

# Creel Notes from the



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



June, 2008



## President's Riffle

Fellow Fly Fishermen,

We hit our summer stride this month: kids get out of school, shorts and flip-flops become abundant, and the tourists pack the Pike Place Market. In the fishing world, many lakes hit their prime, or perhaps we just sneak in a few last casts before they hit their high heat doldrums. The rivers will be calming down soon after carrying their winter burden to the seas. This all means no more excuses to not get out there and wet a line.

A great opportunity to do that very thing, perhaps lure a few rainbows to your hand, and most assuredly make some new friends, also happens this month on the 21st. Our New Member Outing at Rattlesnake Lake in North Bend is that opportunity, and it's a great way to connect with fellow members. I want to emphasize that this is not just for new members and their sponsors—this is for *everybody*! But the primary purpose is to get members who have joined in the past year out there fishing and hanging out with the rest of us. It's close, it's easy, it should be a lot of fun.

Our general meeting this month should be a lot of fun, too. For all you "foodies" out there (and really, who isn't?), we will be dining at the Palace Ballroom, as we get another cooking lesson from a world-class chef. OK, I know some of you might be thinking "What does cooking have to do with fly fishing?" Well, we will be learning how to cook *sea* food after all, in the form of crab cakes. But more importantly, this is our once-a-year chance to show our significant others what kind of she-nigans go on at a WFFC meeting, and introduce them to some friends with whom we spend a good bit of time. We will still have the usual introductions and fishing reports, and I might call on someone randomly for a re-

port of any kind, so be ready!

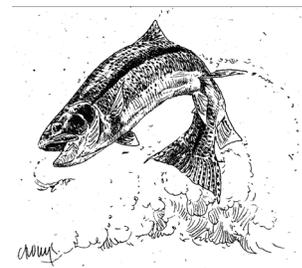
I wrap up this month with a quote I found recently that really spoke to me about how I feel when I'm out fishing:

*When one tugs at a single thing in nature, he finds it attached to the rest of the world.*

That was written by naturalist John Muir about a hundred years ago, but it is timeless wisdom. We're all connected. Let's go out this month and see what we can learn when we feel that tug.

Tight lines to all,

Bill Kuper



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## June Meeting—at the Palace Ballroom

by Keith Robbins

Chef Eric Tanaka will be giving a cooking demo at the June meeting. The meeting is at the Palace Ballroom on June 17<sup>th</sup> at 5:30 pm (cocktail hour) and 6:45 (call to dinner). The Palace Ballroom is at 2100 - 5th Avenue in downtown Seattle, at the corner of 5th & Lenora.

The cost is \$38 per person—and remember: this is the only monthly “meeting” that you can bring your sig. other to.

Get a load of this menu:

Starter: *Steven’s Perfect Crab Cakes, Celery Root Remoulade*

Entrée: *Smoked Pork Belly, Slow-Cooked Greens, and Beans*

Dessert: *Tom’s World Famous Triple Coconut Pie*

Tom Douglas was originally scheduled to give the demonstration, but couldn’t make it because he has had a recent death in the family and has to attend to some family matters. But Chef Tanaka is a worthy replacement. He is the executive chef and partner of all of Tom’s Seattle restaurants: Dahlia Lounge, Palace Kitchen, Etta’s, Lola, and most recently, Serious Pie.

Eric was a 2004 James Beard Award Winner for Best Chef in the Northwest/Hawaii. Eric filmed Iron Chef America for Food Network TV in April of 2005, alongside Tom Douglas and then Dahlia Lounge Chef, Mark Fuller. The episode aired in November of 2005, where ET and teammates defeated Morimoto—only the second loss of Morimoto’s Iron Chef career.

We have 2/3 of the reservations filled and I have to give a final body count on Friday, June 13th. If you haven’t registered yet, please go to the front page of the website <http://www.wffc.com/registration0608.htm> and fill out all areas. If you have already rsvp'd, there is no reason to do it again.

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## New Member Outing by Pat Peterman

New members and your sponsors: this is your second and final notice for the New Member outing! If you joined the club in 2007 or 2008 (or earlier and have not attended a new member outing), you and your sponsors are invited to attend a new member outing to be held at Rattlesnake Lake on Saturday, June 21st, starting at 10:00 am and lasting until whenever. We will provide lunch, accompaniments, and soft drinks. Bring your own special diet needs and adult beverage, if desired.

The lake is selective gear, single barbless hook. Many will fish from the bank, but most will use a pram, pontoon boat, or float tube to get around. All members of the club are welcome and as with all outings, members’ spouses, family, and friends are welcome. New members and their sponsors are strongly recommended to attend.

