

TIGHTLINES



MIKE TRUAX AND FAITHFUL COMPANION LAKOTA prepare to launch the pram as Bill MacDonald pushes off at Blue Lake (pond). The weather this time around was a bit dicey. Barry Hutton summed it up this way: "I fished in rain, snow, hail and wind — best fishing trip I've ever had!" See why on Page 3 —Barry Hutton Photo

Les and Jim's not so excellent adventure.

For Jim Hagy and Les Jones, this year's Chopaka/Blue Lake trip had its share of mishaps and adventures.

It starts Sunday morning when they're loading the pontoon boats into Les's pickup truck and break the rod holder off Jim's boat. "We'll fix it later" and so off they go with Les driving his pickup, pulling Jim's travel trailer and Jim navigating. Next morning they climb the hill to Chopaka followed by See "LES & JIM" on Page 3

Mike Truax drafts petition for FFO lake.

Conservation Chairman Mike Truax has prepared a petition to present to the State Fish and Wildlife Commission that could start the process of designating a Snohomish County or South Skagit County lake as "Fly-fishing only" or "Selective gear rules."

"The more names we collect the better chance we have of getting a new lake designation approved during the Commission's next rule making cycle," says Mike. See complete text of the petition on Page 4.

Brita Fordice ties, teaches, and shares some good ideas about Chironomids.

Brita Fordice is one of those rare fly fishers who actually does her due diligence when she arrives at the lake or stream.

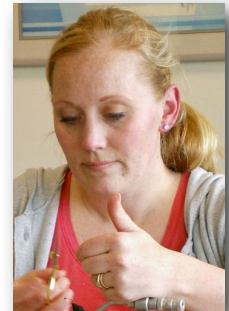
She spends time studying the water. She digs around in the shoreline mud, turns over a few rocks, and skeins for insects and shucks.

By the time she's on the water she already has a good idea of where the fish are and what they're feeding on, in terms of size and color, and after she's finished checking the water temperature gradients, she'll know exactly how deep to fish.

If Brita ever gets skunked it's probably because there aren't any fish. Period.

She spoke at our May meeting, passed along some excellent tying tips and even brought some goodies for the raffle.

Brita has been part of the Avid Angler staff for years and was recently promoted to Manager and Co-manager. Here are some of her observations on how to succeed with midges. See "BRITA" Page 2



June Calendar

6/9, General Meeting: Guest Speaker Peninsula fishing guide and writer Doug Rose. Rose is author of three Olympic Peninsula fly-fishing guides and editor of the Washington River Maps & Fishing Guide.

There will be no Business Meeting in June. The next Business Meeting will be on July 23 to firm up plans for the Club Picnic in August.

Let's just accept it, Chironomids rule!

*In his book *Fly Patterns for Still Waters*, Phil Rowley estimates that Chironomids account for 40% of a trout's diet — year round. Ranging from 50% in the Spring down to 22% in the Summer. So whether you love fishing them or hate it, you're going to miss a lot of action if you ignore Chironomids.*

Based on her experience Brita has some suggestions that can definitely help improve your success with Chironomids. And, as mentioned earlier, taking time to observe and check things out before you even get on the water or cast a line is a great way to begin, no matter where or how you're fishing.

If you're fishing midge patterns on a lake you can zero in on size and color by looking for shucks and searching for larva in the mud and under shoreline rocks.

As far as locating fish in a lake, Brita says she's had her greatest success fishing in about three feet of water 30 to 40 feet from the shoreline. She also noted that fishing Chironomid patterns over mud bottoms is one of the best places to be. Because that's where they live and develop and that's where they will eventually rise from to the surface.

Depending on depth, fish can be anywhere in the water column. In deeper water, your best place to intercept feeding fish is right above the thermocline where the water makes a dramatic temperature shift from colder to warmer.

A fish/depth finder is the easiest way to find the thermocline because it shows you right on the screen. But you can also figure it out with a thermometer on a line marked off in one foot increments. Start out checking the temperature at the surface and then lower the thermometer 10 to 20 feet, pause for it to get a valid reading then retrieve quickly. If you have a significant difference in temperatures take another reading half way between your first two then make adjustments up or down as needed. Ultimately you'll want to be fishing in the warmer water just above the cooler water.

