



August 2005

Snags and Snarls



Committed To Coldwater Conservation

The Newsletter of the Pisgah Chapter of Trout Unlimited

From the Past President

It may seem a bit unusual to have the monthly message written by the Past-President, but a set of unfortunate circumstances dictate this action. As many of you know by now our President, Craig Larson, tragically passed away at his home on Friday, July 15th. I do not know too many of the details surrounding Craig's untimely demise. We were to have our monthly PCTU Board meeting on July 6th, but that was postponed to July 13th because Craig was not feeling well. I was unable to attend that meeting due some problems with my back, but I can assume that Craig did not attend either. It is my understanding that when Craig failed to show at the Picnic on Saturday, July 16th, there was cause for concern. Bob Daubert went to Craig's house

From the Past President

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MEETING NOTICES

DATE/TIME: **Thursday, August 11, 2005**
7:00 p.m. Social • 7:30 p.m. Meeting
PROGRAM: **Speaker:** Mike Adams - Fishing Guide from Tennessee. Mike runs float trips on the Watauga and South Holston Rivers
Topic: Fishing the Watauga & S. Holston Rivers

DATE/TIME: **Thursday, September 15, 2005**
7:00 p.m. Social • 7:30 p.m. Meeting
PROGRAM: **Speaker:** Brent Martin
Topic: Little Tennessee River Land Trust

A Chapter Board of Directors meeting is scheduled for **Wednesday, September 7, 2005** at 6:30 p.m. at the Log Cabin of the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship on Kanuga Road. All members are invited. ➤

Welcome to our New Members

We are happy to welcome the following new members to Pisgah Chapter of Trout Unlimited.

Leonard Overstreet Al Rolla John Peterson

Craig Larson

Craig's son Chris has requested that donations be made to NCTU Rivercourse in memory of his Father. Donations may be mailed to:

NCTU Rivercourse
C/o Pisgah Chapter
P.O. Box 841
Hendersonville, NC 28793-0841

Bob Daubert ➤

Tributes to Craig Larson

See page 5 for tributes received as remembrances of Craig.

Angling the Catalogs

Jim Heller

One interesting aspect of fly-fishing is the challenge posed by the myriad of catalogs that my letter carrier is forced to cram into my mailbox. I have two in front of me as I type. The Cabela's book is called Fly-Fishing. The L.L.Bean book is simply called Fishing. I suspect that L.L.Bean believes that there is only one kind of fishing - with flies - and that it would be redundant to call it fly-fishing.

The other aspect of catalogs is that some anglers really don't need them and it is a waste of time to read them. This group I call the "Stealth Anglers" or "Purists." The Purists make up most of the membership of Pisgah Chapter. The other group I call the "Neophyte Anglers" or "Wannabes." The Wannabes number very few in our chapter and is the group of which I am a member. To explore this subject, let's start at the trout end of the sport and work toward the angler.

Flies

L.L.Bean offers over 2,000 flies; just looking at the names of the new patterns for 2005, we wannabes are already reaching for our VISA card. How can one resist buying such exotic offerings such as Crystal Stimulator Rubberlegs, Evergreen Eastern Green Drake, Gold Bead Purple Prince, Hot Wing Elk Caddis or Tungsten Hot-Wired Prince? For a mere \$10.05, you can get one of each of these beauties. Of course, one should buy more than one to allow for the fact that these flies also catch Rhododendron and other exotic vegetation along stream banks. Cabela's also offer new flies but with much less esoteric names: Pale Evening Dun, Coffin Fly, Ginger Quill, Fat Albert and Cad-dis Poopah. These five flies from the other side of the tracks cost \$6.83.

The purists, of course, don't carry any flies. When they arrive at the stream, if your vision is good, you will be able to see them crawling along the stream edge carefully observing the insect species. They are also observing what part of the life cycle the critters are currently at. The purist then withdraws from the stream edge while simultaneously extrapolating where the life cycle will be fifteen minutes later. This is the time it takes the purist to tie several flies that duplicate specie and subsequent life cycle in ten-minute intervals. The

purist also files the hook so as to remove the barb and sharpen the point to a tolerance of one micron. This allows catch-and-release with minimum damage to the trout. (I, of course, have a more advanced technique which I call the "remote release." With my technique, you don't have to handle the fish at all.)

