

Creel Notes from the



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



November, 2006

President's Riffle

The Nominating Committee has been working diligently and promises to have a full slate ready for the election of officers to be held at the November meeting. The Ghillie has reviewed all the procedures and guarantees there will be no discrepancies in our ballot counting.

Christmas Holiday Party reservation forms will be available at the November Dinner meeting, just in case you haven't been able to receive yours via e-mail. Please get your reservations in soon because, as always, our space is limited. **Ed Sozinho** says he and his crew are gearing up for another super event.

Our October meeting at REI was the first ever joint NWF/WFFC meeting in the history of fly fishing! Thanks to Stacy Stratton for engineering the event. And, thanks to our John Schuitemaker who donated a Yakima float trip to the raffle. Since **Dave Hawkinson** did not have to perform as RaffleMaster, he was able to skip out and attend the Rolling Stones concert. Of course he was properly attired in his Harley leathers and beads and chains.

The Wet Buns outing was again indeed very wet! Some fish were caught in spite of the weather. Those who attended were treated to a fine dinner with an outstanding bouillabaisse. Thanks to Head Chef **Dick Stearns** and all who helped with the tarp and food preparation.

The College Club building has been sold to make way for a high rise building. The details aren't completely defined yet but we'll be appointing a search committee soon to be able to take advantage of the best options. We've received some ideas already and will appreciate your suggestions. Whether the College Club relocates, and where, is one of the factors being considered.

If you have photos taken at WFFC outings or other activities please make them available to **Leland Miyawaki** for the Creel Notes, **Kris Kristoferson** for the website, and **Ed Sozinho** for the Christmas Holiday Party. Kris would like to update the website photos frequently.

One of our members questioned the propriety of

the WFFC opposing I-933. Our 501(c)7 status as a social organization allows us to take such a position without jeopardizing our tax status. The WFFC takes stands on issues that impact the fishing environment from time to time. At general membership meetings, **Doug Schaad** discusses letters sent by the Conservation Committee supporting or opposing various actions and we ask members to contact legislators, etc. when necessary to protect our ultimate favorites – the fish.

Happy Thanksgiving!

Bob Birkner

Holiday Party Announcement *By Ed Sozinho*

The Holiday Party is approaching quickly. This year's party will again bring us all together to celebrate the sport and our club's great history. As in years past I ask that you send me your images from this years fishing escapades and adventures. The party is only as good as the work that goes into it, if you would like to volunteer to help out please contact me. If you have received a donation or wish to give a donation for the raffle/auction please contact me and we will make arrangements to get the items to Earl Harper's studio. The party reservation form is online and in the Creel Notes, send it in before it's to late.

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Creel Notes

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Little did those of us in attendance at the Wet Buns outing realize that that would be our last opportunity to engage **Jordy Issiou** in memorable fishing conversation. Jordy and two other members of the Portland Club came north to enjoy our bouillabaisse extravaganza on Saturday evening. Jordy passed away from a heart attack this past week. He was a regular attendee of our meetings and has continued his WFFC membership even after his employment took him south. His memorial service was held in Portland on Saturday the 11th. I'll have a card for signatures at the November club meeting. -- A fine fisherman and friend he was, and he will be sorely missed! -- Pete --

Beginning Fly Tying Class

Starts: Thursday January 4, 2007

Place: Mercer Island Covenant Church

Time: 6:30 PM to 9:00 PM

Duration: 8 weeks, every Thur. evening

Cost: \$35.00 plus \$20 for tying DVD

To register call **Don Simonson** 206-932-4925 or **Bob Birkner** 206-542-4623

WFFC Fly Tier's Round Table *By Dick Brening*

The next round table will be on the 2nd Wednesday, December 13th, 7 to 9 PM.

The WFFC is a supporter of the Reel Recovery program for men suffering from cancer. (See the article in this issue or the Creel Notes). During their recent retreat in October they asked if the WFFC would tie and donate some flies to them to be used at future retreats.