Brita says there are four things you need to get right to have consistent success with Chironomids. You need to fish the right **depth**, the right **size**, the right **color** and create the right **movement**. You can figure out the first three by spending a little extra time poking along the shoreline, looking for shucks, and using your thermometer. The right movement comes with a little

Steelhead guide Doug Rose is June guest.

Olympic Peninsula guide Doug Rose is our June speaker. He's the author of *The Color of Winter — Steelhead Fly Fishing on the Olympic Peninsula; Fly-Fishing the Olympic Peninsula and Fly-Fishing Guide to the Olympic Peninsula*

His articles have appeared in *Fly Fisherman*, *American Angler*, *Flyfishing and Tying Journal*, and *Northwest Fly Fishing*. He specializes in steelhead and cutthroat on West End rivers and saltwater cutthroat near Port Townsend.



Brita Fordice has been fly fishing since she was eight years old. An outstanding tyer, she has developed a number of her own Chironomid patterns. She's a big fan of Pass Lake.
—Dick Simmons Photos

practice and trial and error. She recommends retrieving with slow, two inch strips. "That's a normal way for chironomids to move," she says.

If you can't find any shucks on the water or midge larva along the shoreline, she suggests starting with a black or gray pattern with a red pattern as a dropper — sizes 14 to 18.

You don't need 20' leaders unless your fishing in 80' of water. You'll definitely need an anchor. If you don't get hits in one spot, move on to another. The primary reason for using a strike indicator is to keep your fly at the right depth. If you don't like them use a big orange Stimulator instead.

For more information, drop by Avid Angler and say hello to Brita Sunday through Thursday. **DS**

Mike, Ken & Steve go sturgeon fishing and have a "super wonderful" experience.



GOTCHA!

Bunney, Murray. The weather was terrible. Windy! (*The day before, three men drowned about a half mile down river from where they were fishing.*)

"Ken caught a small sturgeon in the first 15 minutes," said Steve. "Then we sat there for eight hours just looking at our rods, doing nothing. Now I remember why I stopped being a gear fisherman and started fly fishing."

The Fly Fishing Life



Tony Koenig works the Chopaka shoreline.



The view at Rat Lake.



Barry says "so long" to a beautiful brown. It was worth the bad weather.
Barry Hutton Photos

Right: Adm. Jack Byrd, (the young guy in the blue shirt) with Stanwood High Fly Tying Class. "I had very good use from the OFF fly-tying materials that have been loaned to me," said Jack. "Auctioneer Don Bayes has been very supportive and helpful in organizing the class."



"LES & JIM" from Page 1 Jeff Salisbury who has now joined the parade. But as they drive down the road to the lake they're greeted by everyone else from the club leaving for Blue Lake to fish at the sheltered end of the lake (the "pond") because the weather is so bad at Chopaka. *Is there a trend developing here?*

Okay, so they hang around Chopaka for awhile and then decide to follow the herd to Blue Lake. But halfway along Sinlahekin Road they're stopped dead in their tracks by a large tree lying across the road. *Perhaps the tree is a victim of the 65 mph winds that are now buffeting them mercilessly.*

So they backtrack and find a road crew to clear the tree and then continue on to Blue Lake. But guess what? Blue Lake weather is just as bad as Chopaka. Barry Hutton and Bill MacDonald have already been blown across the pond and Mike Truax nearly capsizes. *Jim decides to bag fishing for the day. Maybe forever. Who knows?*

As the week progresses they do get back to Chopaka and Les catches some big Rainbows fishing dries from the bank. Jim catches fish on Chironomids. Les loses his truck keys. Everyone paws the ground

searching for a couple of hours. Then Jim has an idea:

"Les. Take off your waders and turn them upside down." Les does. Keys fall out.

On the windiest night a limb falls on Jim's trailer. No serious damage. On the coldest night, Jim's heater breaks down. At the same time the zipper on Les's sleeping bag breaks. At the bottom of the bag of course. A cold night for all.

