

THE PREZ SEZ

by Jeff Ziehm

As many of you know, the Dallas Flyfishers lost an old friend last month. Michael Verduin past away after a long battle with cancer. When I joined the DFF ten years ago, Mike was already a long time member of the club. Mike generously gave his time and talent to teaching others fly fishing and his passion, fly tying. We will all miss him.

On September 13th and 14th DFF volunteers demonstrated casting and fly tying at the Heard Museum in Fairview, TX, just north of Allen. It was the Heard Museum's annual Birds of Prey event. Watching the falcons work was amazing. Our thanks to Slim Mitchell, Mark Eskew, L.C. Lower, Bob Tumlinson, John Peterie, Richard Komar, and Jere Anderson for volunteering. And a big thanks to Chuck Sabolovic for organizing the DFF's participation in the event.

Last month before our program, Ken Cole was out in front of the Addison Conference Center giving casting tips to anyone interested. Every time I talk to Ken, I take away a tip that improves my casting. Ken, who is Certified Casting Instructor, normally gives free casting advice during the Daylight Savings Time months. So October will be your last chance to take advantage of Ken's expertise until next spring.

Last month's speaker was Clint Wilkerson. Clint gave a fine presentation on fishing the White and Norfolk Rivers in AR. This is a good time of year to take advantage of this trophy trout water relatively close to home.

On September 20th, the DFF held our 2nd annual family picnic at Breckinridge Park in Richardson. 22 members and families enjoyed Chuck Sabolovic's hamburgers, hot dogs, and a perfect TX Saturday afternoon. It's amazing what moving the picnic from the middle of August to the 3rd week of September can do. (And who says you cannot teach old flyfishers new tricks.)

Activities included:

- Wading in the park's creek
- Wading in the park's lake. (The kids had to be wading, since there was a "no swimmin" sign posted
- Frisbee
- Spin casting a weight into a hula hoop. (Spin casting a weight into a hula hoop. Who would have the nerve to bring a spin casting rod to a fly fishing picnic.)

A good time was had by all.

Our October speaker will be Jim Partin. Jim will be discussing fishing the Arkansas River near Buena Vista, CO. I look forward to seeing you at the October meeting.

FUTURE MEETING PROGRAMS

October 20-Jim Partin, ArkAnglers, flyfishing guide from Buena Vista, CO, will be presenting a program covering the Arkansas river near Buena Vista. Jim will focus on the fantastic brown trout fishery, reading the river, locating fish, favorite flies, and techniques.

November 17- Ed Koch, famous author of many flyfishing and fly tying books, outstanding dry fly fishing guide and instructor, from Boiling Springs, Pa. Bring your copy of Ed's book for his signing. He will also bring several copies of his books. Ed will focus on midge and dry fly fishing the fabled Letort, Big Spring and Yellow Breeches rivers. He will also share his stories of his friendships with Vince Marinaro and Charles Fox.

December 14, 6:00PM-Holiday Party at The Crown Plaza Suites Hotel. Sign up by Dec 8th.

HOLIDAY PARTY

The annual DFF Holiday Party will be held at 6:00PM, Sunday evening, December 14th, at the Crown Plaza Suites Hotel. This is the same location as last year. The Crown Plaza Suites is north and west of the Central Expressway (US 75) / LBJ (Interstate 635) intersection. There is a map along with the registration form on the back page of The Leader.

The cost is \$25 per person for a sit-down meal and several hours of camaraderie with the best group of Flyfishers in Texas. We will have a holiday raffle, and a lot of fun as well as install the new officers for the upcoming year. Don't miss this great chance to salute the holidays.

On the back of this Leader you will find one of our holiday party sign-up slips. Please complete this form and mail it and your check as soon as possible. December is closer than you think, and we need an accurate head count for the party by December 8th.

FISHING TIP

Hook eyes clogged with glue or paint should not be opened with the point of a hook, which will dull it. Instead, carry a few safety pins for the job. One pinned to a fishing vest is always handy.

FUTURE OUTINGS

by L.C. Clower

October 18th-19th: Brazos Overnight Canoe Trip with FWFF. For details check with L C Clower at (972) 463-5126 lcclower@airmail.net

Nov 1st-2nd: Rendezvous, North Toledo Bend State Park. Overdose on Cajun cooking a possibility. Very little fishing is done at Rendezvous, rather it's a 2-day progressive dinner and fly tying event held in the group facility at North Toledo Bend State Park, outside Zwolle, Louisiana (check out <http://www.lastateparks.com/ntoledo/ntoledo.htm>).

