

Wind Knots

A monthly publication of the Texas Flyfishers

Volume 24 / Issue 2

February 2005

TFF Meeting Update

Our next meeting will be held on Tuesday, February 22nd.

Ken Richards will be our speaker. Ken operates a guiding service on the White River and fishes other streams in Arkansas. He generously donated a trip for the upcoming TFF auction fund-raising event.

The March speaker is Pete Barrett who wrote an article published in last month's *Wind Knots*. Pete does a yearly fly fishing pilgrimage from Utah to Alaska and fishing all along the way. He will join us next month to talk about the experience.

As Jerry Loring explains in the President's Corner, the monthly meetings will be held at the Uptown Hotel which is the new name of the hotel that was, until recently, the Holiday Inn at I-10 and Antoine. Doors open at 7:00 p.m. The meeting begins at 7:30 p.m.

Books for the Fly Fisher

By Tom Lyons

In last month's issue of the *Wind Knots* I gave away all my wheeling and dealing secrets for eBay. This month I'll make the ultimate sacrifice and let everybody in on one of the greatest deals around.

Half-Price Books has a number of stores around the Houston area that actually sell books for half of their listed jacket value. These stores have the books stacked neatly by category and most of their books are new. The fly fishing books can be found in the Sports section in their own labeled shelves. I have been buying books from them for at least five years and I have really found some great deals

I bought a number of fly tying books by Dick Talleur, Lefty Kreh's *Presenting The Fly*, and classics by Ernest Schweibert, Doug Swisher and Carl Richards, Lou Tabory, Gary LaFontaine, Leonard M. Wright, and many others. I could have bought many others but I had them before I discovered Half-Price Books.

I think the mechanism that allows all these good fly fishing books to be available has to do with the scarcity of fly fishers here in Texas. Half-Price Books seems to get its hands on books that don't move in normal settings. They purchase them at a discount and then offer them to customers. I seldom see the good fly fishing books moving off the shelves at the normal bookstores. My wife and I visit Barnes and Noble occasionally and they also have some good books but they go at full jacket price and I find my ardor often wanes when I see the full retail prices.

There is one caution for shopping at Half-Price Books. British fly fishing books show up on occasion. They are well done, but they cover British stream and lake fishing and are not good references for typical fishing situations found in the U.S.A. The British fish a lot of clear, cold lakes

and use flies that look like big-eyed Martians seen in old science-fiction movies. The books are entertaining, but I prefer those that will help me fish or tie in my home waters.

Sometimes you run into books that haven't moved at Half-Price and their prices will be halved again to move them. I have bought some great books in this way. If you are really lucky you will get some older books sold to Half-Price's buying program by an individual. These will often sell for 25% of what they are worth.

All TFF members who are learning the sport can benefit from a visit to Half-Price Books, as can the students in the fly tying program. A combination of some book study, some actual fishing experience, and some presentations or classroom work will show up in improved results on future trips.

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ANNOUNCEMENTS

Going once, going twice...SOLD!

The annual TFF fund-raising auction will take place on Saturday, March 12, 2005 at the Bethany Christian Church located at 3223 Westheimer near Bammel. The silent auction begins at 10:00 a.m. followed by lunch around 11:30 a.m. after which the live auction shall commence.

If you have never attended this event, then you are in for a real treat. Besides the chance to participate in the auction and visit with your fishing buddies, there will be a raffle for a rod and reel.

Proceeds from the auction provide approximately fifty percent of our yearly budget. The support of our members, vendors, and guides is always exceptional and we are looking forward to this year's event. Items up for auction include artwork, guided trips, and all sorts of fishing gear.

If you have items you wish to donate, please contact Rick Rawls at 713-830-5446 (h), 713-705-9797 (c), or 713-666-7100 ext. 129 (w) or Jerry Loring at 713-464-8687 (h) or 713-875-4289 (c). You may also bring them to us at the next club meeting or you could deliver items to Orvis, the Angler's Edge or Cut-Rate Tackle and we will pick them up.

Hope to see you there.

Beginning & Intermediate Fly Casting Instruction

The first fly casting classes of 2005 will be held on the 12th, 19th, and 26th of February at the Lakes of Meyer Park. Two levels of instruction will be provided. Beginners will meet from 10:00 a.m. until noon, followed by intermediates from 1:00 until 3:00 p.m. There is no charge for TFF members current on their membership dues; non-members pay \$24 for the entire 3-week session. If you have your own gear, by all means bring it. If not, TFF has a limited number of rod/reel combos to loan. For further information or to sign up, contact Troy Miller at 713-466-2322 or e-mail at Troy.Miller@bakeroiltools.com. Troy can always put several helpers to work, so come out and lend a hand if you're able. If you need a little incentive, the club will provide lunch for the teaching staff at Luby's.

