

President's Message

by Mark Borserine

Membership & Volunteerism

After nearly two and a half years as Club President, I find 'writer's block' being more and more of a problem every month! What to write about? The answer – Time-Honored subjects – Membership & Volunteerism

Membership: In both HOAFF and the FFF; never forget that your membership dues go a long way to furthering the goals of both organizations which are one and the same: Education, Conservation and Restoration; Preservation and Expansion of our Sport! What is returned to you is information that keeps you up to date on our sport and access to all sorts of educational material and opportunities via websites, magazines and newsletters. If you are coming to meetings but do not belong to HOAFF, please join us and if you belong to HOAFF but not yet to the Federation, complete the package!

Volunteerism: Is the lifeblood of any organization. All too typically a few do for the many and a few things get done (often done well), but, if the many would do just one thing each, much would get done (well). If you can help out with just one event a year, even one small aspect of that event, your participation is invaluable. Mother Teresa's most famous saying was "We cannot do great things, but we can do small things in great ways!" – a lesson for all aspects of our lives. Mother Teresa got many people to do small things and much was accomplished! I am very happy and gratified that we have just recently had an influx of new blood into our Officer 'ranks': Travis Knight - Membership; Darren Watson & Ron Carruthers – Outings; Kevin Carril – Conservation and Jim Jorgensen - Secretary. I cannot say how much I appreciate their

HOAFF Meeting

Monday, April 16 - 7:00pm

Brent Frazee

Outdoor Columnist for the Kansas City Star

contributions, in just a very short time they are making a genuine difference! Please consider helping them!

Very few people are contributing to the Newsletter. If you have a good trip, a good experience, a good seminar or just plain catch a nice big fish – give us an article and a photo – even if it's just to say "I caught this nice fish on a trip to so and so and had a great time!". Don't be shy if you are not good at spelling and grammar, you are among friends! Send me your articles if you're concerned; I'm a good speller and my wife's an excellent grammarian – we'll be happy to assist without losing your original intent. By doing this one simple thing you can help indeed!

Arkansas Tailwaters Update

by John Bell

Here are some selected highlights on what the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission (through its Trout Program personnel) has been doing lately. All of the information was gleaned from the Coldwater Resources Newsletter at the Arkansas Game & Fish Commission website at <http://www.agfc.com/data-facts-maps/publications/>

agfc-newsletters/coldwater_newsletter.aspx
Check it out!

Beaver Tailwater:

Improvements to the Parker Bend Angler Access were completed in fall 2006. The project helps to eliminate eroding stream bank and allow for increased angler access.

Bull Shoals Tailwater:

The Cotter Access area (and boat ramp) was completely redeveloped and rededicated in November 2006.

The Rim Shoals Habitat Improvement Project began in December 2006. This project will improve aquatic habitat in the 1.8 miles of the White

that is above the current Rim Shoals "Catch & Release" area. The project extends
continued on p.6



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Lake of the Forest is a private lake, known for great bass and crappie fishing. Bring your float tube / drift boat. We will have a contest with prizes for the total length and the number of fish caught using just 1 fly. Lunch will be provided if you RSVP by e-mail to dwatson@lawingfinancial.com before June 6th.

Directions – Exit going west on Kansas 32 from 435. (Bonner Springs exit). Go 2.2 miles. The entrance is on the right side of the road. The entrance is easy to miss, so look closely. Follow the signs.

Blue River Cleanup

Saturday, March 31, 2007 – 8:00AM

Kevin Carril

Although the weather forecast was not encouraging, a small but energetic contingent from Heart of America Fly Fishers joined with the Lakeside Nature Center's Project Blue River Rescue on March 31 to help with the cleaning of the riparian zone of the Blue River. As it turned out, it never rained a drop and the sun was out by late morning. With the warm weather and with the dogwoods and redbuds in bloom, it was a nice morning to be outdoors.

Our group, with the assistance of some

volunteers from Honeywell, concentrated on removing litter from the area below the I-435 bridge. The view of the river and the surrounding area was markedly improved by the end of the morning.

