

## *President's Message*

by Mark Borsierine

*The arrival of Spring*

As the weather warms the water we enter both the most active time of the year for us as Fly Fishers and the most quiet time for our Club itself. Spring Seminar and Sowbug are behind us and the Southern Council Conclave and our Auction are ahead of us. In between these events we have some great outings planned just for your enjoyment and relaxation. Many of us have some great trips planned: Cliff Newton and I will be going to Kodiak Island in July!

I want to encourage everyone to make the most of the summer! Enjoy and enjoy some more –

we, as fly fishers are given a great gift to enjoy the beauty and serenity of nature. Be safe, be careful of the environment: when you pass through, leave as little of yourself behind as possible, but take the memories and sense of peace with you and carry it always in your heart.

If you've never tried it, do some Warm Water Fly Fishing this summer. A summer evening spent in a comfortable float tube is among the most peaceful experiences you will ever have! Yet the action you can have will be some of the best! A bluegill is every bit as game as any trout – a

## *HOAFF Meeting*

*Monday, April 17 - 7:00pm*

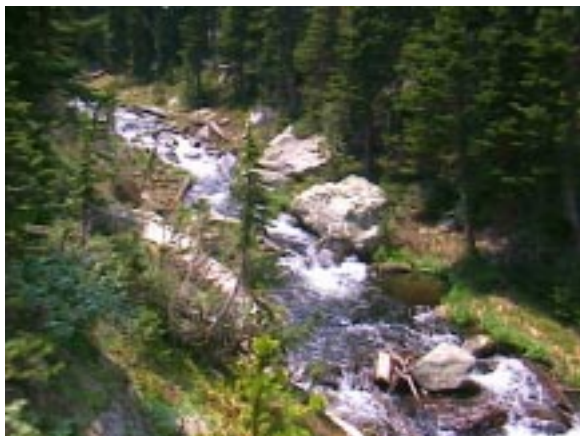
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big bass will test your gear to the max. If you've never tried Float tubing before on small waters, make a point to come to our June 17<sup>th</sup> outing at the Hunting Sports Plus strip pits just an hour South of Kansas City. We'll have some extra "boats" for you to try, all you'll need is waders and boots!

## *Marcy Brook*

by Steve Jenkins

Mountain streams have their own fascination. Maybe it is the intimacy of the surroundings. Maybe it is the unspoiled beauty.



Many writers have tickled our imaginations with their portrayals of mountain streams.

I'll admit it; I'm drawn to mountain streams. Surely it isn't the size of the fish – typically small. Surely it isn't their wariness – typically bold. At sometime I expect most of us trout fishers have tried our luck on mountain streams. For me, fishing mountain streams is something I grew into.

Small streams can be an excellent classroom in trout habitat and behavior. They can teach us more, and more quickly, than spending the same time on larger streams. On small streams, everything is in focus, and your mistakes are magnified. But, small streams are not the place to perfect your double haul. Intimacy means cautious casting

with short lines.

My first exposure was on Marcy Brook. This gem rises on the north face of Mt. Marcy, the highest peak in the Adirondack Mountains. Its south face provides the headwaters for the Hudson River, but the north face drains through the Ausable River system to Lake Champlain. Except for perhaps its last mile, before joining with other mountain streams to form the West Branch of the Ausable River, Marcy Brook is home exclusively to brook trout. The trout here aren't large, but they are feisty. A 10-inch fish is a big one.

Barney was nearing retirement. Other than a few  
continued on page 4

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## White River Outing

April 22 – Mountain Home, Arkansas

by Jim Jorgensen

The first club outing of the year will be held on the weekend of April 22<sup>nd</sup>. There is a variety of water to fish on the White and North Fork Rivers.

Accommodations will be at the White Sands Motel and Restaurant, Brass Door Motel and Restaurant, and the Rim Shoals Lodge. All locations have contact information in the newsletter. The club will meet for dinner on Saturday night at the Brass Door Restaurant in Gassville, Ark. around 7:00 pm.

For additional information contact Jim Jorgensen, 913/481-1129.



