

Creel Notes from the



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



June, 2011



President's Riffle

Mid June here in the Great Northwest. The weather is just now starting to feel like springtime. I am wistful ... wistful for a couple of reasons. It's been many weeks since my last meaningful fishing trip, so I am dying to get out there.

Usually in late May or early June, my thoughts turn to fishing for the early summer-run steelhead, specifically those in the rivers of Southwest Washington ... the Kalamia, the East Fork Lewis, the Washougal, to name a few. There was a time years ago that that type of fishing was my favorite of all. Those early summer-runs were something else ... tail walkers that went nuts. If you were lucky enough to land one, sometimes the backs of the fish were BLUE with a wrist at the tail that was tough to get your hand around. Sadly, those days are a thing of the past. With the returns being a fraction of what they once were, and the fact that houses and "No Trespassing" signs have sprung up along those rivers limiting access, my heart and hopes have faded. I haven't fished those rivers in a long time. But I will always go fishing, as will all of us. The lakes should fish well into the first part of July this year.

Our annual Chopaka Lake outing was a rousing success! Forty-seven people were in attendance (includes guests and family members). Excellent job to everyone who helped out, especially **Dave Schorsch** and **Jim Macdonald**. Also, a special thanks to our Tempura chefs ... I was told it was as good as ever. When I took office at the beginning of the year, the most important initiative on my agenda was to continue, and even increase, the success and participation in our club outings. Seems we are on track for that one. Oh! A couple of other notes on that outing ... Rumor has it that a couple of members wanted to partake in a more "personal and up-close" encounter with our aquatic quarry by actually

entering their environment. Perhaps the encounter was not voluntary ... that remains for discussion. Both members did make it to shore safely. I am assuming those members will also be recognized for their "beyond the call of duty" research at the next club meeting. It was also reported that a couple of club members, whose names shall not be mentioned in this Riffle, were planning on going to the outing, but bailed out at the last minute because of some hazy (OK, very threatening) weather reports. Wussies! Obviously, they missed out on a good time.

Next outing for the club is more of a day trip type of event. Fish Lake near Leavenworth happens on June 18th. Be sure to sign up on our website in the Members Only section.

Slight change in the dinner meeting format beginning in June ... we will spread out the raffle drawings and winners throughout the length of the meeting. We will do a few after the announcements, before the break, a couple more after the break, and the remainder after club business. It seems that members are vacating in droves after the speaker presentation. This change in the raffle format may help in more raffle ticket sales as well.

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The Jimmy Green Fly Fishing Conclave/ Show originally scheduled for July 30 at Lake Tye near Monroe, has been CANCELED. Please make a note of it. We were planning on having a booth at the show.

If you have any ideas for a “boots on the ground / pick and shovel” type conservation project that our club can either participate in or lead, please let me know. I know several of our members have asked about that. I think we should try to take something like that on.

This is prime fishing time, folks. Take time to go fishing ... and if you do, try to bring a youngster with you. It’s the best thing you can do.

Rocco Maccarrone

The Creel Calendar

Monthly Meeting, Tues., June 21st, Donn Mills presents **Methow River Secrets**
Fish Lake Outing, Sat., June 18th

Swanson Takes Boyd Aigner Competition

by Bill Neal, Awards Committee Chairman

Congratulations to **Walt Swanson**, for winning the 2011 Boyd Aigner Fly Tying Competition. This is his second win, having done so previously in 2007. This year’s competition had ten participants, and as always the voting was very close. **Ron Dion** placed second overall, and **Steve Sunich**, third. The overall winners are determined based on the total votes received by each tier for the three patterns that he submitted.

The patterns for this year’s competition and the placements for each of them are as follows:

Parachute Mayfly: 1st. **Ron Dion**; 2nd. Tied, **Dick Brening** and **Walt Swanson**

Orange Stimulator: 1st. **Walt Swanson**; 2nd. **Chuck Ballard**; 3rd. **Steve Sunich**

Moosetail Irresistible: 1st. Tied, **Walt Swanson** and **Steve Sunich**; 3rd. **Dick Brening**

The club offered a total of \$250 in prize money for this year. This was distributed as follows: 1st-overall, \$100; 2nd-overall, \$50; 3rd-overall, \$25; 1st- in each category, \$25. Accordingly, Walt received \$137.50; Ron, \$75; and Steve, \$37.50.

Thanks to all who participated. Special thanks to **Dick Scales** for his help in selecting the patterns.

