

#### ....Carl Richards continued

or so ago the Muskegon was the finest caddis river I've ever seen, but nobody knew what species they were. I camped out up there for a couple of years, all summer long, to key out the caddis just like I did the mayflies for *Selective Trout*. I figured out what they were and made new patterns to imitate them. The patterns appeared in *Caddis Super Hatches* and they really worked. There were five years of fabulous hatches and fish, but the zebra mussels came in and changed all that.

#### You have taken a very complex set of data and made it understandable; still, some might tend to be overwhelmed by all the information. What advice would you have for those individuals?

You need two things — the right fly and the right form of presentation. The casting part involves practice beforehand or getting some lessons. I think you should have a dissection microscope and collection vials. Take the bugs home and find out what they are. Keep a journal with times and dates. Take pictures, macro photography is much easier now, to complete the process. Before long you will have a very accurate and consistent record of hatches for that river.



On rivers like the Au Sable for mayflies and the Muskegon for caddis it can often look like there are many different types of bugs

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## SWMTU Honors Four at Annual Fundraising Banquet



The C. R. Evenson Award was presented to Jeff Alexander of the Muskegon Chronicle in "recognition of contributions toward preserving the environment." In the last year whenever we faced a new environmental issue and we were looking for more information, Jeff's work repeatedly came up. His series of articles last summer on Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations provided timely background information as we responded to the Tyler Creek fish kill. His book, *The* 

*Muskegon: The Majesty and Travesty of Michigan's Rarest River* helped inspire our board to organize this winter's Muskegon River Steelhead Symposium(see page 3). His series of articles on groundwater withdrawal have also educated many in West Michigan about an important issue for our coldwater resources.



The Cornelius M. Schrems Award was presented fishing guide, *Kevin Feenstra* of Feenstra Guide Service in "recognition of outstanding service to fellow fishermen through extraordinary contributions to the arts, skills, and lore of trout fishing." Kevin can best be described as a true 'Gentleman Sportsman.' He is widely admired for his patience, intimate knowledge of the river and the resource, his ability to teach, and his willingness to volunteer his time to schools to help with lassroom programs, and to church groups. Kevin

their Salmon in the Classroom programs, and to church groups. Kevin is admired for being an overall nice guy to everyone on and off the river.



The M. C. Bud Kanouse Award was presented in memory of Carl Richards who passed away last Memorial Day. Accepting the award on Carl's behalf was his widow, *Alecia Richards*. The award is in "recognition of exemplary service to SWMTU and to cold water fisheries issues through art, passion, leadership, contribution and volunteerism." Carl Richards was one of the key early members of the Schrems chapter. His hatching when this is not really so. It is actually only one or two main species, actually genus, but every caddisfly in a genus looks pretty much alike so one pattern can cover 50 different species of caddis. For mayflies, there are 10 or 12 important species; this is the concept behind super hatches.

It's important to remember that nothing else worked for Doug and me, our success in the sport is based on the two themes of *Selective Trout* and *Fly Fishing Strategies*, proper fly selection and proper presentation. Perhaps the novice is overwhelmed at first but they shouldn't be discouraged.

#### Are there any mysteries left to write about?

I wish I could think of one to tell you the truth because I'd like to write another book but I can't think of what to write about that has not already been done.

#### What would like your legacy to be?

Maybe I invented some new flies or changed the way that flies are tied. Doug was an equal contributor in all of this. I was the "bug man" and he was the caster, but that overlapped to some degree. We were a great team and I'm proud of our work.

chapter seminar notes became the basis for his later books. He authored 14 books on aquatic insects and fly fishing including the classic fly fishing book *Selective Trout*. He pioneered the use of insect hatch charts. He also pioneered the development of many photographic techniques for shooting insects, the evolution this art form was wonderfully demonstrated by John Miller a year ago at one of our seminars. He simplified the complex science of entomology and made it understandable to the lay person so that we knew when the insects hatched and mated, and most importantly, how to tie the proper patterns for each fly from nymph to spinner. He was previously awarded the Cornelius Schrems award in 1976."



**The Cornelius M. Schrems Scholarship** was awarded to *Kristine Boley-Morse* of MSU's Department of Fisheries and Wildlife. Sis Schrems founded this \$2,000 scholarship in memory of her husband. Kristine works full time at the Calhoun Conservation District as the Battle Creek River Watershed Coordinator. As Watershed Coordinator, Kristine has been involved in two dam removals, a stream restoration project utilizing natural channel design and several other pro-

jects. Kristine has served as a counselor and presenter for the Kalamazoo Valley Chapter of Trout Unlimited Youth River Conservation and Fishing Camp.

