

# Clearwater Fly Casters

September, 2003

# The Tippet

## From the President's Desk

Well here I am, at the beginning of another semester. Summer is gone. It was short, hot, and busy. My rods got out of the truck exactly twice for exercise on the Joe, and those were fun times. I had the opportunity early in June to introduce some easterners to the Joe. They caught a few fish and I had a great time watching them fish a real river. It was at 5000 cfs. My second time out was the fish-out in July-always a good time-good fishing, good food, many friends, and the introduction of Reid Miller's exchange student to fly fishing. She had a great time and caught some fish. At the end of July we said our final good bye to Dave Engerbretson, who found eternal relief from his illnesses. I will always remember him because I fish with one of his rods purchased at our last auction.

Looking ahead, we have a BBQ scheduled for September 10, Sunnyside Park, around 6 pm. This is the second time for a September BBQ. I found the last one to be an enjoyable time to visit about summer fishing trips. Whoever has the casting rings, bring them. If we want to do a casting contest we need to get started early to beat the short day length.

The rest of the meetings for this coming year are already scheduled into the University Inn Best Western, Moscow. I will be checking with previously invited speakers Bob Harwood and Reid Miller for October and November meetings. I intend to try a little different meeting schedule this year (the remainder of my term). The speakers will be featured first in the meeting, as soon as everyone is finished eating. The December speaker, hopefully, will be a student who is the winner of our Alspach scholarship. I need to

get the announcement of that competition out soon.

Also in September, it seems will be bon voyage to John Toker, who has accepted a position manager of a bone fishing operation in the Bahamas. See John about saving you a space at his lodge. He will be at the September meeting. Pursuant to that effort, page 2 has a list of items that he deems inappropriate for the Bahamas and prudent to sell.

*Bruce Frazier*

## ST JOE FISHOUT

It has been an interesting year on the St. Joe. It started with a trip on opening weekend with John Read when the river was flowing at 7000 CFS. John caught the only two fish from a big eddy created where Eagle Creek flows into the river. He says he caught them on nymphs, but I saw an empty worm container in the bushes on my way back to the truck. Then last week when I was up there the river was running at only 450 CFS, about as low as I've ever seen it. And of course, there were several trips in between. Without a doubt the most enjoyable and memorable was the club outing in July.

John Read and Jim Palmersheim started the trip out on the Sunday prior to the scheduled weekend with a float down a portion of the roadless area. Actually, John has been going up there earlier and earlier every year. Rumor has it that he bought Fly Flat Campground and plans to move in there on opening day for the entire season. Check out the bumper sticker on his truck and you will see why he might be able to get away with this. I'm sure you will hear about this year's trip in September and October, and November and, well, probably forever. Apparently it was a genuine trip

from Hell explained in part by the fact that they missed two critical clues. One, the river was running about one third below normal, and second, the trail down to the river was called Broken Leg Creek Trail. I'm sure this whole thing will get them into the finals for the Darwin Award.

The rest of us began to roll in on Wednesday and Thursday with a few stragglers on Friday and Saturday. It was a great turn-out with a large number of members and several guests. I won't try to name them all because, no doubt, I'd miss

(Continued on page 2)



Siriluk (Lin) Chiarakorn, my visiting grad student from Thailand. She had never held a fishing rod of any kind before coming up to the St Joe Fishout. I gave her a 10 minute lesson in casting in the campground. She caught 15 trout while up there - all by herself. It was a thrill of a lifetime for her - and for me too!

- Reid Miller



"The charm of fishing is that it is elusive but attainable. A perpetual series of occasions for hope." - John Buchan

## Upcoming Events

- September 10, 2003** 6pm Clearwater Fly Casters Annual BBQ at Sunnyside Park in Pullman, WA. Casting games at 4:30pm.
- September 17, 2003** 5:30pm Conservation/Executive meeting at the Daily Grind in Pullman, WA.

## Fluorocarbon By Bob Shirley, WSCFFF President

someone. On Thursday night five people, including John and Jim just recently returned from the wilderness and close to dead, showed up and I was the only one with food. We managed to turn two salmon steaks and a bunch of stuff in the stock box into a tolerable catch-of-the-day stew that fed all six of us. If you haven't had the real version of that by the way, it's in A.J. McClane's North American Fish Cookery and is delicious.

