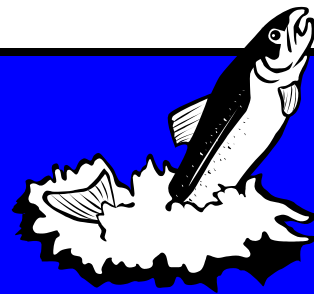


Brule River

Sportsmen's Club, Inc.

OVER 500 MEMBERS DEDICATED TO THE IMPROVEMENT AND PRESERVATION OF THE BRULE



April 2024

Brule River Anglers Seegar Swanson, Sid Gordon & Modern-Day Caddis Imitations

by Dean Wellman

The Seegar Swanson Sr. family has been our neighbor on the Brule River since my dad bought our property in 1961. Seegar Jr. is 93 years young and living at his home on the Brule. Last fall, I sat down to talk with him. We talked about his dad, Seegar Sr. (1905–2002), and Seegar's friend, Sid Gordon (1885–1956), and the "Seegar Swanson Wet-dry Fly."

Sid wrote fishing articles for the Evening Telegram in Superior WI and Seegar Sr. was the editor. Seegar and Sid became good friends through their love for fishing the Brule and Seegar's efforts trying to decipher Sid's writings before putting them to print. Through that partnership, Seegar encouraged Sid to write a book based on all his fishing articles.

The book, *How to Fish from Top to Bottom*, was published in 1955 and Seegar was the editor. Sid wrote, "More than once I have had the urge to dunk my friend underwater in the same manner that I dunk the fly that henceforth will bear his name (The Swanson Wet-dry fly), because he is the one who hounded me for 15 years until I finished it."

Seegar Sr. introduced our family to Sid's book. As kids, it became our very first "go to" book on fly tying and fly fishing. Sid was the first fisherman to describe the "gas bubble" encasing the diving caddis. These insects swim to the bottom to attach their eggs. Sid describes sitting on a rock near Winneboujou (one of his most favorite fishing areas) in 1937 and observing caddis flies going through this process of egg laying. On page 207, he writes, "The Seegar Swanson wet-dry fly very plausibly gives the effect of the shinning bubble of the underwater caddis. It is tied with a fat silver body, which shows through the wings at every turn of the fly in the water."

This pattern may not look like much in the illustration shown here, but tie one on a leader and dunk it the stream or the bathtub. If the 'gleam' doesn't surprise you, I shall be disappointed.

While I cannot achieve the silvery case of the diving caddis fly, I get the flash effect with three openings of the body showing the bright silver tinsel... someday, someone will beat my pattern... I hope to be the first to pin a medal on whoever finally achieves that outer coating of quicksilver that I so far have been unable to simulate."



Gary Lafontaine accomplished that feat in the mid-1970s when he discovered he could imitate the "silvery effect of the gas bubble" using 3M's Antron yarn that was used in carpets. He did this by encasing the body of the caddis fly with Antron. Through his research on the caddis fly, he introduced fly fisherman to the two most evolutionary caddis flies ever, the "Deep Sparkle Caddis Pupa" and the "Sparkle Caddis Emerger."

The Sparkle Pupa imitates the stage when the caddis is changing from the pupa to the adult underwater and swimming to the surface. The emerger is the stage when the caddis is breaking the surface film and the wings are quickly getting ready to fly. Gary subsequently published the book *Caddisflies* in 1981.

To give you an idea on how important Sid's observation was, here's part of an interview with Gary Lafontaine in 2002 by Craig Oberg in Montana before Gary's tragic passing that year from amyotrophic lateral sclerosis.

Craig asked Gary, "You already mentioned a few of your favorite writers. Who were some of the traditional writers that influenced your outdoor and fly-fishing writing?"

Gary replied, "Vincent Marinaro, author of *A Modern Dry Fly Code*, is probably my favorite traditional writer. It was such a beautiful book. It came close to being a perfect book. There are so many. Sid Gordon with 'How to Fish from Top to Bottom.' His anecdotes were clownish, but the scientific information was so good.

He saw a female caddis go underwater and carry air bubbles with her. He said that whoever could effectively imitate that would be a hero. He set that challenge which I took. That was written in 1950, and it wasn't until the discovery of Antron that a material could effectively imitate those bubbles of the diving caddis."

Seegar Swanson Sr. was instrumental in getting Sid Gordon to write his book and Gary Lafontaine learned of the "gas bubble" from Sid's book and took up the challenge to imitate it. It's fun to think about how instrumental Brule River fishermen Sid Gordon and Seegar Swanson were in the development of modern-day caddis imitations!