Intermediate Fly Tying Classes Begin in March

The Intermediate fly tying course begins on Monday, March 14, 2005. This nine week class will meet on Monday nights from 7:00 to 9:00 p.m. at the Bethany Christian Church on Westheimer between Kirby and Buffalo Speedway. If you would like to take the Intermediate course and are not already enrolled in the Beginner's class, please arrive by 6:30 p.m. on March 14th so we can handle your registration. For further details, please contact Frank Schlicht at 281-392-5296, or by e-mail at aged_sage@hotmail.com.

President's Corner

by Jerry "Buggywhip" Loring, president, Texas Flyfishers



Please forgive the January meeting hiccup. Most club members got the word in time, but confusion about the location of the January meeting did cause a few members to miss it. I apologize to those members and assure you it was not for a lack of effort to properly inform them.

At the last meeting in November of 2004 there was no indication that our meeting place would change. But sometime before Christmas the owners of the Katy Freeway Holiday Inn informed us that they were closing and the Texas Fly Fishers would have to find a new location for the monthly meetings and the Fly Tying Festival. Needless to say, this news caused a rapid succession of events during the next five weeks.

First, the Fly Tying Festival committee took action and signed a contract with the Holiday Inn at Kirby and the Southwest Freeway. After that important first step was out of the way, the search started for a new monthly meeting location. Since we had just negotiated a contract for the Fly Tying Festival at the Kirby location, the thought was to investigate the possibility of holding our monthly meetings at that location as well. However, after two weeks of discussion, a price was not agreed upon and the search continued.

The American Red Cross was contacted. Their building was perfectly suited for our needs. It is a tremendous central location with an acceptable price. We made an offer to lease the space and were awaiting approval from their Board of Regents. The board eventually decided to restrict room rentals to only those functions that were directly related to their organization's mission. Thus, our search continued once again.

We noticed that the old meeting place at Antoine and the Katy Freeway had not closed but had instead changed names. The new Uptown Hotel was open for business. With time running short, Rick Rawls successfully negotiated a multi-year contract with the Uptown Hotel for space to hold our monthly meetings.

We attempted to notify the membership through the demon phone dialer and a posting on the web site, but we did not reach everyone. The oversight was unintentional and please accept our apologies.

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"I do what the voices in my fly box tell me to do."

Our own Rick Rawls is now famous. While fly fishing with kayak guide Lefty Ray Chapa last year, Rick was photographed looking into a fly box. The picture was selected by *Fly Rod & Reel* magazine for use in an ad soliciting subscribing to the magazine. The ad appears on page 9 of the winter issue of *Trout* magazine. The image is posted in the photo section of Lefty's web site: www.leftyray.com.

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The Question-of-the-Month

Everything you ever wanted to know about fly fishing but were too afraid to ask...

Q: What kind (brand and model) of fly line is best for winter fishing in Texas, where the air and water are cold and you want a compact, heavy head that will load the rod for relatively short casts of 30 to 40 feet?

A: Marcos Enriquez of Orvis Houston fame recommends his company's Bass Wonderline. It is manufactured by Scientific Anglers with several modifications to the head shape and line coatings. Marcos uses the Bass Wonderline throughout the winter here in Texas because the braided Dacron core, unlike nylon, has virtually no memory and the line does a great job of turning over large saltwater fly patterns.

OUTINGS SCHEDULE

Our outings schedule is an ongoing work-in-progress. Here are the trips we have currently scheduled for 2005. Sometimes dates and places change, so check here regularly.

To volunteer as a trip leader, contact fresh water outings chairman Clarke Thornton or salt water outings chairman Scott Fossum. Their telephone numbers and email addresses are on the Executive Committee listing later in this issue. Fresh water trips are designated [F], salt water [S] in the listings below.



February 13, 2005. Yegua Creek - Newmans Bottom, Burton, Texas. White bass [F]. Bank fishing access.

February 20, 2005. "Guadalupe One Fly," Guadalupe River, Sattler, Texas. Trout [F]. Float or wade as you wish.

February 27, 2005. Yegua Creek - Newmans Bottom, Burton, Texas. White bass [F]. Bank fishing access.

Clarke Thornton - *fresh* March 18-20, 2005. "Sowbug Round Up," Mountain Home, Arkansas. Trout [F].