I think everyone had a good time and felt good about doing something tangible to improve the habitat of a fishable stream that is located right in the metropolitan area. Many stretches of the Blue River are quit beautiful. A special thanks to Ron Carruthers, Bill Brant and Kathy LaFrensen, for their assistance.

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Hogback Cabin Silent Auction

by Mark Borsierine

A friend of Norm Crisp's who was with us in September for our Iowa Outing has made a very generous donation to the Club. In Norm's own words:

"Duane Brandt won the Hogback Cabin Lottery. Duane has the cabin on the nights of August 27th, 28th, and 29th of this year. This is a restored homesteader's cabin on world famous Rock Creek near Missoula, Montana. Fishing is so good my son Dan missed two flights home from Missoula because the Skwala hatch or the hoppers were fishing so well! The cabin sleeps eight. I've fished Rock Creek several times and stayed in the cabin three times.

Duane is offering HOAFF three spaces in the cabin. Three others are going to the Guadalupe River Trout Unlimited and Duane and I each get one. Duane's only restriction is that the space has to be used as a fund raiser. Auction or Raffle doesn't matter as long as it brings in some money. All one has to do is get to Missoula. We will even do airport pick up. Meals are on Duane and I. Not a guided trip since Streamside Adventures does not have a permit for Lolo National Forest but we are happy to let participants fish with us – as long as we get first shot at prime water from time to time."

HOAFF will auction these three precious 'spots' off during the May 21st member meeting by silent auction. Don't miss this once in a lifetime opportunity for a wonderful trip and to give some money to your club!



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Mill Creek – A Special Opportunity

by Norm Crisp, Stream Side Adventures

In last month's newsletter there was an excellent story reprinted from the Columbia Tribune about Mill Creek and the history of its special trout. We are fortunate that the Missouri Department of Conservation was able to purchase the Bohigian tract and add another mile of trout water to public access.

The purchase could only be made by leveraging Department funds with a pledge of \$100K from other sources. The Coldwater Fund committed \$50k of the \$100k. Mid-Missouri TU and the Ozark Council of TU have contributed \$30K. That still left \$20K to be raised. I'm happy to say that HOAFF has pledged \$1,000. Our donation is being



matched by the Southern Council. My math still has Mill Creek's Trout about \$18K short.

I love Mill Creek and its beautiful trout. But don't take my word for what this means to those of us who value wild trout. The two strongest champions of Missouri's wild trout Curt Morgret, Chairperson of Coldwater Fund and President of Mid-Missouri TU, and Mike Kruse, the driving force of the Department of Conservation's Trout Plan, will be at our April meeting to tell you how important this acquisition is

and to answer any questions you may have. I hope you will all listen to what Curt and Mike will have to say and be encouraged to support this rare opportunity.

March Educational Events

by Norm Crisp, Stream Side Adventures

March was a busy month. At the request of the Federation of Fly Fishers, HOAFF spearheaded a series of fly fishing program at Cabela's on March 3rd, 4th, and 10th. On each day we made three presentations and hand out membership information for both HOAFF and FFF.

On March 8th we presented a program in cooperation with the Missouri Department of Conservation at the Discovery Center titled "Alternatives to the Trout Parks". Over 20 people attended this seminar. Most of those attending were not HOAFF members. All those attending were given

a HOAFF membership application.

On March 31st we conducted a fly tying class for WOW (Woman in the Outdoor World).

Our next planned seminar in cooperation with the Department of Conservation will be held on September 13th. This seminar will deal with nymph fishing and cover information on typical nymphs found in trout streams, flies to match them, and nymph fishing techniques.

If there are any topics you would like to see HOAFF present or if there is a class you would like to teach please let me know by e-mailing streamsideff@yahoo.com.