## Clarification on Doug's Crayfish

A clarification is in order on the fly recipe I included two newsletters ago. In the recipe it says a "1/64<sup>th</sup> oz. Jig hook"; I find that Doug was using custom-molded jig heads. The smallest available on the market in a tube jig hook is 1/32<sup>nd</sup> oz. I have been tying the fly (in preparation for our next meeting on April 17<sup>th</sup>) on Eagle Claw 570 size 6 jig hooks and wrapping .020 lead on the last third of the shank at the hook eye in two layers. This seems to give the fly the correct weight. Also the Ozark FlyFishers (St. Louis), lists a recipe for the fly which includes a longer hook – Eagle Claw 630 (3x long) in size 6 or 8 version. The recipe discusses the smaller 570 version. This recipe can be reached at [http://www.ozarkflyfishers.org/pages/flies/flies\\_page1/dougs\\_crayfish.html](http://www.ozarkflyfishers.org/pages/flies/flies_page1/dougs_crayfish.html). This recipe is basically the same but the text is somewhat more detailed than the one given me; it is worth having both at hand. I will be tying this fly for you before the meeting on the 17<sup>th</sup>.

## Conservation Team

Encouraged by Ray Zook, the Officers and Directors established a Conservation Team. The purposes are:

- To keep abreast of significant activities related to conservation in areas of interest to the club.
- To make appropriate and timely reports to the club pertaining to these activities and make recommendations or proposals for actions to be taken by the club.
- To write grant applications to the Southern Council.

There will be four members covering the following areas:

- General – Nationwide:
- Missouri:
- Arkansas: John Bell
- Metro Kansas City:

### Assistant Newsletter Editor

Tom James needs help with the Newsletter. Would someone like to be a Reporting Assistant? Contact Tom. Also, any member who would like to submit articles (200 words or less preferred) and photos that would be of interest to our members is requested to do so.

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# Notes on AK Best Spring Seminar      March 11, 2006

by Mark Borserine



close-up and it struck me that there is not a motion wasted – no unnecessary wraps or hand motions.

AK donated three of the flies he tied to the club for auction. I have the flies in my safekeeping until our auction, so I've had the pleasure of being able to look at them "up-close" and "leisurely" and they are simply exquisite! There is not a fiber out of place, not a piece of material more or less than necessary! In other words, they reflect his discipline and economy in tying. I think AK would be flattered to have me say they are entirely "sufficient"!



I had the wonderful opportunity to spend some one-on-one time with AK Best at dinner the night of the Seminar and he gave me a couple of tips that I wanted to pass on to all of you.

I asked what could the tyer do who wanted to tie his quill-bodied dry flies but didn't tie in enough quantity to justify the process of stripping by 'burning' and dyeing quills. AK said to strip the quills by hand and simply color them with permanent markers, like "Sharpies". The quills can still be soaked prior to tying without the colors running and fished successfully. AK said this is the way he did it when he first started tying his "signature" quill-bodied flies. He went to "burning" the

quills instead of stripping by hand and dyeing when he needed much larger quantities.

Also, AK said that he uses Kreinik silk dubbing for his dry flies smaller than 18. Some fly shops carry this and some don't. If you're having trouble getting it, call me; I can get it for you through my wife's Needle Work shop since she is a Kreinik dealer.

AK was very generous in letting Ron Renoe (and we are very grateful to Ron for doing so) videotape his presentation. Ron will be putting this on DVD and it will be available through the club library. I would encourage you to especially watch AK tie his flies; his economy of motion is simply astounding! Ron taped it in



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# Marcy Brook

continued from page 1  
years in Washington, D. C., during World War II, his entire career had been in the design of large electric generators. Tall and rangy, Barney grew up on a farm in Michigan, and he learned early about the wily ways of trout. I was just learning the ways of trout and was anxious to accept Barney's invitation to fish Marcy Brook.

We made our plans for a trip in mid-June. Any earlier date would have exposed us to the nemesis of the Adirondacks, the black fly. These critters hatch soon after ice-out and can last into late May, if the ground remains damp. Only about 2 mm in length, black flies can leave nasty bites. Some folks are allergic to their bite and will have severe swelling near the site. They generally persist in swarms and can get into your nose, ears and under your cuffs and collar. As I wanted to take one of my boys along, I voted for the

June date.

We hiked from the South Meadow parking area along a closed logging road toward Marcy Dam and the summit. About half way up the road to Marcy Dam, Barney turned right and we headed into the woods. There was no trail, and fortunately, no black flies. We had our hip boots and lunch in a wicker pack basket.

