

July 2011 Fish of the Month Club Winner – for more information see inside

Clearwater Currents

The Official Publication of the Clearwater Chapter
of
Trout Unlimited
169 Old Niskayuna Road Latham, NY 12110

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Summer, 2011



*America's Leading Coldwater Fisheries Conservation
Organization*

Promoting Habitat for Wild Trout and Salmon

*Trout Unlimited Has Been Fighting for Coldwater Fisheries
Conservation for 52 Years*

Join us before each meeting at 6:30pm for a tying demonstration. Meetings begin at 7:30pm, the third Monday of each month (except Banquet month, July and August), at the Best Western on Western Avenue, Albany, NY (about a mile east of the end of the Northway).

Upcoming Events

September 19	Chapter General Meeting
September 30	New York State Fishing Licenses Expire – Time To Renew
October 15	New York State General Trout Fishing Season Ends – Special Regs Only

Board of Directors/Staff

President	Mike Walchko	234-4192	Trips	Bob Mead	399-9000
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Video Library	Richard Atkinson	377-8249	Youth	Mike Walchko	234-4192
Battenkill	Greg Cuda	587-1189	Banquet	Jessica Galasso	716-913-5550
Board Member	Glenn Kuhles	869-0817	Banquet	Bill Cosgrove	766-2405
Website	Bill Wemple	384-0014	Publicity	Bill Wemple	384-0014

Clearwater Chapter of TU PO Box 9686 Schenectady, NY 12309
www.ClearwaterTU.org

Chapter Fly Swap

Ron Boutin

Another year of fly swapping is over, but it starts all over again at the Chapter meeting in April. Bring in 13 of the current months category and get 13 back of the same category from other tiers in the Chapter. It's a great way to build your fly boxes and try some new flies. New ideas are always welcome as to what you want swapped so call me at 453-9843 or email me at rx4fishing@nycap.rr.com if you have further questions or ideas.

Sept	Isonychia
Oct	Attractor flies
Nov	Streamers
Dec	Salmon/Steelhead

Fish of the Month 2011 Contest in Full Gear

Mark A Brown

The Chapter's Fish of the Month Contest is already in its fourth year having crowned **Noe Mead, Jim Berry** and **Bill Bach** as winners in its first three years. The contest is open to all members (except me!) and the children of the Chapter and is not necessarily based on the biggest fish, but the quality of the fish, story behind it and picture quality all make up a winning entry. Simply send a photograph to me at my email address at brownie6@nycap.rr.com or contact me for my mailing address if you have a Polaroid or 35mm shot. As the entries come I'll publish them in the newsletter and select a winner in December when the winner will get a dozen hand tied flies as a prize.

My wife and I just got back from visiting children and grandchildren down south. While there I took four of the grandson's fishing, two trout fishing in Tennessee and two sunfish fishing in Georgia. Our three year old grand son caught his first fish, see attached picture, plus two others – Doug Howard.

DEC Announces New Record Brook Trout

Forestport Resident Reels in 5-Pound, 8-Ounce "Brookie" from South Lake

The New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) has certified Dan Germain from Forestport, Oneida County, is the new holder of the state record for brook trout. Mr. Germain reeled in the record-breaking fish on June 15 while fishing at South Lake in Herkimer County in the southwest corner of the Adirondack Park. The new record brook trout, caught on a Lake Clear Wabblers and worm, measured 22 inches and weighed in at 5 pounds, 8 ounces, surpassing the previous state record set in 2009 by 3.5 ounces.

Mr. Germain submitted details of his winning fish as part of DEC's Angler Achievement Awards Program. Through this program, anglers enter freshwater fish that meet specific qualifying criteria and receive official recognition of their catch and a distinctive lapel pin commemorating their achievement. The three categories that make up the program are: Catch & Release, Annual Award and State Record.

Information about the [Angler Achievement Awards Program](#), including past winners and a downloadable application form, can be found on DEC's website. Program details and an official entry form can also be found in DEC's current Freshwater Fishing Regulations Guide.

For additional information on the Angler Achievement Awards Program contact (518) 402-8891 or [email DEC Fishery](#)

South Lake yields record brook trout

By **JOHN PITARRESI**

[Observer-Dispatch](#)

Posted Jul 31, 2011 @ 01:31 PM



Dan Germain had caught some nice brook trout in South Lake in northern Herkimer County.

