



Arrowhead Fly Angler

October 2012

www.arrowheadflyfishers.com



What's up? At a glance

September 30, 2012

Wisconsin general inland trout season closed.

October 6, 2012

Fall Banquet at the Proctor Community Center, at 6p.m. Elections to the board and a chili feed and/or wild game appetizers. Food prepared by Fred Broman.

October 31, 2012

Stream Trout in lakes, end of Minnesota summer season.

November 2nd -4th, 2012

Arrowhead Fly Fishers 7th Annual Fall Steelhead Rendezvous. Location: Brule River, WI.

November 15, 2012

Open trout special season downstream from U.S. Hwy. 2 to Lake Superior

November 30, 2012

Close of muskie season Wisconsin - northern zone.

December 18, 2012

Holiday Banquet

Guess where!

Each newsletter there will be a photo from a club member. You try to guess where it was taken. There will be a prize for who guesses correctly first.

email to:

Arrowheadflyfishers@aol.com

Didn't guess the photo location? You can still contribute by emailing

your photo for the contest.

Congratulations to Jim Arnt for guessing the last issue's photo. Mouth of the Lester, after the Big Flood.

submitted photos are available for use by the Arrowhead Fly Angler and Arrowhead Fly Fishers club



Volume 23 Issue V

email edition

Guess where!.....	1
Bass Camp.....	2
Youth in the Outdoors.....	3

AFF General meeting.....	3
AFF Fall Steelhead Rendezvous.....	4
From the banks of the Midway.....	5
Casting corner.....	6
Who we are.....	7

Bass camp

The second annual bass camp was held August 10th, 11th, and 12th. Friday fishing was a trip to the Flambeau river east of Hayward Wisconsin. The day was sunny and windy which made casting and rowing challenging. Bass were caught despite the wind, and even a couple muskie came to the net! The main fishing was done on Saturday and Sunday. The anglers met at the Main Street cafe in Siren for a huge breakfast, including pancakes that were so large they hung over the plates. The float was about 8 miles of the St. Croix river in the Grantsburg area. The flotilla included drift boats, canoe, and inflatable pontoon. The water in this section was completely different than last year. It was low! Fishing was challenging. No boats were skunked, but fish were hard earned. A highlight was a visit from the National Park ranger, club member, and friend, Jeff Butler. Jeff shared some history of the river during our lunch on an island. The tired crew went to bed late that night.



We met the next morning for a hardy breakfast in Danbury, Wisconsin. Sunday's fishing was done in the



upper section of the St. Croix river. Again, the day was bright and sunny. The winds were light and sight fishing was the main attraction. Smallmouth were caught on the surface and on steamers. The fun was in reading the bass' reaction to the fly. By looking at the bass ghosting the fly the

puppeteer of the fly enticed the bass to strike. There were a few doubles landed by the second angler casting towards a hooked bass. The shadowing bass at times would strike the offered second fly. One had to be careful not to get tangled in the first anglers fish, this could lead to some dissension among boat partners.



The fishing and friendship of the bass camp was as nice as the weather. It was good to have the rivers fill our spirits, and the sun recharge us.

Youth in the outdoors

On August 25th the Youth In The Outdoors event was held in Siren Wisconsin. The Wisconsin Smallmouth Alliance's donation of \$250.00 was used to purchase a beginner Fly rod kit to be given away and the remaining donation was put toward advertising and lunches for all children that attended.

The event hosted 150 - 175 children. This year the Angling Area had the National Park Service doing fish painting and logging history of the river along with canoeing, kayaking, and camping. Frank Pratt (Retired WIDNR biologist) did lure making. Arrowhead Fly fishing Club of Duluth and the the Lew Jewett club of the Twin Cities had two drift boats for the kids to climb in and cast from. Fly casting and fly tying was taught by club members and were a big hit with the children.

