



# Trout Tales

## Rocky River Chapter

### Trout Unlimited

April 2011



## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

I know that normally you would find a paragraph or two in this spot from our illustrious president **Bill Thomas** (aka Alaska Bill), but unfortunately he had a small accident at Appletree this year. While trying to tame that wild pig he was cooking for our guests, the pig managed to extinguish the flame to the gas grill. Upon seeing the flame not doing its job, our hero Bill struck up a new, great and powerful flame and went after the monstrous beast of a gas grill. However, the gas grill decided to object and spewed its flame all over our great leader's right hand. Thus his writing hand is out of commission for a while. Bill, being the strong man that he is, tried to give himself a little first aid. But, to no avail. Upon genuine concern and pressure from his fellow campers, Bill finally went to find expert help. He ended up in Murphy at their clinic where, upon his arrival and explanation of his accident, the nurse asked, "Have you been drinking?" The answer was no. "Dumb A\*\*?" was the next question. I won't convey Bill's answer to that question.

Other than this unfortunate accident, Appletree was a great success. The weather was warm and wonderful. That's twice in a row now. We had folks fishing the Hiwassee and the Tuck as well as the Nantahala. The Nantahala was hard fishing but not impossible. We raised money for our Trout in the Classroom (TIC) program by auctioning a seven piece, four weight, March Brown travel rod donated by **Dave Wilson**, a great guy, great fisher and cobbler maker extraordinaire. Your cobbler making successors are doing you proud Dave. The rod was won by **Caleb Barnhardt**, one of our Rivercourse alumni. Two of our young men from Rivercourse were at Appletree their skills to the waters and lending a helping hand with the campfire.

Our next meeting is Thursday, April 21, 2011 at Covenant Presbyterian Church, beginning at 6:30 PM with social time. Our program will be presented by Ken Manuel and the topic will be River Fauna. Ken works as a biologist at Duke Energy. He specializes in

entomology. Ken has done several programs for the chapter over the past 30 years and always provides a great program on NC and SC stream entomology. Make plans to attend this educational and informative presentation; bring a friend or two.

- **Joyce Shepherd** (First Vice President)

Editor's note:

In spite of only having one hand for keyboarding, Bill sent a few items for the newsletter:

Bill and **Jim Mabrey** attended the Earth Day event at Carolina International School on Friday, April 15. They delivered a 30 minute presentation for each class in grades K thru 4. They had some film of bugs, fish eating bugs and, of course, fishermen catching fish. Thanks to all the bug collectors at Appletree as those bugs came in handy for this presentation. Special thanks to **Brian Miller**, who prepared some fishing movies for this event; the children seemed to enjoy those a lot. We probably reached out to 200 students, parents and teachers during this event. It's ALWAYS a good day to spread the word on cold water conservation. Finally I must acknowledge Jim as he brought all his equipment and that made the show possible. This was a good day.

The winter fly tying classes ended in March. And it sounds like everyone who participated learned a great deal and would like to continue this as a regular winter project. Special thanks to those who helped with organization and instruction: **Jack McNeary, Tom Adams, Alen Baker**.

RRTU still supports the North Carolina Wildlife Federation (NCWF) scholarship/grant program. Scholarship grant applications for the 2012 school year are due by June 1, 2011. For more information, check the NCWF on the web: <http://www.ncwf.org/>

THANK YOU to all those who helped with the Appletree outing. Having members and guests volunteer to assist with setup, take down, cleanup, meals, raffles, fire pit, etc. makes the event very pleasant for all who attend. RRTU, like many nonprofit

organizations, achieves most of its success via the active participation of its membership. Bill said this in the March newsletter and I do not think he would mind if I borrow it for April:

Bill – “We surely appreciate all our volunteers – volunteering is a great way to get more involved in chapter events. We need and welcome your help!”

