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### Inside this issue:

President's message	1
Gods of Fly Fishing	2
Grip Studs review	3
Home away from home	4
Bad ass angler	5
Just a snicker	6
Lessons learned	7
G Hopper Battle	8
Fuel prices	9
Fishing w/Dad	10
Cont'd	11
Cont'd	12
Geezer quiz	13
How will we live?	14
Field notes & Fridge Reminders	15

# Tippets, Tapers & Tales

## President's Message - November 2018

I hope November finds you all well. We have a wonderful meeting planned for all. Bob Ceru will be sharing some of his fishing adventures from not too far from home.



Bob Kren has some thoughts and ideas on our club, where we are going, and possible opportunities for the future.

A short open discussion will be held to give everyone a chance to contribute and offer ideas and ask questions. Your input is valuable and I look forward to hearing from all. The board is working on future meeting ideas, so give it some thought. If you want to see or hear from someone, we want to try to make it happen.



For our deer hunter friends, shoot straight and watch out for stray shots. Oh, and good luck?

John



## RED CEDAR FLY FISHERS

*Okemos, Michigan*

[www.redcedarflyfishers.org](http://www.redcedarflyfishers.org)

1981 McKenzie Cup Winners

The Red Cedar Fly Fishers is a Charter Club of Fly Fishers International.

It's purpose is to promote fly-fishing through Education, Restoration and Conservation

## Gods of Flyfishing, by Bob Kren, RCFFer and occasionally Mr Flyfishersonguy

Some while back, an Indian, from Bombay or Mumbai or somesuch -- why can't they make up their minds about city names? -- told me that there are 300,000 deities recognized in Hinduism. Another impeccable source, Wikipedia, says that there are 32,000,000. Talk about inflation! Must be confusing to pick one out for daily prayers, but there have to be plenty to satisfy every possible need.

That mammoth mythology got me to thinking about the gods and demigods and semihemidemi-gods that could apply to flyfishing. Here's the bare beginning of a list, based loosely on the stories of ancient Greece, for common flyfishing situations.

- Aeolus, the god of wind and windknots, the god likely responsible for Alexander the Great's encounter with the Gordian knot, the mother of all snarls. How many of us have wished that the solution to the tangles we get with tandem rigs could be simply done away with by using a machete, or a katana? But we try, pointlessly, to untangle the mess, figuring that such a simple act as casting couldn't possibly produce a mammoth macramé. It can, and it does. You think that's the wind in the trees? That's Aeolus, watching you pick and pick, and laughing. He also invented the tailing loop.
- Poseidon, the god of the seas and leaky waders, had two brothers - Zeus, king of all the gods, and Hades, lord of the underworld. Turns out that the boys' father, one Cronos or Cronus or Kronus -- again with the names! -- had eaten Poseidon and Hades and his other kids, but Zeus vanquished Cronos, forcing Cronus to barf up children: this was, apparently, not an uncommon thing in those days, or these, for that matter. The Greek gods were pretty serious folk, what with all the incest and philandering and begatting, so Poseidon was granted the ability to make us miserable on the water, finding and fighting the source of wader wetness, purely for laughs. Just imagine that somewhere -- Olympus, probably -- a bunch of drunken gods are watching you dump water out of a set of waders, on a 72,000 square foot TV screen. More like a Hooters than you might think.
- Artemis is the goddess of the moon and the hunt. It's no stretch to add flyfishing to that list: just imagine Joan Wulff with a bow, a good dog, and a ten-foot six-weight. If you wish to curry Artemis' favor, try bowing down when on the water (which is a sign of respect, and keeps you out of the fish's view), hollering "Oh, Gawdness!" (instead of the usual thing you yell), gazing skyward hopefully while you look for where your fly is hiding in the bushes, respecting property rights (I just threw that one in), and hiring a woman to cure you of your tailing loops.
- Zeus, the Head Honcho once Kronus was gone, is the god of lightning. Some folk say that graphite rods were invented just so flyfishers could get hit by one of Big Z's bolts. That's just silly, but I always keep my rod tip really low as soon as I hear the slightest rumble, even if it's just me or the gaseous bozo I go fishing with. Oh, and Zeus is also the possessor of the patent on fire, and got really mad when Prometheus gave fire to humans, who screamed when he put it into their bare hands. It's a matter of conjecture whether the following counts as childbirth, but Athena, fully armed, jumped straight out of Zeus' brain during the worst hangover EVER! -- sort of like "Alien," but prettier.
- Hera was Zeus' wife and, how shall I put this, um . . . sister. They had some kids together, in the usual way, by which I mean the brain never entered into the picture. Zeus messed around -- a lot -- and Hera was really jealous that she wasn't getting enough brotherly love. So she performed her usual wifely duties, mostly various types of complaining, and made Big Z miserable. Hera especially despised one of Zeus' "love children", Hercules (played by a young Charlton Heston). She gave Herc twelve tasks, like reading everything the Borgers ever wrote, or tying a Jock Scott in under twelve seconds using only his personal body hair, or cleaning up the Flint River. Which he did. Yay, Herc!
- Let's wind it up for now with a shoutout to Athena, goddess of wisdom, courage, inspiration, civilization, law and justice, strategic warfare, mathematics, strength, strategy, the arts, crafts, and skill. Why bother with any of the other gods when Athena can grant you all these? Imagine yourself onstream: which of these do you need most? Law and justice not so much, unless you're trespassing again, and maybe not arts and crafts. But all the rest, for sure. And at the tying bench many of these apply, except again for law and justice. Law and justice might well be disposable, but that's another story.