Up to about three pounds, maybe, which didn't prepare him for what he connected with June 15.

Trolling a Lake Clear Wabblers – a classic Adirondack lure, even if made in Gilbertsville, in Otsego County – baited with a nightcrawler, he had a big hit.

“I knew right away I had something extraordinary,” said the Forestport resident, who is retired from Alcan Aluminum in Oswego.

Using a 4-foot Ugly Stik with 4-pound test line, Germain took 8 to 10 minutes to land the huge brookie.

“It seemed like 20,” he said. “When the fish finally rolled on the surface, I could not believe it. ... I was in awe of that fish.”

As well he might have been. It was 22 inches long, and when he had it weighed at Bonnie's Country Store in Forestport, it came in at 5 pounds, 8 ounces. Germain didn't know it at the time, but it was a new state record.

Getting that record – Utica wildlife artist Tom Yacovella held the previous mark with a 5-pound, 4½-ounce fish caught at Raquette Lake in 2009 – was something Germain didn't even think about when he drove the fish all the way to Rochester to have a ceramic replica made by Joe Lake. Lake suggested the fish might be a record.

Getting the record certified took some doing, because Germain told Lake to eat the brookie, and Department of Environmental Conservation biologists needed to examine it to make sure it was not a splake, a cross between a male brook trout and a female lake trout. As it turned out, Lake had frozen the fish, the innards were intact, and fisheries biologist Dave Erway of the DEC's Utica office was able to confirm that it was indeed a brook trout and the new state record.

Yacovella was gracious in acknowledging the new standard.

“Congratulations to Dan Germain,” he said. “It is a proud moment indeed, for now he owns not only the largest example of a state fish, but also the most coveted of all – the native brook trout.”

There are 45 New York state fishing record categories. As far as I know, Germain is the only local resident to hold one at the moment. There have been others in addition to Yacovella. In 1984, the late Bill Marscher, of New Hartford, set the steelehead/rainbow trout record with a 23-pound, 13¾-ounce fish from the Salmon River. In 1986, Eric Pfendler, of Alder Creek, caught a 32-pound lake trout from Lake Placid that snapped a standard that had stood since 1922. Both those records have since been eclipsed.

A couple of marks were retired by the Department of Environmental Conservation more than a decade ago. I've forgotten the reason, but I think it was because they were ancient and deemed unreachable. The old brook trout record, 8 pounds, 8 ounces by William Keener, from Punchbowl Pond, had been around since 1908. The

smallmouth bass record of 9 pounds, from Friends Pond Outlet, caught by George Tennyson in 1925, was retired, too.

The only other state record from local waters is a 13-pound, 8-ounce splake taken from Limekiln Lake by Jonathan Simon in 2004. I don't know if Simon is or was an area resident.

The oldest state record remains Peter Dubuc's 46-pound, 2-ounce northern pike, caught in 1940 at Great Sacandaga Lake on a Heddon Flaptail, Heddon has been making lures since 1894, but I don't think the Flaptail is made anymore. I found a couple from the 1930s on sale on line for \$55 and \$89. I'd think about buying one of those, but I don't think I'd fish with it.

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[Details of a Great Adirondack Canoe Trip](#)

The website below takes you to a detailed article on a canoe trip many of you would enjoy especially this fall. From Lake Lila to Little Tupper Lake through the new Whitney Preserve you will encounter plenty of places to wet a line for Adirondack trout and enjoy the wonderful scenery.

<http://www.adirondackexplorer.org/stories/lila.php>

[Battenkill Fly Fishers MEMBERSHIPS AVAILABLE](#)

Battenkill FlyFishers Inc, a small non-profit organization of fisherman who enjoy family camping and have a deep regard for fly fishing and the Battenkill River have a limited number of memberships available. The organization owns 2.5 acres with 200' of river frontage on the Battenkill in New York, with an electrified pavillion, picnic tables and bath house. For inquiry and further information, contact:

Robert Kammer

PO Box 713

Ledyard, CT 06339

bobkammer@hotmail.com

[New Website Recommendations](#)

I have some new web sites I would like to recommend to all of our members for great tying tips, videos, information, and techniques valuable for all NE rivers but especially those memmbers who fish the Farmington and Housatonic Rivers, CT. My favorite sites are WWW.TroutPredator.com, Aaron Jasper's website has great video tying tips for all our common NE nymphs and duns etc. A second terrific site is WWW.Catching-Shadows.com, Rich Strolis' web site, particularly good stuff on the Farmington Rv. I have found the Farmington to be a terrific river for Dry fly and terrestrial fishing, even in sunlight!!! (unlike the Delaware.) Weekday fishing is best to avoid a social experience and canoeists but even weekend fishing is worth the easy hour and one-half drive from Albany.