The children had a variety of outdoor activities to try at other booths such as:

- Whitetails Unlimited
- Orienteering course
- Canoe and Kayaking
- Horse and Mule Packing
- Outdoor cooking



Lure making with Frank Pratt



Board of Directors Update

- A general business meeting was held on Tuesday September 18, 2012.
- The club decided upon a new logo.
- There was discussion and feedback on the club's scholarship, which was awarded by the University of Wisconsin Superior on behalf of the Arrowhead Fly Fisher to a student in the Fisheries management program.
- The club's budget and financial status was shared.
- An encouraging effort was put forth to involve others to join the board of directors. Open positions needing candidates for election on October 6th are , **Vice President, Treasurer, Membership director, Conservation-education director**. These positions have well written job descriptions that were emailed to the membership and can be attained by contacting any board member.
- The Upper Midwest Council president, Todd Heggstad spoke of the newly formed International Federation of Fly Fishers council. And announced the council's first general meeting in November at Stevens Point Wisconsin.
- The Uskabwanka river project was updated to club members.

2012 AFF Fall Steelhead Rendezvous November 2nd to 4th, 2012

The Arrowhead Fly Fishers have organized the 7th Annual "Fall Steelhead Rendezvous". As in the past, our goal is to have a great time together, share knowledge, and also prick (and hopefully land) a few steelhead ('migratory' rainbow trout) from the beautiful Bois Brule River in northern Wisconsin. If you have never been to the Bois Brule River in the late fall, then you are in for a real treat. In some years, the leaves can still be falling off the trees and other years you may get snow during the day. In either case, it is beautiful, the fish are usually biting, and it's time well spent in the outdoors. We'll do our best to pair all 'new steelheaders' (often called 'jacks') with the more 'seasoned steelheaders' who attend (easily identified by their curious smell and unusual nicknames).

The Fall Steelhead Rendezvous is similar to the 'Hex Camp' outing our club organizes each July, except we sleep indoors! It is scheduled for the weekend of November 2-4, 2012 at Brule River Classics in Brule, WI. See their website for directions and a map (<http://www.brulriverclassics.com/>). We have reserved the large cabin (Cabin #5) that will serve as the Rendezvous headquarters and three more cabins (#1, 2, and 3) for additional bunks. So, we can accommodate up to 15 people this year (Sorry, no pets or smoking in the cabins)!

The festivities will begin around 5 pm on Friday, November 2nd. The plan is to have people staying in the cabins to settle in early Friday evening, dine-in on Doug Mroz's famous spaghetti as they arrive, and then around 8 to 9 pm CSFT ('Central Standard Fisherman's Time') start making plans for fishing the following day. Early on Saturday morning (depending on what you call early and whom you talk to), small groups of fisher folks will be departing for the river to try their luck with the steelhead.

We will gather again on Saturday evening between 4 and 5 pm at Cabin #5 for a cookout-style dinner. Afterwards, we'll settle into the living room for stories (some even true!) about fishing that day, the 'only' fly to use, the 'big one' that got away, how best to lose flies (on rocks or trees, your choice),

and trading information on 'secret' spots on the river and how to tie the perfect steelhead fly. Sunday morning after breakfast, you are free to fish the river again but you must check out of the cabin before departing. The Fall Steelhead Rendezvous will 'officially' end at checkout time (10 am) on Sunday morning, November 4th.

This event is strictly BYOB, BYOFTG ('bring your own fly tying gear'), and BYOBSR ('bring your own BS repellent')! Everyone should bring waders, his or her favorite fly rod and reel (6 to 8 weight rods work well), and flies. You can buy flies at the Superior Fly Angler in Superior, WI (715-395-9520; <http://www.superiorflyangler.com/>) or the Great Lakes Fly Company in Duluth (218-740-3040; <http://www.greatlakesflys.com/>). Good steelhead maps of the river are available at these shops or through the Brule River Sportsmen's Club (<http://www.brulriverclassics.com/>).



Interest is high again this year, so don't delay reserving a spot! You must come both Friday and Saturday nights if you plan to stay in a cabin. If you stay in the Brule River Classics cabins, the cost will be about the same as last year (~\$120 per person for Friday and Saturday nights and meals).