Leaders

Now we're getting into a controversial area. For the wannabe, it's simple. L.L.Bean offers Scientific Anglers® Mastery Leaders and Tippet Material. What gives us wannabes confidence in the product is the little "®" attached to Anglers. I think that this means it is registered in some government office and is protected from duplication by the Federal Government. The leaders are offered in 7 1/2' and 9' lengths and 0X-7X sizes. You can get a set of three for \$9.25. Cabela's offers a similar assortment of lengths and sizes for the same price under the brand name Umpqua. The one potentially troublesome point is that I didn't observe the little "®" attached to Umpqua.

The purists have a completely different take on this - almost to the point of a fetish. In my opinion they are making a really simple matter very complicated. They consult ancient texts and nomographs. They apply the latest theories of Statics and Dynamics. They devise various mathematical formulae which tell them how to make the "perfect" leader. They spend countless hours cutting various diameters of bulk leader material into various lengths. They then tie all of these pieces together with special knots according to a secret formula. This will equip them to scientifically angle under any conditions in the field. Although the catalogs offer various Leader Books to hold these assortments, there is not enough capacity to hold the entire collection. So the purists file their handiwork between pages of The Old Farmer's Almanac. As I was researching this essay, I happened to turn to a section of the Cabela's catalogue devoted to this craft; two pages were extolling the benefits of the Frog Hair Leader Tying Kit from Gamma Technologies. Maybe the purists are on to something. Any company with a Greek letter as part of its name must be on the cutting edge of technology.

Fly Line

"Fine-tune your presentation with Scientific Anglers® Fly Lines. An AST (Advanced Shooting Technology) coating adds 20 feet (sic) or more to your cast and gives you less tangles, for superior performance over the widest range of conditions. These ultra durable lines are available in a full range of tapers, line weights and colors, so you'll find the line you need to catch the fish you're after." So says Leon Lewellyn Bean. Just what we need here in Western North Carolina. A guaranteed hooking of the flora on the opposite bank which is usually less than twenty feet from the near bank where I'm standing. I also looked through Cabela's but didn't find what I was looking for - a line guaranteed to cast less than 20 feet. For such a line I would gladly pay a premium. This would be repaid many times by the cost savings in flies lost to the vegetation on the opposite bank.

While this is a problem to us wannabes, it is a simple matter to the purists. They have such casting skill that they can present a fly inside a target with a diameter tolerance no larger than a Hills Brothers coffee can (the original one-pound variety as featured in the movie and novel, *The River Flows Through It*).

Rods and Reels

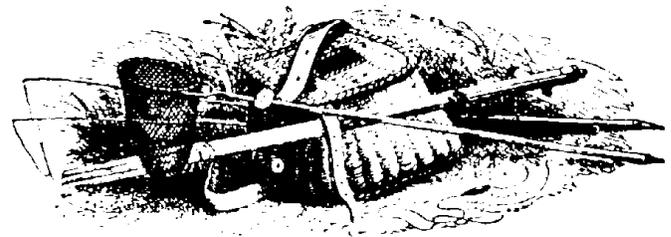
L.L.Bean devotes ten pages, Cabela's thirty-two pages, to rods and rod and reel combos from which we neophytes can choose. The price for the outfit can very easily be north of \$400 and the rod alone \$200. I spent quite a sum less, however. I received a plastic card with a toll-free number to call if I ever broke my rod; L.L.Bean would then send a replacement by FedEx. Although I'm quite clumsy, I have not had to test this feature yet. However, I did drop my reel and break off the thingy that attaches the reel to the rod. I called L.L. to ask if I could have it repaired by them at my expense. "No!" they said. However they sent me, shipping prepaid, a replacement reel rigged with backing and fly line for exchange at no cost. It pays to lead a clean life.

The purists make their own rods out of aged bamboo which has been acclimated to the temperature and humidity conditions of Western North Carolina. As far as reels are concerned, the sky's the limit. The one thing I can never understand is why fly reels are so much more expensive than spinning reels. The gearing and mechanism on a spinning reel seems to be much more complicated

than that of a fly reel. And when the purists are using their expensive Rolls-Royce versions of a fly reel, they never use the mechanism anyway; they are constantly feeding line in and out by hand. Some use a Stripping Basket (L.L.Bean, \$19.50) but the more experienced form loops with their free hand much like a cowboy/cowgirl coils his/her lariat.

I have maxed out my VISA and will have to draw this rambling to a close. As the catalogue aficionado realizes, we have barely scratched the surface. Subjects left to be covered are accessories, tools, sunglasses, vests, packs and luggage, float tubes, apparel (clothing in Cabela's), wading shoes (boots) and waders.