- **Jonathan for Bill Thomas** ([bthomas999@bellsouth.net](mailto:bthomas999@bellsouth.net))

### **RRTU Calendar**

Apr 7-10: Appletree trip  
Apr 15: Earth Day @ Carolina International School  
Apr 21: RRTU meeting. Ken Manuel  
Apr 23: TU national stream cleanup day  
Apr 28: Film @ Orvis Phillips Place

May 19: RRTU meeting. Rob Domico  
May 19-22: National Fly Fishing Championships

June 15: RRTU meeting. Kevin Howell  
June 19: TU national stream cleanup day

July – no monthly meeting

Aug 18: RRTU meeting. Richard Mode

### **April 21<sup>st</sup> meeting**

Stream Entomology – Ken Manuel

Covenant Presbyterian Church  
1000 East Morehead Street  
Room 205, Fellowship Hall  
Charlotte, NC 28204

Social time: 6:30 pm  
Meeting: 7:00 pm

### **Friends of Rocky River (FORR)**

The 2011 Friends of Rocky River (FORR) program campaign officially started in February. RRTU sent

each chapter member a letter via USPS mail. Did you receive your letter? Did you respond with a donation?

Several individuals have responded already and the 2011 campaign has already hit the \$3000 mark in donations. A huge THANK YOU to these February and March donors:

**Dr. Rion Rutledge, Glenn Mease, John Killian, William Anderson, Joe Liebdzinski.**

If you have not donated yet, please do so. A successful 2011 FORR campaign should allow the chapter to meet routine annual expenses. Our goal for the 2011 campaign is \$8000.

In order to donate, please make checks payable to Trout Unlimited and mail your tax deductible donation to:

Terry Hill  
PO Box 456  
Matthews, NC 28106

Some employers may match employee donations to 501(c)(3) organizations. If your employer matches employee contributions, please include those forms with your donation as well.

Thank you!  
- **Steve Craig/Terry Hill**, FORR Committee

### **March 2011 meeting – A Fishing Trip**

Thanks to RRTU member **Jack McNeary** for his presentation at the March 17 meeting. Jack highlighted western US fishing trips he took with friends during 2009 and 2010. He also included quite a few pictures of the fly selection used on western rivers/lakes.

### **Appletree spring and fall 2011 trips**

The spring Appletree trip is in the books. Those who attended the April 7-10 event experienced good fishing, good weather, good food and good fellowship! Everyone noticed that the DH section of the Nantahala had plenty of water in it; so much in fact that several in

our group joined that illustrious group known as the Nantahala Swim Team! We had quite a few first-time attendees and based upon my observations, I believe that everyone had a GREAT time! **Bill Thomas** and **Jim Mabrey** continued their tradition of making the Appletree trips one of the highlights of each RRTU year. Ask any of the spring trip attendees about the BBQ pig dinner on Friday; it was outstanding! We did have one mishap on Friday ... **Bill Thomas** was preparing to start up one of our gas grills and he burned a hand badly enough to need a trip to the hospital. He returned late Friday night but was unable to stay for the remainder of trip. Please join us in wishing Bill a speedy recovery.

**Appletree spring trip attendees: Please send 2-3 of your favorite photos from the April trip and I will include some of those in the May newsletter.**

- Editor

The fall trip is scheduled for October 6, 7 and 8 on camp site A (25 campers).

**Bill Thomas** and I will organize the April trip but we need to have a different crew for the October trip. We will be returning from a trip to Idaho the week before and will not be available to organize the October trip.

Here are a few pictures from previous Appletree trips:

A Nanty DH brown



Sitting around the campfire



Cooking Mr. Wilson's famous cobbler recipe



- **Jim Mabrey**

### Film @ Orvis Phillips Place on April 28

Received this note from TJ Roy about an upcoming film event at the Orvis shop:

“I hope all is well, and that you are getting a chance to do some fishing this spring; it seems that no matter what direction you go, the fishing has been great. I wanted to send you an invite that you can pass along to the chapter to our upcoming event at the store. We are going to be screening a cut from the new fly fishing film by RA Beattie (Creator of *Nervous Water*) titled *Off the Grid*; the film focuses on the people, places, and fish of locations such as the Bahamas, Guatemala,

Mexico, and believe it or not, Taiwan! We'll have beer compliments of Old Mecklenberg Brewery, and burgers too. No cost, just show up! The date is **Thursday, April 28 from 6 to 8pm**. Look forward to seeing you there!"