BRSC Calendar:

The board meeting will be held on
Monday, April 22, at the KroBar at 6:00 p.m.





Brule River Sportsmen's Club Electronic Meeting Minutes March 25, 2024



President Dennis Pratt sent agenda and reports to Officers and Directors.

Officers and Directors: Responding - Ed Chaplinski, Paul Helbach, Courtney Johnson, Ken Lundberg, Dennis Pratt, Mike Sierszen, Den Smet, Jeff Stollenwerk, Walt Swanson, Jim Waletzko, Dean Wellman, Mike Zicus and Ken Zivic.

Minutes of the February Meeting: The minutes as written in the March newsletter were approved following a motion by Dean Wellman, second by Ken Lundberg and unanimous email approval.

Treasurer's and Financial Secretary's Reports: Treasurer Jeff Stollenwerk reported that February's beginning balance was \$11,826.66, and the ending balance was \$9,232.99 with the following expenses: Dean Wellman (fly supplies for expo) \$34.38; Pro Print (1,000 membership cards) \$173.85; Jeff Stollenwerk (fly book printing docu-copies) \$449.11; Katie Thompson (February newsletter) \$200; MN Assoc. RC&D (display for expo) \$100.00; Trout Unlimited (expo booth) \$475; transfer to savings (officer stipend donations) \$700; transfer to savings (January donations) \$1,100. The Treasurer's report was approved following a motion by Mike Sierszen, second by Den Smet, and unanimous email approval. President Dennis Pratt reported for Financial Secretary Dean Wellman that there were \$205 in total deposits into the general fund since the last meeting and that the Club had one new member and 19 renewals. The Financial Secretary's report was approved following a motion by Paul Helbach, second by Ed Chaplinski, and unanimous email approval.

Committee Reports

Legislative, Audit and Membership: Nothing to report.

Habitat: Pratt – Our first volunteer workday, planting tamarack/spruce at Beaupre project site, will be held on May 18. No other habitat projects have been finalized yet.

Education: Den Smet – Den Smet and Dennis Pratt made presentations to all six 11th/12th grade Ecology and Conservation classes at Superior Senior High School. Trout were in excellent condition at the high school. A total of 123 students attended the high school classes. We presented to all four Northwestern 6th grade science classes on the 27th and 28th. The trout were all in excellent condition. A total of 100 students attended the 6th grade presentations.

Scholarship: Mike Sierszen – No valid applications have been received yet. One came from a high school girl who apparently didn't read the application guidelines.

Social media: April newsletter will feature the Seegar Swanson Wet-Dry Fly.

Other Business

Spring Clean-up Date: Den Smet – This year's spring cleanup will be held on April 27. (Backup date May 11)

Fly of the Month: Dean Wellman – April will feature the 'Nuke Caddis'

Spring Raffle Items: Mike Sierszen – Raffle committee consisting of Sierszen, Wellman, Zicus, Smet, and Stollenwerk. We applied for raffle license and when we receive it, we'll be able to print tickets. The committee recommends the Norling fly rod as the grand prize, a box of flies and an accompanying fly pattern book as second prize, and one 9-inch Weber donated filet knives as third prize. We decided to print 300 raffle tickets upon receipt of the raffle license. They will be sold for \$10 each. The date of the raffle will depend on how quickly we receive the license; we'd like to allow 3 or 4 months to sell the tickets. Last time we sold all 200 tickets in 2 months.

Fly of the Month Book: The fly book has been very popular. We've sold 19 thus far and have another 14 spoken for. So, we've sold well over half of the quantity that we had printed. We'll advertise the fly book in early April with a Constant Contact email to our entire e-membership.

Great Waters Expo Wrap up Report: Ken Lundberg – The booth featured a new display board which has a

See "Minutes" on pg. 3



BRULE RIVER SPORTSMEN'S CLUB, APRIL 2024

"Minutes" from pg. 2

Velcro finish and we displayed new pictures of habitat work, Brule scenes, and fish of the Brule. Pictures are easy to attach and adjust and more will be added as needed. Club merchandise was sold. This year, the new Fly of the Month Book featuring flies used on the Brule and materials used to tie them became available. It turned out to be very helpful when talking to people interested in fishing the Brule. I would like to thank the volunteer workers Matt Benson, Cynthia Bennett, Paul Gausman, Greg Lonke, Bretta Chaplinski, Ed Chaplinski, and Mike Sierszen who staffed the booth the three days. Paul Gausman tied flies and gave them to kids visiting the booth. My sons, Tim and Dave, and Paul Sandstrom helped with the booth set up and take down.