I would like to focus the December round table on tying flies for this worthy program. It would be appropriate to tie fly patterns that are associated with WFFC members an/or the waters we normally fish. Please come and help tie the flies. Also bring any flies you wish to contribute. I'll make sure that they are sent to Reel Recovery.

Place: Mercer Island Covenant Church, 3200 78th S.E. (S.E. corner of 78th S.E. and SE 32nd), just south of the Mercer Island business district. Off street parking is available off 78th S.E.

If you have any questions on directions contact Pete Baird or me at the club meeting or give me a call.

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*

October 17, 2006

Our President opened the meeting with the call...hold on, not tonight. The WFFC joined the Northwest Women's Fly Fishers Club at REI and all tradition hit the road. Opening impressions: raffle tickets are \$5 a piece, coffee and cookies grace the table instead of Scotch and water, dinner was down the hall and in a plastic basket, and female voices were heard at the head of the room. Bob welcomed us to a "one of a kind, rare and never heard of before kind of event."



NWWF President Judy Graham, Bob Birkner and Stacy Stratton

We moved quickly to introductions, including meeting inspiration, Stacy Straton who introduced the main event, art curator, Patty Junker. Our speaker boasts a fine resume of exhibitions of various artists. Our subject tonight is Winslow Homer.

Patty, an angler herself, learned to appreciate Homer after she started fishing and noticed the precision of his fishing vision. After her brief introduction, the lights were dimmed and members of both clubs were treated to a wonderful array of oils, water colors and sketches via slides. Known as our country's foremost artists of the Civil War as well as recorder of daily events, Homer's

year-round home on coastal Maine, availed him to commercial and recreational fishing. A fly angler, his accurate depiction of technique, tackle and flies, make his creations timeless. In other words, you can tell exactly what's going on despite more than a century of separation between us and his generation.

He painted from his favorite spots in New York's Adirondack's, the St. John's River in Florida and the wild waters of upper Quebec. He recorded his favorite guides and companions, sometimes handing them a water color of their catch later in their stay. His paintings of trout are vivid and accurate. (One boisterous WFFC member even took it upon himself to correct the speaker when she called a Brookie by the wrong name.) His depictions of casting inspire the technician.

Patty's talk covered more ground than I could record, but suffice it to say, she spoke as an expert in both art and angling, treating club members to many lessons. Her catalog will fill in the gaps. Available at REI, in soft cover for \$29.95, *Winslow Homer: Artist and Angler* has well over 200 pages of his work and Ms. Junker's critique.



Jim McDonald and wife Lynn show off a nice fly box he won in the raffle. Box donated by Casting for Recovery.

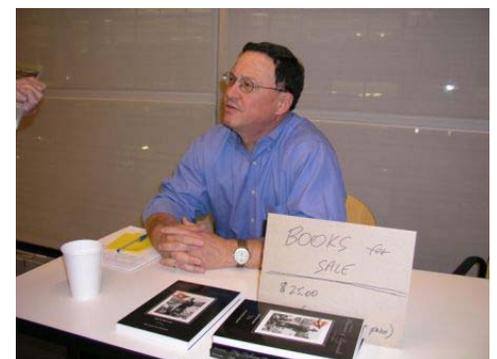
No fishing reports, no guest introductions, no club business; tonight's historic meeting was a simple celebration of the nexus of fine angling, fine art and those who appreciate both.



Judy Graham and John Schuitemaker congratulate Lenore Ingram, the winner of a Yakima trip donated by John.



Visiting before the meeting (Just coffee)



Jack Berryman offers his "Legends" book, many of whom were WFFC'ers.