That's it for now, folks. Next month, more mythology you can believe in.

## Gear Review — Grip Studs are the Real Deal

My favorite fly fishing tips are based in movement. I often urge anglers to get closer to the target — cast only as far as necessary, so you have maximum control over the fly's path in the water. I encourage clients to cover more water — give the trout a good shot at the flies and then move on. I tell guys if the fishing is slow, focus on the water type where you *are* catching fish and leave the other stuff for another day. And when searching for the biggest trout in the system, hop from one prime location to the next. None of that is possible if you're bumbling and stumbling with every step. If all you're thinking about is not falling down, it's tough to focus on the fishing.

I once read an author who argued that good wading is about learning to slide into place with each step. He said that everyone out there is slipping in the stream, so learn to deal with it; fish a lot, and you'll gain confidence in slippery conditions. I couldn't disagree more.

The wading angler needs *gription*! And solid, stable contact with the riverbed is the only thing to provide that confidence. There is no substitute.

- Non-studded felt is great until it isn't. When you encounter the wrong algae or plant life on the bottom, the creek turns into a slip-and-slide. Same with non-studded rubber.
- Studs of various designs work for a while and are usually best when new. My main gripe is how fast they either wear out or fall out.
- Many screw-in studs have a wide head that flattens after a couple dozen miles of walking. They round off and lose their edge for biting in.
- Aluminum options can be wonderful. I'm a big fan of aluminum bars and Rock Treads discs. But aluminum chunks screwed into your soles are heavier than studs, they can slip on wet wood and ice, and they're kind of a bear to install. (That said, I use aluminum bars and Rock Treads a lot. They're a great option, especially for giving new life to boots with worn soles.)



For the complete article head over to: [www.troutbitten.com](http://www.troutbitten.com) and check out additional info on his testing and options in lengths, types of boots, and whether or not one needs any additional help beyond traditional felt. This was taken from the author's Sept. 9th write up.

Tony Parks did a road trip this past year and found a cozy little “honeymoon suite” at Craig Lake State Park in Baraga county. The nearest town is Michigamme, which is 4 miles away. Check with him if you’d like directions as it’s a long way down a two track to this secluded getaway.



You can almost hear the banjos playing from downstate as well!

## How to Become a Bad Ass Angler

### Treat it like a job

I know, you already have a job, and a family, and the same twenty-four hours in a day as everyone else, but success only comes through sacrifice. You have to make the time. Many years ago, I considered going to guide school to become a better fisherman. I got on the phone with the fellow who ran the school and talked to him for over an hour. I tried to give him an accurate picture of where I was as an angler. At the end of the conversation he told me,

“I can take your money, but you already know what you need to know. You just need time on the water. Fish a hundred days next year and you’ll be a badass.”

The following year I fished closer to a hundred-fifty days and the change was remarkable. I landed several of the biggest trout of my life that year.

### Check Your Ego

The number one thing that holds anglers back is ego. For that matter, ego is the number one thing that holds our sport back. The stereotype of the snobbish fly fisherman exists for a reason. Not only does it keep good folks from trying fly fishing, it keeps those of us in the sport from learning. Most fly fisherman spend so much energy trying to prove that they know what they’re doing that there is no energy left for learning. You can learn something from everyone. Ego precludes that.

