



# The Tippet

October 2001

## October Meeting Program

Dave Corcoran

*(Given the undisclosed location of our esteemed president, I thought I'd bring you Dave's description of his upcoming program - Tim)*

The program I'm set to give is called, "Fly Fishing The Seasons of Montana". It's designed to give the audience an introduction to the fly fishing opportunities in and around the Bozeman area as seen through the eyes of local anglers. I'll talk briefly about our well known areas and hatches but I'll also tell your club about smaller, out of the way places that visitors don't always know about. I'll talk about fly patterns, techniques, and tips that can make the difference between a frustrating day and a successful one. I'll be available to answer questions following the program.

A bit of information about me, I've been in the fly fishing business in Montana for the past 23 years. I started as a fly fishing guide in West Yellowstone for Bud Lilly and then for the past 19 years my wife Lynn and I have owned and operated The River's Edge fly fishing shop in Bozeman. During the winter months we travel to warmer destinations salt water fly fishing. We've been around the globe in pursuit of bonefish, tarpon, permit, travalley, and just about anything else that swims in clear water surrounded by palm trees.

Regards,

*Dave Corcoran*



## Putting Back

As an Environmental Manager for a city with over half a million people, a lot of interesting things cross my desk. The issues, naturally, are complex and the variety never ceases to amaze me. But for the most part, my problems, and yours too no matter where you live, often revolve around air pollution or water pollution in some form or fashion.

The main problem in dealing with complex environmental issues is that everyone has an opinion but rarely are these opinions in agreement. When a thousand accredited scientists say the planet is warming at an alarming rate because of man-made air pollutants, and another thousand accredited scientists say that, yes, the planet is getting warmer but it's just a natural cycle that will work itself out, and then another thousand accredited scientists come along and say there's just too many flatulent cows out there, who do you believe? This is the sort of thing that can really make your brain hurt.

To make matters worse, just when everyone finally agrees that there actually is a problem, no one can get together on a solution. Just look at all of the "possible" solutions the scientific community is throwing out to solve our energy shortages. You've seen them. In fact, you've been seeing them for about 40 years now but can you honestly say that, as a nation, we're any closer to kicking our dependency on foreign oil? While everyone is quick to offer imaginative solutions to our environmental problems, the sad fact is, a viable solution is rarely found. There will be tons of money spent on additional studies and monitoring but rarely will anything of note result in something that comes close to actually fixing a major environmental problem.

Now that I've really bummed you out, go take a Prozac and a short nap and then we'll take a hard look at how all of this affects us as fly fishers. All right, let's see now, mercury

and old pesticides have contaminated the fish in at least 60% of our nation's waters. Water rights issues are draining trout streams from Montana to Texas. Non-native species are out-competing natives to the point that many fisheries are on the brink of extinction. Introduced species have brought in diseases that have wiped out entire rivers. Public access seems to diminish more every year. An on and on and on. Are you mad yet? You'd better be because it is your sport that is being exterminated.

So what are we going to do about it? One of my favorite writers, Thomas McGuane, offers this bit of advice in the introduction of his classic work, "The Longest Silence". He says; "We have reached the time in the life of the planet, and humanity's demands upon it, when every fisherman will have to be a riverkeeper, a steward of marine shallows, a watchman on the high seas. We are s.

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### Clearwater Fly Casters 2001 Officers

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CFC membership dues are \$20/year for individuals, \$25/year for families, \$10/year for students, \$50/sustaining and \$300/lifetime.

Meetings on 2nd Wednesday, Sept - May, at Lakey's Grill, 300 S Grand, Pullman, WA

Wet Fly time at 6:00pm, dinner at 6:30pm and program at 8:00pm

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beyond having to put back what we have taken out. We must put back more that we take out. We must make holy war on the enemies of aquatic life as we have against the gillnetters, polluters, and drainers of wetlands. Otherwise, as you have already learned, these creatures will continue to disappear at an accelerating rate. We will lose as much as we lost already and there will be next to nothing, remnant populations, put-and-take, dim bulbs following the tank truck."