Breakfasts were the usual culinary version of what Patrick McManus calls a "mild stationary panic" with God only knows what being thrown on Darve Tharp's industrial sized grill. There was no Spam in evidence, so I guess that's an improvement on past years. Friday night's feed was the usual multiple Dutch Oven extravaganza. There were 22 folks to dinner that night. I've had several requests for the recipe for the baked beans. They have evolved over the years on several St. Joe trips and this year I remembered enough of the whole catastrophe to get it down on paper. If Tim has room in next month's Tippet we'll publish it.

Oh, by the way, the fishing was excellent. There's always a remote chance that you'll hear the truth about that at the barbecue.

*Bill Hendrix*



The dutch oven cook (Bill Hendrix) standing guard over Friday night's dinner. - Photo by Reid Miller

Several years ago, the guys at the Hatch in Tacoma told me about a new material being used for tapered leaders - it was called fluorocarbon, it was expensive, but almost invisible in water. Since I was planning a trip to one of my favorite nymphing rivers in Montana, I bought some and took them with me. I firmly believe those leaders helped me hook up to vastly more fish and to land more because of my ability to use larger diameter tip sections and still be invisible to the fish. This was happening UNDERWATER since fluorocarbon sinks many times faster than nylon unless greased - making it a bad choice for dries.

So it seemed the answer to a fisherman's prayer, but there was a down side. Fluoro should not be straightened with a commercial leader straightener made with the two pieces of black rubber. The rubber generates heat in the leader and curly layers of material are stripped off as if you were using a tiny wood plane on it rather than a rubber pad. Fluoro is slippery - an improved clinch knot needs to be wrapped 6 to 8 times not 3 or 4 like nylon. Hence, any knot needs to be modified in order to allow for the slickness of the material. Fluorocarbon does not degrade as easily in nature as nylon. Be careful where or if you throw it away.

Some more good news, fluorocarbon will not degrade with exposure to UV which means you can keep it year after year without losing tensile strength. Fluoro does not mar or scuff like nylon and is more resistant to abrasion. I use it to good effect by tying on any wet dropper with fluoro tippet material. The tiniest wd-40, Copper John, Lightening Bug or other dropper WILL sink thanks to the higher sink rate of fluoro. Now the commercial - Rio has come up with 'Fluoroflex (reg. trademark) Plus.' 'Plus' is strong stuff. 3x tippet material is 9.4 lb test, 5x is 5 lb! It would seem that this product, in the proper application, could make a world of difference in nymphing and in the use of a dropper. Higher test and no increase in visibility screams for use against large fish in lakes using intermediate lines, and in rivers as tippet to your first nymph, your trailer nymph, and to any sinking dropper when they are tied to large dries used as attractors.

I have used this new generation of fluorocarbon on Rocky Ford, Park Lake, Blue Lake, and Lake Minterwood. No failures, no slipped knots, no complaints. We are going to Montana for a week on the Missouri, so that to me will be the real test. If it fools big fish in big water using heavier diameter tippet with increased tensile strength and less abrasion, it may have found a home with me. Hopefully my opinions about fluorocarbon will help you make correct choices in the specific applications where it can make a difference. You know, I have even been hearing tales of bill fish accepting fluoro in the highest test weights, and large spools of it are showing up at Sportco in Fife claiming it won't spook bass, pike, perch.

*Editor's Note: Bob didn't know about some of the things that folks around here are doing with fluorocarbon. Several people have been using it for dry fly fishing. In very clear water, with spooky fish and a glassy smooth surface thin fluorocarbon has been used to really hide the leader from the fish. Sometimes the floating flies are large enough to support it. However, I have used it on size 18 flies with some success. The dead drift isn't as long as I would like, but the "invisible" leader makes up for it. Bob Bates*

*(Via the FFF ClubWire)*

"The proper sauce for trout, of course - the one requisite sauce - never appears on the platter. It is finely and inimitably blended of the wind in the cedars, the ceaseless gurgle and gossip of the stream, the odor of clover perhaps - or of wet leather - the chill of a forest twilight, and a persuasive, healthful weariness that is itself a blessing. Such is the sauce for a dish of fried trout. Scarcely do I need to point out to you, Miss Tingle, the failure of the urban kitchen to provide these certain condiments, and gladly do I absolve you of all fault. One must contrive to get a dinner from such materials as are at hand..."