### Fish With Anglers Who Are Better Than You

Language scholars call this “finding an informant”. Find an angler that you get along with, who is better than you and willing to have you along. Find several and fish with them as much as possible. Make yourself useful. Bring beer, buy gas, offer to drive. Pay attention to everything they do. Talk about fishing and ask questions. Be humble. This is hands down the best way to rapidly improve your skills. I owe a great debt to the guys that helped me.

### Immerse Yourself

If you’re reading this post you’re likely on top of this one. Reading blogs, magazines and books is a great way to gather information, but it doesn’t stop there. Get involved in your local TU chapter or fly fishing club. Surround yourself with images of rivers and fish. Use a bulletin board or, like me, just pin stuff straight to the wall. My office always looks like some special branch of law enforcement on the case of some crime involving fish.

### Stay focused

Remember, it’s a marathon not a sprint. Be patient with yourself and stay positive. Beating yourself up over a missed fish or a blown cast or even the general feeling that you suck is counterproductive. Recognize your shortcomings, learn from your mistakes and celebrate your progress. Slow and steady wins the race.

### Hire guides as teachers

When you hire a guide, think of them as your teacher. Don’t judge your day on the water by how many fish you catch but by how much you learned while catching them. Guides have dedicated their lives to fly fishing and they have a wealth of knowledge to share. Once they see that you are eager to learn, and not offended by constructive criticism, they are eager to teach.

### Practice

If you can’t take a day to fish, you can almost always take an hour to cast on the lawn. Without the distraction of catching fish you can focus on technique. This is especially important when preparing for a big trip where you might be casting a new rod or fishing in tough conditions. Those days that seem better for flying a kite are great days to practice your casting.



## Where Some of Your Funds Go When You Join Fly Fishers International

<https://player.vimeo.com/video/280813275>

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### **Comments from a gentleman who “moved from being a sexagenarian to being a septuagenarian.”**

Once you start to fly fish, you will discover something called wind knots. Wind knots are not caused by the wind. They appear in leaders that are defective. How else could you get a knot in your leader when there is no wind or as you unfurl it from a package. If you discover a wind knot in your leader, you should take it back to the shop where you purchased it and trade it in for a new one. I have found fly shops understand this flaw and are more than happy to help address the issue of wind knots with you, usually with a casting lesson.

When deciding on the correct fly to use, I believe a Royal Wulff is the best all-around dry fly and a Woolly Buzzer is the best all-around wet fly. Take those two flies to the stream and see if you don't catch as many fish as some of the folks carrying 2,000 flies in their vest.

Fly lines are also a great mystery. If you are in a boat, you'll discover that fly line is magnetically attracted to everything on the boat. It doesn't matter if the attractor is metal, fly line will attach itself to anything that sticks up from the deck. Flies are similar when it comes to fly fishing around trees. They just automatically gravitate to wood products.

All waders will leak. I don't care what the brand is or how much or how little you paid for them, at some point they will leak. I've had brand new waders right out of the box fill up with water. And I've had my favorite pair of real comfortable waders spring a tiny pin hole leak that I couldn't find when in 35 degree water.

Expensive fly rods can also be a problem. If you lay your new expensive fly rod on the ground, one of two things will happen. Someone won't see it as they try to get their wood-attracted fly free from a tree and step on it. Or, a pet deer will chew it in half. I've seen both happen. Those things never happen with an inexpensive rod.

Last, at the end of the day, a good cigar and whiskey sipped from a metal coffee cup help us old codgers know why we do what we do.

.....from Don Oliver in the Durango Herald

## The Great Grasshopper Throw Down.....google these up

PAGE 8

Having success with grasshopper patterns is often easier said than done—late summer conditions can stack up against us as the prolonged days of bright sunshine cause water temps to often climb into the high 60s. However, armed with the right grasshopper pattern, you can beat the conditions and find success. Here's eight of the best hopper patterns going head to head.

**Stalcup's Hopper versus the Panty Dropper Hopper.** I first fished the Stalcup's hopper back in the '90s on the Missouri River. Craig was a sleepy riverside hamlet with only one fly shop and a bar. These days the Panty Dropper is the more appropriate pattern for the epicenter of fly-fishing hipness. Both hoppers are easy to see with a chunk of orange foam on their backs. The Panty Dropper is appealing with its large foam legs and foam underwing, but once in the water, the sleekness of the tube legs and marabou feet of the Stalcup's outperforms the sexier-sounding pattern. Winner: Stalcup's Hopper.