Best regards,

Bob Stockton

Giant Hogweed Spreading Across New York State, DEC Warns Of Burns and Blindness



The giant hogweed is a stunning plant--reaching up to 12 feet tall with flowers as big as umbrellas-- but it's also dangerous. **Its sap can cause third degree burns and blindness** and New York environmental officials are worried the plant is spreading across the state at an alarming rate, [The New Daily News reports](#).

Officials have found 944 sites in New York, according to The News, including some in Nassau County, L.I., and Putnam County, where the green monster is flourishing.

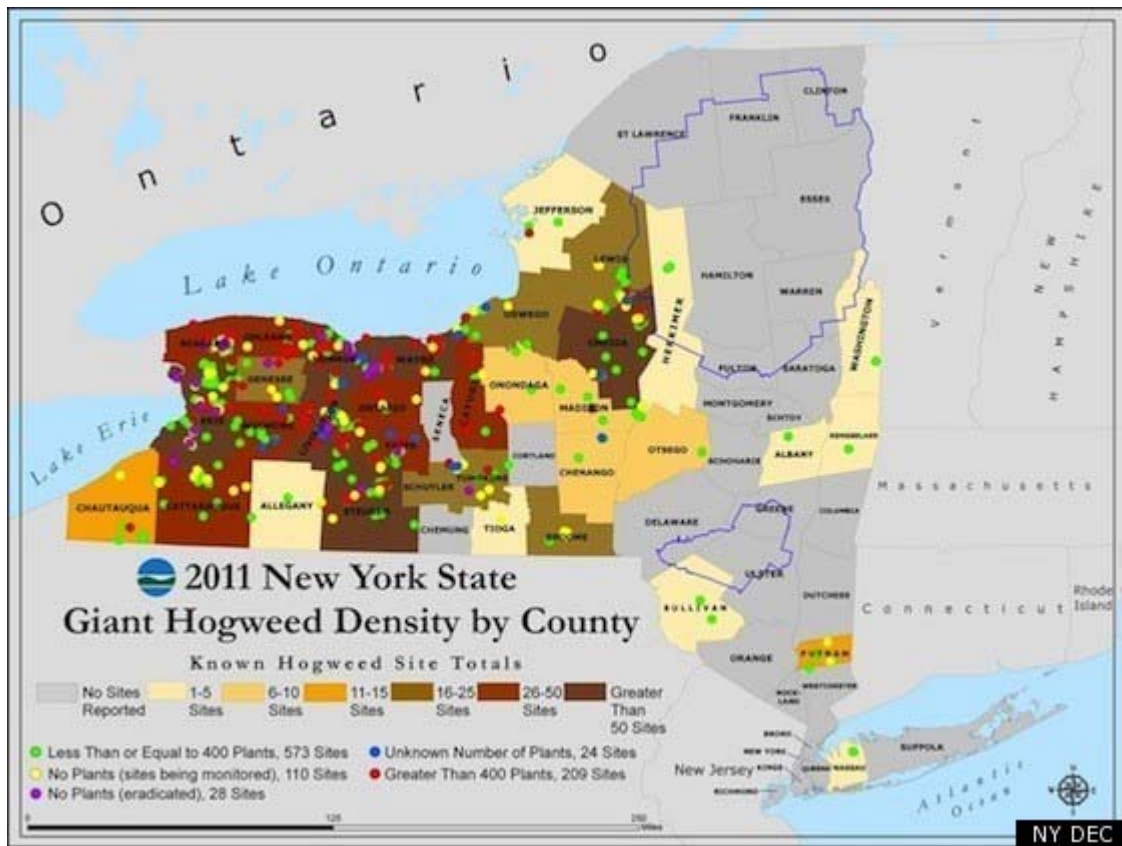
The Department of Environmental Conservation has even set up a special **Hogweed Hotline** (845-256-3111) for New Yorkers to call in sightings of the invasive species. Callers are asked to take photos and report site information, **but should avoid touching the plant**. (You can also check out photos in this handy [giant hogweed identification guide](#).)

