



**Roubidoux
Fly Fishers
Association**

RIVER RAP

**December
2007**

Next Meeting
at 6:30 on
Wednesday
February 20th
at Home
Town Suite's
conference
room in St
Robert



**Missouri
Stream Team
#1**

FEDERATION OF
FLY FISHERS



"A good game
fish is too
valuable to
catch only
once."
L. Wulff

2008 Annual Banquet

The 2008 Annual Banquet and auction has been set for Saturday, January 26th at Zeno's Steakhouse on Martin Springs Drive in Rolla, Missouri.

Mixer will start at 6:30 pm
Dinner Buffet at 7:00 pm
Presentation at 7:45 pm
Auction following Presentation

Tickets for the Banquet are \$20 per person and include Zeno's buffet dinner complete with beverages and dessert. **Zeno's requires reservations so send **RSVP** to Max at (573) 528-3543 or Boot at (573)308-4416 and to purchase your advanced tickets please send check to**

**Roubidoux Fly Fishers Association
c/o G.A. Maxwell
21526 Highway Y,
St. Robert, MO 65583**

Chuck Tryon has graciously volunteered to give one of his greatly heralded yet seldom seen presentations titled **"HAPPINES IS..."** Chuck describes is as choked full of laughs, a few tears and some really great fly fishing moments.

Items for auction include:

"Roubidoux Creek Special" Custom Flyrod built by Mark Van Patten
St. Croix Flyrod – 2 piece, 8 foot, 5 weight
Fishing Vests,
Tie-a-fly kits,
Fly Fishing DVD's
One weekday pass for two people at WESTOVER FARMS trout lodge
Yucky Winter Survival kit – Includes hot cocoa and Fly Fishing reading materials
Hand tied flies
Home Décor
Free Canoe rental on Little Piney River from Lay-Z-Days Canoe Rental
Fly boxes
Fishing Lanyard
Kretschmar Ham
PLUS...Many other items

2008 Dues

Wow! Can you believe it? It is already the end of the year and time for our 2008 dues. Don't forget to bring your dues to the next monthly meeting or send your dues to:

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Up Coming Monthly Meetings

January – No regular meeting instead Winter Banquet – 26 January 2008 6:30 P.M. Zeno's Restaurant in Rolla

February - Tie Your Fly - Max will demonstrate the Klinkhammer Special and Lou will do the Bitch Creek. John – may be enticed. Anyone else is welcome (3 or 4 flies would be nice)

March - Movie Madness - The Hatch; Sage Rod Building; Anatomy of a Trout Stream, if we have time a bug flick. BYOPC (Bring Your Own Pop Corn)

April - Casting Practice with obstacles. We'll set up 5 casting stations to practice different casting techniques. They will be

1. In Air mends (both left and right) and Straight Line Cast
2. Casting around an obstacle
3. Casting under an obstacle
4. Tight loop
5. Pinpoint accuracy (heavy fly such as Clouser Minnow Required) Please bring their own rod

May - Critter Collecting and Classification with fly matching. Some of us will meet early to go to the Roubidoux and take a stream sample (critter collecting). We'll bring them to the meeting to classify them and either tie a fly to match the "hatch" or just look at flies that are already in everyone's boxes to see how close we can come to matching the hatch.

A Morning Treasure

By Max

If you're like me and still get up early even though you don't have to, mornings can be a bit of a bore. Some of us get up with all good intentions but still end up staring into the depths of a coffee cup hoping for that bolt of energy to get started which somehow never comes. The worst part is feeling guilty about it. Here's something to assuage that guilt—if you get the Animal Planet channel on your Dish or Cable, between oh-six and oh-eight hundred, weekdays, there's a marvelous program called "Sunrise Earth." It's nothing more than marvelous video of natural scenes from locations around the world accompanied by the natural sounds of the earth awakening. That's it—no annoying cutesy narrative, no twit of a host wandering the back alleys of the third world, no blatant messages of religious salvation or yet another diatribe about global warming. It's just, well, beautiful, contemplative and delightful. It's that non-fishing part of fly fishing that attracts us so strongly. It's a grand background to tying a dozen flies or just continuing to stare into the depths of your coffee but now feeling like your day has started well. Enjoy.

Max has recently hired a "small" crew to help him obtain tying materials for a new streamer he is designing.
Max is now talking to "little" people.



A Discussion About Casting Instructors

by Max

Recently, while visiting Mark at his office (yes, I actually caught him in!) I mentioned that I was planning on taking the Certified Casting Instructor (CCI) exam while at Sowbug Roundup in March. Mark is not in favor of the program; I obviously am in favor, but only came to that viewpoint after a period of ambivalence dating from its inception. I think what made up my mind was the CCI preparation class I took at this year's Southern Council conclave. I intended to use it as a diagnostic of my own casting skills and as a bonus came away with a positive feeling about the CCI program.