**Morrish Hopper versus Fat Frank.** This is a battle of the legs. Both are easy to see—they're hoppers, they should be—and feature an abundance of rubber legs. A Fat Frank will float a dropper nymph better, but this battle is about getting a fish to eat your hopper. The Morrish Hopper's all-foam body and its loosey-goosey thin rubber legs provide life-like action while drifting down the river. Winner: Morrish Hopper.

**Parachute Hopper versus Dave's Hopper.** A dog fight of the old school greats, the Dave's Hopper and Parachute Hopper are tied without foam or rubber legs. With its spun deer-hair head the Dave's Hopper looks buggier than the Parachute Hopper, but the Parachute Hopper doesn't sit quite as high on the surface, which makes it a very successful pattern for trout who are selective in their hopper eating. The legs and wings are similar, but it's the spun deer-hair head that makes the Dave's Hopper so lifelike and thus so effective. Winner: Dave's Hopper.

**Chubby Chernobyl versus Carnage Hopper.** Every trout angler must have a few Chubby Chernobyls in their fly box—and after reading this you should also have a few Carnage Hoppers. A Chubby Chernobyl with its massive white-foam wing is easy to see, but the Carnage Hopper with its segmented foam body, large foam head and glossy eye, is a very close imitation to the real thing. Tied with flexi-floss and rubber, the Carnage Hopper's legs take the cake for the most lifelike hopper imitation available today. Winner: Carnage Hopper.

**Semi-final one: Stalcup's versus Morrish.** A grind out battle to the finish, but the Stalcup's Hopper is more durable over the long haul. With a body made entirely out of foam, the Morrish's lifespan is short—a few teathy fish and the foam weakens and spins on the hook. If you have the ability for an endless supply of Morrish hoppers, it's a tie. Otherwise, the winner is: Stalcup's Hopper.

**Semi-final two: Dave's versus Carnage.** Both have very realistic profiles when seen from a trout's vantage point. But beyond that, they are very different—the Carnage is tied with all synthetic materials while the Dave's is traditional. But it's the Carnage Hopper's segmented body and glossy eye that imitate a real-life hopper better. This battle went deep into overtime, but its flexi-floss and rubber legs left the Carnage Hopper standing. Winner: Carnage Hopper.

**Championship: Stalcup's versus Carnage.** Larry Bird versus Magic Johnson. Tom Brady versus Joe Montana. Lionel Messi versus Cristiano Ronaldo. Well, it's not quite that grand, but choosing the right hopper is important. My choice is the Stalcup's mostly for sentimental reasons as I've caught more large trout on this pattern than any other. It's slimmer than the Carnage and tied with traditional materials along with plenty of foam to help it float well. It's caught selectively feeding trout on the Paradise Valley spring creeks, ambush-hungry browns on the Yellowstone, pressured trout on the Madison and Missouri rivers, so it's the first hopper I reach for this time of year. Winner: Stalcup's Hopper.

While the Stalcup's won this battle, faith in your favorite hopper pattern goes a long way. Your top choice may not be my top choice.

.....from Pat Straub owner of Gallatin River Guides in Big Sky

## You Think A Gallon Of Gas Is Expensive?

from Robin Rhyne

Makes one think, and puts things in perspective.

Diet Snapple 16 oz \$1.29 .....	\$10.32 per gallon
Lipton Ice Tea 16 oz \$1.19.....	\$ 9.52 per gallon
Gatorade 20 oz \$1.59 .....	\$10.17 per gallon
Ocean Spray 16 oz \$1.25 ... ..	\$10 .00 per gallon
Brake Fluid 12 oz \$3.15 .... ..	\$33.60 per gallon
Vick's Nyquil 6 oz \$8.35 .....	\$178.13 per gallon
Pepto Bismol 4 oz \$3.85 .....	\$123.20 per gallon
Whiteout 7 oz \$1.39 .....	\$25.42 per gallon
Scope 1.5 oz \$0.99 .....	\$84.48 per gallon

Here is the REAL KICKER..... Evian water 9 oz. for \$1.49, \$21.19 per gallon.

\$21.19 FOR WATER!....and the buyers don't even know the source. And let's not forget what "Evian" spelled backwards is, .....LOL!! (NAIVE)

So, the next time you're at the pump, be glad your car doesn't run on water, Scope, or Whiteout, or Heaven forbid, PEPTO BISMOL or NYQUIL!