# Down Stream...

### Steelhead Symposium: Hot topics on cool water

By Dave DeJonge

The chapter, along with help from the Muskegon River Watershed Assembly, held its first Steelhead Symposium regarding the Muskegon River on February 24, 2007. The idea was to bring together a variety of people to talk about the issues facing the Michigan steelhead fishery. It was an opportunity to discuss the biology, river habitat, regulations and economics of steelhead fishing.

About 70 people, including 10 presenters, came to the event. Each presenter was given 20 minutes to speak and 5 minutes for questions. The Chapter is very grateful to all the presenters who took the time



The seminar covered a wide range of topics and we could not spend a great deal of time on any one particular point. This caused some problems because people wanted to keep debating hot topics such as regulations, the rate of natural reproduction, water temperatures, DNR sampling surveys, and stocking. These issues are worthy of continued discussion and in future symposiums we will focus more tightly on specific topics.

One week after the symposium an article appeared in the Grand Rapids Press by attendee and columnist Howard Myerson. In my

opinion, the article covered the overall essence of the symposium, but missed the mark on two points.

While it did the CliffsNotes version of each speaker's main point, it left out any mention of the in-depth research presentation by Ed Rutherford from the University of Michigan. His recent studies of the Muskegon River provide very valuable information for any future decisions.

Second, the article led with and focused on "cynicism tarnishing" the forum. I think this shined the spotlight too brightly on the few times when emotions did run high. Those instances were nowhere near as important as the overall content of the event. I think it is unfortunate that 40% of the article's space was devoted to Mr. Myerson's opinion about Matt Supinski's and Jeff Bacon's comments.

That's my opinion, not the opinion of the TU board. In the days since the symposium, lots of opinions have been voiced. Hopefully yours is one of them. Our objective from the beginning was to facilitate the discussion so as to inform the public and ourselves.

In the end, there are two points I think most people agree upon. One, the Muskegon River currently has great fishing opportunities and could be even better. Second, an increase in the river's overall water temperature will harm the trout fishery.

From the very beginning, Trout Unlimited was guided by the principle that if we "take care of the fish, then the fishing will take of itself."

Because of that, I believe it's in the river's best interest to do whatever we can to keep the water temperature down in the watershed. This includes removing small dams, managing urban development and getting Consumers Energy to move colder water through their dams.

If you would like to give feedback about this article, the symposium, or any future plans for the Muskegon River, give a board member a call or email the chapter at wmtu@wmtu.org.

To read each of the speaker's presentations, you can find them here: http://www.wmtu.org/articles/steelhead\_symposium.html

## Conservation Corner...

## Conservation Update News from around the State

Nestle Ice Mountain. In a press release dated April 5, 2007 Nestle announced that they are no longer moving forward with their proposed water well near the White River. Nestle stated that their initial scientific assessment indicated that the water at this site has a different mineral composition than the spring water currently bottled as their Ice Mountain brand which made this new site not suitable for their use. This new direction does not have any impact on the proposed well located northeast of the city of Evart near Twin and Chippewa Creeks. Nestle applied for and received from the DEQ a finding of "No Adverse Resource Impact" for this proposed well. In discussions with the Michigan Council of Trout Unlimited, Nestle described the purpose of this well as to allow them to minimize the ecosystem impact by spreading their water withdrawals over a larger number of wells and watersheds. The Schrems chapter and MCTU responded to this proposed well by submitting our concerns to the DEQ. For more details you can read these letters at www.mctu.org.

**Kennecott Mining.** On March 1st, 2007 the DEQ withdrew its proposed decision to approve a permit for the Kennecott Eagle Minerals Company to conduct mining operations under the Salmon Trout River in Michigan's Upper Peninsula. The decision was made after discovering that two reports on the structural integrity of the mine were not properly made part of the public record or given a comprehensive technical review. DEQ Director Seven Chester has also announced an external investigation into why these two reports were not released to the public and properly considered by the DEQ. In light of these

recent developments and previous concerns with this project, MCTU has called upon the DEQ to deny this permit. A copy of our press release can be found at www.mctu.org.