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Lewis Creek

by Steve Jenkins

I was very reluctant to even get my feet wet in Lewis Creek. I had been there before. It wasn't pleasant. The creek frequently smelled like the Vermont farmyards that bordered its headwaters. In the slower stretches, it seemed like much of the silt on the stream bottom also came from a barnyard. On my first trip there, I had caught two scrawny rainbows. Today I was looking for something more promising.

The winter drought in the Northeast had been broken by about ten days of nearly continuous rain and warm temperatures. The timing of the trip to visit our daughter and family couldn't have been worse, at least from the fisherman's point of view. But now, temperatures had nose-dived and the rain had finally at least slowed down. It was reported that the streams were dropping. After settling in over the weekend, I took a couple of hours on Monday for a scouting trip. The remaining snow (it was mid May) on the mountains was now slowing its melt since temperatures had dropped. But, still, the volume of water coming out of the mountains kept most all of the streams roaring. Except for Lewis Creek, more of a meadow stream, all the other nearby streams were still way too full to wade.

On the scouting trip, I visited with a fisherman who was getting into the water on Lewis Creek, downstream from the spot of my previous trip. He was a student at the university and reported participating in a shocking survey that had turned up some very nice rainbows in the area he was preparing to fish. Since the lower reaches of Lewis Creek support a healthy supply of smallmouth bass and sunfish, I had just dismissed this area as a transition zone, at best. But, his report seemed to show me up as a skeptic.

So, I got clearance for a shot at the creek on Tuesday. The weather was beginning to improve. There had been little rain over the weekend and just a dab on Monday, but Tuesday's prediction was light rain showers. So what? I had rain gear and clouds were generally helpful – I was going, anyway. I dropped one grandson at school, came home and made a lunch and headed for the creek. The thermometer read 47 degrees and it was very, very cloudy. In about 45 minutes, I was in the water. It was up, but not like the other (mountain fed) streams. The color was good and the water temperature was 49 degrees.

Heading upstream, I really didn't have high expectations. Last year's trip

had tainted me. I expected this to be a "just great to be out" kind of day. Lewis Creek flows almost due west from its headwaters south of Burlington and empties into Lake Champlain. It isn't a long, or large stream – it's just a creek. With the proximity to Burlington and moderately easy access, I guessed it gets heavy pressure. The state stocks rainbows, and there are also some brookies, but they run even smaller than the rainbows. I wasn't looking for a trophy – I wanted action. At this spot, the stream makes a moderate "S" curve, made necessary by several large outcroppings of red slate. At the upstream part of the "S", there was nice pool. Faster water entered centrally at the top of the pool, flowed against the far bank and was turned to the right by one of the outcroppings. Above the fast water was another nice looking pool, but as I moved upstream, I could see that this pool was already occupied. A change in plans was needed.

Frequently, my first fly these days, if I'm fishing downstream, is the .56%er. With that guy already in the next pool, I would have to fish downstream from where I stood. Swimming the fly down the pool was a familiar drill. I worked it close at first, lengthening casts thereafter. Moving downstream about two steps, the drill was repeated. Practicing this drill for about five minutes produced a strike. I was

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unprepared and that fish escaped from the business end of the hook. Continuing the drill, I was ready for the next strike and landed an eight-inch rainbow. For all the commotion it created, that fish should have been eighteen inches. It hit the fly hard and immediately bolted upstream, right toward me. As I scrambled to recover line, it turned and began leaping and leaping, downstream. Seeing its size clearly now, I relaxed and let it play out. When I released the fish, inspection showed no hatchery marks and apparently it had never been caught, previously. For its size, that little rainbow was a real fighter.

I continued the drill toward the far end of the pool with no more action. A splash in the middle of the pool was almost hidden in the current. But, it surely was a splash. Then, a second and a third. What was this? Lewis Creek and rising fish? Then, I saw the bugs. I guess I had been just too intent with the .56%er drill. These were definitely mayflies, and they appeared to be Hendricksons, based on size and color. I rummaged around in my vast armada of flies and picked out a possible imitation – a Hendrickson dry in size 12. Off came the .56er and the 3X leader and on went a longer, dry fly leader, size 5X and the fly. It took several minutes to make the switch and to grease the fly, but the fish were still

rising.