John Day River, Oct. 29-30, 2006

By Hugh Clark

On October 29-30, my son Hugh, his yard manager, Chad, and I fished two mornings on the John Day at mile 17-22 from the Columbia. We landed seven steelhead, all on egg-sucking leaches, both green and black. By report over 40,000 steelhead have crossed the John Day ladder, but very few the McNary ladder, and the John Day is the only major river in between. We had hits spread throughout the morning although we got on the river at daybreak. Most of our fish were taken in what might be considered frog water, slow drifts, in water 6-8 feet deep. Fishing remained good on Nov 4-6 based on telephone reports from other members of the John Day River Club.

Report, Summer '06 *By Leland Miyawaki*

It began in June when my article on surface fishing for searun cutthroat and coho in Puget Sound ran in Northwest Fly Fishing Magazine. I thought the article came out well but I wasn't prepared for the jinx.

A couple weeks after the article appeared, the phone began ringing off the hook. Not a day at the shop went by when I didn't get at least three phone calls inquiring about guide date availability. I began checking tide tables and booking trips for months in advance.

Of course, coho fishing sucked this year. Spending 6 hours through a tide change with two complete strangers from California waiting for something, *anything* to show gets old fast. I ran out of big fish stories, stories about last season, stories about what it could be, stories about what it *should* be, stories about anything. I couldn't even bring a "gourmet enough" lunch to make them forget the lack of fish! On the last weekend of August, I went out with Gil and his fellow members of the Whidbey Island Fly Fishers. I don't think a fish rose between us and Port Townsend.

I thought a lot about trout guides. They have it so easy. They take their sports out on the same river every day where the same fish are behind the same rock, at the same time, eating the same bugs. I thought about steelhead guides like John Farrar who

fish for migratory fish in the winter. No way! There must be so many more days without fish than days with fish. Does John ever run out of stories? Does he ever get tired of his stories? In the end, I think all my clients learned something about beach fishing, except one guy, who vowed to give up flyfishing and go back to fishing with gear.

The jinx continued on into September, then October. I was definitely in a "salmonid slowdown." Not only was I not finding any coho, I couldn't buy a searun cutthroat. And worse, in the mornings before I opened the shop, I hadn't touched any summer steelhead! How bad is it when you can count more winter fish you've caught than summer runs?

Finally, I got my mojo going and managed to find a steelhead that fell on it's sword for me on my birthday – a hot little hen on the Snoqualmie. Two days later, a big ol' buck left a huge hole in the river as he took down a skated Turks Tarantula. And now, I'm back to catching steelhead in the morning on my way into the shop.

Last week, I went to the Clearwater and Snake rivers with a friend from Ketchum. The Snake was out of shape Sunday afternoon when we arrived. Monday morning I caught two Clearwater fish. The first was a very large hatchery buck I'd estimate at between 10-15 pounds. The second was also a hatchery fish – a female half the size of the first fish. Tuesday, we went to the Snake as it was dropping and clearing. It was a bluebird day and, in the evening, I hit a huge fish (the one I've been looking for these past years!) that grabbed on the hang down just as I was beginning to strip back. It tore line downstream and out of my hand so quickly that it over-ran my poor Hardy. As I worked line free off the reel while at the same time stripping to gain control of the rampant fish, it jumped again, not downstream, but mid-river directly across from me and I knew it was over.

Isn't it queer and what does it say about us fishermen that this lost fish will be all that I will remember from this past summer?

South Puget Sound, November 8, 2006

By Leland Miyawaki

I stepped into the water at 11:30am during the first half of the ebb. The water was cloudy from the rains and wind so I walked down the beach until I found clear water. As I worked my popper down the beach I

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turned over eight fish that looked to be nice searuns.

At exactly 12:30pm, the sky clouded over and a little breeze ruffled the water and a single fish jumped between 50 to 60 feet out. I covered the ring and got an immediate boil and grab. It was a cutt of 15-16" chock full of sea lice. Before I released it, I pondered as to whether or not I should scrape off the lice (a good question for Curt at the WFFC meeting). The next 12 casts produced 12 more fish. All struck straight out in the deep water in the first couple strips. All were beautifully marked searuns. All were well over 12 inches but not more than 18. All put up a great fight.