Of course, the best bargains to be found and the most expertise given to us wannabes (and to a few purists) is from our local outfitters, especially the loyal supporters of our chapter who advertise in *Snags and Snarls*. Also, it goes without saying that the premier source of flies that really catch trout and not vegetation are available from one of the chapter's greatest assets, Al Rogers. 🐾



Davidson River Project Workday

On Monday, August 22nd, we will be doing the next big workday for the Davidson River Project. This one includes about 30 kids from Brevard College, so we need 15 or so chapter folks to help direct the efforts, and do the skilled jobs. We are going to build 350 feet of rail fence and a set of steps at the Art Lobe trail parking area off the entrance road to the Davidson River Campground. Meet at the Pisgah Forest Ranger station at 9:30 a.m. for an orientation. We will serve lunch. Please come if you can, and either sign up at the August meeting or let Bob Daubert or Skip Sheldon know you are coming. 🐾

From the Past President

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and when there was no answer, he called 911.

Craig Larson was an outstanding member of the Pisgah Chapter of Trout Unlimited. My first real close contact with Craig began when we both served on the Board of Directors in 1999. Craig served as the Secretary and Editor of Snags and Snarls. After his term on the Board was complete, Craig continued to serve as the Editor of our newsletter. He also served a term as the Chair of our highly successful Fly Fishing School. During my term as President Craig assumed the duties of the coordinator of the Davidson River Project and returned as a member of the Board of Directors. At the same time Craig became extensively involved with the NCTU Rivercourse, serving as its co-director for the past two years. Craig's dedication to that cause helped Rivercourse grow into a successful youth camp.

Last summer I approached Craig about becoming the President of PCTU. At first he was reluctant to accept that challenge. He felt that he was already stretched too thin with Rivercourse and the Davidson River Project. His dedication to the Pisgah Chapter and its successful continuation as a premier chapter of Trout Unlimited led Craig to divest himself of his beloved Davidson River Project and accept the position of President of PCTU. This was no small sacrifice on his part.

Under Craig's leadership we became the only chapter in the Southeast to be awarded an Embrace a Stream Grant from Trout Unlimited. Craig instituted a new member orientation meeting to help new chapter members become acquainted with the chapter and its goals.

I have lost a friend and com-

patriot with the passing of Craig Larson. I remember our heated discussions on the Board, but in the end we were both arguing for the same thing, only from different perspectives.

It is written in Talmud "that he whose deeds exceed his wisdom is like a tree whose branches are few, but whose roots are many, so that even if all the winds in the world come and blow upon it, it can not be stirred from its place".

Craig, we will all miss you!

Jack A. Frisch ➤

Becoming an Outdoor Woman Fly Fishing Class

The North Carolina Wildlife Education Center is looking for help on Saturday, August 6th in assisting women learning to fly fish. You would be required to take one or two women into the Davidson and assist them in fishing. Your assistance is needed from about 3:30 p.m. to 6 p.m.

The portion of the Davidson that they will be fishing is the Private Waters of the Davidson River Outfitters thanks to Kevin Howell. As a special bonus to those who volunteer, Kevin is allowing you to fish this section on July 26th from six until dark. You would meet at Davidson River Outfitters just before 6 p.m. to get authorization to fish.

If you are interested in volunteering please contact Lynn Veurink at 828-877-4423 or e-mail him at lynn.veurink@ncwildlife.org. Hope that you can help in this fun and interesting project.

Bob Daubert ➤

Fly of the Month - Black Foam Ant

Jack Frisch

It is getting to be that time of the year when terrestrials are a very productive pattern. Fish the ant near the tree line and let it plop in the water imitating an ant falling off a tree.



Hook: Dry fly size 14-18

Thread: Black

Abdomen: Black closed cell foam

Thorax: Black closed cell foam (I use Rainy's Float Foam)

Legs: Black hackle

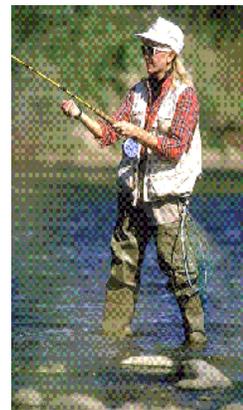
Cut 'Float Foam' in half length-wise

Notch one end of the foam body
Tie foam on top at hook end (the end you notched out) with notched-out area facing up

Pull foam back over hook and tie down at 1/2 to 2/3 the length of the hook shaft

Tie in black hackle at this point to make legs

Tie off head to form rounded head. ➤



Tributes to Craig Larson

Craig set an example of leadership worth noting by all of us. For as long as I can remember being a member of PCTU Craig has been active in some worthwhile function which contributed to the goals of TU. He ran picnics, joined in work details, and spoke his opinion at just about every PCTU meeting. Perhaps most importantly, Craig picked up the slack.