Fly tiers, be they Prominent or obscure, famous or infamous, gather in the dining hall, set up their stuff and tie all day and into the late evening. Spectators are more than welcome to sit, watch and ask questions. This is not an insignificant event because some of the top fly tyers in the nation attend Rendezvous every year.

The unanimous verdict of those who've been, is that Rendezvous is too good to miss. The family fee is \$30 for the weekend or \$15 for a day or night. Single's fee is \$20 for the weekend or \$10 for the day or night. For more information contact Walter & Linda McLendon at 936-875-3726 or check the following website: <http://home.sprynet.com/~waltermc/Rendez/indexR.html>

Nov 28th-30th: Annual Thanksgiving Outing to Broken Bow, OK. Check with Diane & Richard Blair for details. This is always a great week-end outing for fishing, tying, eating, & visiting.

CONSERVATION CORNER

by Jere Anderson

What's Hot and What's Not

On the first weekend in November is the Toledo Bend Rendezvous. This is a must attend for fly tiers and other fly fishing cognoscenti. It is a lot of fun and the food is tremendous. Lots more will be said about this in future meetings, but you really need to get to this one if you can take the full weekend off. Fishing, eating and fly tying are the prime events, but a little casting practice and playing with other's fly fishing toys usually get in there somewhere.

We are tying at Bass Pro Shops now, with the unfortunate demise of the Backwoods at Coit and Campbell. More folks need to go there and tie. The audience is in the thousands if you total the crowd in and out in a day, and certainly hundreds of them give us at least a quick look-see. Give it a try.

Conservation Issues

I have had a full plate this summer teaching. Lots of kids and adults seem to have found the need for fly-fishing, fly casting and fly tying training. The summer started off with my usual sojourn to the North Texas Outback at Bonham State Park. The first Church camp was populated with 55 kids from 8 to 11. They tied flies, cast fly rods and did a fairly good job of getting all the knowledge required for the Texas Basic Fly-Fishing certification. Then we got 45 Middle School and high School kids. They also ran through the course with good style, and even tied more flies than needed for the certification. Then some individual events like the chance to meet the public at various museums, outdoor festivals and the like occurred, along with some time being spent taking individual kids out fishing for Mom's that needed some help with the outdoor subjects. This is a lot of fun, and I very much suggest that everyone take the pledge to take a kid fishing in the remainder of 2003. Don't forget that you do not need a fishing license to take a kid fishing at a state park during the 2003-2004 license season. That's right, it is free for the adult to fish if accompanied by a kid (under 17 is the definition of kid). So get out there.

Now I am teaching adults at the church, and have a few folks that I talked to at the raptor show in McKinney that want to get me into their scouting outings. This is a very active place for volunteerism. I will be calling on other's to assist with this area. My adult classes all include a fishing trip to local water, and I have found the nirvana of bream water. Active fish that turn over on the fly as fast as it hits the water. And lots of them. No, I won't tell, but you can find out where by helping with the teaching.

Have fun and get out there and fish. The second top water season is upon us, and it is a very good time to be running Dahlberg's though the tops of the grass beds about dawn. Big bass will be hitting the minnow population getting that fat layer rebuilt for winter. They are yours for the taking. Be sure to try it. I get better quality fish in the fall season. The chance for the double-digit bass is probably better now than spring, though the chance for the new state record bass is not so good. Go fish.

Tight Lines and Big Fish

Gar on the Fly

by Dave Speer

The call came early this morning. "I'm not going to let That Water beat me... I'll be back there just as soon as I can get the kids out the door."

"Okay," I said, "I have a few things to do first. I'll be there later, just leave me a radio."

Drink coffee. Spend money on the phone/internet. Pet dog. Kiss girlfriend goodbye, et cetera.

Okay, yesterday a little flash worked: cone-head no-hackle crystal bugger. But it didn't work so well, and even drew a few refusals. Also, it sank too fast. So today I will try something different-- a poly-yarn clouser. Green poly/black flash/white poly and small black bead chain eyes. It'll sink, but slowly.

I tie up a couple of the poly clousers in the baby bass colors. The black flash makes a very nice lateral line, and I picked up a couple of bucket-boys out of That Water yesterday, so I know there is fry from time to time.