This is one of those rare environmental issues that you, as an individual, can become an integral part of a viable solution. You see, we really can fix many of our broken fisheries by simply putting back more than we take out, as Mr. McGuane so wisely advises. "Putting back" can take many forms, from a club rolling up it's sleeves and physically restoring an eroded creek bank to writing letters to the politicians that want to de-water your favorite trout stream. The bottom line is, you guessed it, becoming a part of the Federation of Fly Fishers.

We are the only organization on this sadly abused planet that is tackling all of the conservation issues mentioned a couple of paragraphs ago. And that's just the short list. We are doing much more indeed. Most importantly, every bit of our effort is directed to maintain your sport of fly fishing. Need I really say more? Please join us - you and your children will be glad that you did!

*(by Brian Camp, President of the Southern Council, for the FFF ClubWire Email NewsWire)*

## **Wanted: New editor for the Tippet! Fame, fortune, perks**

It's been fun these last two years but the time has come for me to pass the pen onto another hapless victim, er ... I mean volunteer. If you're interested in serving the club please contact me at 883-4572 or [greenecat@turbonet.com](mailto:greenecat@turbonet.com)

Cheers,  
Tim Cavileer

## Fishing Tips for Parents

1. Fish with your kid.
2. Let your kids go fishing, even if you don't want to take them.
3. Let your kids buy supplies and tackle. That's half the fun of fishing.
4. If your kids are young, take them to a place where fish are easy to catch and are small.
5. Let kids fish as long as they want. Let them get obsessed
6. Let the kids go off and do their own thing. It can get to be incredibly annoying and/or frustrating if there's an adult standing over them barking orders.
7. At least pretend to act excited when your kid catches a fish. It can quickly ruin a day of fishing if the kid feels you don't want to be there, and they're just dragging you down.
8. If you know how to fish, don't give your kid too much unsolicited advice, although it can be helpful if the kid is young.
9. Let your kid teach you how to fish; participate in the fishing. This can be quality bonding time.
10. Remember that fishing and spending time with family is just as or more important than homework.
11. Have fun; that's the entire point of going fishing in the first place. And whatever you do, **DON'T LET YOUR KID THROW ROCKS IN THE WATER!**

*(by Matthew Louv of the San Diego Fly Fishers for the ClubWire Email Newswire. 12 year-old Matthew started his fishing career at age 3, in the humidifier at home).*

## Book Excerpt

"We have reached the time in the life of the planet, and humanity's demands upon it, where every fisherman will have to be a riverkeeper, a steward of marine shallows, a watchman on the high seas. We are beyond having to put back what we have taken out. We must put back more than we take out. We must make holy war on the enemies of aquatic life as we have against gill-netters, polluters, and drainers of wetlands. Otherwise, as you have already learned, these creatures will continue to disappear at an accelerating rate. We will lose as much as we have lost already and there will be next to nothing, remnant populations, put-and-take, dim bulbs following the tank truck."

*(from the Longest Silence, by Thomas McGuane)*

## Upcoming Events

**October 10, 2001** 6:00 pm. Clearwater Fly Casters meeting at Lakey's Grill in Pullman

**October 17, 2001** CFC Board/Conservation meeting, 5:30 pm at Rico's in Pullman

President	John Toker ( <a href="mailto:johntoker@hotmail.com">johntoker@hotmail.com</a> ) 332-6603
Vice-President	Jim Siebe ( <a href="mailto:jsiebe@moscow.com">jsiebe@moscow.com</a> ) 883-0622
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Newsletter Editor	Tim Cavileer ( <a href="mailto:greenecat@turbonet.com">greenecat@turbonet.com</a> ) 883-4572

## Tying Phylosophy

Have you ever noticed the "mystic" that some "gurus" try to introduce into their tying process, or the ultra realistic detail that others strive to get? It is almost as if you can't become a member of their inner circle unless you buy into it. Don't get me wrong on this, if that is what turns them or you on, and you believe it helps you catch more fish, then I wish you happy tying and good fishing. I'll be the first to agree that having confidence in one's approach adds greatly to success on the water.

In my fifty some odd years of tying and fishing I have taken a lot of wrong forks in the road and have had to back track many times (read that as: wishful thinking and good sounding theories that didn't work.) With the passage of years I have developed my own philosophy of tying, which in turn affects the way I fish to a great extent. More on that later.

