and then a fifteen-minute rotation of four stations (rainbows, cutthroats, brookies, and browns) was then begun.

**Dave Hawkinson** "suited up" and played show-and-tell with a full duffel bag of different fly equipment used to go fishing. Waders, hat, fins, float tube, rods, reels, nets, and vest were just a few of the items on display. Also handouts, books, magazines, and pictures were provided.

**Bob Young** and **Joe Kristof** had a fly-tying demonstration and entomology session. Each tied a variety of flies while answering questions from inquisitive minds. These flies were then given to the scouts. This station led into the scouts' fly-tying session.



*WFFC members with fly fishermen in the making*

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Conducted by **Dick Brening** and **Don Schroder**, each scout had the chance to tie the infamous Nyerges nymph with varying levels of success. With much concentration and help from parents, the scouts created some subtle variations. Undoubtedly, some of these will catch fish at a local lake or stream.

And the final station was fly casting outside on the church grass. Demonstrated by Paul Lesh and assisted by various fly-fishing scoutmasters, a team of capable casters could be assembled by a half dozen of the scouts. Most showed good skill and understanding of the principles of the simple overhead cast.

Scout master Bob Cormier stated in a follow up email: "The program was well organized and delivered precisely the kind of message we strive to communicate to the scouts at our Den and Pack meetings. You are all a quality group of mentors and I know I speak for our entire pack when I say we are extremely grateful for your help tonight. It was one of the best meetings of the year."

Additional thanks go out to **Jim Higgins** for supplying the fly-tying materials and to the Wednesday evening **fly tying group** for supplying flies to give to the scouts. Thanks to **Doug Schaad** for forwarding the inquiry to the youth committee.

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### **Fly Tying Hall of Fame** *by Chuck Ballard*

Two members of the WFFC have been elected posthumously into the Fly Tying Hall of Fame, which was announced at the recent annual FFF Washington State Fly Fishing Fair in Ellensburg. **Boyd Aigner** and **Walt Johnson** were the recipients. Boyd was a past Buz Buszek award winner and probably best known for his Chopaka Mayfly pattern. Walt was best known for his various steelhead patterns, including the Deep Purple Spey, the Lady Caroline, and Lady Coachman. **Chuck Ballard** accepted the awards on behalf of the WFFC.

### **Deer Lake Whidbey Island** *by Don Gulliford*

Hoping to return to (a) more local fishing reports and (b) reports on waters never reported on, I tried Deer Lake Saturday, using several patterns, including a green Carey and a bead head #12 nymph. A total skunk. With 43 F night temps, my finger-mometer confirmed that water temp was too cold for much activity. As I often do, I canvassed Power Baiters, wormers, and even black plastic wormers and found similar no-bites. Made me wonder at the 2.3 per fish WDFW summary for Deer Lake in Sunday's Times. Two guys on the Mukilteo-Clinton ferry advised that Lone Lake was in bloom, skunking them also.

5-5-2010—I got a nice letter from WDFW Director Phil Anderson appointing me to a 2-year term on the WDFW Enforcement Advisory Group. First meeting is in Ellensburg July 10th. FYI to you in the Washington Fly Fishing Club, and my friend Kittitas Deputy Fred Slyfield. In the spirit of tightening the nooses.

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### **Cranberry Lake (Deception Pass State Park)** *by Don Gulliford*

Year or two ago, I saw a young sailor from NAS Whidbey baiting off the shore and almost get spooled by a monster brown that I saw shake his hook (goodie) at the last moment. Today on a 65 F plus beautiful day, I tried for a monster, but perhaps due to green dust bloom in the water was cheated, sink-tipping leeches, woolly buggers, and even tiny bead-headed chironomids. Saw only other fisherman, a nice guy elec motoring triple teaser, Dick Nite, etc., who had several hatchery victims. He did tell me that before the season opened earlier this spring on Cranberry (all-year lake), he caught a 20" in fine shape. Pretty good-sized 125-acre lake; lots of vegetation on shoreline in and out of water. Not a soul on Pass Lake. I have Walcott's map & info from 1961.

## Idaho Falls, April 18<sup>th</sup> by Bob Burdick

Invited to tie my sculpin at the East Idaho Fly Tying Exposition in Idaho Falls two weeks ago, I elected to fly rather than drive alone for 12 hours to get there. Excited about the opportunity to fish after the exposition, for two days in an area I had never fished before, I talked to tens of friends, acquaintances, and fly shops to get the most up-to-date info and secret hot spots on the Madison, Henry's Fork, and the South Fork of the Snake. I packed and repacked my fishing equipment and arranged to rent a Suburban in Idaho Falls, rent a pontoon boat in Ennis, and just clobber those Madison browns. As each local Idaho Falls fisherman came by my booth, I queried him on his take on all the local rivers. Bursting with enthusiasm I raced by taxi to the airport to pick up my Suburban after the expo. Bellying up to the National Car Rental table at the airport, I announced my presence, and handed over my driver's license as required. A long pause ensued from the salesperson. Then "I'm sorry, Mr. Burdick. I can't rent you a vehicle; your driver's license has expired." Stunned, I realized that without a valid license, I had no personal insurance, they could not insure me, nor could I borrow or rent a vehicle from a friend. The nearest fishing on the Snake was an hour away, an exorbitant taxi trip if I elected to bank fish, and the Henry's Fork was 1¼ hours away by hitchhiking. Slinking out of the airport, I was so dejected I could have stepped on my chin.

Recovering after a time, I pondered my few options, and headed for the local fly shop. Fortunately, I found that one of the clerks had a guiding license, and was willing to take me to the South Fork of the Snake, on Sunday, for an arm, a leg, and a 1% lien on my monthly social security check. Sunday dawned sunny and windless with a daytime high of 65 and were the fish biting! I had 30 fish to the hand with 10 on dries, ½ cutthroat, ½ browns, from 10 to 17 inches. The ride home was uneventful.

## Fishing by the Book by Mike Wearne

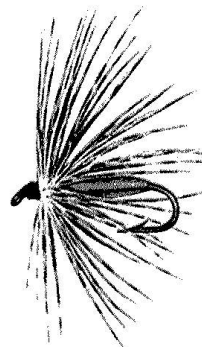
Many years ago Bill Laprade, a good friend, recommended a book to me. It was W. P. Kinsella's *Showless Joe*. His only comment was something like, "Just suspend your sense of reality and go with the flow of the book." Fast forward to the fly fishing show last June in Monroe, when I was visiting with **Leland Miyawaki**. He recommended a book to me, which was Paul Torday's *Salmon Fishing in the Yemen*. Leland's recommendation mirrored Bill's recommendation, "Just suspend your sense of reality and go with the flow of the book."

This is a novel about an attempt to develop salmon fishing in a wadi in Yemen. The proponent is a member of the royal family in Yemen. The concept is ridiculous. The format of the book is what makes this interesting. The book is a series of emails, journal entries, memos to the files, etc.

The story involves the Prime Minister of Great Britain, a bureaucrat in the Ministry of Fisheries, his soon to be ex-wife, a public relations person who becomes his love interest, and several other government officials.

I read the book last summer in Maine. It is sort of a "Beach Book". It was entertaining, light, and engaging. I know both Leland and I enjoyed it; maybe you will also.

Just suspend your sense of reality and go with the flow of the book.





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here

May, 2010

### 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:

Chad Jackson (WDFW Fish Biologist): "New Fly Fishing Opportunities"