If you have questions, phone Orvis at 704-571-6100.

### **Fly Tying – thanks for the memories (and the flies)**

The final RRTU fly tying class for the winter 2011 season was held on Saturday, March 12. The Y2K served as the “fly of the day” for this session. **Jack McNeary** demonstrated tying this fly with and without weight; he even gave a few away and I will confess that my first four Nantahala DH trout on the spring 2011 Appletree trip were caught on that Y2K provided by Jack! (editor comment)

THANK YOU to all our volunteers who provided instruction and materials for this fly tying class. **Tom Adams** and **Alen Baker** provided excellent assistance for these sessions. And we must recognize the organizer of this event – **Jack McNeary**.

Ken Shoe won the drawing for Dave Hughes book: *Trout Flies: The Tier's Reference*.

Here are a few pictures from the March 12 fly tying event:





Looking forward to fly tying for next season.  
- Jack McNeary ( [jmcneary@gmail.com](mailto:jmcneary@gmail.com) )

### **Upcoming 2011 RRTU Meeting Topics/Presenters**

#### **April 21**

Are you interested in “bugs?” If so, do not miss Ken Manuel’s April presentation on bugs ... the fishing kind. Ken is a biologist at Duke Energy who specializes in entomology. Ken has done several programs for the chapter over the past 30 years and always provides a great program on stream entomology in North and South Carolina.

#### **May 19**

Ever considered making a backpack trout fishing trip? If so you will want to attend our May meeting as Madison River Outfitters owner Rob Domico will talk about backpacking for wild trout.

#### **June 16**

Kevin Howell of Davidson River Outfitters will present material on fishing techniques and fly selection.

### **March 19 Streamside - South Mountains State Park**

On Saturday March 19, 2011 a small group of RRTU members and guests made a trip up to South Mountains

State Park to remove dams created by last summer's campers. Campers and day visitors build these dams to create deeper pools for swimming. We make this trip every year to remove the dams so the trout can migrate up and down the stream. We were able to remove several large dams and many smaller ones before the April stocking.

We split into two teams and worked up stream from the horse trailer parking lot and down from the uppermost parking lot. We met at the horse crossing above the Cicero parking lot. We enjoyed a sub sandwich lunch and even had time for a little fishing and hiking. Thanks to these RRTU members and guests who attended:

**David Hollifield, Alex Sawtschenko, John Oliver, Katherine Whipple, Paul Isaacs, Ken Shoe, Erin Purves and his sons, Jim Mabrey**

- Jim Mabrey

More info on South Mountains State Park here:  
<http://ncparks.gov/Visit/parks/somo/main.php>

### **RRTU goes to Raleigh**

Most of us, even if we haven't yet had a chance to fish the DH portion of Wilson Creek, will agree that a great thing happened when the Lutz property was purchased by NCWRC and Wilson Creek was protected from development. Most of the money for that purchase came from the Clean Water Management Trust Fund (CWMTF). The NC Legislature funds the CWMTF but in these trying economic times the amount given to CWMTF was cut by 50% in the last budget cycle (from \$100 million to \$50 million) and there was some suggestion of it being left out completely this year.

**Jim Mabrey** and **Tim Wilhelm** learned from Damon Hearne (TU's Southeastern Land Protection Coordinator) that Land for Tomorrow was holding its Lobby Day on March 22<sup>nd</sup> and representatives from TU were needed. Jim and Tim decided to go to Raleigh and meetings were setup with their respective Representative's and Senator's. The goal of Lobby Day was to keep the funding for CWMTF at the same level as last year. It was quickly evident that funding was not

going to be at the level of funding in the last budget but it would receive funding. An interesting point is that for every dollar spent for conservation funding \$4 returns in economic value. Therefore the funding received over the past 10 years will ultimately return more than \$3.6 Billion in natural resources goods and services alone. Everyone we talked to was sympathetic to our cause but said the economic environment we are in now, prevents them from funding the CWMTF at the \$50 million level.