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Jim van de Erve ... Editor
425-489-0971 jimvde@comcast.net
Ron Tschetter ... Publisher
425-746-6652 batribble@juno.com

President

Rocco Maccarrone *maccarrone@frontier.com*

1st Vice President (Membership)

David Ehrich *demuslindley@yahoo.com*

2nd Vice President (Programs)

Mike Wearne *michael_wearne@msn.com*

3rd Vice President (Christmas Party)

Mike Santangelo *Mikeonthefly@gmail.com*

Treasurer

Don Barton *dbarton44@comcast.net*

Secretary

Ron Tschetter *batribble@juno.com*

Ghillie 1

Jim Macdonald *macdonaldco@msn.com*

Ghillie 2

Conrad Gowell *CGowell@pugetsound.edu*

Trustees

Scott Hagen '09 Jim Young '09
Andrew Bennett '10 Craig Koeppler '10
Bob Young '11 Chapin Henry III '11

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.

On The Fly *by David Ehrlich*

Rocco Maccarrone failed to name himself in his introduction, earning a wee fine before he turned his wrath onto **Larry Karlovich**, who had come dressed for tennis, not club membership. From there we went to guest introductions and tall tales. **Gil Nyerges** seized the mic and regaled us with a story of Charlie, a Swiss American founder of the club who used to come over every Saturday precisely at 7, but one morning he came late. When asked why, he replied, “vell, I wasn’t feeling very gutt, but I decided I must go fishing, but when I got to the door and turned the knob I passed wind and it had gravy in it” and that was his excuse. I think he might have mixed two stories up, but no mind. That led to an off-color nun joke by **Bob Birkner**, and then one by me: “What do Puget Sound salmon and Osama Bin Laden have in common? It’s all great until the Seals show up.”

Greg Crumbaker took a minute to describe a recent article about Casting Forward, a program serving homeless adults with fly tying classes and opportunities to fish. The club got some good press to a variety of philanthropic organizations. Look for the full text in the Creel Notes.

Doug Schaad yielded his time to **Bill Redman**, who described a meeting he attended regarding the Elwha river dam removal project. The fish recovery plan poses the question; are the relevant agencies going to make this wild river the best salmon river in Washington or screw it up? The problem involves local tribes stocking the lower river with clone salmon and scooping them up later, hence the conflict between WFFC, WDFW, FFF, and the tribes. It’s a relationship built on historic mistrust. Bill hopes mutual interests prevail and we can stop this invasive fish stocking.

Rocco reminded members to tie a bunch of your favorite flies, and give them to Gil with your name, the title of the fly, and how and when you fish it. Gil is going to make beautiful plates for the Christmas raffle with these flies and it’s not too early to get started.

After a short break, Rocco asked up Gil, **Jim McDonald**, and new member, **Peter Draughton** (pronounced like – drawn), who was immediately turned over to Gil’s grilling and advice before he passed over the magic envelop and then a secret

supply of the only flies that matter – the Nyerges Nymph.

Then **Chapin Henry** and **John Callahan** introduced our newest candidate, Mike Hurt, who John described as a “young, energetic young man” who will bring a lot of skills to the club. Chapin, who lives next door to Mike, enticed him into the WFFC with stories of fellowship, expertise, and an opportunity to get out and fish.

After all this nonsense, Rocco introduced **Bob Burdick**, self-proclaimed “world-class fly tier”, who explained the Boyd Aigner awards, consisting of several awards with several prizes accordingly. See page 2 for full details. I will say, however, that the Big Kahuna of fly tiers is.....[drum roll please].....**Walt Swanson** who took home the logical figure of \$137.50 and his name on the plaque. A winner in 2007, he’s knocking on Burdick’s heels.

Now, to the program– **Mike Wearne** introduced Ray Gould via **Perry Barth**, with whom he goes way, way back. Ray and Perry shared neighborhoods and an interest in fishing and golf. He described Ray as “salt of the earth” who isn’t afraid to rough it for great fishing and a strong contributor to angling in our area, enough that the WFFC awarded him the Letcher Lambuth Award in 2005.

Ray started in with his talk, “Fly Fishing for Kamloops” on Glimpse Lake in BC, where he has fished for 53 years as well as entertained many members of the club. The secret of BC lakes starts with rich food sources and private lakes. The private organizations that own lakes team with various organizations, public interest groups, and First Nations. To stock a lake, owners have to work through channels to make sure you do the right thing. But the Freshwater Fishing Society of BC stocked over 800 lakes with almost 7 million fish just last year.