These are 2003 prices when gas was \$1.54/gallon

Just trying to bring it into perspective when filling up for your next fishing trip.

### Record hybrid sunfish caught in Lake Anne

Michigan has a new state-record hybrid sunfish, out of Lake Anne in Grand Mere State Park in Berrien County. Joel Heeringa, of St. Joseph, Michigan, caught the fish July 9 while still-fishing with a crawler. The record fish weighed 1.8 pounds and measured 11.7 inches.



This should give some incentive to any club member to beat this record while using a fly rod. Even though Wakely Lake is catch and release, they do have some of these monsters still left. An editor I know caught one that measured 13" many years ago that he thought about sliding down the back of his waders to hike out with.

As we drove north for our trip, I asked to hear the story of how my father learned to fish — one I thought I had heard many times before. “I taught myself in college,” he told me. It turns out, he had only learned bait fishing as a kid. His father and his uncles fished off a boat, using live bait kept in a coffee can. In the '70s, in college, my dad and his roommate had decided that fly-fishing was more ecological, classier, and they had taught themselves from books in the library. Stoned on the quad in front of their dorm room at Michigan State University, they flicked the rod from 10 to 2.

The story disappoints me a little. I liked the legacy of the lessons I was about to get — the passing down of the ancient knowledge of rods and reels. It disrupts the romance that my dad learned it in a book. I suppose it means I could have learned it in a book, too. That the rituals of masculinity, not just the narratives, had long been freely available in the *Time-Life Complete Home Improvement Series* and the *Orvis Guide to Beginning Fly Fishing*.

The night before my dad and I left for our trip, I tried to put on his waders in the basement. You need waders to fly-fish. If done correctly, you will be standing in a cold stream for hours, feet planted on the round rocks of the riverbed. Waders keep you dry and warm and have grippers on the boot soles to keep you from falling over as you walk against the current.

My dad is tall, and he bought both of his pairs of waders when he was about 30 pounds lighter. On his body, they are taut and stretchy, on mine they are enormous and slouchy. We both are going to have to make do. I try to walk around the basement and nearly trip and fall onto an industrial-size bag of cat litter. He promises me that once I'm in the river, the extra fabric will suck to my legs and I won't be able to tell the difference. I'm skeptical.

After breakfast at Gates, it is early afternoon, and we drive to Jim's, a place where my dad has been renting canoes and cabins for decades. The truth is, it has been some time since my dad has come up to Grayling. My brother left home 15 years ago for college then California. My uncles are all old men now, happier to sit on their decks and watch the birds than to sleep on lumpy bunk beds. My dad's best friend from college used to come here with him, but he too has moved on to other hobbies and other friends.

*My father seemed to like the self-reliance, the fraternity, and domestic activity of outdoor life. I think must have reminded him of a part of himself that was wild and also a part that was tame.*

We pull off to the side of the road and look at the river to scout a spot to put in our canoe, and I get my first real glimpse of the river that my father so dearly loves. This section of the Au Sable is called the “Holy Water,” a distinction no one can explain in the abstract. It's a catch and release, no-kill section of the river, and this is one of the most storied trout fisheries in the world. In that sense, it is holy — a place of life, not death.

But one look at the river and there is no question: This place is holy in the way that natural places often are. It is quiet and wild, transcendent and feral. The trees hang low over the brown water. Roots make up the banks, and leaves decay at the edges. It is late summer, and cicadas hiss long hisses. There are worlds and life cycles beneath the surface — minnows and flies and fish and turtles. It is a place of life *and* death, and there is the most holiness in that.

There are many small bends and pools where fish will hide and breed, which is why the river is holy to fishermen. My father points out these places, and I can see that he sees the river in dimensions that I can't. To me, it feels like a familiar wilderness, placid and serene in an almost nostalgic way — these are the trees and sounds I knew growing up. It is that for him, too, but it is also a place of entomology and ichthyology, a place where he has fished with his brothers and his son and his friends, and now a place where he has brought his daughter so that she can see about the things that men do.

When we get to Jim's, Jim only barely remembers my dad after a bit of prompting, despite his many years as a renter. But then there are lots of weekends and lots of cabins, and Jim also keeps a boat down in Florida, where he takes very wealthy people fly-fishing for Tarpon. I feel all the years he has come to this spot, and all the years he hasn't. I wonder how many more times he will see these holy waters. But it isn't his way to think much about that. He'll see them this time, with me, and he's happy for that.