Mark's sole point is that he has taught lots of people—probably numbering in the four figure range—how to cast and doesn't need the blessing of an external organization to tell him how to do it no matter how pro he feels about the Federation of Fly Fishers on other matters. In fact I agree with him. Mark doesn't need that imprimatur. Right up front I'll tell you that I was one of the multitudes who have benefited from Mark's remarkable teaching skills and infectious love for our sport. In fact, I will still turn to him to correct any annoying bad habit that has crept into my casting like continually dropping my back cast. I need to spend some time on the water with him to get that fixed and just enjoy his company.

And that's my main point: Mark is somebody whose skills have been proven to my satisfaction. That is to say, I know and respect those skills by association. But what of somebody new to fly fishing, or new to a locale, or new to a club even as an experienced caster seeking a little

coaching? (There's that dropping back cast again) There are options. That person can ask around, or observe some of the other anglers, make a decision about their casting skills, and then take a chance on their teaching or coaching skills. Or, that person can seek out someone who's casting and coaching skills have been verified according to a set of standards. Although I hesitate to make the comparison, it's analogous to a dedicated golf nut going to a pro for lessons except you don't always have to pay for the privilege. Oh you can, of course. There are people who make an honest living from fly fishing. A guide, for example, should be expected to coach your cast or your fish handling or your wading skills as part of the day's price. Or, you can start from scratch by signing up for one of the many fly fishing schools and pay through the nose for something that hanging out with other fly fishers and joining a good club can give you by association (there's that word again). The last method is not as fast but certainly more socially rewarding. At least a couple of people in our club have done both.

The concept of certified casting instructors is not in any way considered mandatory. At least I haven't gotten that impression. To my mind the triple-F has done fly fishing a service by establishing the certification program. What I see in it is a set of publicly proven superior skills by such as Lefty Kreh, Joan Wulff, Mel Krieger, and numerous others being boiled down into a standardized terminology that is accompanied by a set of minimum standards for the proving (and proofing) of the necessary physical skills. The vocabulary and physical skills are then combined with a means of both proving and proofing the coaching skills of a volunteer instructor. It's a voluntary program for both the instructor and the student to a known set of minimums. For the purposes of this discussion "proofing" means reviewing, analyzing, and refining; "proving" means the pass/fail examination step.

That pass/fail test is something not understood by the general fly fishing public. In order to reach the physical and coaching skills part of the certification the prospective CCI must first pass the written portion of the exam. Flunk it and you do not go on to the casting ground and kiss your fifty-buck registration fee goodbye on the way. Pass it but flunk the hands-on event, and General Grant still goes out the door. Come to think of it, the old boy walks out either way, pass or fail, and takes his whiskey and cigars with him.

I agree with the testing fee. Fifty bucks is not too much or too little to make sure that the entrant is serious and not just doing it for a lark. I think it is telling that very few pass on their first attempt yet they come back for a retry, sometimes more than once. One of the reasons that I never took the professional theatrical lighting designer exam years ago was the testing fee, but that was a nice, round thousand pass or fail and I was never that confident.

There are several versions of the written CCI exam that are rotated through. Word has not gotten around, to me at least, of any available crib sheets. I have seen some sample questions that are NOT on any of the actual question sheets and they seem reasonably tough. They require some study beforehand to connect with the standardized terminology and develop your skills of analysis. It's almost like the dreaded compound sentence word problem on a math test—if two trains leave different stations at different times and your mother wears Army boots what was the weather like in Burbank on Tuesday?

During the practical test they test your coaching and demonstration skills. It's one thing to cast a certain distance or throw a tight or open loop or to demonstrate a particular cast, but can you explain the what, when and why of what you're doing? Can you do it in simple terms? Can you find another example if the one you're using doesn't make sense to your student. Do you recognize that people learn in different ways; can you analyze, adapt and overcome?

One of the things that I don't agree with is the "once certified, always certified" piece. In this I'm of the same mind as Charlie Reading—a certified instructor should have to recertify periodically and provide some proof (a personal log of teaching/coaching events would suffice) of working with a given minimum limit of persons within a certain time frame. Add on retesting a CCI's basic skills every few years and I think it would improve the program.

Another down side is the few who consider themselves to be "among the chosen." There are those, and they are few thankfully, who consider themselves the Lord's gift to fly fishers and are not shy about it blathering about. They use the CCI designation like a nine-weight on a brook trout stream. An Arkansas quarter stick would be more subtle. It's human nature I guess, and happens in any endeavor. The vast majority of people in the CCI program are in it for the love and furthering of the sport. I include in that statement the number people who make a good living on the public side, those professionals who add it as a multiplier to other activities like guiding or shop ownership, and the club guys like me who just see it as an added personal skill that can be freely shared if asked.