There is an outing signup on our Web site. Please take a minute to sign up so we know how many burgers to buy. See you there.

## 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.

## On the Fly *by David Ehrich*

To start the May 20<sup>th</sup> meeting, our president, Bill Kuper, shook the gavel and wished the membership a good evening. By all indications, we were enjoying the better part of a blustery day that started with rain and ended with blue skies that always look better from the Seattle Tennis Club.

Guests were introduced without incident and fishing reports got worked into the mix. As told: a mating muskrat attacked Kris Kristoferson on the Grande Ronde. He chose not to share any details about any of the fish for some reason, but the muskrat gave us plenty to think about. Rocco gave the Dry Falls retrospective: cold and windy, slow fishing on a Mayfly hatch. As reported in the Creel Notes, Rocco served more as a dock and beer distributor than he did as a beacon for great fishing technique. Lone Lake served up lots of fish on a full-sinking line with a bead head. Birkner dodged the floating crud and fished down and dirty at Rocky Ford, “only catching fish in the low 20’s.” Rattlesnake Lake, aka, “The Meat Farm”, gave up 12-13 inchers on a woolly bugger size 12. Ditto for Pine Lake. Hood canal was hit or miss for sea-runs due to muddy water and hot weather. We even got a fishing report from the Himalayans in India—spooky 15-lb. fish with side trips to the Taj Mahal. We also heard about good floating on the Yak. Dyche gave us an update on recent volcanic activity in Patagonia that left water recently fished under five feet of ash.

Bill started a new agenda item by randomly selecting a member for a fishing report under the assumption that members hold back on their reports. For the trouble of being truthful, the poor fellow earned the skunk chapeau.

Bill started the formal part of the meeting by calling up Peter Baird to report on the details of Ted Pearson’s Rosary and Funeral, and invited members to sign a card as well as leading a moment of silence.

Robert Tovar took the mic and promoted the trips to Chopaka, Lone Lake, and a work party on the Yakima. If you aren’t checking the club website regularly, get on the World Wide Web, scout out your next fishing date, and sign up. Speaking of the website, Roger Rohrbeck invited members to take a look at several new features.

The high lakes trip is headed to the Absaroka-Beartooth Wilderness for the last week in July. Con-

tact yours truly for details (David Ehrich at rim-roq57@yahoo.com). We have horses to carry our load up and they can be hired to take you up as well. The area boasts thousands of lakes at high altitude with the pleasure of Golden Trout as well as the usual varieties.

Ed Sozinho reported on the Conclave. Failing to find another team willing to compete, the WFFC team split up and competed as individuals, taking many honors.

The Boyd Aigner Fly Tying Competition announced the winners. Pete Baird stood in for Bill Neal, our awards chair. Boyd, famous for his personality, spontaneous surprises, and fantastic flies, gave the competition its namesake. Known for challenging members to a mid-February competition, the club continues in that spirit. A fine selection of talented members gave it their all for a few patterns. The winners included third place to Preston Singletary, second to Steve Sunich, and blue ribbon went to the big Kahuna of craftsmanship, Bob Burdick, who heard the applause in absentia.

I’ll spare you the details of the membership section of the meeting, aside from seeing our roster grow. I should note that as the prospective members went off to hide, their desserts were compromised during the votes. Gil Nyerges welcomed two new members—Gary and Robert—with his usual call to service.

Just before our break, members recalled stories about Ted Pearson, who was remembered for being



*Gil Nyerges inducting new members Robert Schor (far right) and Gary Bergquist*

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the last one off the water in the worst conditions, and a guy who knew High Hume like the back of his hand, among other attributes.

Steve Sunich introduced Troy Devin, former college basketball player, whitewater guide, Alaskan lodge guide, and fly-shop owner. Currently a salt-water guide on the Olympic Peninsula, Troy showed

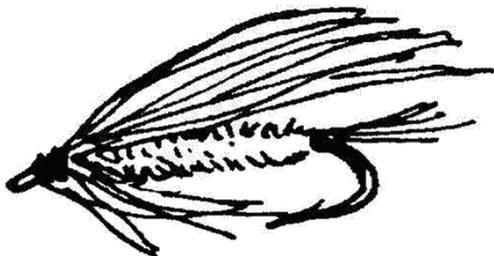


*Troy Devin and a client with a big fish*

us five years of photos that show off NW waters around the Puget Sound and some of our fine rivers.

Troy likes pink and white Clousers and he fishes poppers. On the John Day and Grande Ronde, he targets bass with 3-weights and poppers and guarantees his clients more than 100 fish a day on the Ronde. His trips promise superb campsites, and luxury items like a camp shower and toilet. Troy painted a good picture of hot fishing in hot weather.