Fly tying isn't really a mystery. It can vary from quite simple techniques to very complicated time consuming procedures. Both approaches work on occasion from the fish's viewpoint. If you are tying Atlantic salmon flies for show and arts sake you are surely stuck with the complicated time consuming procedures. I have seen some extremely realistic flies, especially some nymphs that were pieces of art. The tiers when questioned would admit that each would spend the better part of an hour to several hours on each creation depending on the level of detail. In the 1950's some very realistic plastic nymphs showed up on the market. They looked as if they could crawl off the table and they were certainly more realistic than anything I could tie but they didn't produce worth Jack. That's about the time I gave up on trying to make exact copies of bugs, besides, oh does it hurt to lose a fly in which you have so much time invested.

When you stop and think about it, the fly really offers only a visual stimulus to the fish. Missing is the taste, smell, texture, and a host of other details we about which we can only speculate. If the degree of exact duplication of an insect was the measure of success of a fly then the entomologist had better start looking harder for that here- to-fore undiscovered insect species,

"Ephemeroptera, Distinctus, La Royal Coachman." On the other hand fish have also been known to strike at a lot of other items that to our eyes have no resemblance to fish food, for example cigarette butts and strike indicators.

I started this column with plans to discuss flies and patterns that can be tied very very quickly, say three to four dozen an hour for an accomplished amateur. But my train of thought is taking me elsewhere, so lets go with the flow, and continue on tying philosophy. Some of my early fly tying books recommended half-hitching and cementing after every step and some very good tiers go to extra lengths to make sure their flies are very durable. Let me give some examples; now I'm not saying they are wrong, I just have a different viewpoint. It may be that they just do it the way they were taught, accepted the reasons given for it at the time, and haven't thought about since.

The first example of taking extra steps for durability's sake is the twisting of the peacock herl and tying thread into a rope before wrapping it into a body. I know that many of you do it this way. My question is why? I can't remember the last time I had a trout's teeth shred a peacock herl body. The second example is using the loop method of dubbing almost exclusively. Sure it makes a durable body but is it really necessary? Have you ever had the dubbing come off a fly made with dubbing a single waxed thread? The loop method has its place for very bushy, heavy-duty applications, but I believe that it is over used especially on smaller trout flies. And you have to admit that compared to dubbing on a single thread it is more time consuming.

Now here is an issue that is sure to rise some eyebrows. Is it really necessary to complete every fly with head cement? On some flies, especially the larger patterns with large heads, the heads can take a beating and in those cases head cement is an asset. But how about those tiny dries, emergers, and nymphs, how much does cement add to a well-tied whip finish? Remember the use of cement first started when the only threads we had were silk or other materials with a high rot factor. That's not the case today. I have enough trouble

trying to thread a fine leader tippet through the eye of a tiny fly without fighting cement.

Now many of you may be disagreeing with me at this point and that's OK. From my experience I rarely retire a fly because it came undone; it is much more likely that I'll retire it on the bottom of the river or donate it to the brush overhanging a promising pocket of water. With little time invested in the fly and another dozen in my vest, I don't worry about losing flies. As a result my casting may be more aggressive and I fish spots many others pass by. If I can entice a larger fish at the cost of a fly or two I figure I'm ahead. After all I didn't spend a lot of time at the vise on each one. Just food for thought - think about how you tie and why. Everyone who seriously ties and fishes long enough will develop his own theories and approaches; my point is that one should take the time to ask, "Why do we do it that way?"

P.S. While I'm not an advocate of the super realistic fly I do appreciate the craftsmanship and skill that goes into those creations. Some of them are things of beauty. I also feel strongly that shape, size, color, and proportions are important ingredients to a good looking, successful fly.

*(by Jim Cramer of the Russian River Flycasters of Santa Rosa, CA for the FFF ClubWire Email NewsWire)*

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## Tying Tip

If you're using breast or flank feathers for an upright wing with a hackle as well, tie in the mallard or breast feathers in the normal manner. Pull up, divide the wing, and apply a little head cement to their full length. Let it dry, and then wrap your hackle behind and in front of the wing.

Now, strip the cement off the wings by pinching them with your thumb and fingernail and pulling up. The head cement will come off easily because of the natural oils in the feather. This method will prevent any fibers of the wing being caught up during the wrapping of the hackle.

*(by Bill Starr of the Osprey Flyfishers of BC)*



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