**Tyler Creek.** The Tyler Creek Committee, consisting of members of the Lansing, Kalamazoo, and Schrems TU chapters and other organizations conducted a survey of the lower section of Tyler Creek on April 4th. Braving the blowing snow and high winds, the dozen committee members split into several teams to cover Tyler Creek from 84th Street down to the Coldwater River. The survey identified several issues that we can work on improving including finding a drain tile that drains into a wetland that feeds the river and an old dump that is on a channel that drains into the river. Specific project plans are being developed as we work to improve Tyler Creek over the next two years.

**Farm Bill Proposal**. Senator Debbie Stabenow held a series of meetings across the state to gather information for the upcoming reauthorization of the Farm Bill. The Farm Bill is important since it is the single largest source of conservation spending on private lands in the federal budget. MCTU Chairman Pat Kochanny attended the Frankenmuth meeting and Schrems WMTU President Dave Smith attended the Muskegon meeting to present TU's concerns. TU is requesting changes to make the Farm Bill friendlier towards projects that benefit cold water resources and also to establish a new approach that benefits tackling issues over an entire watershed rather than strictly owner by owner as the current programs are structured. To learn more about the Farm Bill or to help in educating our legislature about this important issue, go to www.tu.org.

# **()** Just Beyond the Bend...

### SWMTU to sponsor student at Michigan Trout Camp

The Chapter is seeking nominations for children who would like to attend a summer camp all about the ways of trout streams.

The four-day camp is organized by the Kalamazoo Valley Chapter of TU. It educates 12-16 year old boys and girls about the importance of protecting our coldwater resources. Campers learn how watersheds work, collect and identify insects, and test their trout fishing skills on the Au Sable and Manistee Rivers.

SWMTU is also looking for businesses or people who would like to sponsor the student. SWMTU has pledged \$295 for this summer's camper. Any other pledges will help offset this cost.

Applications must be received by May 8, 2007. Application must include a one-page written essay on why you would like to attend camp. You should also include a letter of recommendation from a teacher, school counselor, local TU chapter, or other conservation group. Please send your application to **Ron Barch**, **1178 Valleyview Dr.**, **Hastings**, **MI 49058 or email to aldercreek@core.com**.

More information can be found on the Kalamazoo Valley Chapter TU website at http://www.kvctu.org

### WA WA SUM OUTING • JUNE 21-24, 2007

The annual membership meeting and outing will be held again this year at the Wa Wa Sum camp near Grayling. The lodge will be open for us Thursday, June 21 at noon. We have the camp until Sunday, June 24.

The membership meeting will begin at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday, June 24. Everyone is encouraged to attend. At that time, a new Board of Directors and Officers will be elected.

Wa Wa Sum Lodge is located on the banks of the main stream of the Au Sable River. *Mid June is traditionally a super time to meet* some of the best hatches of the season: yellow and olive stones, drakes and caddis flies. There's a good chance at big trout rising to a hex hatch at dark.

Fishing opportunities aren't limited to trout; Wakeley Lake offers anglers fine bass and bluegill fishing. The location is a great jumping off place beyond the Au Sable mainstream. The north and south branches, and the Manistee, are minutes away. Canoes are available if you want to explore any area streams or lakes. If you're unfamiliar with Grayling-area fishing opportunities, we'll be happy to point you in a good direction or let you tag along.

After holding the line on prices for several years, the rising cost of food and lodging means the nightly rate is increasing. The cost is \$135 for three nights, \$90 for two nights or \$45 for one night. The Board member rate, which in past years has been free, is now \$75, \$50 and \$25. This includes simple breakfasts and dinners. BYOB Please RSVP by June 14 to either wmtu@wmtu.org or call Dave DeJonge at 616-771-9690. Sleeping space inside the lodge is limited, so reserve your spot ASAP.

Complete information about the weekend and location can be found online at http://www.wmtu.org/articles/wawasum.html

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#### Reflections- President's Drift continued...

On the social side of the chapter, our annual Muskegon steelhead outing on April 14th met with some great weather and the last report I heard was that Sarah Start was outfishing all the guys for steelhead. The catch of the day, however, may go to Dave DeJonge who landed a 19" Brown on his 3 wt rod; I can't wait to see that picture!