The action stopped at 1:15pm. And I went home a happy guy.

Reel Recovery by *Bob Young*

"Be Well! Fish On!" (The rallying motto of the Reel Recovery program.)

This is not a fishing report so I'll try not to take up too much room in our newsletter but I think the contributions of some of our members should be recognized. For two days members of the WFFC participated in a great program.

At the behest of **Kris Kristoferson**, he, **Jim McRoberts**, **Scott Hagen**, **Gene Gudger**, **Don Simonson**, **Chuck Ballard**, **Brian Hata**, **Dick Brenning**, **Greg Crumbaker** and **Bob Young** responded to a call for fishing "buddies" in support of a group of men who are facing the issues of dealing with cancer.

During the two-day period the "participants" (those afflicted with the disease) partook of meetings which took the form of a support group. But for a substantial time during this "retreat" one of the objectives was to provide some respite from dealing with their issues. The "Reel Recovery" organization provided the entire Retreat (meals, lodging, and all the fishing gear) at no cost to the participants. This first-ever Washington State Retreat was one of 13 Reel Recovery retreats nationwide in 2006. As "buddies" we were not along to go fishing but to offer support, to provide a little guidance and engage in some new friendships.

The retreat was held at the Inn at Suncadia, a new Resort just out of Roslyn. The resort provided Retreat accommodations, meals and meeting space to

Reel Recovery at substantially reduced rates. They also allowed the fishing on a small lake near the lodge, which was easily accessed by all. One drawback was that the lake lay right between the 9th and 18th greens, which required keeping one eye out for flying golf balls.



Brian Hata knows where the fish are.

Some fishing was undertaken on the lake for a period during the morning of the first day. After lunch, those that were fit enough (most) piled into vehicles and convoyed a short distance to the banks of the Yakima. Donning waders, buddy and participant pairs headed into the water in search of trout. The next morning some fished the lake and some went back to the river. When a fish was hooked, everyone was overjoyed and cheered the other's success.



Kris keeps an eye on things.

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Dick Brening with Micheal who was scheduled for treatment the next week.

Cr. I fished 3 hours Sunday after we broke the camp down but to no avail.



Gather 'round the table guys.

After lunch we split up into "participant" and "buddy" groups. The administrator passed on to our group the great appreciation of the "participants" for our attendance. Later we all assembled out in the sunshine overlooking the lake for a sort of closing ceremony. This consisted primarily of an uplifting message by the co-administrator of "Reel Recovery" and each "participant" was asked what this event meant to him. Each "buddy" was provided a small fly box with some flies, which was presented to the participants to go along with their Reel Recovery fishing cap as a remembrance.

I thought a little about what I would say had I been asked to speak. What came to mind was the concept that fishing takes ones mind off of anything unrelated to the angling activity and that I was sure that for a substantial period of time over the last two days each man was relieved of a heavy burden. "Be well! Fish on!"

WET, WET BUNS! *By Jim McDonald*

I sent a bunch of pictures from the dryer and less windy periods. Saturday afternoon it rained so hard it was hard to see where the sky left off and the salt-water began. It rained so hard it windrowed the fir needles. **Don Simonson** was there a couple of days early to nail done the camp site and caught a whole bunch of chums over at Sherwood Creek in Allyn. Some of us went over Sat. after setting up camp and before the really bad part of the storm hit and managed to catch some bullheads but no chums. A couple of seals were working the inlet to Sherwood



Good raingear a must.



It Gets dark early in November.

Gil Nyerges of the Whidbey Island Fly Fishing Club is Hero to Irish Ladies!

By *JEFF VANDERFORD* Oct 28 2006, *South Whidbey Island Record*

Knowledgeable fans of fly fishing know that Ireland is one of the best places on earth to indulge their sport — the deep lakes, swift-moving streams, cool temperatures and friendly folk all combine to make a trip there memorable. In fact, it sounds a lot like Whidbey Island. And that's why Dubliners Maureen Lyons and Mary Brady flew here just to test their mettle against some local rainbow trout.