It is the movie version of *A River Runs Through It* that I love these days. The beautiful casts, the sweeping vistas, the hunky men: watching it is a kind of shortcut to feeling. The soundtrack and the '90s cinematography put me right back in my parents' basement with my brother, each of us trying to pretend we aren't crying in the last minutes of the film. It's the story of two brothers, both fishermen, who grow up in Montana and become very different men — Norman, a serious scholar who goes to Dartmouth, and Paul, a poker-playing reporter always in debt to the wrong people. They find each other again and again when they are fishing in the Blackfoot River, holding onto a bond of childhood and seeking closeness through experience rather than words.

There are almost no women in the movie, only a girlfriend, a mother, and a prostitute. It doesn't come close to passing the Bechdel test. But women are good at imagining themselves into the parts of men, if only because men are often the only decent characters. The film inspired thousands of women to take up fly-fishing, a strange fact considering not a single woman performs that activity in the story. For 10 years after the film came out, some of the most famous fishing schools in the United States had more women than men learning to tie flies and cast tight-looped lines.

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*This river is holy in the way that natural places often are. It is quiet and wild, transcendent and feral. The trees hang low over the brown water. Roots make up the banks, and leaves decay at the edges.*

For all the years I've watched the movie, I switch between the moments I see myself as Norm and the moments I see myself as Paul; the times I feel stalwart and surefooted and the times I feel wild and talented. Either way, I imagine myself fishing in the currents of the Blackfoot River in Montana, roll casting a fishing line over the water, small and strong in the forest. I imagine myself competent and tough, and therefore male, an equation that makes me queasy.

I wonder now if part of the reason I never went fishing with my brother and father as a kid is that I didn't want my gender and youth to become synonymous with my incompetence. When I think back on it, I certainly would have been welcome if I had ever asked to join. But by the time I would have gone, I would have been a girlish interloper who was still learning — the worst one, the youngest one, and a girl to boot. Even then, I didn't want those ideas braided together. It is only years later, as an adult, that I have let myself be a novice and a woman — that I have given it all a clumsy, childish try.

My father and I rent a canoe. Jim says there are no ladies' bathrooms in the vicinity, so I change into my swimsuit in the outhouse, awkwardly trying to step onto my shoes so my bare feet don't touch the floor. Jim drives us up the river and talks to us about politics on the way.

"People think this is Trump country," he says. "City folks see us up here and just think we are a bunch of hicks. But I've been renting people cabins and canoes all spring long and haven't met anyone voting for him. I think the real Trump supporters live deep back in the woods, with a still and confederate flag."

As a city folk, I had to admit that I had been pretty sure this was Trump country, but I'm glad to be disabused of my prejudice. I like Jim and the waitress and the other fishermen, and I'm glad for there to be one less divide between us. A few months later, I will think about Jim and wonder how he too had been so wrong about the election. Sixty-four percent of the people in this county would vote for Trump, surely a much higher percentage than the number of stills.

Jim lets my dad and I out with our metal canoe, a couple of paddles, and some beaten-up life jackets, then drives away. We plunk the canoe into the river, and I awkwardly climb in. My dad stands on the riverbank and prepares us to launch. He is starting to look like an old man, with a big round belly and weak appendages. His arms and legs look skinny and pale. I can't help thinking my parents will both always be about 40, strong and tan and capable, and that I, in turn, will always only ever be young.

The athletics of the afternoon will be a confusion of roles. My father is the one who knows how to fish and how to canoe, but I feel like I should be doing the harder work because I am 30 years younger, in better shape, and not diabetic. I am constantly offering, and he is constantly turning me down, and we both seem to feel embarrassed about this dance we are doing. I am still his child, after all, and no one wants to feel like they are getting old. Canoeing down a river in the direction of the current is pleasant and easy, though, so there isn't that much required of either of us.

*As we stand in the cold and rusty water, fishing feels less like a ritual of maleness than a ritual of growing up — something passed between child and parent.*

I half-heartedly paddle from the front and my dad steers the boat from the back, our oversized waders, box of *Hexagenia limbata* imitations, and peanut butter sandwiches shoved into the bottom of the canoe. It is quiet as we go along. We don't talk much, which is my dad's way after he settles. I feel a little bit in charge of filling the void, but can't bring myself to try too hard. In the end we just paddle and look at the trees and enjoy the day.