Personally I thought that our banquet on March 23 was well executed at our new venue and everyone that I talked to about the evening had a very good time. Our banquet committee deserves everyone's thanks for planning such a great event. Unfortunately our attendance was down from last year, and also our income. As a result, the board has had to make some cut backs in our spending plans this year with support for a third salmon in the classroom sponsorship being cut (we will still support two new schools for the 2007-2008 school year) as well as our contributions to the State Council. All of our other major spending plans remain unchanged at this time.

I hope that everyone has a great opener and trout season this year, and don't forget to plan some time in your schedule to help out on one of our conservation projects this year. If the scheduled weekends don't work and if you have some free time during the week that you would like to put towards a worthwhile cause, contact Josh Zuiderveen at (616) 634-5156 or ajz600@yahoo.com and weather permitting, he can put you to work on one of our projects on the Rogue or Tyler Creek during the week.

Dave Smith, SWMTU President

# Just Beyond the Bend...

### Great Lakes Steelhead History and Tactics (Part 2) By Dick Smith

In the mid-1970s, there were incredible numbers of steelhead in some of the streams, and very few people were fishing for them. I was one of the people fishing who was fishing for them, and most of the steelhead I caught in my early years of fly fishing for them were taken on streamers. A simple streamer about three inches long, with a white chenille body, silver tinsel ribbing, gray squirrel wing, and red hackle was the best steelhead fly for me back then. It was tied like an Alaska Mary Ann with a gray squirrel wing instead of polar bear hair. I caught as many as a dozen steelhead year on that streamer. It was not until I started fishing small nymphs for steelhead that I actually caught a dozen fish in a day.

For me, the best of all steelhead flies have been small, dark, sparsely dressed nymphs. The first successful nymph pattern that I ever used for steelhead is called the Early Stonefly. It was designed to imitate the little dark stoneflies that we often see crawling out on the snow along the banks of trout streams on sunny days in February, March, and April. There are several species of small stoneflies that emerge in later winter or very early spring. They vary somewhat in size and color, but they are all fairly small and fairly dark. They are commonly a size ten or twelve and their colors very from slate gray to reddish black. One size ten nymph pattern with a dark gray or black body will imitate all of them.

On many occasions, I have given some of my steelhead nymphs to other anglers so they could use them as patterns for tying their own nymphs. When they show me the flies they have tied, they are always bigger and fatter than mine are. The tendency is always to tie them bigger so it will be easier for the fish to see the fly. I start doing that myself if I'm not careful. It doesn't hurt to have some bigger stonefly nymphs in your fly box. It does hurt not to have the small ones. Steelhead see everything. They may be big fish when they come back from Lake Michigan, but they still have the same eyes they used

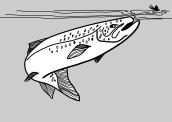
to make a living when they were small, and they ate very smallthings. They will notice a small nymph drifting by.

Steelhead that have been fished to a lot are very hard to catch. Steelhead that have been bothered by snaggers will often move away from a fly the first time it comes through. Sometimes they will flee

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from very small flies on fairly light tippets. I have had a lot of fishermen who were fishing to steelhead on redds tell me something like, "They chase the fly every time it goes through, but they won't take it." What they are really seeing is the fish moving away from the fly every time it comes near them.

I like to fish streamers, but I know it's more likely I will be successful if I use a small dark nymph. If a steelhead on a redd doesn't take a streamer on one of the first few casts, it's not likely to take it at all. Trying to



antagonize spawning steelhead into striking usually just makes them leave. It is the fly that doesn't get them all stirred up that they will eventually take, and typically that is a small nymph.

I tie most of my steelhead stoneflies on salmon hooks. I always tie some of them in the low water style of the flies made famous by A.H.E. Wood, the man who pioneered the greased line method of fishing for Atlantic salmon. They are tied sparsely and only about two-thirds of the length of the hook shank. That way, small nymph patterns can be tied on larger, stronger hooks than they would normally be on. A. H. E. Wood liked his flies tied that way and he often used flies with only a small body and no wing or hackle. He also successfully used flies with nothing but a tinsel body, and others with nothing but red or blue paint on the hook shank.

I have caught steelhead on bright colored traditional steelhead and salmon flies like the Skykomish Sunrise, Fall Favorite, Kalama Special, and chartreuse Cosseboom. There are times when they take them readily. There are also times when they won't take them at all. It's possible to fish a good steelhead run with one of those bright flies and catch nothing, and then fish it again with a small dark fly and catch a steelhead. I have not been very successful fishing a bright fly after a dark one. They will take a small dark fly when they won't take a bright one, but they don't often take a bright fly after they have refused a dark one.