Wild Rivers Chapter Trout Unlimited Expo: Dennis Pratt and Ken Zivic will represent the Club at this year's Expo to be held in Hayward on April 6. We're not allowed to sell any BRSC items at the event, but we'll display what we have available in our Club store and provide booth visitors with a handout on how to purchase online.

Wisconsin Wildlife Federation District I Fund Raising Banquet: This year's banquet is being held on April 18. Ken Lundberg is purchasing a table again this year and still has a few tickets available.

Wisconsin Wildlife Federation Annual Meeting: Ken Lundberg is representing BRSC at this year's meeting held in Wisconsin Rapids. He had written a recommendation for Paul Piszczek for the outstanding fish manager award which Paul received and will be accepting it for Paul who cannot attend. Paul Helbach made a motion to reimburse him for his hotel stay and a second by Ed Chaplinski, which was followed by unanimous email approval. Ken is covering mileage and meals.

Upcoming Events – Please check our calendar (<https://brulerriversportsmensclub.com/category/club-calendar/>) for the latest events.

Recorded by Walt Swanson



Club Projects thus far:

1. Wild River TU Expo with Ken Zivic and Brule Hatchery technician Angelica Komarek looking on.
2. Minnesota TU Expo with Ken Lundberg and

Greg Lonke.
3. Our trout in the classroom with photo of Den Smet presenting to one of the Northwestern 6th grade classes.



The Nuke Caddis

Dean Wellman, BRSC Financial Secretary – Brule, WI

Gary Lafontaine set off a barrage of new caddis fly patterns when he encased the body of a caddis pupa in an Antron "bubble." The Nuke Caddis is one of these spinoffs and employs a technique similar to the one used to create the "milky veil" around the Nuke Egg (March 2024 Fly of the Month). You can achieve a comparable effect with Pearl Ice Dub around the caddis body. Ice Dub doesn't fold around the thread the way Glo Bug Yarn does, so you have to lay it around the body to form the "veil," which imitates the shiny gas bubble around the pupa body. In the water the Ice Dub shows up as a translucent glimmer around the body, a definite trigger to the fish.



A recipe for the fly can be found at <https://brulerriversportsmensclub.com/wp-content/uploads/2024/04/2024-April-fly.pdf>.

BRSC Gift Store Order Form (prices include shipping & handling)			
#	Item	Cost	Total
	Lower river map poster of Brule (36"x24")	\$45	
	Women's baseball hat	\$25	
	Lower Brule River map	\$10	
	Upper Brule River map	\$10	
	Men's baseball cap (mesh back)	\$25	
	Framed Lower River Map (cannot be Shipped)	\$125	
The Brule River Sportsmen's Club, Inc. is a tax-exempt organization			
https://brulriversportsmensclub.com/contact-us/join-the-club/			



What We Do:

Fisheries Habitat Projects — Club members and others volunteer during the summer months to restore features necessary for fish spawning, growing, and feeding.

Clean-ups — Keep the Brule clean and beautiful.

Monthly Membership Meetings — Frequently include guest speakers.

Monthly Newsletter — Helps generate understanding of fisheries and water quality, and keeps members and others informed about Club activities.

Scholarship Program — Provides financial support to students.

Newsletter editor: Katie Thompson (goirish@cheqnet.net)

BRSC Membership Form

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____
 State _____ Zip _____ Phone _____
 e-mail _____

Membership Type: Renewal (due January 1st) New Membership

Email newsletter only: \$20 – Individual \$25 – Household

Paper newsletter only: \$30 – Individual \$35 – Household

Donations

College Scholarship \$ _____ Education \$ _____
 High School Scholarship \$ _____ Habitat \$ _____
 General \$ _____ Multiple \$ _____

Visit us online at www.brulriversportsmensclub.com

All information contained herein is confidential.
 All but \$1.00 of your membership dues is tax deductible.
 Donations are 100 percent tax deductible.

Officers	Board of Directors
President — Dennis Pratt — prattdd@charter.net	Ken Lundberg
Vice President — Ed Chaplinski	Paul Helbach
Financial Secretary — Dean Wellman	Courtney Johnson
Recording Secretary — Walt Swanson	Mick Killoren
Treasurer — Jeff Stollenwerk	Glen Hill
	Dennis Smet
	Jim Waletzko
	Mike Sierszen
	Mike Zicus
	Ken Zivic