"If the sap gets on your skin and it's exposed to sunlight . . . you end up with third-degree burns, oozing and scars," Naja Kraus, the DEC's Giant Hogweed Program coordinator, [told The New York Post](#), adding, "**If it gets in your eyes, you can go blind.**"

Kraus also told The Post her office has received reports of kids using the plant's 4-inch-wide stems as telescopes, putting them up to their eyes -- and getting severe burns on their faces. And one DEC technician who was exposed to the plant "got a horrible burn on her leg that she still has to cover up," Kraus said.

[The DEC says](#) the giant hogweed is "a native of the Caucasus Mountain region between the Black and Caspian Seas. It was introduced to Europe and the United Kingdom in the late nineteenth century and to the United States in the early twentieth century as an ornamental garden plant".

[The DEC released a map](#) (see below) showing giant hogweed density by county. And although there are no reports of hogweed in New York City as of yet, Krauss told the Post "**Just because it hasn't been reported doesn't mean it isn't there.**"



Editor's Note – I have seen this stuff along the banks of the Oatka Creek and the Cohocton Rivers – if you are in Western NY fishing, hiking, etc please be especially aware.

[Two New Adirondack Brook Trout Ponds – Handicap Accessible](#)

The New York State DEC is pleased to announce the opening of two new ponds for handicap access in Franklin County. Located off Route 3 on Route 26 near Merrills Corners, Grass and Fishhole Ponds offer naturally reproducing brook trout and easy access for one and all. The US Forest Service and DEC both chipped in \$30,000 each to make the ponds accessible. To get to Fishhole Pond take Route 3 to County Route 26 north about 6.3 miles then follow the access road to a t-intersection. Turn left and go 1.3 miles to the parking area. To get to Grass Pond take County Route 26 about 7.6 miles north from Route 3 and the parking lot will be marked with a sign. Happy angling!

[Simms Plans About-Face on Felt](#)

Posted on 06/30/2011 by [admin](#)



By Kirk Deeter

Angling Trade has learned that [Simms Fishing Products](#) told its sales representatives, and is now informing dealers, that the company plans to reintroduce boots with felt soles in its 2012 product lineup. You may remember that just a couple years ago, Simms was the company that beat the drum loudest about going felt-free, and swore off production of felt-soled boots after 2010.

As most of you know, felt has been associated with the spread of aquatic invasive species... nasty things like New Zealand mud snails, didymo (rock snot), as well as the parasite that causes [whirling disease](#). In some states, the threats have been taken seriously enough that felt is no longer allowed. You can't fish in felt in Maryland or Vermont, and starting next year, felt will be banned in Alaska.

The science hasn't changed, but neither did consumers' and dealers' attitudes toward wearing felt—there are still many felt stalwarts who contend there is no adequate substitute for traction in a river. And apparently, a good number of dealers claimed they had plenty of customers who could not be sold on felt alternatives.

As such, Simms director of marketing and brand management Diane Bristol said that the company labored over the decision, but ultimately yielded to the demands of customers, specifically dealers, who said they needed felt in the arsenal.

“It's ultimately about choices, and allowing customers to make their choices on boots with felt,” said Bristol. “We didn't take this decision lightly, but ultimately it came down to listening to what our customers wanted.”

Which many will assume means it came down to a matter of money... not just for Simms, but also for dealers.

Simms says it is not disengaging from the invasive species fight by any means. Plans are to reintroduce felt on only three boot models, and the company also intends to amp up efforts to inform consumers about the need to wade clean through additional literature and labeling.

Still, Simms will get plenty of flak for the turnaround, and no doubt expects it. But keep in mind that other major boot makers like Orvis, Patagonia, and Korkers, kept right on chugging with felt production in recent years. So don't expect any stones thrown from glass houses.

Thus, the Simms turnabout is less of a head fake, and more a situation where Simms tried to lead the market across the avenue, then got caught alone in traffic when the lights changed.