I try to use the heaviest possible tippet when I use a small nymph. Light tippets in the four-pound range can be used with small flies in very cold water. A steelhead in 33 degree water is not anything like a steelhead in 46 degree water. I have taken a lot of steelhead in the winter that never even got into the backing. I have had big steelhead, fish that weighed 12 pounds or more, circle the pool a few times and then come right in. Once the water gets up around 42 degrees, which is about the bottom edge of spawning temperature for steelhead, they are much harder to control. Sometimes they make very long runs. Then they resist strongly when you try to bring them back upstream. Four-pound test is not up to the job of bringing an angry, active steelhead back upstream. With six-pound test and good knots, you have a chance if the current is not too strong, but typically you have to go after them. If you can get a fish to take a small fly on an eight-pound tippet, odds are you can play it, land it, and then release it without the fish becoming so serious-ly stressed that it will die.

Using light tackle has long been considered the height of sportsmanship. If you intent to kill a fish and the tackle you use gives it a better chance to get away, that could be considered good sportsmanship. If you intend to release a fish, and you play it so long that the fish cannot recover from the build up of lactic acid and the break down of red blood cells that always occur during heavy exertion, that is not good sportsmanship. If you intend to release a fish and instead it breaks off and gets away with a hook in its mouth, that is not good sportsmanship. An angler has a moral obligation to a fish if he intends to release it. And that obligation is to return the fish to the water so it is not in much worse condition than it was when he hooked it.

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I	BOARD OF DIRECTOR	OTICE OF ANNUAL MEET S SCHREMS WEST MICH 207 at 9:00 a.m. at Wa Wa Su	IGAN TROUT UNLIM	ITED
		PROXY		
The undersigned,, hereby nominates and appoints or any member of the Executive Board, with power of substitution, his or her true and lawful proxy for him or her and in his or her name, place stead to vote at annual meeting of the members of Schrems West Michigan Trout Unlimited, on which any and all matters which come before the members of that SWMTU chapter at that meeting.				
		Nominations are:		
Dave Smith 🖵	Paul Eberhart 🖵	Larry Risbridger 🖵	Dick Smith 🖵	Marc Montpetit 🖵
	Write-in candidat	te 🖵		
DATED this day of, 200		, 2006	(Signature)	
Please cut along dotted lir	ne and return to: Schrems West Michi	gan Trout Unlimited, P.O. Box 230094, Gra	and Rapids, MI 49523-0094 or em	ail your vote to wmtu@wmtu.org

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#### MISSION STATEMENT

To conserve, protect and restore West Michigan's coldwater fisheries and their watersheds and to provide a forum for the exchange of information concerning coldwater fisheries and the techniques and the sport of trout fishing.

# SWMTU EVENT CALENDAR- 2007

Saturday, June 9, 2007 Rogue River Habitat Project RSVP with Dave Smith at davidsmith@chartermi.net or 616-748-0101

June 21-24, 2007 Membership meeting at Wa Wa Sum Grayling, Mich.

RSVP at wmtu@wmtu.org or Dave DeJonge at 616-771-9690. Annual membership meeting and election of officers to be held at 9:00 a.m. on Sunday, June 24.

> Saturday, June 30, 2007 Rogue River Habitat Project. RSVP with Dave Smith at davidsmith@chartermi.net or 616-748-0101

> > July 8-12, 2007 Trout Camp

Kalamazoo/Valley Chapter Trout Camp for children from 12 to 16 years old at the DNR's MacMullen Conference Center on Higgins Lake. For more information- see www.kvctu.org.

> Saturday, July 28, 2007 Tyler Creek Project with Oak Brook TU Chapter. RSVP with Dave Smith at davidsmith@chartermi.net or 616-748-0101

2006-07 COMMITTEES: <u>Conservation</u>: Dave Smith, Chair – Paul Eberhart, Dick Smith, Ron Barch, Bradley Boomstra <u>Membership</u>: Gregg Start, Dave DeJonge, Andy Milnes, George Carroll • <u>Communications</u>: Gregg Start, Dave DeJonge, Ron Barch, Dick Smith <u>Fundraising</u>- Andy Milnes, Chair- Jim Scott, Teresa Skye, Larry Risbridger, Robert Fox, Erick Stark <u>State Council</u>: Paul Eberhart, Eric Starck



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