I set off my friend's car alarm retrieving the radio, but I'm glad I got the radio anyway. Before I'd been on the water 2 minutes he yelled into the mic: "Woo-hoo! I've got a carp!" It's not a bad carp, either. A little smaller than the one I pulled out yesterday but not so small, either; the rod is bent hard and the water is boiling. Thanks to the radios I paddle up in time to snap a couple of pictures of:

a) his largest fly-rod fish to date

b) his largest fish to date

c) his first carp, by any method

Two casts later and he catches another carp, 50% larger and a very nice fish by any means. Congrats, mental high fives, and I'm on the hunt.

Drifting slowly through the water, not paddling. Quiet, invisible, fly in one hand, rod in the other. Suspended just 20 feet from me are living, swimming spotted sticks. GAR !!! More false casts than I thought prudent later, the fly landed just beside the gar. I was thinking about how badly I needed to clean my line (recent incident with wet clay-- casting/shooting line is a complete joke at this point) when I twitched the fly and the gar came alive and turned, hit, shook, and was gone. The hit and miss was with incomprehensible speed. I didn't realize what was happening until it was already long over. I didn't get another chance for almost an hour. I finally found myself in a back cove shaped more like a feeder creek, and there were gar literally everywhere. Gar on the left, gar on the right, cast to the middle gar, fight, fight, fight. For a brief moment I thought I would land one that had around an inch of poly yarn firmly embedded in the mouth... then it yawned and swam off slightly irritated.

Finally, it happened. The gar was no more than 15 feet away. I cast, the fly dropped like a feather next to the beast's eye. It turned, hit, and I hit back, 3 times, fast, hard, with the rod, the line, and my upper body for good measure. The water EXPLODED. Then the fish just laid there, motionless, looking at me, thinking: "I am the top of the food chain in This Water. Go away." Slight upward pressure with the rod to swing the fish toward the boat and it came STRAIGHT OUT OF THE WATER! Then it hit the water and laid still again. Hmm... Upward pressure, the fish jumps again. Seems to be a pattern. I debate about whether to touch the fish or just attempt to release it with the hemostats and a slow, steady hand. Then I realize, hemostats in hand that the fish is NOT Hooked. Rather, the hook shank is laying perpendicular to the snout, upside down on the roof of the mouth, so that the hook bends outside of and on top of the snout, the hook point resting on top of the gar's head/nose/paddle/handle/snout. And then it decides it is done playing, twists, and the hook falls to the side. The fish disappears into the murky edges.

Half of the battle was trout/tarpon/sailfish/small mouth bass, leap straight out of the water. The other half was drum/am I hooked here? What is going on? Did that fish bite back? Honey, where is the remote?

All in all, I ended up getting maybe 20 shots at gar today. I had about 4 or 5 hookups but just the one fish landed. Everything came together, I was living between the pages of a magazine:
saw the challenge
gained some experience
thought it through
tied some flies
found the fish
made the presentation
hosed the presentation
tried again
hosed it up again (and again, and again)

and then just one beautiful moment when a fish probably best described as "you rat bastard" ate the fly, looked tough, lept, and hunkered down. No, not hunkered down, exactly. Just "hunkered." Oh, I could say he ran off 15 million feet of backing in the blink of an eye, or came to the top and did three of those triple-axle ice skating moves everyone was talking about after Nancy, Tonya and the Trailer Trash Gang Incident. But in all reality the gar was good for a couple of jumps and then it was mostly dead weight. A stick with kick, I guess. I found my fishing partner into another carp. They just kept getting bigger. I sort of wanted to be jealous but couldn't bring myself to it. I did what I set out to do, which, in fishing, is kind of like jumping over the moon. It doesn't work out often.

I'll go after more gar, but not for the fight. I will chase the gar for the strike-- which will most likely be referred to as "sight fishing for heart-attacks."

SEE "CLUB PHOTOS" FOR PICTURES FROM OCTOBER LEADER (and more)

DFF 2003 HOLIDAY PARTY REGISTRATION FORM

Attendee Name(s) _____

Make check payable to: Dallas Flyfishers

Mail to: Jeff Ziehm
8349 Club Meadows Dr
Dallas, TX 75243

The cost is **\$25 per person** for a sit-down meal and several hours of camaraderie with the best group of Flyfishers in Texas.