Next he took us to his favorite rivers on the Peninsula, including the Hoh, Bogachiel, Calawah, and the Clearwater. We saw lots of pictures of happy clients with big fish.



## Chopaka Lake Outing *by Pete Baird*

The crowd was small—in fact the WFFC almost owned the Chopaka Lake campground this year, a rarity I cannot remember in the past 25 years. The Hanson and Wyman families were among the first arrivals early on Thursday and retreated to their normal secluded encampment at the north end of the lake. Next to arrive was Tempura chef extraordinaire Scott Hagen with his guest Mary Nell. Several more of us rolled in as the day progressed on Thursday: Chuck Ballard, the Bairds, the Brenings, the McRoberts, and followed later by the Levinthals, Jim MacDonald, the Stearns, David Ehrich and his guest Jennifer, and Pat Peterman, Tim Bohlin and family and his guest family Skip, Holley, and daughter, etc. There were perhaps another half dozen fisher persons and that was about it. Of course when it came to dinner time on Saturday night for barbecuing of steaks, the max people always show up. We counted about 36.

Chopaka beamed with all its normal beauty for residents of the motor home, trailers, tents, and other vehicles that speckled the campground. Mother Nature treated us to a variety of weather, cool but not downright cold, showery but not solid rain, windy from time to time, a little hail for dessert at the end of one shower, and fleecy white clouds with delightful splashes of sunshine much of the time. We avoided putting up the circus tent on Sat. & Sun. evenings, but raindrops did occur and prompted the early departure of would-be campfire celebrants on Sat. night.

I think everyone arrived not expecting the fishing to be much better than fair. In that regard most would agree that we were well rewarded by the quality of the fishing!! The larger fish plant produced measured fish to 16" (and who would doubt the word of Chuck), and the smaller plant treated us with fish ranging from 9" to about 11". I had one 15-fish day, which is the best I can remember ever doing up there. One big difference: I do not recall any reports of a fish taken dry. They seemed to mostly want their food presented down deep and moved slowly, but there were exceptions to what was working.

Patterns: A variety of flies seemed to work. I



*Chopaka Pancake Breakfast*

heard Woolly Buggers in various sizes & colors, Nyerges Nymph, Gil's Monster, various scud-like patterns, and I did well with a very beat-up Self-Carey or Halfback, a Thin Mint (thanks to Pat Peterman), a size 12 silver-tagged soft hackle, and a dark green damsel nymph-like pattern. Another major difference was no mayfly hatch, but there was a good population of scuds, and some chironomid shucks in evidence. I was not aware of damsel or dragonfly nymphs or adults being present.

Our outing support volunteers did an outstanding job with Sat. barbeque, Sun. breakfast, and Sun. night tempura. Special kudos to Jim McRoberts, Scott Hagen, Jim MacDonald, Dick Brening, Chuck Ballard, and all the ladies that prepared potluck food. As always there was an abundance and it was terrific!! One other special honorable mention goes to Jim McDonald, who diagnosed and repaired the ailment afflicting the Wyman family Camry. It seemed a major vacuum hose connection had shaken loose on the less-than-smooth road into the lake. One highlight of the trip certainly has to be Tim Bohlin's son Charlie, age nine, fishing by himself in an inflatable canoe, caught his first fish on a fly he had tied!! And then of less honorable mention, there is the instance of the Power Bait bottle found in the proximity of the McRoberts/Bohlin family camps. Does this warrant further investigation??

This outing is a long-standing club tradition and those who have not experienced the setting, congeniality, and fellowship (personship?), not to mention the fishing of Chopaka Lake, are truly missing out on one of the delights of outdoor life!

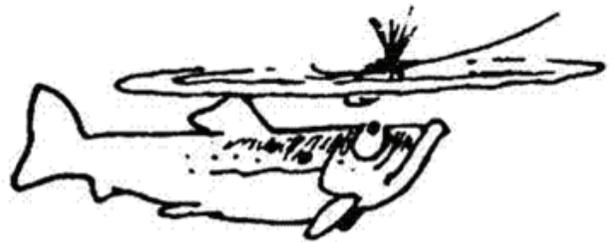
## Lone Lake Outing *by Steve Raymond*

Members of the WFFC, Whidbey Island Fly Fishing Club, and Olympic Peninsula Fly Fishers gathered at Lone Lake Saturday, May 24, for a joint outing hosted by the Whidbey Club. It could not have been a better day: sunny and warm with just enough breeze to take the edge off the heat. Chironomids cooperated by hatching and a few mayflies joined in.

