



Cross Currents

November 2007

Comments from Curt

"To be caught, a fish must first open its mouth." Chinese proverb

Sometimes it's hard to comprehend all the skills you've acquired over the years of fishing. Not just the fishing stuff, like which fly to drop in the water when you're trying to tie it to your tippet (answer: the last one you have of that pattern and size) or how to pack non-matching sections of different fly rods into a tube. But, you know, all the incidental things like identifying the difference between a poison ivy rash and a poison oak rash, knowing how far it is to the next public telephone to call your wife when you lock your car keys in the car and how to identify symptoms of hypothermia after you fell in while stringing up your rod.

You get a feel over time how long the fish were that you caught, which, if you're a beginner I'll pass this on, is directly proportionate to the length of fish your friend says he caught. Lots of woodcraft like that is picked up over the years. Usually you know your dull knife blade is going to slide off that stick you're trying to cut and slice your hand real bad about five minutes before it actually happens. That way you can be prepared with the dirty handkerchief to put over the wound to stop the bleeding.

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Kids Trout Outing



Photo courtesy of Clearwater Outfitters

Kids Trout Outing is Sunday afternoon, November 4 from 12:30 – 3:00. Please tie barbless streamers, glo-balls, and other flies likely to bring success to the kids and drop them off Clearwater Outfitters by November 3. We also need volunteers to help rig up beginning at noon and to assist kids in catching and releasing trout unharmed. Michael Riley coordinates the event and questions can be addressed to him at: rileym@missouri.edu or by phone at: 882-6475 work or 817-0631 home.

Upcoming Meetings

November 6: John Holste – Kodiak Alaska, An Outdoorsman's Dream. Come hear MMTU regulars describe adventures that most of us only dream about. The meeting will be held at the Missouri Department of Conservation, Resource Science Center, Columbia. The Resource Science Center is on the east side of College Avenue, just north of Stadium Blvd. The meeting will begin at 7:00 p.m.

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I once owned a pickup that was light in the back and had no traction in the snow at all. That's why I always invited my friend Tony to hunt with me because he couldn't drive a stick-shift and he was a big fella and was good at pushing the truck out of ditches. He always swore off hunting with me but he didn't have a very good memory.

I have a friend with a wife who is really good at finding hooks lost while tying flies. She has a knack for using her feet to collect them. Those hooks usually cost the price of dinner out but at least you didn't expose yourself to tetanus. Of course, that could lead to things worse than paying for dinner but life has risks, right? That's why I have decoy fly rods scattered around the house – just in case someone gets a severe case of "snapping" disease and runs rampant before I can use the dart gun. (Shoot, I even learned stuff from watching "Wild Kingdom" when I was a kid.)

Sometimes people ask me if I'm "for real," like they couldn't acquire all this knowledge themselves. Don't underestimate yourselves. With a little hard work and application you can learn this stuff, too. Usually a mentor is a good place to start. Mine was my late Uncle Bob. He was great but unfortunately we lost him before I could learn even a tenth of what he knew. I remember visiting him in the hospital right after he had the car crash on Highway 63 while he was tying flies on the steering wheel and eating a burrito. His last words to me were, "Boy, if you only knew what I know."

– Curt Morgret

Officer Nominations

Two years have rolled by and it is time once again to choose new leadership for MMTU. The list of offices and the current nominees are (names in parentheses have not been confirmed):

President – Dean Rapp
Vice President – Lynn Kloepfer
Treasurer – Michael Riley
Secretary – Jon Deal
Program – Mike Kruse
Newsletter – Lamberson/Morgret
Membership/ Web Editor – (Jim Washabaugh)
Resources – (Jim Auckley)
Member-at-large – (Scott Rubinstein)
Banquet – (John Meyer/Lynn Kleopfer)
Program – Mike Kruse
Conservancy – (Richard Mendenhall)

We are happy to have volunteers for these offices. If you wish to get more involved and serve as an officer or board member, contact Curt Morgret or Bill Lamberson. Our contact information is on the cover.