Jim met with Sen. Fletcher Hartsell, Jr. and Rep. Linda P. Johnson. Tim had a meeting scheduled late in the day with Rep. Ric Killian which was cancelled due to a change in his schedule. Tim wasn't able to schedule a meeting with Sen. Bob Rucho but did get a chance to talk with him during the reception held in the NC Museum of Natural History. Tim was also able to speak to two other Mecklenburg Representatives at the reception, Rep. Ruth Samuelson and Rep. Becky Carney. All of them agreed that CWMTF will receive some funding this year (in that regard the trip was a success) but that funding would not be at the level requested.

- **Tim Wilhelm**

### **TU – National News @ tu.org**

Looking for information on legislation? How about recent press releases? Searching for the TU president's message in the TU newsletter? Interested in member benefits? You will find all of these ... and much more at [www.tu.org](http://www.tu.org)

### **- 2011 TU Annual Meeting -**

Feel like a fall trip? Go west ... to Bend, OR for the 2011 TU Annual Meeting!

Dates: September 14-18

Cost: \$300 registration fee (\$275 Early Bird Discount before July 1).

What to do: Conference activities, BBQ/banquet, hosted fishing trips, conservation tours, fly casting tournament and much more.

Need more info: <http://www.tu.org/events/am2011>

### **- Other "stuff" -**

(1) Third season of *Trout Unlimited: On the Rise* airing on the Sportsman Channel.

(2) Notes on a TU petition regarding the upcoming Food and Drug Administration (FDA) decision on genetically modified salmon.

(3) Did you know that TU has a Science Team? More information located here: <http://www.tu.org/science>

### **- Trout magazine -**

Lost your recent issue? Trying to find an old article? You will find current and archive issues of *Trout* on the TU web site in the Press Room tab:

<http://www.tu.org/press-room/trout-magazine>

### **- April 2011 Lines to Leaders -**

(1) Notes about the current budget battle and its impact to organizations like Trout Unlimited.

(2) Model Chapter and Council Bylaws

(3) Embrace-A-Stream Grants Awarded

### **May 19-22 National Fly Fishing Championships**

Editor's note: Judges are still needed for this event. We received this note from Chris Smith in early April - Not only is the National Championships in need of judges, but the notice could benefit anglers who had been contemplating a trip to the area that weekend. They'll find the water on those five venues fairly crowded.

You will find information about this event, the venues, how to volunteer, etc. at <http://usnffc.com/>

Fellow anglers,

I'm excited to announce that the 2011 National Fly Fishing Championships will be held May 19-22<sup>nd</sup> in Cherokee, North Carolina.

Likely venues include the Nantahala River (upper and lower), Queens Creek and Calderwood Lakes, and a Cherokee venue, amongst others.

This is a huge event that will help to determine the anglers who will comprise the US National team. It's

also a great opportunity to showcase NC as a premiere destination for fly fishing.

To pull an event like this off, however, we need volunteers.

If you would be willing to judge one or all of the days of the event, please respond to this e-mail. In the response, let me know which days you're available. In addition, include a telephone number for future contact.

Judging is very simple, and you'll be fully trained before the event.

In addition to having an opportunity to observe some of the best anglers in our country, you'll get a \$100 Simms Guide shirt with the NFFC logo embroidered on it, as well as a Simms hat.

Once we know who's willing to judge, we'll see if we can't coordinate group lodging or camping.

Best,  
Christopher Smith  
[chris smith@teamstonefly.com](mailto:chris smith@teamstonefly.com)  
[www.teamstonefly.com](http://www.teamstonefly.com)

### **Rivercourse 2011**

RRTU will continue involvement with the Rivercourse program. The 2011 camp is scheduled for the week of June 19 - 24, 2011 at Lake Logan Center near Canton. <http://www.nctu.org/rivercourse.html> Contact Joyce Shepherd for more details on this program.