Hopefully, the industry as a whole, takes a harder closer look at the felt issue... not necessarily to regulate, rather to amp up efforts to inform the public about the effects of invasive species.

In truth, aquatic nuisances can be transported in many boot materials, not just felt. In some ways, the notion that an angler got a "free pass" from cleaning boots by buying models with rubber soles was as dangerous as it will be to allow responsible choices and encourage responsible care regarding felt.

Now the choices are more open. It will be interesting to see where consumers, retailers, and manufacturers all go with them.

Editor's Note – no matter what wader you wear please rinse them in a hydrogen peroxide solution before fishing another watershed.

When Fashion Meets Fishing, the Feathers Fly



Craig Dilger for The New York Times

At the Eldredge Brothers Fly Shop in Maine, Tom Cormier has fielded a number of calls about the suddenly hard-to-find feathers.

By KATIE ZEZIMA
Published: June 28, 2011

CAPE NEDDICK, Me. — The most enthusiastic customers at the [Eldredge Brothers Fly Shop](#) of late are not looking to buy fly fishing reels or snag stripers. They are here to make a fashion statement.



Craig Dilger for The New York Times

Mary Altieri, a hairdresser, shows the feathery look.



Is this a custom hand-tied fly or a hair extension? These days, it's all in the eye of the potential customer.

In an improbable collision of cutting-edge chic and a hobby that requires drab waders, fly fishing shops around the country are suddenly inundated with stylish women looking to get in on the latest trend: long, colorful feathers that are bonded or clipped into hair.

Demand for the feathers, before now exclusively the domain of fly fishermen, who use them to tie flies, has created a shortage, forcing up the price and causing fly shops and hairdressers to compete for the elusive plumes.

“I’ve been out for probably a month,” said Bill Thompson, the owner of [North Country Angler](#) in North Conway, N.H. “There is that worry that next year, fishermen won’t have materials they’ll need.”

The circumstances are especially strange because a proudly stodgy and tradition-bound industry content to hide from the world beyond the river is competing in this niche marketplace with a fad that may not last as long as a trout’s spawning season.

“For someone to use them as a fashion statement is just sacrilegious,” said Bob Brown, 65, a fly fisherman who lives in an recreational vehicle parked in Kennebunk, Me. He said he had been tying flies for 50 years and this is the first time he had ever heard of a feather shortage.

“They’ve been genetically bred for fly tying, and that’s what they should be used for,” Mr. Brown said.

Fly fishing feathers — which individually are called hackles and as a group called saddles — are harvested from roosters painstakingly bred to grow supple feathers. It takes more than a year for a rooster to grow feathers long and pliable enough for use by fly fishermen. Because no one could have predicted the fashion trend, there are not enough to go around.

Thomas Whiting, the owner of [Whiting Farms](#), the country’s largest hackle producer, said the company stopped taking new accounts several months ago after being unable to fulfill orders for current customers. Today, about one-fifth of their feathers are used for “fashion fodder,” Mr. Whiting said.

Mr. Whiting produces about 80,000 roosters a year for feathers and owns specific genetic lines that guarantee long, strong feathers. Each bird has his own “apartment” where he is “truly pampered” before being euthanized and plucked, he said.

“The fashion world is a vastly larger animal than the fly fishing world,” Mr. Whiting said. “We can’t keep up with demand. Things are pretty crazy.”

The feathers, anglers said, are used to help the flies that mimic bugs that sit atop the water, which are called dry flies, as well as wet flies, which sink below the surface and are supposed to look like bait fish.

Dry flies typically use brown and neutral feathers, which women prefer for a more natural look, and flies that sink often use feathers in colors like yellow and electric blue, which deliver more pop as a hair accessory. Some feathers come in solid colors, and others have patterns of contrasting colors.

The qualities that make the feathers so attractive to anglers — pliability and durability — are also what appeal to hairdressers. The feathers can be washed, blow dried, curled and flat ironed, and typically stay in hair for a few months.

“They’re just like hair and they don’t fade,” said Sheryl Miller, the artistic director at [Fringe Hair Art](#) in Kennebunkport, Me., where three feathers cost \$25.