Matt, my 10 year-old son, got to wade wet (47 degree water!) Matt was planning to fish with worms and his spin cast outfit. Barney and I brought fly rods – he recommended something short. Mine was a 7-½ ft fiberglass rod designed for a 3-½ weight line, but I used a 4 weight because the 3 ½ was almost impossible to find. Barney said you didn't need many flies. He recommended streamers and wet-flies. I also brought some typical nymphs.

After crashing then through the woods for about 15 minutes, we came to the

stream. In most places, the trees on either side were no more than 10 yards apart, with the stream tumbling through. There were no pools – just pockets around the boulders. I wondered how one was to fish this kind of water. We selected a wider clearing area and left our gear.

Matt got started immediately – it took Barney and me more time to get rods prepared and into the hip boots. Barney suggested we work downstream for a while, hike back up, have our lunch and then walk further upstream, fishing back down to our "camp". We would spread out – maybe 50 yards apart. Matt and I stayed together.

It was tough work, hopping the rocks and trying to keep your line out of the trees. Matt did connect with a couple of fish, both about 7 inches long. I dropped my flies into the pools and let them swim around, but had no success, in spite of trying

various flies. Sometime after noon, we met Barney coming back upstream. He had caught four fish, all about the same as Matt's. During our lunch break, he showed me the fly he had used. It was a simple streamer with black chenille body and a grey squirrel tail wing. He said he used no extra weight.

On the way upstream after lunch, Matt and I stopped to cast into a larger plunge-pool, formed below a particularly large boulder. Matt threw his worm up toward the foam and while winding it back, hooked a trout. On his second cast, it was instant replay. This looked too easy, so I tossed my streamer – a bucktail – into the same spot. It took me two casts, but I caught the prize fish of the day – about 11 inches.

Resuming our trek upstream, I wondered about the technique. Barney had apparently been fishing downstream. I had little success with that technique, yet here at the foot of this



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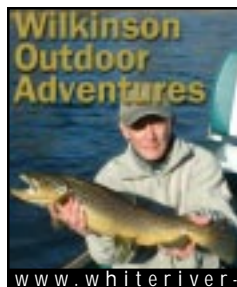
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falls, we took three fish by casting upstream and retrieving downstream. Soon we began our trip back downstream, with Barney leading. Matt and I let him get just out of sight and we began out trek. Matt caught another trout soon, but I was having the same luck as in the morning. I decided to revise my technique. I cast upstream and slowly stripped the streamer back. Bang! A nice strike, but no fish. At the next pocket, I tried it again – it worked and I released a fat 8 inch brookie. I think I learned something.

Working Marcy Brook, or any similar mountain stream, is a different challenge from a more typical trout stream. You probably have to contend with tight foliage, complicating conventional casts. Many spots call for a "plop-and-drop cast", where you gently flip the fly forward

to plop it into a likely pocket and gently retrieve.

Sometimes you can work a roll-cast, if you aren't too vigorous. If you are casting upstream from the middle of the water, you may have enough of an opening in the tree canopy to make a normal, but short, cast.

Clear water is another challenge. Fishing downstream normally has you approaching the trout head on, right into their best visibility window. Even in fast



moving water, your reflection or movements may spook the

fish. Casting upstream has its advantages. Combat the clear water and spooky fish by using the natural cover of boulders and trees to break up your body silhouette.

If the stream is small, fly placement may not be that important. Visibility in the water is generally not a problem in a bath-tub size pocket. While it might be nice to know what food is in the stream, my experience says what you offer is less important than how it is presented.

Many mountain streams are not particularly fertile, making almost any pattern you throw interesting to the fish. But, sometimes it seems the fish can be leader-shy. If the fish refuse your offerings, try a finer tippet. Check you hook frequently. Bouncing flies around on the rocks can easily break the point, and

you'd never notice it.

A few years later, on another Marcy Brook trip, I took my younger son and a friend. Clay is a good fisherman – his mother used to say he could catch a fish in a mud puddle. His first four fish came from the same small pool, casting his worm upstream and retrieving down. In this trip, my technique was compromised – I forgot to bring my fly reel. I took about 15 feet of Clay's spinning line, ran some through the guides and left about 9 feet beyond the tip. Even with this unconventional rig, when I fished upstream, retrieving down (by lifting the rod) at just faster than the current, I caught fish. If I dropped my fly down into the pockets, no fished were fooled.