Early Thursday morning, the two ladies gathered at Lone Lake at the invitation of the Whidbey Island Fly Fishing Club. "Last year we visited friends on Bainbridge Island and they told us Whidbey was even prettier," Lyons said.

They went on the Internet and got in touch with the WFFC's **Gil Nyerges**, who invited them to visit. "And here we are," Brady said as she and Lyons examined flies specially tied for them by Steve Mooney. "Our club in Dublin has over 2,000 members and we get visitors from all over Europe and the U.S.," she added.

Lyons' late husband was the angling correspondent for Ireland's Evening Press. "He taught me to love the sport 35 years ago," she said. "And I brought Mary into it about 20 years ago."

So, what's the big deal about fly-fishing? "For me, it's a chance to go back to nature, enjoying what God gave us without altering or damaging the environment," Lyons said. "And the camaraderie is important as well; fishermen look out for each other, as you see."

Lone Lake has been stocked with 300 trout, many a special breed called "triploid," Nyerges explained. They look, swim, jump and taste like normal fish except for one important difference — they can't reproduce. Researchers have found that they can create triploid trout both by exposing trout eggs to pressure or by placing trout eggs in a warm water bath shortly after fertilization. Both processes inhibit a trout egg's ability to kick out the specific third set of chromosomes needed for reproduction. "Bigger fish is what fly fisherman want," Nyerges said. "This is a 'catch and release' lake so the fish are always here. You just need the patience to wait." But due to the herbicides used to eradicate pesky Brazilian Elodea weeds, club members still advise anglers not to eat the fish.

"It's all about fooling the fish at his own game. We don't use worms or corn but ties that simulate bugs the fish normally feed on," said Baert Simmons. Later that day Nyerges reported everyone had a great time, the ladies from Eire included. Brady caught a fine specimen and Lyons — well, she'll have a nice story to tell her friends back home about the one that got away.

On Friday, the Irish duo ventured onto the beach at Ala Spit County Park for a little salt water fishing adventure. Before leaving for a wedding in San Diego, Calif. they plan to present club members with a Friendship Trophy, to be awarded each year to the most prolific fisherman.

"The trophy depicts the Children of Lir," Lyons said. "It's an old Irish folk tale about a jealous step-mother who drowns her children in a lake because she thinks her husband loves them more than her. They return as swans to haunt her forever," she said.

Jeff VanDerford can be reached at 221-5300 or www.southwhidbeyrecord.com.



That's a coyote with it's eye on Scott Hagen.



Photo Gallery

Below: More Wet Buns Action(?)



Above: Gene Gudger (top) and Scott Hagen bein' Buddies.

Below: Scott Hagen with a Grand Ronde (or Snake) steelhead





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Stamp
here

Nov. 2006

Meeting Announcement



Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month at The College Club, 505 Madison St.
The Wet Fly hour begins at 5:30 PM and dinner is served at 6:45 PM

November speaker: Curt Kraemer, "Sea-run Cutthroat and Bull Trout in the Skagit/Sauk System"

Curt grew up in North Bend and cut his fishing teeth on the Snoqualmie and its forks. He began fly fishing when he was 9 and tying flies a year later. He is a self taught caster which, he says, "accounts for the hitches in my casting." Curt attended UW, graduating with a BS in Fisheries in 1969 and spent two years in the Peace Corps working with small commercial fishermen off the coast of Brazil.

Curt has been an avid flyfisher of sea-run cutthroat and bull trout for more than 4 decades and calls the Skagit system his home waters. Since his retirement as a biologist in Region 4 (Seattle) with the Department of Fish and Wildlife, he has been enjoying his three grand-kids, gardening, catching up on "honey dos", and enjoying the great outdoors more than any person should be able to.