At Appletree Joyce announced that Rivercourse still has room for two girl campers. So if you know some young ladies interested in herpetology, geology, entomology, botany, wetlands ecology, stream restoration, environmental policy and of course – fishing, ask them to contact Joyce.

Several Appletree attendees raised \$1400 in pledges for the Rivercourse program. Camper fees do not cover all

the costs. Thanks to **Alen Baker** for leading the mini-pledge drive.

- **Joyce Shepherd**

### **Tip of the Month**

When wading in swift or deep water, always work sideways to the current to reduce water pressure on your legs. A wading staff helps, as does a stick picked up along the stream bank. Also, chose the place to cross a stream carefully, broad and shallow is ideal or places where the bottom can be clearly seen and the rocks are fairly consistent in size.

- **Alen Baker**

### **Tails from the Creek**

Been fishing? Who went with you? Where did you fish? What did you use? #18 pinkie? Stick bait?

We're anxious to hear about your fishing adventures; your stories may inspire others to try out a new place or technique. Please share!

- **Jonathan Miller**

### **Fly of the month**

This "fly of the month" represents the latest in the **Tim Wilhelm/Tom Adams** series.

I suppose most of us know what a Mickey Finn is because of the 1941 film *The Maltese Falcon* where Joel Cairo slipped a Mickey into Sam Spade's whiskey. There are also references to it in many other detective novels and movies such as the Philip Marlowe series. So how did a fly come to known as a Mickey Finn instead of the Yellow and Red or maybe something sinister such as the Assassin?

The Mickey Finn is an old pattern that continues to be a favorite among trout and salmon anglers to this day. Its popularity is probably due to the fact that it catches fish, even if it doesn't represent anything in nature.

Reportedly, it was developed by a Canadian fly-tier by the name of Charles Langevin and for a while the fly

was called simply the Langevin. It has also been called the Yellow and Red and the Assassin. Greg Clark, a well-known Canadian writer of the time proclaimed, after a very successful a fishing trip, that the fly was as effective as a Mickey Finn. Now, at that time the Mickey Finn was a famous drink, developed in New Orleans in the 1920s, that was very potent because it contained narcotics of some sort. As the story goes, famed actor Rudolph Valentino died from drinking too many Mickey Finns while at a hotel in New York and Clark reasoned that the fly was as deadly as the drink.

Clark published a story about the Mickey Finn in 1937 for Hunting and Fishing magazine. The magazine was published to coincide with the annual Sportsman Show in New York City. The fly became so popular at the show that it was estimated that up to half a million Mickey Finn flies were tied and sold in a few days.

Give it a try. (The fly not the drink.)

### **MICKEY FINN      Fly of the Month 04.11**

Hook: Streamer hook, 3xL to 6xL, perfect bend, 2x hvy. Size: 2,4,6,8,10,12

Thread : Uni- 8/0 black

Body : Silver mylar flat tinsel

Ribbing : Silver oval tinsel, silver wire may substitute

Wing : Yellow and red bucktail

**WARNING :** Leave room for a proper head !

Directions :

1. Start three or four eye lengths back from eye and wrap tightly to above the hook point. Trim tag. Cut flat silver mylar at a forty five degree and tie in firmly at the cut. Tie in the oval tinsel and advance the thread in tight, smooth wraps to where you began tying in and let the bobbin hang.
2. Wrap the flat tinsel toward the hook bend in smooth, tight and non overlapping but covering wraps. Stop just before the hook bend and return in smooth, non overlapping wraps toward the head. Lift the oval tinsel as the wrapping goes past to avoid a "lump". Continue to the head

stopping at the starting point and secure the tinsel and let the bobbin hang.

3. Wrap the oval tinsel in tight, evenly spaced wraps to the same spot as the flat tinsel. Secure with thread wraps and trim tag ends, let the bobbin hang.
4. Select a small portion of yellow bucktail from the tip of the tail. The fibers are thinner and not as hollow as at the base. Even the tips and tie on top of the hook shank extending slightly past the hook bend [about a third of the hook length]. Tie in firmly and trim at an angle. Let the bobbin hang.
5. Select the same size portion of red bucktail as above and repeat, tying on top of the yellow.
6. Select a portion of yellow bucktail equal to the previous yellow and red portions combined and tie in on top. Cut at an angle and secure with several wraps advancing the thread to the hook eye after forming a tapered head with thread wraps. Whip finish and lacquer the head.