One of those fish is a Kamloops, genetically similar to Rainbow, Steelhead, Blackwater, and the Gerrard strain of trout. The record for these long-living (8 years) piscavores hooked on Jewel Lake weighed 53 lbs.

The Kamloops trout don’t get that big, but they have a few unique traits. They can see independently from either eye and can target food from both sides. They move quickly and can be easily spooked, but when they get on the hook, they will fight.

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Ray suggested a few lakes and a few lodges, including the Corbett Lake Lodge (which may soon close), the Douglas Lake Ranch, Eliguk Lake, and Batstone Lake. If you like the hard work, you can hike up to the Steven Lake chain for fantastic fishing. Or our well-healed members can get to Eliguk Lake, north of Nippo Lake by plane. The lodge will feed you, and give you a warm place to dry off and get ready for your next session on one of the most fish-populated lakes in the area.

He recommends planning your trip around pairs of lakes in case one lake fails. For example: Big OK Lake and Calling Lake; Marquart and Lundbom Lakes are small and both near motels in Merritt, BC; Stump Rocke Lakes, north of Merritt on Highway 5A by about 30 miles; Peter Hope and Plateau Lakes accessible by 4-wheel drive vehicles. Ray adds lots of details to these lakes in his well-illustrated book, *Fly Fishing for Kamloops Trout*, available for \$35. In it he covers 26 lakes with contour maps, 60 handy fly patterns, fish stocking data and all sorts of useful advice.

General hints: use a fish finder to find the drop-offs, pick the appropriate line for conditions from the usual selection, use a long-handled net to make sure you bring that bad boy to hand, fish in the evening (bring a head lamp to fish sedges), and learn the flies that work: the Tom Thumb for a sedge hatch; the Nyerges Nymph; the Black O'Lindsay and the Static Shield Chironomid, a fly that's taking BC by storm made of bags designed to shield computer parts from static before installation. Otherwise, you can fall back on caddis in all forms, Damsels, Chironomids, and Leeches.

From there we got fishing reports and committee reports, but just after my report from Rock Creek, Montana, where I slayed them for four days on all forms of March Browns, catching rainbows, cutthroats, browns and whitefish in snow, sleet, rain, and sun, the battery in my laptop started to fade, so I will spare you more reports.



Chopaka Lake, May 2011 by Dave Schorsch

Another great time at Chopaka!

I arrived 11:00 Friday morning, found a huge campsite right away, and set up camp in a hurry. I made it onto the lake in time for a great hatch of mayflies from about 1:00 to 3:00. Spent the next couple hours picking up stragglers in the weeds that were still looking for a bug on top. Got blown off about 5:00 and made some dinner. The rain started about then, so we set up one of the canopies, and drank beer and told stories in front of the fire 'til bedtime. It rained hard all night, except for a brief spell in the wee hours of the morning when it changed to snow.

By coffee time Saturday morning, it was bright sunshine above mist on the lake, with a little snow on the trees above camp. Beautiful! Trout rising everywhere! A lazy morning visiting friends in neighboring camps and fiddling with gear..... Did the usual hunt and peck around the lake with damsels and beadheads, picking up some really nice fish along the south shore. No 20 inchers, but plenty of 16 to 18's for sure! The guys dangling chironomids under floats had steady action on the 12- to 14-inchers in deeper water. Mixed weather—raincoat,



BS'n around the campfire Sat. night



Pancakes Sun. morning—Chuck Ballard hungry

short sleeves, sweater, raincoat, repeat.... Hatch came on schedule and lasted for two or three hours right through a windstorm.

Was still taking fish on dries in the whitecaps when it was time to set up happy hour. Forty-seven people at the happy hour/barbeque! Lots of wives and kids! What a great time! A little windy at times, but sunny and warm. MASSIVE appetizer and side-dish tables! Music by **Ballard** and **Lingbloom** and a big fire 'til bedtime. A good time had by all! Lots of volunteers made setup and cleanup a breeze!

Sunday morning, and a massive effort expended by the blueberry pancake crew, **Dick Brening**, **Chuck Ballard**, and a cast of thousands. (OK, several.) After crewing stoves and coffee pots, the breakfast guys cleaned up and went fishing with the rest of us. Bluebird skies and warm weather made sight fishing easy along the shore, and a lot of folks had big fun 'til the wind came up again. No hatch of duns to speak of on Sunday, but a spinner fall went all morning. I had a blast on gulpers in the weeds on the north side of the lake. One of my best days ever on this lake, with two fish measured over 19 inches, and every fish on a dry!

