



Cross Currents

December, 2002

M i d - M i s s o u r i C h a p t e r , T r o u t U n l i m i t e d

PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

Lets Eat, Not Meet

What I mean is we will meet to eat at the Pasta House INSTEAD of our regular chapter meeting, Tuesday, December 3. We will NOT meet at the Conservation building.

The Pasta House (447-0500) is adjacent to the Holiday Inn Executive Center in Columbia, near I-70 and Stadium Blvd. So bring yourself and your special other person to meet and eat with the rest of the gang. We will start socializing at 6:00 and order from the menu at 6:30.

In lieu of a photo contest you are invited to bring pictures/prints you would like to share, everybody wins!

The next 6 weeks will be filled with Banquet planning, especially ticket sales. Our ticket chairman, Ken Scott will soon have tickets for you to buy and sell. The banquet will be Thursday, February 27, at the Holiday Inn Executive Center. We are preparing for record attendance and to make it happen everyone needs to be there and to sell a few tickets. You only need to sell three tickets, more is OK, but you gotta sell 3, and buy one for you and your special other person. 3!

We need donated prizes to auction, what can you obtain? Look for your chapter and MU to be mentioned in TU's magazine in the winter issue.

So plan on meeting at the Pasta House, Tuesday night. Let's eat.

- Jeff Witten

MMTU CALENDAR

December 3, 6:00 p.m. The meeting that was previously planned has been cancelled, and in its place we will be having a dinner at the Pasta House. See President's Message for more information. (Please tell others about the change.)

January 7, 2003, 7:30 p.m. TBA

February 27, 2003 (Thursday) Annual banquet.
Holiday Inn Executive Center, Columbia.

***Best Holiday Wishes from your
friends at Mid-Missouri T.U.!***

NOVEMBER MEETING

At our November meeting, Jon Deal made a presentation on a fly-fishing trip to Alaska he and some friends made earlier this year. The presentation included some nice photos and some terrific stories about what they experienced under some really bad circumstances. (Nothing sugar-coated here!)

The party making the trek consisted of Bob Hook, Jeff Bridges, Doug Rogers (Bob's brother-in-law), Kip Padbury (a friend of Doug's), and Jon Deal. Also traveling with them was their guide, Justin.

Their original plan was to float and fish the Talichalitna River, but nothing on this trip went as they planned. Instead, they ended up on Lake Creek, about an hour northwest of Anchorage by float plane.



During their expedition, they stayed in tents and basically "lived off the land." This was not quite as easy as they might have hoped, however, because it rained nearly the whole time they were there. The most serious downside to this was that it made it impossible for them to find any dry wood with which to make a campfire. Serious problem, indeed, in Alaska.

As if being cold and wet for an extended period of time were not hardship enough, Lake Creek turned out to be no "creek" at all - it was actually a raging river due to all the rain. The nice float trip the group had planned turned out to be a survival test of the first order. Fortunately, they passed the test with flying colors.

While in Alaska, the group stayed for two nights at Wilderness Place Lodge, which they enjoyed very much. If you're interested in more information about the lodge, you can visit their Web site at www.wildernessplacelodge.com.



OCTOBER MEETING

At our October meeting, MDC's Del Lobb shared some of his knowledge about Lake Taneycomo with us. For several years, Del has been doing research into the effects of different minimum flows coming into the lake from Table Rock Dam, and his presentation included animated computer models of what actually goes on when the turbines start generating.

A fascinating evening for anyone who has ever fished Lake Taneycomo, or wanted to!

BAMBOO FOR CHRISTMAS

For this holiday newsletter, our editor has asked me to write a piece on nostalgia, which my dictionary defines as “*a wistful or excessively sentimental, sometimes morbid, yearning to return to some past period.*” Christmas is definitely a time for nostalgia, and at the risk of being called excessively sentimental (for me, unlikely) or morbid (more likely), I’ll use the season as an excuse to admit that I enjoy the nostalgic aspects of angling, particularly the pleasure of fishing bamboo fly rods.

Although bamboo rods do evoke many fond memories, I see no reason that they should be relegated to the past, and I pity anglers who have not experienced lots, where most rods are sold these days, but being made of a material that wants, above all else, to be straight, they are not particularly well-suited for most fishing. Bamboo, a natural fiber that evolved to sway in the wind, requires a gentle casting motion that is not only more practical for most fishing, but also engenders relaxation and contemplation, which is what angling is supposed to be all about.

Modern anglers often cite reasons for avoiding bamboo, including several common misconceptions: — *Bamboo rods are all expensive.* Don’t judge the cost of bamboo solely by the prices of new rods in the glossy catalogs of the few large companies that still make them, or by the prices paid by collectors for vintage, mint condition Garrisons, Gillums, or Paynes. Many individual rodmakers are building excellent rods today, and the prices of these and many vintage rods are competitive with the cost of graphite rods. Sorting out the good from the bad takes experience, but developing that knowledge is part of the adventure. Slow down and learn to enjoy the trip.

— *Bamboo rods are fragile.* Bamboo is tough stuff and is less brittle than most man-made fibers. Bamboo rods have been used to land countless salmon, steelhead, bass, and bonefish. No rod of any material is going to win a battle with a car door, but bamboo can be more easily repaired than graphite if an accident does happen.

— *Bamboo rods deteriorate with time.* Aside from a wonderful rod based on a Garrison taper that Bill Lamberson made for me last year, my newest rod was built in 1975 and has seen many, many days astream. Lots of anglers use rods that were made as early as the 1930’s. They perform as well as they did on the day they were made.

— *Bamboo rods are heavy and tiring to cast.* Bamboo rods are heavier than graphite rods of similar length. Maybe it’s a macho thing, but I somehow manage to drag that extra ounce or two around all day without fatigue. Actually, I find it much less tiring to cast a good bamboo rod than to use the staccato whiplash casting motion necessary to get light, but stiff graphite to bend.

— *Bamboo rods are all works of art for which my casting skills are not worthy.* I believe that beginners should learn to cast with a good bamboo rod because they will feel the rod work and will develop their timing more quickly than is possible with a graphite rod. And bamboo rods suitable for all skill levels are available. In the days before fiberglass, virtually all fly rods were made of bamboo, including those sold at Montgomery Ward and the local hardware store. Some are dogs, some are great. Again, sorting out which ones are suitable for you is part of the fun.

As for nostalgia, the holiday season may just be the best time to step back from the modern angling world and discover some lost joys of the past, whether you choose to be wistful, excessively sentimental, morbid, or not. And if you decide to try a bamboo rod, when it’s too cold to fish you can spend a winter evening in a comfortable chair just admiring your classic. Bamboo does look lovely in the glow of Christmas tree lights.

- Terry Finger

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Trout Unlimited
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Cross Currents, the Mid-Missouri Chapter of Trout Unlimited newsletter, has a circulation of approximately 300. Regular chapter meetings are on the first Tuesday of each month, except for July. The meeting place is usually the Missouri Department of Conservation Fisheries Research Facility at Stadium and College in Columbia, Missouri. Meeting time is 7:30 p.m. See the newsletter for any changes.

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