I've fished numerous small mountain streams. The downstream approach will work, but using the Marcy Brook approach, casting upstream with a gentle retrieve, has been the best bet.

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# Dumpster Lifecycle

Most people in the club understand the life cycle of a mayfly. It's born in a stream and spends the first part of its life in the water as a nymph. At the appropriate time the mayfly leaves the water in the form of a winged insect that can fly through the air. It mates, and

then the eggs are dropped back into the water to repeat the cycle.

Once in a while other things, such as a dumpster, can also go through a lifecycle that involves dry land and a stream. Prior to June 2005 a dumpster sat on dry ground, somewhere in the floodplain of the upper Blue River. Maybe the dumpster was located in Kansas City; however, it was probably located in southern Johnson County. On June 3<sup>rd</sup> and 4<sup>th</sup>, 2005 there was a

rain that caused the Blue River to swell up and flow up out of its banks. Sheets of water flowed across the floodplain, and presumably floated the dumpster. It ended up that a dumpster is seaworthy if the drain plug is blocked.

On June 4<sup>th</sup>, 2005 the water surface reached the level of the steel superstructure of the Red Bridge, located on the appropriately named Red Bridge Road. The first time I got to see the dumpster, it was floating in the water, pounding into the upstream side of the Red Bridge. I pushed it down and sank it. It disappeared in the torrent of water, and then presumably bounced along the bottom of the stream, moving downstream with the current.

In September 2005, I found it ½ mile downstream from the Red Bridge. It was sitting upright in the middle of a 3 foot deep pool.

In March 2006, it was gone. I found it 100 yards further downstream, resting



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on the upstream side of a gravel bar. High water after a rain must have floated it off of the streambed and moved it downstream until it landed in shallower water.

April 1<sup>st</sup>, it was time to return the dumpster back to its native habitat, dry land. This was the day for the 1000+ person Blue River Rescue sponsored by the Friends of Lakeside Nature Center.

We baled water out of the dumpster and floated it downstream to an accessible location. We used a bobcat and a chain to hoist the dumpster out of the river and up on the bank. We dragged it through a meadow and placed next to the parking lot at the baseball fields south of I-435.

Later that day it saw its first piece of trash. Someone threw an empty beer bottle in the dumpster.

A few days later, the dumpster's original owner came and retrieved their property. The dumpster has now

completed its lifecycle and is again sitting on dry land, available for depositing trash.

One good sign: We found lots of mayflies when we first started moving the dumpster in the river. They were March Browns, size 12, that hatch in mid-April in the Blue River.

Those who participated in this event: Bill Brant (HOAFF), and Jim Hightower and Dave Goodwin (Friends of Lakeside Nature Center).

### Clear View of the Blue River

A few hundred yards downstream of the dumpster, club members cleared honeysuckle along the east bank of the Blue River. Honeysuckle is the invasive shrub that is displacing native plants throughout the metropolitan area. By opening up this stretch of land, we returned visibility of the Blue River to those who travel along the Blue River Parkway.

One of the reasons for picking this particular project is that reconnects people to a natural stream. Hopefully this benefits all

streams, and the fish that we pursue with flyrods. Although few of us fish in the Blue River, the people who drive along the Blue River could end up being either allies or adversaries when we think about fisheries conservation. I would rather build allies.

Special thanks go out to Hod McIntosh, Dan Dieter, Fred Clark, and Tom James for participating in this activity. Fred noted that this was really hard, physical work. In spite of that, he persevered.

Quite a few people signed-up, but were unable to attend. We would like you back next year, would a reminder phone call help?

Thanks also go out to KCWildlands (www.kcwildlands.org). They provided tools and herbicide for our use.



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### Upcoming Events & Programs

- April 17, 2006 **Eric Pietz** - Fly Fishing Utah and Colorado
- April 22, 2006 **White River Outing**
- May 6, 2006 **Fly Tying 101** - Red Bridge Library - 2pm
- June 17, 2006 **One Fly Outing**
- June 19, 2006 **Norm Crisp** - Fly Fishing Strategies



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