To get the right casting position, I had to move up the pool about five yards. After about a half dozen casts, I was into another fish. It rose to the fly with authority – a nine-inch rainbow. Fish continued to rise, but now there were some caddis flies beginning to buzz the surface. Another strike and another fish. Say, this Lewis Creek was looking up, but where were the “nice rainbows” the guy mentioned yesterday? The second rainbow was a copy of the first, but it really mangled the dry fly. I took a few minutes to clean, straighten and dry the fly before regreasing it. Returning to casting the fly now found no more takers. I worked the Hendrickson pattern through the current tongues, into the still water beyond the current and through the tail of the pool. The rises continued, but with noticeable diminished intensity. Yet, the caddis were still buzzing, and the mayflies seemed gone.

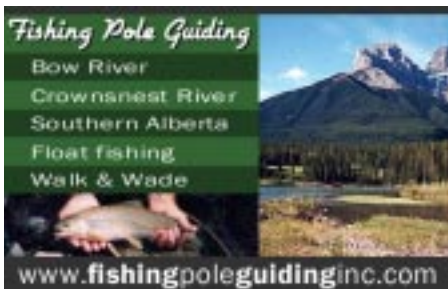
I tied on a small deer hair caddis dry fly. The bugs on the water seemed to be the “cinnamon” caddis in about size 18. After I had worked the fly for about ten minutes, and with the fish showing no interest, I really wondered what I had done. Did I run them off, or had they lost interest? Still, this was Lewis Creek and I shouldn’t have been expecting much, anyway. But, there were still those pesky rises. With the caddis still buzzing

around, I speculated they were taking emerging caddis just under the surface.

Soft-hackle flies have been a recent addition to my arsenal. I now carry several dozen in assorted colors and sizes. In other situations, I’ve found them useful when caddis are emerging. I moved upstream in the pool, to where the main thrust of the current entered. Here the water was probably too fast for good action of the soft feathers used in these patterns. But, the current speed dropped as the pool widened and deepened. It was in this current tongue that the majority of the rises were seen. I tied on a tannish fly with pheasant tail body, size 14. Casting across and down gave the fly the proper swing.

In the area where the current began to noticeably slow, I had the first strike, but no hook-up. Two casts later, feeling a slight tug on the line, I set the hook into another small rainbow. It worked! Soft hackles seemed to be fooling even these urbane Vermont trout. I really believe the soft hackle action and downstream presentation make a great simulation of emerging caddis – great enough to fool these rainbows.

As the day ended, I had added several more small rainbows to the count. But, nowhere were the reported “nice rainbows” to be found, at least by me. Still, Lewis Creek has come up several notches in my book. I’ll go back again, too.



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Arkansas Tailwaters Update

continued from p.1

from the Armstrong Hole to Jenkins Creek. Larry Rider is the Chief of Habitat Improvement for the Trout Program.

An improvement project is being developed at the Ranchette Access Area. The project will provide increased angler access and habitat improvement in the river.

Norfolk Tailwater:

The Norfolk Tailwater has some disturbing news surrounding it. First, in spring of 2006 a developer cleared a large parcel of land on the east ridge top overlooking Norfolk Dam and Tailwater. The development is called "Overlook Estates". Apparently the developer did not acquire and follow stormwater runoff permitting requirements from the Arkansas Dept of Environmental Quality (ADEQ). As a consequence each time when it rains, runoff from

the development carries excessive sediments via tributaries into Norfolk Tailwater causing very muddy water and sediment accumulation in the streambed. ADEQ and Arkansas Trout Unlimited have filed lawsuits against the developer. Trout Program personnel ran several studies to determine the impact now, and to predict the extent of the impact if excessive sediments keep flowing into the tailwater. Recently a report summarizing their findings was submitted to the Commission.