- Author Unknown

from Robert W. Eubanks, Jr. Buckeye United Fly Fishers via the FFF ClubWire

- \$300 Orvis Trident TL 9' 6 wt
- \$300 Orvis Trident 9' 6" 9 wt
- \$475 Sage 15' 1" 10 wt
- \$200 Orvis DXR reel 5/6 + Sp Spool
- \$75 New Simms Guide Vest XL
- \$75 New Simms Guide Boots sz 14 felt
- \$3600 12' 6" Sotar Elite Raft, NRS fishing frame, 3 cataract oars and extras, 2 yrs old (over \$5000 new)
- \$23,000 2000 Dodge Cummins 3/4 ton quad cab SLT, manual 5 spd, 74,000 miles, canopy, CD, Power seats, etc., 100,000 mile warranty

All prices negotiable. Contact John Toker at [jtoker@wsu.edu](mailto:jtoker@wsu.edu) (509) 332-2818 or (509) 336-4652 cell

### Clearwater Fly Casters' Officers 2003

President	Bruce Frazier	(bfrazier@pullman.com)	332-7346
Vice President	Don Shearer	(don@mail.wsu.edu)	432-6906
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Conservation Chair	Jim Palmersheim	(jamesp@turbonet.com)	882-4502
Newsletter	Tim Cavileer	(greencat@turbonet.com)	883-4572

CFC membership dues are \$20/yr for individuals, \$30/yr for families, \$10/yr for students, \$50/yr sustaining and \$300/lifetime. Meetings are on the 2nd Wednesday, September through May at the Best Western - University Inn, 1516 Pullman Rd, Moscow, Idaho. Wet Fly time 6pm, dinner at 7pm and program at 8pm.

## In Memory of Dave Engerbretson

### Fly-fishing authority dies at 67; Dave Engerbretson was co-host of fly-tying show on public television

By Eric Barker of the Lewiston Tribune

The fly fishing world lost one of its chief ambassadors and educators Wednesday. Dave Engerbretson, 67, of Moscow died Wednesday, July 30, of complications from diabetes and heart failure.

He started with LeRoy Hyatt of Lewiston in "Fly-Tying: An Anglers Art" on public television. Hyatt would tie flies and Engerbretson would provide commentary.

"Of all the years I knew him, you know, we never did fish together," Hyatt said.

But the pair did share fishing stories and fly-tying techniques on the show that was produced in Pullman. "I think it's the camaraderie between the two people that makes the show," Hyatt said.

Friend Charlie Powell of Moscow said both the state of Idaho and the entire fly-fishing community lost a great person.

"He was to a fly rod and fly fishing what Ernest Hemingway was to a typewriter," Powell said. "He had done it all and traveled all over the world to fish, including Russia and North America. He knew all the great fly-fishing people."

Engerbretson was a retired professor of exercise science and taught anatomy at Washington State University. He was also a prolific writer on fly fishing and fly tying and an editor at large for Fly Fishing Magazine.

Last year Engerbretson received the Charles E. Brooks Memorial Life Award from the Federation of Fly Fishers for his years of teaching and writing about fly fishing and fly tying. He was a certified master fly caster and casting instructor as well as a member of the FFF Casting Board of Governors.

His wife, Shirley, said teaching was the love of his life and much of his interest in fly fishing and tying had to do with teaching the pursuit to others.

"It wasn't really a hobby, it was more of a second vocation," she said. "He just went after it with a vengeance." Hyatt said Engerbretson had a wealth of information about fishing and Hyatt would often call him before a trip.

"He will be missed. He was always a guy I would call and get a report on some fishing hole, whether it was Canada or wherever."

*(Provided by Charlie Powell, Pullman Washington via the FFF ClubWire)*

Dave's wonderful sense of humor was one of the many reasons we became close.

He provided with more than one inspiration for cartoons. At one point we decided to investigate the possibilities of creating greeting cards based on his humor (read: puns) and my artwork. The plan never got off the ground but I'll never forget some of his ideas. One was for a drawing to show a couple along a path in a forest. They'd be carrying a Chinese wok. Dave's caption was: "Taking a wok in the park." Another was set in a fly fishing shop at a display area. A mannequin is shown sporting a fishing vest with half the vest missing. Dave's caption was: "Vest sale, half off."

I can't express how much I'll miss my dear friend, but the wonderful memories he gave me will always bring a smile to my face. *Gene Trump*



Dave Engerbretson, Tim Cavileer, Jim Palmersheim, Hans Weilenmann, and Don Shearer enjoying world famous Dave Burgers during a gathering dubbed, Moscow I Conclave in 1998. Photo by Hans Weilenmann

*Don Shearer and Dave Engerbretson were both members of the flyfishing email group flyfish@ - this was a post Don sent to that list.*

I first met Dave through the flyfish@ email list. I was surprised to find that he was a professor at the very institution I was attending. We first met face to face in his office and he quickly took me out to the football practice field and gave me a quick casting lesson.