When there was a need for new DRP leadership, Craig stepped in to take over the project. When we were hurting for a new president, Craig stepped in to take over the presidency. When we were all scratching our heads about the then new Rivercourse program, Craig jumped in with enthusiasm and helped to make it work. When our Line Management and Knots class of the Fly Fishing School was hurting for an instructor, Craig was there - and with his own choice of knots which only he could tie. Picking up the slack is needed in any organization, and PCTU does this well, but Craig showed many of us how to do it. He will be missed by all of us, and we must pick up the slack from his absence.

David Maxwell

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I was sharing e-mails with some old friends from Georgia who are Craig's counter parts in Georgia's trout camp. They had all met at this spring's Regional Rally and shared information on the camping experience and objectives. In the process, I recalled the last time I saw Craig, and wanted to share that:

I attended Rivercourse one afternoon this year to speak on the Back The Brookie project. I stayed

for the cook-out and to help the kids on their last evening of fishing. The river was kind to them that evening, being some of the best fishing of what otherwise had been a rainy and high water week. I had spoken a few words with Craig during the day, but nothing of consequence. During the fishing, Craig was on the bank, managing the proceedings and frankly looking rather pleased as another Rivercourse moved to closure. At twilight, as most of the kids and adults were packing it in, I noticed Craig along the bank breaking out a light rod and happily casting to a nice little run. So there in the early dusk was Craig, looking quite pleased, and rod in hand. That was the last time I saw him, so that's how the memory banks will keep him.

John C. Kies

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Last fall 5 of the TU'ers from Pisgah planned a trip to fish the San Juan in New Mexico. It ended up with 10 people going: Jim Dore, Bob Daubert, Sogi, Craig and myself as well as a friend of Jim, his two sons, my son-in-law and his friend.

Craig and I roomed together and fished together 4 of the 5 days. We had an amazing time. The fishing was excellent, the facilities were fine, the food excellent, the guides terrific and best of all was the comradeship and fellowship we all felt with each other. Craig and I got to know each much better and it's hard to believe that he is now gone. We had hoped to have more wonderful trips like that in the future. Alas, it is not to be, but the memory of that trip with Craig will always be with me. He was a fine friend, a great TU'er, and a wonderful

leader of our pack and he will sorely be missed.

Stu Cohn

=====
I am shocked at the news of Craig's death. I am at a loss for words to adequately express my feelings. I will certainly contribute my recollections of Craig as both a PCTU Board member and as a loyal member of the Chapter. Craig had previously served as Secretary when I first came on the Board. This was at least 6 or 7 years ago. He was Editor of the Newsletter at that time. It was during Tim Laufer's presidency. He then left the Board and came back on during my term. He graciously agreed to serve as the DRP coordinator when I approached him about it and then agreed to serve as President when I approached him about that last year.

Jack Frisch

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He was a strong and creative force in PCTU and a great personality. He will be sorely missed.

Chris Ellis

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I just heard about Craig. I am so sorry. I really liked him not just as a customer, but as a person. I will miss him.

Juls A. Allen

Copy-Works!

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All I know about producing this newsletter I learned from Craig and I thank him for broadening my horizons in this respect. In looking over past issues I found that I had inadvertently changed the appearance of the headline style so Craig, to honor you, I'm putting it back to how it used to be. I'm going to miss you.

Carol Ten Broek 🐟

Picnic Recap

This year's Pisgah Chapter picnic, held July 16th at the UNC Asheville Kellogg Conference Center near Hendersonville, was a delight. A week's worth of rainy days gave way to the sun, reminding attendees that umbrellas not only shelter us from cloudbursts but provide blessed shade.

About 40 Chapter members and their families showed up, grinning as they greeted old friends and made new ones. They brought loads of tasty side dishes and desserts to complement steaming charcoal-grilled hot dogs. The string band Sassafras sparked our annual celebration with lots of good old foot-tapping tunes. A door prize drawing also proved a crowd-pleaser. Many thanks to the Kellogg Center folks, who were great to work with, and to all who contributed in various ways to make our 2005 picnic memorable indeed.

See you next summer!

Norris McDowell 🐾