Here at the Eldredge Brothers Fly Shop on Saturday morning, Tom Cormier said, “Feather call,” from behind the counter as he hung up the telephone. Another disappointed feather-seeker was on the other end.

The store is keeping and will eventually sell one saddle, a large mane of about 300 white, velvety-soft feathers that Jim Bernstein, the store manager, said sold for about \$120 last year.

“I found out this is worth \$1,000,” Mr. Bernstein said, adding that no fly fisherman would pay that much. “It would be nice if you had blond hair. It has that subtle barring on it.”

The store would have more, Mr. Bernstein said, were it not for a monthlong delay from its supplier. It has a wall filled with packages of colorful feathers, but they’re the wrong ones — too short and wide for most people’s tastes. But that seems to be changing.

“Now they’re buying any saddles, wider feathers, and that’s going to affect fly shops even more,” Mr. Bernstein said.

Mr. Bernstein has no problem selling to hair-extension seekers; he even teaches them how to dye the feathers. Todd Lanning, manager of [South Fork Outfitters](#) in Swan Valley, Idaho, says the trend is good for fly fishing.

“It’s business. We’re happy to sell whatever feathers we can to whomever,” said Mr. Lanning, who has received some calls about his feathers. And, he likes the look.

“I think it’s kind of cool,” Mr. Lanning said. “I think it’s kind of sexy, to be honest with you, for lack of a better word.”

But other fly shops want nothing to do with the fashionable. Tom Ciardelli, the owner of Hanover Outdoors in Hanover, N.H., refuses to sell feathers to anyone other than fly fishermen.

“We felt we would be better off with good will than just selling out,” Mr. Ciardelli said.

The feathers are fetching big interest — and money — on the Internet, with nearly 6,000 listings for “hair extension feathers” on the Web site [etsy.com](#) and more than 6,000 listings on eBay. Feathers that used to cost a few dollars are fetching \$20 each in some salons.

The situation has spawned some interesting business alliances.

“We do get our feathers from a local fly fishing shop,” said Rebecca Pellman, a spokeswoman for [Vain](#), a salon with two Seattle locations. She said she understood why fishermen might be upset.

“Can you imagine some Dad type coming in for feathers and hearing, ‘Sorry, I sold them all for people’s hairdos’?” Ms. Pellman said.

She estimates that the salon has put feathers in the hair of at least 1,000 clients. But she and others recognize that the shortage, and the hairdos, will probably be short-lived.

“It’s a fad,” said Jim Makris of the [Opechee Trading Post](#) in Laconia, N.H., which still has some shorter feathers available. “And like all fads, it will go away. But right now, it’s hot.”

A version of this article appeared in print on June 29, 2011, on page A1 of the New York edition with the headline: When Fashion Meets Fishing, the Feathers Fly.



L.L.Bean Albany Outing Club

Got Fish??

Join our Fly Fishing expert Rodney over at Six Mile Waterworks off of Fuller Rd to try out your new rod set-up or just to spend more time casting.

When:

August 3rd, 17th, 31st 5:45-8pm
September 14th, 28th 5:45-8pm

Where:

Six mile Waterworks off Fuller Rd

Cost:

FREE!!!

Details:

BYOG-bring your own gear!

Fly rod set up

Flies

Fishing license

Have a Boat?? Want to Paddle??

Join us as we head out to paddle our local waterways!

When:

August 10th, 24th, 5:30-8:30pm
September 7th, 21st 5:30-8:30pm

Where:

TBD each week. The Mohawk River, Grafton Lake, Up in Glens Falls

Cost:

FREE!!!

Details:

BYOG-Bring your own gear
Boat, PFD, Paddle

Don't forget about our Shop Rides



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Book of the Month: River Monsters by Jeremy Wade

Some of you may have seen the show by the same name on Animal Planet network. I have not, but I have read the book and now I want to catch an episode or two because Wade's globe trotting adventures trying to catch the world's toughest and meanest fish is fascinating to say the least. Much of the adventure is in just getting to the spot where the monsters live. If you think that this book has nothing to do with angling in upstate NY then you would be wrong. Many of the same lessons that we know to catch fish here are utilized by Wade in his angling pursuits. Reading this book will make you a better angler plus make a welcome addition to your summer reading list. I found copies at Barnes & Noble for \$26.

Have and Safe and Happy Rest of the Summer, 2011