Sunday evening tempura was great! **Scott Hagen** and **Jim McRoberts** did serious duty at the frier, with able help from head waiter **Don Barton**. Not only did they do the cooking, they hauled all the gear, set up and cleaned up! What a crew! Again an embarrassment of riches at the appetizer and side-dish tables for the 44 guests to enjoy. Nobody goes hungry or dry at this gig!

Monday morning dawned warm and sunny. I had to leave early of course! Dammit! Had lots of help

taking down canopies and hauling extra gear back home. Special thanks to **Jim Macdonald**, who worked hard and hauled tons, but left early due to illness. Get better soon, Jim! Same to **Ron Mazurek**, who was under the weather when he headed home as well. Also, thanks to the two club members (you know who you are) who didn't drown when they fell out of their boats. Dead guys really drag the party down. And thanks to all the rest of you guys who hauled, cooked, dug, and brought your beautiful wives and exceptional children. See you next year!

Upcoming Fish Lake Outing

by Dave Schorsch

As usual, vocation beating out avocation. A little, late blurb about our upcoming day trip to Fish Lake on Saturday, June 18th.

Fish Lake sits about seventeen miles east of Stevens Pass in the Cascades. A short trip gets you from the soggy evergreens of the "sound" to the ponderosa pines of the Lake Wenatchee area. A left turn at Coles Corner gets you to the road to Fish Lake. Follow the signs to the private boat launch and campground at the lake. It cost five bucks to launch a boat there last year, so I assume it's about that now. There is also a campground at the state park at Lake Wenatchee just up the road, for those of you planning on spending the weekend.

This outing is intended as an "easy" day trip with minimal prep and expense required. It's about 90 miles from my house in West Seattle to the lake. So heading out early and packing a lunch works well. After a day of fishing the lake, with a possible get-together about lunch time at the boat launch to share fish info and a sandwich, we can get together at one of the restaurants at Coles Corner for chow and beers on the way home. This is a good trip to share with another angler in one vehicle. You might even get home in time to watch "Jersey Housewives".

The fishing: I usually head west (left from the boat launch) to the shallow and more wind protected end of the lake. There I fish dragonfly or damsel nymph patterns on intermediate or dry lines for rainbows and the occasional squawfish. The squawfish are now called northern pike minnows, which does not save them from a grizzly demise in the shoreline brush. Raccoons love 'em! Farther east, along the deeper south shore, you'll see people trolling with

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rapalas and big flatfish for the big browns that live in the lake and eat the abundant minnows. I fish here, when the weather allows, with a full sinker or shooting head and a zonker type streamer in olive or white. Dace patterns work, too. My best brown was about seven pounds, several years ago.

This is a "boat" lake, with little functional shoreline access. Most any vessel will work, just be prepared to cover some water in a day.

The outdoor committee is planning more day trips, which are less expensive to attend than some of our traditional outings. If you have any ideas of great quick trips, near home, let us know!

See you at Fish Lake!

Dave Schorsch 206-227-6134

6-10-2011 Lake Keechelus *by Don Gulliford*

Full to the brim; fullest in years. Had about only 3 hrs with my jon boat launched in Meadow Cr. by dam due to Friday social conflicts, but released one nice cutt. No goose families and no squawfish this first trip. Forgot my anchor and stiff south 58F wind from pass made effective casting/mooching difficult. Sunshine and snow patches in trees as of now 6/10 show late spring for sure. Had, as always, all to myself.

New Member Bio: Peter Draughon

by David Ehrich

Peter Draughon started fly fishing at 12 when his dad bought him a fly rod while living the Chicago area. He was an Eagle Scout. While in college, he started a still existing fly-fishing club in Toledo, Ohio, called the "North Branch Boys". This club is a FFF club and also active in TU, as well.

Peter is a very accomplished photographer and has his work on display throughout the country and Canada. He still shoots in film and does his own darkroom processing.



Peter is very much interested in FFF activities and plans to attend the Conclave. His interest in participating in the WFFC is working with youth. He believes that the youth are the future of fly fishing and that we need to capitalize on this as soon as possible

Peter is interested in the education, conservation, and Holiday Party efforts.