The afternoon light has turned golden and the day has started to feel fleeting when my dad finally chooses a spot and we pull the boat over to the riverbank. There is a house here and a deck, which my dad assures me is "not really private property" and therefore a good place to pull out our gear. Dad assembles a rod and reel, and I do battle with the waders. I jump into the water, and of course my Dad was right. The neoprene sucks tight to my legs and I can walk as easily as one ever can in a river. It doesn't matter that the waders are the size of my father and that I am the size of me.

He hands me the rod with a fly on the end and shows me how to cast. 10 o'clock. 2 o'clock. Don't get it stuck in a tree. Flick your wrist at the end a little. Yeah, that looks about right. Just keep doing that. I keep doing it, over and over again.

"But when will I catch a fish, Dad?"

He laughs. "If you stood there all day, you'd be lucky to catch one," he says.

"Even in the Hex Hatch?"

"Yep, even now in the Hex Hatch."

.....cont' on page 12

We stand there awhile, watching the river, waiting for a fish to rise. He adjusts my technique, shows me where to point my rod, tries to explain how flies float and where fish swim. The water is freezing and dark, the air is hot and sweaty. We stand there in the same spot for an hour or so, and I get to know the curve of this section of river well. There is a slight bend here, as the river moves around a willow. The tree dips into the water and the current tugs at its leaves. I adjust my cast to avoid snagging the branches after a few mishaps. I see how the light changes on the river just a bit over the course of the time we stand there. The sun sinks just a few minutes down, and the shadows grow bit by bit. I keep casting, over and over again.

I never do catch a fish, and really no one is surprised. My father and I stand in the river and wait, enveloped in activity, feeling the closeness of experience, rather than words. We are far away from the question of manicures and bathrooms and emasculating competence — or maybe we are right in the heart of those questions, which are always written on our bodies. As we stand in the cold and rusty water, fishing feels less like a ritual of maleness than a ritual of growing up — something passed between child and parent, something capacious enough to hold my city clothes and my blow-dried pony hair and my curiosity and my inability; big enough for the masculine and the feminine, the son and the daughter. My father is delighted to have me in his world, to teach me about fish and flies and rods, to share this activity with his child who is finally interested.

A few weeks later, I talk to my brother about those fishing trips he used to go on as a kid. I asked him what they did and why he liked them.

“It wasn’t like a big men’s club,” he tells me. “It wasn’t just farting and cards. Although it was some of that. The reason I loved it was because you could stand in the river for long afternoons more or less alone. The river bends enough that you couldn’t see anyone else, although we all knew we were there. I stood there alone but in company in that beautiful place. It all felt so big.

“It was one of the only times I felt small in a good way,” he said. “It felt right-sized.”

## Here’s Looking At You Kid!

### Store Caught Sticking Googly Eyes On Fish To Make Them Look Fresh



There’s something fishy going on here. A store in Kuwait has reportedly been shut down after it was discovered that its owners were sticking googly eyes on fish in an attempt to make them appear fresher.

Images of the fish, which were uploaded to Twitter by Al Bayan newspaper on Saturday left users in hilarious disbelief at the creativeness of the store’s owners.

*So, the takeaway here is you had better check the fish you net to make sure the eyes are real!*