WFFC members on hand included Mark Pratt, Paul Lingbloom, Robert Tovar, Rocco Maccarrone, Chapin Henry, Jim Morrison, Tom Campbell, Paul Messner, and yours truly (hope I didn't miss anybody). Fishing was reported from tough to good, with a wide assortment of different fly patterns accounting for various numbers of fish. There were reports of trout up to 20 inches. One member (who has an elastic tape measure or needs new glasses) reported he caught a trout that measured "12 to 18 inches." Mark Pratt probably enjoyed the greatest success among the WFFC contingent, but then he spends almost more time fishing Lone Lake than he does working.

Tom Hawkins of the Whidbey Club provided a great lunch of pulled-pork sandwiches with barbecue sauce, cole slaw, and baked beans with a healthy (?) dose of pork mixed in. Since Tom Campbell, Paul Messner, and I enjoy dual membership in the WFFC and Whidbey clubs, we figured that entitled us to double rations, which were hard to resist. Hawkins does this sort of thing as a hobby, and he does it well.

We thought about the WFFC members over at Chopaka, where we figured it was probably raining and blowing with occasional lightning strikes for variety. But if you enjoyed the Chopaka outing half as much as we enjoyed the hospitality of the Whidbey Island Fly Fishing Club and the fishing at Lone Lake, then you had a good time.



## The Secret Weapon *by Steve Sunich*

### SS Minnow

**Tier and Originator:** Steve Sunich

**Hook:** TMC – 3761 or 5263 Size 10 to 8; 9394 or 200R or 300 Size 8 to 6

**Thread:** 6/0 Red

**Tag:** Red Thread, coated with head cement.

**Tail:** White blood quill marabou topped with 8-10 strands of extra limp tinsel flash Flashabou. Color can vary from green to blue to red. Multiple colors work best.

**Body:** Silver Tinsel, counter-wrapped with at least a dozen wraps of red wire.

**Wing:** White blood quill marabou topped with 8-10 strands of extra limp tinsel flash Flashabou.

Color can vary from green to red.

**Head:** Red thread



#### Tier's Notes:

This pattern originated at the tying bench while playing with some marabou and Flashabou. The idea was that it would be an attractor and something thin to represent a variety of baitfish found in the fresh and salt water, on which trout, salmon, and sea-run cutthroat prey. It can be tied in smaller and larger sizes. I use freshwater versions in size 10. Saltwater versions up to size 6, but as small as 10 for early in the season. The larger version should be in the size 6 range, about 3" long. The marabou and Flashabou provide very good swimming characteristics. The counter-wrapped red wire has an iridescent look when viewed at different angles.

I have fished this pattern with a sinking line stripped fast or slow, depending on the fish mood. It is also excellent when trolled either single or in tandem with another a couple feet back. I have used this pattern to test if there are fish in an area as it always prompts a reaction.

Note: The Secret Weapon is a recent addition to the Creel Notes. It highlights new patterns originated by, or standard patterns uniquely modified by, club members. If you have a secret weapon that you would like to share, please let your Creel Notes editor know.

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## Diario Patagonia *by David Ehrich*

I may have seen too many Patagonia clothing catalogs, but I assumed incorrectly that this region abutting the Andes was lush and verdant, with snow-capped rocky peaks in the distance. Instead we found a high desert, with rolling hills and one large (3775 m) volcano in the distance. And just like Bend, Oregon, beautiful rivers poured out of the dry rangeland, providing good fishing before they became sources for irrigation. The whole thing felt very similar to the arid western USA.

We flew across the absolute pan-flat farmland of Buenos Aires, Pampas and beyond, landing in Neuquén, the capitol city of the Patagonia province of Neuquén. Imagine Boise. Just like driving across southern Idaho and eastern Oregon, we wound our way through empty scab lands to the foothills of the Andes (imagine the eastern flank of the Oregon Cascades). We started to see valleys lined with cottonwoods turning gold with the coming of fall.

Our destination was Junín de los Andes, the self-proclaimed "fishing capitol of Patagonia" with easy access to the Rios Curruhue', Malleo, and Chimehiun, on whose banks our hosteleria rested.

Junín is big enough to have two elementary schools, one big church, and a small hospital. Like our western towns, the outskirts were dry and dusty with plenty of vehicles hoping to someday to leave the front yard. The central square was surrounded by real stores, a few craft boutiques of local Gaucho and Mapuche character, and a couple restaurants.

Junín was founded as a military outpost in the late 1800s and plays a role in "defending the border" against Chile. It is Neuquén's oldest colonial settlement.