New Member Bio: John Prudden

by David Ehrich

John Prudden grew up on the banks of the Hudson River, about 20 miles north of the city. His outdoor life took a siesta for the next 20 years, but by good fortune, he and his wife -to-be rented a dependency on a 300-acre preserve in Bedford NY with three (bass-filled) lakes! This was a time of bait and treble hooks. After a few too many mauled fish, he took a Trout Unlimited course, bought a Cortland kit, and took up fly fishing as a more interesting and sporting way to fish. Since then, John has fished most of the Eastern waters with trips to the wilds of north central Pennsylvania.



Once John moved to paradise, he cast a long eye on Alaska, Montana, and the big rivers of the West. He took the fly tying class last year, and met a lot of nice guys who were knowledgeable fisherman.

John looks forward to learn about lakes, the ocean ("Stripers ain't Salmon"), and knockdown Big Water. He wants to learn Spey casting, and as John said, "I have yet to get my first steelhead."

Fishing as Therapy

Ed. Note: This article was published in the spring edition of *Cornerstone*, the quarterly publication of the Seattle Downtown Emergency Services Center.

When the Washington Fly Fishing Club (WFFC) began in 1939, fly fishing education was one of its aims and purposes. Today that mission is being fulfilled at DESC's Canaday House, where 83 residents are learning about community support, friend-

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ship, and personal growth through the art of fly fishing.

Originally, this Seattle-based fly fishing club taught fly tying to veterans of WWII as a form of therapy following their battlefield trauma. Realizing that in our modern community, people living on the streets shared many of the same challenges as war veterans, including fear, distrust, and isolation, the members of WFFC approached DESC staff at Canaday House and offered their unique brand of therapy to our residents.

Stop by Canaday House on any Thursday evening and you'll witness residents quickly downing their dinner so they can prepare the community room for the WFFC members and their next fly tying class. Through patience and dedication, these volunteers help clients who were previously isolated and reserved to open up. WFFC calls the program "Casting Forward" and Canaday House is the first place in the country to try such a program. "So far," remarks Canaday House's Residential Counselor, Jeremy Lernoine, "it's our most popular activity offered at Canaday House."

Jeremy notes that when clients move into permanent housing after years of living on the streets or in shelters, they are met with a series of dramatic changes: neighbors, behavioral expectations, on-site support staff, and daily routines to be established. Although these are all positive changes, for many new residents it is overwhelming and intimidating to go through so much radical change in such a short time period. WFFC's Casting Forward program brings residents together where they can discuss their fears and concerns while learning a new skill.

Anticipation for the quarterly fishing trip, which takes the residents out of the downtown area and into nature, is the highlight of Casting Forward. "When you have very little income," notes Erica, "it is a rare luxury to commune with nature. It's even a rarer treat to catch and eat your own fish." Following the outing, WFFC members smoke the trout the residents catch and share them at the next meeting. All costs for the trip are paid by the WFFC's education budget.

Canaday House staff and residents agree that the effects of Casting Forward have been amazing. Staff recognize that a supportive environment, peer support, and rewarding activity lead to longer housing

stability and confidence to tackle other challenges. Residents find that Casting Forward has helped them rebuild relationships they had lost while they were homeless. One resident who had spent three years living in a Pioneer Square park sent a photo of her "catch" to her long-estranged father. Within days he wrote back, "I'm so proud of you." Another resident broke out in a big smile when he realized, "I think I could learn to do this and then teach my nephews to tie flies and I could take them fishing."

DESC is grateful for all the volunteers who offer their time and energy to projects like this. For more information about volunteering, please visit <http://www.desc.org/volunteer.html>.

Tackle for Loan by *Bob Young*

Would you like to go to Florida and fish for Tarpon and Snook, or go to Baja and fish for Dorado or Roosters, but only have trout and/or salmon gear? Well, I may have a solution to that problem. I have quite a few 'large' rods and reels that I am willing to let members borrow for that rare trip to warm-water fisheries.

I have a couple of 10 wts, an 11, and two 12 wts that I am willing to loan to club members. Also have a number of large salt-water reels, sorry no Billy Pates, that have served me well. The reels are older Shakespeare, Taurus, and Hardy. They come with floating and intermediate lines, and a fast sinker.

The last time I was in Loreto, Baja California, I hooked a 40-pound Dorado that I didn't have the stamina to get to the boat. I told my guide that 20 pounds was my new size limit.

So if you need some gear, let me know.



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

Stamp
here

June, 2011

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:

Donn Mills presents Methow River Secrets