## Geezer Qualifying Exam

1. In the 1940's, where were automobile headlight dimmer switches located?
  - a. On the floor shift knob.
  - b. On the floor board, to the left of the clutch.
  - c. Next to the horn.
2. The bottle top of a Royal Crown Cola bottle had holes in it. For what was it used?
  - a. Capture lightning bugs.
  - b. To sprinkle clothes before ironing.
  - c. Large salt shaker.
3. Why was having milk delivered a problem in northern winters?
  - a. Cows got cold and wouldn't produce milk.
  - b. Ice on highways forced delivery by dog sled.
  - c. Milkmen left deliveries outside of front doors and milk would freeze, expanding and pushing up the cardboard bottle top.
4. What was the popular chewing gum named for a game of chance?
  - a. Blackjack.
  - b. Gin.
  - c. Craps!
5. What method did women use to look as if they were wearing stockings when none were available due to rationing during W.W.II?
  - a. Suntan.
  - b. Leg painting.
  - c. Wearing slacks.
6. What postwar car turned automotive design on its ear when you couldn't tell whether it was coming or going?
  - a. Studebaker.
  - b. Nash Metro.
  - c. Tucker.
7. Which was a popular candy when you were a kid?
  - a. Strips of dried peanut butter.
  - b. Chocolate licorice bars.
  - c. Wax coke-shaped bottles with colored sugar water inside.
8. How was Butch wax used?
  - a. To stiffen a flat-top haircut so it stood up.
  - b. To make floors shiny and prevent scuffing.
  - c. On the wheels of roller skates to prevent rust.
9. Before inline skates, how did you keep your roller skates attached to your shoes?
  - a. With clamps, tightened by a skate key.
  - b. Woven straps that crossed the foot.
  - c. Long pieces of twine.
10. As a kid, what was considered the best way to reach a decision?
  - a. Consider all the facts.
  - b. Ask Mom.
  - c. Eeny-meeny-miney-mo.
11. What was the most dreaded disease in the 1940's?
  - a. Smallpox.
  - b. AIDS.
  - c. Polio.
12. "I'll be down to get you in a \_\_\_\_\_, Honey"
  - a. SUV.
  - b. Taxi.
  - c. Streetcar.
13. What was the name of Caroline Kennedy's pet pony?
  - a. Old Blue.
  - b. Paint.
  - c. Macaroni.
14. What was a Duck-and-Cover Drill?
  - a. Part of the game of hide and seek.
  - b. What you did when your Mom called you in to do chores.
  - c. Hiding under your desk, and covering your head with your arms in an A-bomb drill.
15. What was the name of the Indian Princess on the Howdy Doody show?
  - a. Princess Summerfallwinterspring.
  - b. Princess Sacajewea.
  - c. Princess Moonshadow.
16. What did all the really savvy students do when mimeographed tests were handed out in school?
  - a. Immediately sniffed the purple ink, as this was believed to get you high.
  - b. Made paper airplanes to see who could sail theirs out the window.
  - c. Wrote another pupil's name on the top, to avoid your failure.
17. Why did your Mom shop in stores that gave Green Stamps with purchases?
  - a. To keep you out of mischief by licking the backs, which tasted like bubble gum.
  - b. They could be put in special books and redeemed for various household items.
  - c. They were given to the kids to be used as stick-on tattoos.
18. Praise the Lord, and pass the \_\_\_\_\_?
  - a. Meatballs.
  - b. Dames.
  - c. Ammunition.
19. Who left his heart in San Francisco?
  - a. Tony Bennett.
  - b. Zavier Cugat.
  - c. George Gershwin.

**SCORING:**

17-19 correct: You are not only older than dirt, but obviously gifted with mind bloat. Now if you could only find your glasses.

12-16 correct: Not quite dirt yet, but your mind is definitely muddy.

0-11 correct: You are a sad excuse for a geezer or you are younger than springtime!

Answers on page 15



Internet went down and I had to spend time with the family.

They seem like good people.

**Field Notes:**

- Answers from page 13 quiz: 1-b, 2-b, 3-c, 4-a, 5-b, 6-a, 7-c, 8-a, 9-a, 10-c, 11-c, 12-b, 13-c, 14-c, 15-a, 16-a, 17-b, 18-c, 19-a



How a fisherman stacks wood for the winter

- Thinking of heading to a beach in Florida, check out this issue they're having down there.....<https://earth.gizmodo.com/inside-floridas-algae-fueled-nightmare-1829518742>
- "The supreme reality of our time is the vulnerability of our planet." -John F. Kennedy
- Very well done movie - <http://www.moldychum.com/run-wild-run-free-50-years-of-wild-and-scenic-rivers/>

**Refrigerator Reminders**

**November**

**1st** - Men Make Dinner Day ("hot dogs & chips do not count")

**8th** - Club board meeting at Leo's Outpost on Pennsylvania ave. 6:30 start - all welcome to attend

**10th** - USMC Day

**13th** - Club meeting, Giltner Hall room 273, 6:30 hospitality, 7:00 meeting. Bob Ceru will provide a program on: Fishing around the Sleeping Bear Dunes area.

**December**

**7th** - Pearl Harbor Day

**11th** - Club meeting, Blue Gill Grill, 1591 Lake Lansing Rd, Haslett, 6:00 hospitality, 6:30 dinner/program: Christmas ideas from Nomad Anglers

**24th** - National Chocolate Day

**27th** - National Fruitcake Day