Scott Fossum - *salt*

March 19-20, 2005. Port Mansfield, TX [S]. Sight-fishing the Lower Laguna Madre flats for redfish, trout and drum. Stay in hotel or, if there is sufficient interest, we may rent a bay house with lighted pier. Boat required. Scott Fossum leader. Contact Scott for outing, lodging, or fishing info.

April 2, 2005. Lighthouse Lakes kayaking, Aransas Pass, TX [S]. Ralph Adams, leader (contact information on Executive Committee listing). Kayak rental available nearby.

April 3, 2005. Yegua Creek, Newman's Bottom, Texas. White Bass [F].

April 9-10, 2005. Lower Mountain Fork River, Broken Bow, Oklahoma. Trout [F].

April 17, 2005. Loring's Secret Bass Lake, Bellville, Texas. Bass & Panfish [F].

May 7, 2005. "Sunfish Spectacular," Seven Lakes, Damon, Texas. Sunfish & Bass [F].

May 14, 2005. Brown & Root Flats kayaking, Aransas Pass, TX [S]. Ralph Adams, leader (contact information on Executive Committee listing). Kayak rental available nearby.

June 11-12, 2005. Llano River, Junction, Texas. Bass & Panfish [F].

June 2005. Louisiana Madness, Lake Charles, LA [S]. Leader needed.

June 2005. San Jose Island kayaking, Rockport, TX [S]. Kayaking from Captain Sally's mother ship. Leader needed.

July 9-10, 2005. Frio River, Uvalde, Texas. Bass & Panfish [F].

July 9-10, 2005. Port O'Connor Jetties, Port O'Connor, TX [S]. Leave POC docks Saturday afternoon, fish all night, return Sunday morning. Camp Saturday night on the Matagorda Peninsula or stay up all night and fish. No boat required to attend, but boats welcome and needed to ferry participants to the camp site. Fish for trout (7 pounder caught last year), reds, and jacks. Leader needed.

July 30, 2005. "Port O'Connor One Fly" Tournament, Port O'Connor, TX [S]. Scott Fossum, leader. Rotating crystal trophy up for grabs. Most inches of fish caught on the first fly you tie on wins. Boat or kayak needed.

August 6, 2005. San Marcos River Float Trip, San Marcos, Texas. Bass & Panfish [F].

August 27, 2005. "Redfish Rodeo," Location TBA, TX [S]. Jerry Loring, leader.

September 10, 2005. Location to be determined. Bass & Panfish [F].

October – South Padre Island, TX [S]. Rick Rawls, leader.

October 1 & 2, 2005. "Padre Island Surf Fest". Four-wheel down Padre Island and fish the surf [S]. Optional camping on the beach.

October 8, 2005. Seven Lakes at Damon, Damon, Texas. Bass & Panfish [F].

October – Nighthawk Bay (Bird Island Basin) in the Padre Island National Seashore in/near Corpus Christi/Port Aransas. Kayak, boat and walk-in opportunities abound both on the flats and in the surf. Leader needed.

November 6, 2005. Guadalupe River, Sattler, Texas. Trout [F]

December 2005. No outings.

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Five Flies of the Shenandoah

By Chris Moser

Sometimes the physical distance between two places understates the actual distance between them. Case in point: Houston and Port O'Connor. The scientific measurement of "150 miles" fails to capture the real distance, or the difference in feel between the two locales. Even more striking, a scant 100 miles separate the corridors of power in our nation's capital from the corridors of nature in Virginia's Shenandoah River Valley. Here, native brook trout live in the small streams that tumble down the mountainsides while, in the valley, smallmouth bass populate the area's namesake waterway. Two rewarding fisheries in such close proximity create a pleasant dilemma, namely: which species to target on a given day. It is the Shenandoah River and its tributaries, which inspire February's edition of Five Flies.

Brook Trout in the Shenandoah National Park

Trout fishing in the Shenandoah National Park is a mountain-side affair. Wrapped in mountain laurel and azalea, rivers such as the Rose and the Rapidan cascade down rocky runs into deep pools only to spill out over the lip and start the cycle over again. In sunlit pools, dappled by the shade of hemlocks, native brook trout dutifully man their feeding stations near boulders. An angler's cautious approach and well-drifted fly is often met with a splashy rise lacking any hesitation. These are scrappy fish, jeweled and beautiful, but small, and the rivers they inhabit are best described as mountain-side freestone streams. These brooks are rarely wider than 30 feet, and often they tally half that size. When packing for the hike, bring plenty of water but leave your double haul at home.