Otherwise, feel free to stay at a motel in Brule, WI, pick an RV spot at a Brule State Forest campground or reserve one with Brule River Classics, or just come over to fish on Saturday and then join us later for the cookout! To just attend the Saturday evening cookout, we ask that you RSVP, contribute \$15, and your beverage of choice. We will provide the main dish, additional food, non-alcoholic beverages, and plates and utensils. For other lodging accommodations, check with the Brule River Motel & Campground (715-372-4815) or the Brule River State Forest Campground (715-372-5678). You can find places to dine out and other information at the town of Brule web site (<http://www.brule-wi.org/index.htm>).

For more information about the 2012 Fall Steelhead Rendezvous, to reserve your spot in a cabin, or RSVP for the Saturday evening cookout, contact Randy Hicks by telephone (218-724-4296) or email (rhicks@d.umn.edu).

From the Banks of the Midway ...

The Final Crossing

“A penny for your thoughts.”

If I had known that question would be the start to my last conversation with Dad, I would have said, “Dad you have been the best father anyone could ask for. Your love and concern for your family was equaled only by the love I witnessed daily between you and Mom. When I think of everything you’ve experienced since 1923, the year of your birth, I am astounded. I will be eternally grateful for everything you taught me.”

What I actually said was something like “I’m not thinking about much. Just wish this warm weather would leave us, and we sure do need rain.” Thoughts which aren’t worth a penny.

My dad was not a fly fisherman. I don’t think he ever really understood the whole idea of catch and release, but was always interested how the fishing was and how often I was able to get out.

He did take me brookie fishing once. It was around 1958 or so and I remember each part of the trip. I didn’t catch a fish, but I managed somehow to pull in a sculpin of all things, which looked to me like some type of prehistoric creature. On the way home the gas gauge on the 56 buick was left of “E” so we coasted down the town hall hill into Esko and limped home, the most dramatic moment of the evening.

Dad and Grandpa were lake trout fishermen. My grandfather and great uncles would travel once a summer to what is now the BWCA with cedar rowboats, a sack of salt, cast iron fry pans, canvas tents, woolen blankets, and a full complement of handmade brass spoons. They did not have rods and reels but trolled heavy Dacron lines, one man on the oars while the other sat in the stern holding wooden, notched sticks which held the extra line. By the time my dad started on these trips the gang carried a boatload of gas for their outboards, and their forays now reached into Canada.

For many years Dad and I spent a week in Canada fishing for lake trout. We’d spend hours trolling on u Lake, and usually ate our fill of fish. Someday I may go back to

our favorite island where we watched the sun set while sitting by the campfire.

Dad took me deer hunting when I turned 14. A few years later he bought me a Remington 600 bolt action rifle, a gun I used last year when I finally bagged a big buck after 50 years of trying. I’m glad Dad was able to see pictures of that deer.

In the late 1970s I persuaded Dad to help me build a hunting shack. It took us nearly a year to complete. We decided it had to be made of logs which made the whole undertaking more daunting, especially since we had no equipment other than a chain saw. A half mile away sits the ruins of the original Johnson cabin, where Dad spent a whole winter of 1941 cutting cedar fence posts with his uncle Matt.

One of my favorite novels is [A River Runs Through It](#). In it Norman Maclean wrote, “In our family, there was no clear line between religion and fly fishing.” Although my dad and my sons cherished the time we spent outdoors, when I held Dad’s hand during the last week of his life after his stroke I didn’t talk about fly fishing. I hope he heard me.



*Phil Johnson,
1952, Sand Lake*

Phil Johnson, is a bamboo rod maker and secretary for the Arrowhead Fly Fishers.

Phil can be reached at:

discophil61@gmail.com

Casting nymph rigs

Steelhead season is right around the corner and although swinging flies is becoming more popular, drifting nymphs is the bread and butter method for Fall run Brule steelhead. The traditional way of casting nymph rigs that have "meat potatoes and silverware with a cherry on top" (nymph, egg fly and spilt shot, with a strike indicator) has been referred to as Chuck and duck. This open lob technique will jerk the line during the cast and the weighted hinge points of the rig often lead to accuracy problems. In fact the "duck" part of this cast is self explanatory to its inerrant wildness.

Here are some tips to help avoid getting bonked in the head with a nymph rig and improving casting accuracy when nymphing:

First step is to slow down the cast. Nymph rigs have hinge points because of the differing weights and components in the rig. Think of it as a bola. By slowing down the cast, sudden changes in direction are minimized.