Another perennial Norfolk problem is the annual decrease in dissolved oxygen (D.O.) levels during summer, fall, and early winter. This year (2006) was no different and a trout die-off was documented in November 2006 as a result. The tailwater experienced D.O. less than 3ppm during 2006 and it is well documented that trout become stressed at levels below 6ppm and will

die at levels less than 3ppm. While Trout Program personnel are certain they are losing trout to this problem, it is difficult to document as the dead fish get scattered by the hydropower generation. This situation also exists on the White below Bull Shoals Dam but was not a serious issue in 2006.

Trout Health Assessment:

During the fall of each year Trout Program personnel perform a trout health assessment study, sampling trout below both of the dams. An integral part of the study is the "relative weight" test. Relative weight is a measure of the average weight of trout in a population compared to what a normal or healthy trout should weigh for a given size. Disturbingly, the relative weight of trout below Norfolk dam has been declining for the past three years. The only bright side to this is that the decline has been from above



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average size to average size. So, for the most part, trout below Norfolk dam (when not stressed from low oxygen levels) are of average size and health. The picture is less bright over at Bull Shoals dam as you will read below.

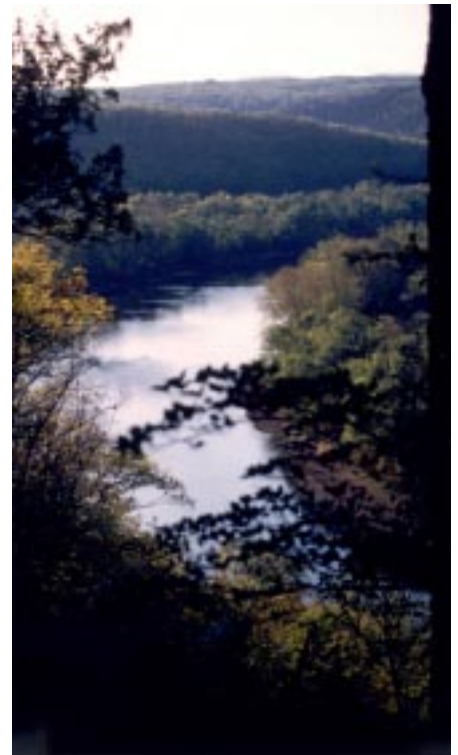
Didymo:

The relative weight of brown trout below Bull Shoals dam in November 2006 was the lowest that has ever been recorded. Relative weight for both brown and rainbow trout have been falling in Bull Shoals tailwater since 2004, which coincides with the appearance of the invasive algae, didymo. This decrease in relative weight has been documented in other trout waters around the world where didymo has occurred. It is believed that blooms of didymo in upper Bull Shoals tailwater have had the predicted detrimental effect on trout forage and trout foraging. Didymo carpets the

bottom of the river and makes it impossible for native macro invertebrates to colonize or survive. Further, trout cannot forage efficiently in didymo and get no nutritional value from ingesting it. Learn more about didymo at the FFF website at <http://www.fedflyfishers.org/conDidymo.php>

Personnel Changes:

Darrell Bowman Chief Trout Biologist and Director of the Trout Management Program has left AGFC to pursue a position in the private sector at Bella Vista in northwest Arkansas. The Trout Program is Darrell's legacy to his tenure at AGFC and while he will be truly missed, we wish him the very best in his new endeavor. Jeff Williams is Interim Chief until Darrell's replacement is named.



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Upcoming Events & Programs

- April 16, 2007 Brent Frazee
April 21, 2007 EarthFest - Shawnee Mission Park - 10am - 2pm
For More info contact Bill Brant
May 21, 2007 Norm Crisp: Traveling & Trout Fishing
June 9, 2007 One Fly Tournament, Lake of the Forest, Bonner Springs, KS
Sept 17, 2007 Annual Picnic



Mike George donated fly

A very special Hatch of the Month will occur the night of our member meeting April 16th. Mike George has donated the beautiful Bass fly, his version of a Dying Sunfish, shown in this photo to the drawing. Bring your best flies or crispest dollars!



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