December Chapter Dinner

The annual chapter dinner will be December 4 at Grill One 5. Cocktails will begin at 6:00 with dinner at 7:00. Grill One 5 is at 15 South 6th in the District. Please join us for this evening of informal socializing. RSVP to Curt at CMorgret@greatsouthernbank.com or 446-4776 would be appreciated.

Fall Chores

This has been a good weekend to catch up on chores. My favorite fishing is pretty well past and bird season is upon us. The tricos should be nearly finished for the year on the Current. I have had a couple good days there recently, perhaps with fish taking as consistently as on any of the many days that I have fished that spinner fall over the years. Although it is challenging fishing, small flies and light tippets, it is among the most reliable dry fly fishing that I have found in Missouri. It seems there have been more rainbows and fewer browns than usual on the Meramec this year, and thus the dry fly fishing has been poorer than normal. There was a notable brown that rose to my Turk's Tarantula in early September, but when I saw the size of the fish I was fortunately able to yank the fly away before the fish was able to close its mouth.

The Southern Bamboo Rodmakers Gathering is this week so I'll spend a few days at Dale Fulton's Lodge on the White River. It is our tenth anniversary, and I have yet to miss a gathering. I still need to do some work on a demonstration that I'll be doing, but at least this weekend I was able to tie the necessary scuds and zebra midges for fishing while I am there. We will have two days of workshops, have an auction to raise funds for some youth and conservation projects (the SRG helped to fund our Little Piney Project), cast some bamboo rods, generally sit around and shoot the bull, and maybe if we are lucky, learn a new trick or two about building rods. Although labeled "Southern", we will have attendees from Texas to Wisconsin, Washington to New Jersey, plus one irregular from Ireland.

The soy beans were harvested on my farm this weekend. That left me driving access to parts of it that can't be reached with the pickup while the beans are still in the field. I

took advantage of the opportunity to give Abby, my Brittany, a run (no woodcock yet), and also sow 5 – five gallon buckets of walnuts to improve the timber, or, perhaps just feed the squirrels. A few deer were hanging around, but no turkeys. Perhaps they were run off by yesterday's combining.

I've also had a chance to do a little reading. Too much of it has been job applications and grant proposals for the university, but some has been related to fishing. I reread Tom McGuane's "Sons", a favorite, but thin volume that always makes me lonesome for my own son. I've also been reading from Pete Fromm's "Indian Creek Chronicles", one of my favorite books of all. It is quite a story of adventure for that young man, spending a winter isolated in the wilderness in Idaho tending hatching salmon eggs. I just received a copy of "Split and Glued", by Bill Harms and Tom Whittle. Vince Marinaro, famous for "The Ring of the Rise", was also a bamboo rod builder, and such a curmudgeon that he ordered all his rods destroyed upon his death. His family didn't quite comply and this book is written by his protégé, Bill Harms, about Vince's rods and rod building. The title comes from Marinaro signing his rods, "Split and Glued by Vincent C. Marinaro". Marinaro's rods are things of legend, and this is the first time that tapers have become available, although there are vague hints of them in Marinaro's own books. He didn't even share the tapers with Bill Harms when he was teaching Bill to build rods. Instead he taught Bill to design tapers for himself. I'm sure there will be much interest among the builders and it will be interesting to see how much of the qualities of Marinaro's rods were indeed factual, and how much legend. I'll probably turn some attention to them myself at the next transition of seasons, that of serious rod building and fly tying signaled by the end of hunting seasons.

Bill Lamberson

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Cross Currents, the Mid-Missouri Chapter of Trout Unlimited newsletter, has a circulation of approximately 300. Regular chapter meetings are held on the first Tuesday of each month, except for July. The meeting place is the Missouri Department of Conservation, Resource Science Center at Stadium Blvd. and College Ave. in Columbia, Missouri. Meeting time is 7:00 p.m.

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