It was on the banks of the Rapidan that President Hoover built a cabin and found summer refuge from official Washington's sweltering heat and partisan politics. An avid angler, he once remarked that "all men are equal before fish." That may be true, but to gain an advantage, waste no time in tying a 6x leader to an elk hair caddis. It may be the only fly to leave the box and its variations are endless (with or without hackle, body color, size). Still, variety is the spice of life, and another fly worth carrying up the mountain with you is the Mr. Rapidan. Local fly shop owner Harry Murray designed this fly and it has built a solid reputation in the area. It is a general mayfly imitator tied with a moose mane tail, reddish brown body, grizzly and brown hackle, and a yellow calf tail wing. The wing greatly improves the visibility of the fly, which is no small matter when fishing the braided currents of a tail-out darkened by the overhanging forest.

Smallmouth Bass of the Shenandoah River

Unlike the Rose or the Rapidan, the Shenandoah deserves its name of "river". Flowing in the valley on either side of Massanutten Mountain, the Shenandoah has a more gradual rate of descent

and is much wider compared to its mountain tributaries mentioned above. Correspondingly, it is an excellent river to canoe, with inspiring scenery around each bend, fairly shallow depths, few rapids and many chances to meet up with its resident smallmouth bass. The smallies here are ambush specialists that eagerly pounce on flies and, once hooked, often treat the angler to a courageous aerial display. These fish are strong but not overly large and an angler who tangles with one immediately notices its fitness and athleticism. Throw a top-water fly first, either a "Sneaky Pete" slider or a deer hair popper depending on your mood. The joy received from watching a smallie erupt on a top-water can more than make up for an hour or so of inactivity. If the top-waters eventually disappoint, then it is time to pull out the reliable Clouser minnow (olive and white) suitably weighted for the local depth. While there may only be a foot or two of distance between where the top-water and the Clouser are each fished, it is an important and exciting foot. Come to think of it, "one foot" doesn't measure the distance between the popper and Clouser any better than "100 miles" measures the distance between Washington, D.C. and the Shenandoah River Valley. I hope you all get to see what I mean sometime.



Five Flies of the Shenandoah (from left-to-right): 1) deer-hair popper, 2) Mr. Rapidan, 3) "Sneaky Pete" slider, 4) elk-hair caddis, and 5) the Clouser minnow.

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About Wind Knots

Wind Knots is your monthly newsletter, and it needs your help – otherwise we'll run out of things to print. E-mail your articles, photos, artwork, graphics, fishing news, tall tales, lies, and letters to the editor to ralphnchristineadams@earthlink.net not later than the 10th of the month for that month's issue. **Be sure to put the words *Wind Knots* in the subject line of your e-mail.** If you don't, I might think it's spam or worse and delete it before opening.

If you have digital photos, please send them via e-mail in .JPG format. If you have paper photos, mail them to Corey Rich, 1900 N. Memorial Way, Houston, TX 77007. Please include a stamped, self-addressed envelope for their return.

The preferred form for text – stories, letters, and so forth – is in Microsoft Word. Please try to keep your

offerings in the 800 to 1,000 word range, or less. If you send photos along with an article, proposed captions are appreciated.

Wind Knots is posted on the club's Web site as soon as it becomes available. Check www.texasflyfishers.org regularly for the latest newsletter and other news of interest.

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TEXAS FLYFISHERS EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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WIND KNOTS CLASSIFIEDS

Space permitting, we'll run "Wanted" and "For Sale" ads for members of Texas Flyfishers. On a case-by-case basis, we may also run ads from non-members if the goods or services sought or offered would be of interest to our members. Send your ad by e-mail to ralphnchristineadams@earthlink.net or regular mail to Ralph Adams, [your preferred address here]. You may include a photograph of items to be sold if you like.



Texas Flyfishers
P.O. Box 571134
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Texas Flyfishers Membership Application

Please check one: New Application Renewal

To join Texas Flyfishers or renew your membership, please complete this form and mail it with your check to the address below, or bring it with you to one of our monthly meetings. All memberships expire June 30th of each year, and renewals are due July 1st. New members, please pro-rate your payment for the number of months between now and the end of June, inclusive. Our monthly meetings are held on the last Tuesday of every month (except December), beginning at 7:00 p.m.

Dues are for (check one): Individual at \$24 a year Family at \$32 a year Student at \$16 a year

Name: _____

Address: _____

Home phone: _____ Work phone: _____

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