We made arrangements for our guide, Aldo, to

*(Continued from page 6)*

meet us at nine. At 10:30, Aldolito, his son, showed up to tell us we would leave at 2 to catch the best conditions. Gaucho time. Meanwhile, I bought a pair of Gaucho pants under the influence of mate', the local stimulating beverage. The damage was \$10.

We loaded up the Chevy at 2, headed about 30 km over the Chimehiun and into the Rio Malleo watershed. After we crossed a single-track wooden bridge, Aldolito showed us some good water down-river of the bridge and suggested a parachute Adams and then a stimulator with a prince nymph following. I hooked and lost a nice fish right off, got stale for a while, and then directed the fly under some willows for a very nice rainbow, about 16". Aldolito left me alone and worked with Anastasia, helping her cast and showing her how to catch a drift. She caught a couple 10" trout. Imagine looking down the river as a very handsome Argentinean 20 year-old boy shows a very beautiful 21-year-old gringa how to cast. Just like a movie. I managed to keep my cool and trust on the finer character of the local men.

Anastasia took a nap and we moved downstream. The water was low and warm, so the fishing was slow. I don't like having a guide, especially when I fall, get tangled in the willows, and lose fish. I would much rather make those mistakes on my own. But we were committed.

At dusk, we packed in on the Malleo and headed back to town. Aldolito pointed out some nice slow water on the Chimehuin and tied on a pale evening dun. Kazaam, an enormous brown took me into deep water. After a good fight, I brought in the biggest river brown of my life, about 22". Aldolito told me "since I had caught the señor, I should find the señora." I tried, but caught a willow branch instead.

We followed the lazy-day pattern and left after a picnic lunch on our second day. This time we took a left after the bridge over the Rio Malleo and drove up the valley, finally losing it in a canyon. We regained the river just at the border to the Parc National Lanin. As we strung up the rods a family of Mapuche Indians on horseback stared at us as they herded some horses west. I got no acknowledgement from my "Hola, amigos."

The river was about 10-15' across and roiling around big rocks. The banks were lined with enormous Monkey trees, but otherwise, the river reminded me of Montana mountain streams. And just

like my favorite western waters, I tied on a size 12 caddis and hooked 3 dozen fish, two very nice high-mountain trout. Ana stood poised on the rocks after a small waterfall and took four trout. She rested and photographed in between the hunt.

Just before sunset, we drove to the frontier, saluted to the Chilean guards and turned around. The volcano takes up most of the area. The flank is enormous and deceptively gentle. I think one would have at least 6000-7000' of altitude left to gain. Three busloads of Mapuche were there for an early morning ascent or some sort of pow-wow. The volcano is snow-clad, but last summer was hot so the snow pack is small compared to normal. Sound familiar?

Dinner featured amazing local wine, roasted meats and trout, and the feeling of a hunting lodge where all the locals gather to exchange tales of fish caught and lost. Instead of cowboy hats, they wear berets with enough brim to hold back the persistent sun. Also, the men kiss each other's cheeks, a habit I plan to bring back to Seattle, so be forewarned.

Day three on the river gets a short report. High winds, no bugs, few fish. We cooled down a chardonnay in the stream and took a long siesta after lunch on the grassy banks, watching the grazing horses, sheep, and avoiding stray dogs. While we dined on ciervo, venison, I overheard other people talking of terrible fishing, so I felt better. Rain followed the wind and we slept like logs.

On our last day we took the long way back to Neuquén, through the fancier ski town of San Martin de los Andes. Good shopping and lots of restaurants. We found a funky one, had a plate of local meats and roasted venison. Ana had spaghetti. The drive back was long, windy, and dusty. I would love to have a motorcycle on these roads; they wind up and over buttes, and through valleys and down long draws. Eastern Oregon, anyone?

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### **Gold Button Program** *by Bill Neal*

I want to remind you of the revised Gold Button Certificate program. This is a more fish-friendly version of the previous program. The goal is to recognize the angler who catches the largest fish in a class during the qualifying year (12-15-07 to 12-14-08). Applications are due by December 31, 2008. Certificates will be presented at the Awards Ceremony in January 2009. The detailed guidelines for the program will be posted on the WFFC Web site.



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Stamp  
here

June, 2008

## Meeting Announcement



The meeting this month will be held at the Palace Ballroom, 2100 - 5th Avenue in downtown Seattle, at the corner of 5th & Lenora.

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

This month: Chef Eric Tanaka gives a cooking demonstration

Come see this renowned local chef give us—and our significant others, if we would like—a lesson in the culinary arts.