Another way to reduce sudden directional changes is to perform the elliptical cast (aka oval, constant tension, Belgium cast). This cast starts with a side arm backcast that smoothly circles up into a vertical forward cast. This cast allows for a more traditional and accurate forward cast without the sudden change of direction that a traditional backcast would have.

Performing a roll cast (previous article) also does a good job of keeping the nymph rig under tension. The water tension also helps load the rod. Roll casts do have limits on how much change in direction can be made from the roll set up to the forward cast.

Water hauling is an additive technique. An example of the water haul would be when the nymph rig has completed its drift and is dangling down current from the caster. The current places tension on the line, keeping the rig straight, and puts a load on the rod. The cast is then similar to the forward cast of the roll or elliptical cast. However, it is harder to control accuracy with the water haul.

Often when fishing dry flies and streamers the cast has a narrow efficient loop. When casting nymph rigs it is useful to open the loop shape in order to give the rig some wiggle room. This wider loop can greatly minimize tangles. This opening of the loop is accomplished by moving the rod top in a more curved shape. Think of the arc of a windshield wiper. The more curve, the more the loop opens.

An example of putting these pieces together would be to start by either roll casting or elliptical casting the nymph rig down stream of the target area. Allow the current to pull tension on the rig, a water haul will get a load in the rod for a more vertical upstream forward cast, with loop control, and accuracy toward the target.

At times letting the rig complete the downstream drift on its own is undesirable, because of a snag or obstacle downstream. A useful technique would be to allow the rig to drift downstream, pick it up at the desired spot and elliptical or roll cast downstream to an area away from the obstacle that sets the next forward cast up aimed at the target target.

Often it is best to water haul from the downstream position to an upstream position. Then, using the upstream position as a starting point roll or elliptical cast out into the river with more precision then can be made with a water haul alone.

Casting nymph rigs with multiple flies, weight, and strike indicators requires a change from the traditional casting style. It is a challenge to accurately cast the rig while avoiding tangles. By slowing down, elliptical and roll casting, combined with water hauling and opening up the loop, casts can be made with more control. Better casts with accurate drifts will catch more fish!



Paul Bartlam has been a certified casting instructor since 2010 and is the Editor of the Arrowhead Fly Angler. Paul can be reached at pbartlam@aol.com

Remember the AFF has 5 and 6 wt. rods for members to check out for a 2 week period by placement of a deposit. Contact any board member for details.

If you have a casting question email it to:

Arrowheadflyfishers@aol.com

Who we are

The Arrowhead Fly Fishers is a group of men and women dedicated to promoting fly angling of all types and to preserving fisheries throughout the Arrowhead region.

What we offer:

- Interesting meeting topics
- Formal casting instruction
- Stream improvement projects
- Group fishing adventures
- Fly tying sessions
- Fellowship and Fun



Board of Directors

President: Karl Kaufman 218-879-9492 jkk Kaufman@mchsi.com

Vice President: Larry Zelenz 507-382-7793
larry.zelenz@gmail.com

Secretary: Phil Johnson 218-879-3206
discophil61@gmail.com

Treasurer: Todd Heggstad 218-310-9182 Theggstad57@gmail.com

Banquet Director: OPEN

Publications Director: Paul Bartlam 218-390-0764 pbartlam@aol.com

Membership Director: Kathy Lansing 218-310-0855 naturegirl669@gmail.com

Conservation/Education Director: Laura Jensen 218-590-6249 jens0619@gmail.com



"We may say of angling as Dr. Boteler said of strawberries: 'Doubtless God could have made a better berry, but doubtless God never did'; and so, if I might be judge, God never did make a more calm, quiet, innocent recreation than angling."

-Izaak Walton

Arrowhead Fly Fishers Membership Form

Dues are payable in January

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

Phone: _____ email: _____

Membership Type:

Individual—\$15

Family—\$20

New Member

Renewing Member

Return to: Arrowhead Fly Fishers 209

Snively Rd.

Duluth, MN. 55803



Arrowhead Fly Fishers

209 Snively Rd.

Duluth, MN. 55803