When I would visit with Dave we often talked about bird hunting. Which kind of shows how dense I am. Here I am visiting with one of the most knowledgeable fly fishers in the world and I am talking about a completely different subject with him. When Dave first moved out west he had GSH pointers and loved bird hunting. By the time I got to know him his eyesight had failed him and his bird hunting days were over, but he really enjoyed telling stories about his hunts and his dogs.

Dave taught my bride how to cast prior to a trip we took. It was a real treat to watch him teach her how to cast. He was always positive and enthusiastic. I believe part of the joy Kate gets from fishing she picked up from Dave during those casting lessons.

Dave was always willing to help with any aspect of fishing. When I was first trying my hand at fly tying I was having a difficult time with parachutes. When I approached Dave about how to tie them he said to just come over to the house and we will get them figured out. Dave was always the teacher and coach.

I will always think of him when I see Kate cast a fly rod or I tie a parachute pattern.

I sat at his funeral with fellow flyfish@ member Tim Cavileer. When I looked around the room and realized that probably 90% of the areas fly anglers were in attendance I said to Tim, "Today would have been a good day to go fishing. You would most likely of had the streams all to yourself, everyone's here." I think Dave would have got a chuckle out of the idea.

Dave introduced me to the local FFF club, the Clearwater Fly Casters. When he got up to introduce me as his guest on my first visit this is what he said, "Don stopped by my office last year and we have been friends ever since."

Dave Engerbretson considering me a friend, now that is something I am proud of.

*Don Shearer*

## Wolfy's Hopper by Bob Bates

July through September are months when we should be looking for opportunities to use a grasshopper pattern. (At least in the U.S. and Canada.) Warm days with a strong wind blowing them into the water are best. When the hoppers are active watch to see where they are flying and falling into the water. Sometimes they hop from one place to another and miss the landing. This is why many casters work the shoreline, especially if there are overhanging grasses, etc. However, don't neglect areas away from the bank. Sometimes a hopper will attempt to fly across a larger stream only to run out of energy part way and drop.

One nice feature about hopper fishing is that you don't have to make a delicate cast. Let the fly hit with a splat. The hard landing attracts the attention of fish that are looking for a big meal. What happens after the landing is sometimes hard to imitate. Several years ago I watched grasshoppers crash in Montana's Missouri River. There were three post splat actions: One drifting downstream quietly, another struggling as it drifted and the third was a regular frog-kick toward shore. I don't know about you, but I can do a reasonable job imitating only the first.

In 1992 Eric Schubert then President of the North Idaho Flycasters was tying flies at the Club sponsored Flyfishing Exposition at the Silver Lake Mall in Coeur d'Alene, ID. His Wolfy's Hopper was different enough to put in my fly box and tell others about. Eric said this about the fly's history: "I originally developed it for fishing large brown trout on the Green River in Pinedale, Wyoming. As with most hopper patterns that I was using at the time, I found that they did not float sufficiently in the fast moving water of the Green River. The Wolfy's Hopper solved my problem---and the brown trout love it." This was about 1987.

When "hopper" fishing Eric works stream banks carefully. For the reasons above. He fishes a lot on "The River" (Coeur d'Alene ?, St. Joe ?) where he wades and casts to the bank. But he also fishes some small streams. One of his tricks is to stand on one bank, cast across to the other bank and then hop his fly into the water. Fish think it is real and slam it. He started this technique on the Green River. Eric uses his fly for more than a grasshopper pattern; it also serves him as a stonefly imitation on the Clark Fork River, Montana.

For information on how to tie the fly, please visit the FFF website at: <http://www.fedflyfishers.org>



**Hook:** Mustad 9672, Tiemco TMC 200R, etc. # 8-10

**Thread:** Olive, Gudebrod 6/0

**Body:** Deer hair, dyed green, yellowish olive or yellow

**Rib:** Tying thread

**Underwing:** Olive marabou

**Wing:** Turkey wing quill

**Bullet head and collar:** Dyed deer hair: orange, olive, mottled yellow, brown

*Clearwater Fly Casters*

*PO Box 2149 CS*

*Pullman, WA 99165*

*Our Next Meeting is ...*

Wednesday, September 10th, 2003

Casting 4:30 PM

Catered BBQ Dinner 600 PM

At Sunnyside Park in Pullman, WA

*Please Join us!*