At last it's time to come home. What else can possibly happen? Well, a lot as it turns out: Just this side of Monroe on 522 in the middle of the commute Jim's trailer mysteriously detaches from the hitch and begins throwing sparks and weaving all over the place. They barely get to the side of the road, inches from the traffic lane. *Thank God for safety chains.* Apparently the cotter pin has broken and the trailer hitch pin has worked its way loose. So Jim and Les make a new cotter pin. Then they have to jack up the trailer.

But the regular trailer jack was broken in the mishap so they use a small hydraulic jack Jim carries, plus all the scrap lumber they can find to raise the height of the jack. Finally they get the trailer and truck re hitched. All this time, cars and **Concluded next Page**

The OFF Beat

WELCOME NEW MEMBER

John Wiegenstein, an attorney and formerly a manufacturing research and development engineer with the Boeing Company, joined the Club at our May meeting.

Photo to come...



Club auction leaders meeting at 5:30 before the May 12 General Meeting. The next meeting will be at 5:30 June 9.

Team leaders for the annual Club Auction had their first meeting in May and will meet again before the June General Meeting.

There are 10 six member teams. By now all members should have received an e-mail from Auction Chairman Jim Traner listing their team assignments.

The goal is for each team to provide two live auction items and 5-10 silent auction items.

"If we do that, we should have a successful auction," said Jim.

The most successful items in the live auction are guided fishing trips with professional guides or fellow club members who know certain waters well.

Rods, reels and other gear is also popular in the live auction as are fishing collectibles and fishing related artwork.

LOST LAKE ON JUNE RADAR

Some Club members are considering a possible end of June outing to Lost Lake about a mile west of Keechelus Lake. The Lake holds Brook Trout and Kokanee. More info at the June 9 meeting.

PETITION

At our June meeting, Mike will discuss the petition and how we might get it more widely distributed to the local fly fishing community for signatures.

Petition for designating a new "fly fishing only" or "selective gear rules" lake.

Whereas, Snohomish County is the home to many of Washington's fly fishers and *Whereas*, Snohomish County contains a population of more than 700,000 persons and many trout-producing lakes and *Whereas*, Ebey Lake east of Arlington had been designated by the State Wildlife Commission for fly-fishing only but that designation has been rendered meaningless due to the loss of public access to Ebey lake and

Whereas, the State of Washington directed state agencies to seek opportunities to reduce the consumption of carbon-based fuel used in transportation and *Whereas*, designating a lake in Snohomish County for fly-fishing to replace Ebey Lake will serve the needs of the large number of fly-fishers residing in Snohomish, King and Skagit Counties and reduces consumption of fuel required to drive to more distant fly-fishing waters.

Now therefore, we the undersigned petition the State Fish and Wildlife Commission to direct the State Fish and Wildlife Department's freshwater personnel to work with representatives of local fly-fishing clubs and organizations to select a lake in Snohomish or southern Skagit Counties for designation as "fly fishing only" or "selective gear rules" so such designation could be completed by the end of the next rule-making cycle.

Talk to Tony about the EXPO.

Tony Koenig is coordinating OFF's presence at the Jimmy Green Fly Fishing Fair and Casting Expo June 19 at Lake Tye in Monroe.

The one day (9 am - 4 pm) expo is great fun and we will have a booth set up to promote our club.

"LES & JIM" continued

trucks are zipping by shaking the trailer and unnerving Jim and Les. Eventually they get back on the road and on to home.

In his own philosophic way, Jim says "There is some family conjecture about letting Les and I go anyplace together again without our mittens pinned to our coat sleeves."

See you on the river. DS



General Information

The General meeting is held on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at the South County Senior Center, 220 Railroad Ave., Edmonds, WA. Social hour: 6:00 p.m.

The Business meeting is held on the 4th Wednesday of each month at Alf's 4820 196th SW, Lynnwood, WA. at 6:00 p.m.

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Bill MacDonald, Treasurer, 425-774-4769
Dick Simmons, Communications & TIGHTLINES, 425-778-9804
Keith Stamm, Secretary, 206-368-5596
Phil Sacks, Gillie, 425-741-7311
Mike Bunney, Trustee, 425-672-3345

Chairs:

Mike Truax, Conservation, 425-672-6963
Steve Murray, Outings, 360-422-7335
Open seat, Education
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