Note : Generally I use several coats of head cement for the head but have also tried black, glossy nail polish with good results.

Mickey Finn



- Tom Adams, Tim Wilhelm

## Who wants to be “nearly almost” famous?

RRTU member **Alen Baker** has an idea about writing a book ... with our help. Read this and if you are interested, contact **Alen**.

### **Tales from the Empty Creel:**

Angler's first hand stories and second hand tales.  
Compiled and Edited by Alen D. Baker

Sound interesting?

Do you have a story to tell?

Want to have your story in the book?

Submit a simple draft of your experience along with your favor mug shot (holding a fish of course). Please supply a phone number and/or email address too as I may need to contact you with questions. I hope to begin writing this book over the coming months. I will provide an update on occasion and probably will be asking for more stories if there is a shortage.

Having trouble thinking about an experience?

I came up with a sample list of situations both dramatic and comedic that I hope will end up in the book (or maybe in this newsletter if our RRTU newsletter editor is allowed). Here's my list:

Fish that got away  
Losing stuff or finding stuff or forgetting stuff  
Falling in or going for a swim  
Bad habits needing forgiveness  
Faulty equipment  
Things going wrong  
The longest fight (playing a fish)  
Doubles or skunked or surprise catch  
The smallest or the most  
Winning the bet or losing the bet  
Rumors or strange beliefs or jinxes  
Caught exaggerating or no photo  
I did not know  
Fly fishing in the trees  
Animal encounters  
Breaking the rod  
Losing the last fly of its kind in the box  
Encounters of the warden kind

Running out of gas or running into things

Caught in bad weather

Embarrassed or how long with not fly or no hook point

It happened at ... or fishing with ...

Lost and found on the stream, in the woods

Trespassing – maybe

The hero

- **Alen Baker ( 704.875.1505 )**

## RRTU on Facebook

How's your social network doing? How about your fishing network? RRTU certainly wants to help with the second question. RRTU now has a Facebook page. Search for us on Facebook under Rocky River Trout Unlimited and sign up to join us. Also, please “like” the page as this will help us to be located more easily. You will be able to post and respond on this Facebook page. You can post pictures, invitations for fishing buddies or trip results, flies that work for you, etc. This page is for your use; we hope you use it often! RRTU on Facebook is a “closed” group meaning your name is public but your information is not.

- **Jim Mabrey**

## Stream Water Flow Data

Ever wonder about the water flow in your favorite stream? How about after a big rain? The USGS has monitoring on some NC streams. You may check on that data at this web site:

<http://waterdata.usgs.gov/nc/nwis/rt>

## The all electronic RRTU newsletter

The RRTU board made a decision to move to an electronic-only newsletter format starting in 2011. Our printing and postage costs for the paper newsletter were running over \$3000 annually; we plan to put all newsletter cost savings into RRTU programs. We use an electronic mail list server for sending the monthly RRTU newsletter. If you want to receive the monthly electronic newsletter, please provide your electronic mail address to **Tim Wilhelm** at your earliest

convenience. You may reach **Tim** via email here:  
[twilhelm@carolina.rr.com](mailto:twilhelm@carolina.rr.com)

**RRTU Officers and Board Members**

President: Bill Thomas – 704.231.7492  
1<sup>st</sup> VP: Joyce Shepherd – 704.392.8499  
2<sup>nd</sup> VP: Tom Adams – 704.877.3367  
Secretary: Tim Wilhelm – 704.442.1253

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Dave Stakel (2011) – 704.399.4076  
Steve Craig (2011) – 704.875.0932  
Paul Isaacs (2012) – 704.960.3649  
Jonathan Miller (2012) – 704.552.0051  
Alen Baker (2013) – 704.875.1505  
David Hollifield (2013)  
Jim Mabrey (past president) – 704.786.0342