



# The Barbless Flyer

The mission of the Spokane Fly Fishers is to provide a family friendly organization for promoting the sport of fly fishing through education, application, and conservation.



## When the Going Gets Tough, the Tough Go Fly Fishing A “Celebration of Fly Fishing the American West”

By Kevin Brannon, Vice President



Spokane author, photographer, fishing guide, casting instructor and teacher (whew!) **Chip O'Brien** will present his program called “**One Year, Six States – My Redemptive Year**” at our regular monthly meeting on January 11<sup>th</sup> at 7pm. As usual, we’ll meet at St Francis of Assisi Catholic Church, 1104 W Heroy, Spokane.

Chip says this program is “a celebration of fly fishing the American West, but it also touches upon the often-overlooked capacity of fly fishing to restore a soul ravaged by some of the inevitable downsides of life.”

According to Chip, his redemptive year began after “life had handed me a turd sandwich.” This program will display Chip’s well-honed story-telling skills and beautiful photography to share the how-to’s and where-to.s of fishing water both familiar and obscure in California, Oregon, Washington, Idaho, Montana and Wyoming while telling the story of “how fly fishing, time and a pack of understanding fishing buddies brought me back, you could even say saved my soul.”

Chip’s journey so far has followed a path set early in his life. When he was 10, he caught his first fish on a bamboo fly rod through what he calls “a complete coincidence” and never looked back. A bit later his mother suggested that he should be a writer. And, like the fateful mashup between chocolate and peanut butter that created Reeses, a fly-fishing writer was born. Chip’s first article was published over 30 years ago and since then he has published hundreds of articles in many fly fishing and outdoors magazines as well as several books. In his “spare time” he guided fishermen in N. California for 14 years, taught writing in Oregon for 10 years, became a certified casting instructor and fished all over the known world. He recently learned the art of euronymphing and is now mastering trout spey techniques. Chip moved to Spokane in 2016 to be closer to family and because “the fact there’s terrific fishing around here just made a move to Spokane irresistible.”

### FUTURE PROGRAM NOTES:

February 15<sup>th</sup> Meeting – Please note that the February meeting will held on the **3<sup>rd</sup> Thursday of the month** to avoid conflicting with both Ash Wednesday and Valentine’s Day. Our presenter will be Brian O’Keefe, another gifted fisherman, storyteller and photographer. He will share his experiences fishing in his recently adopted home waters of Eastern Idaho.

March 13<sup>th</sup> Meeting – This is the date of our Annual Raffle. This is the second of our two big fundraising events of the year. We need help! Please contact Craig Adams at (509)999-5660 or [craigflyfisher@gmail.com](mailto:craigflyfisher@gmail.com) to volunteer.

# THE PREZ SAYS

## JANUARY 2024

By Craig Adams, President



As we reach the end of another calendar year I just want to say “Happy Holidays” to everyone. It’s been an interesting time for me. We’ve had both highs and lows with the Club this year, but we are forging ahead and the club is on solid footing as we move into the new year.

We are still in need of several committee chairpeople. Please come out and support your club, we need your help! The positions that are open are: Raffle Committee, Fundraising Committee.

Looking forward to the Fly School and Fly Tying Classes to getting started. We have a good speaker from January and trying to get a fly fishing film for February. Stay tuned for further details on these. Let’s make this coming year the best yet.

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## 2024 Outings Planning Meeting

The 2024 Outings Planning meeting is scheduled for 6 pm January 9, 2024. The meeting will be held at:

[EVCO Integrated Solutions, 3511 E. Trent Ave, Spokane, WA 99202.](https://www.evco.com)

Chris Bryant has offered up an awesome meeting room. This is where our board and other committees meet.

This meeting is open to all members. Every year we seem to see the same folks which is great BUT I really think that new faces means that new and great ideas will be shared. I invite you to come along if you have suggestions for outings or if you are just curious how the club works. Please join us.

In this meeting we will be reviewing the outings of 2023 outings and setting up the 2024 outings (April-October). It will be an auspicious occasion to discuss the role of a Host on a SFFC Outing.

I will be skiing with my Canadian family over the Holidays and off the SFFC grid. Please contact me the old-fashioned way.

Happy Holidays

Robin Gavelin  
SFFC Outings  
509-998-0612  
[rgavelin@comcast.net](mailto:rgavelin@comcast.net)

## We Want to Know What You Think



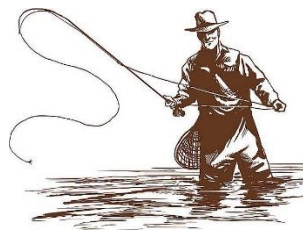
As the Club has gotten back on its feet in the aftermath of COVID, a group of volunteers who are new to leadership has joined the Board of Directors and stepped up to chair our major committees.

Membership is growing overall, after some members dropped away during the pandemic. And, of course, the world around us has continued to change. This seems to be as good a time as any for you, the members of Spokane Fly Fishers Club, to weigh in and tell leadership how the Club can better help you enjoy and draw meaning from fly fishing.

The Board recently authorized the formation of an ad hoc working group to put together recommendations for ways to increase membership participation in and satisfaction with the Club. This group is working to gather members' input on a variety of topics that correspond to the subjects covered by some of our major committees – Membership, Outings, Education, Conservation, Publications and Programs. The first step in this effort will be a series of on-line surveys to gather information about your fishing experience and preferences, your opinions on the Club's recent activities and about activities the Club might offer going forward. You will also be given the opportunity to choose activities in which you would be willing to serve as a volunteer.

Your responses to these surveys will be anonymous unless you choose to reveal your identity and all responses will be held in confidence. The plan is to send these surveys out in chunks small enough that they can be answered in a short period of time, no more often than every two to four weeks and to get the answers compiled by the end of April. After that, the results will be made available to all members, and we will hold a meeting to discuss them and gather further in-person input. The sum of this will be used to guide the Board and committees as they move ahead.

Many of us get tired of the surveys we get bombarded with these days (does my pharmacy really need to ask me the same 5 questions after every visit?) so we'll try to be respectful of your time with these. But we hope you will participate in them. The Club's work is done by volunteers who donate their time and are seeking your direction about how their time can best be used. Please help out by responding to these surveys when they pop up in your inbox!



# Membership News – January '24



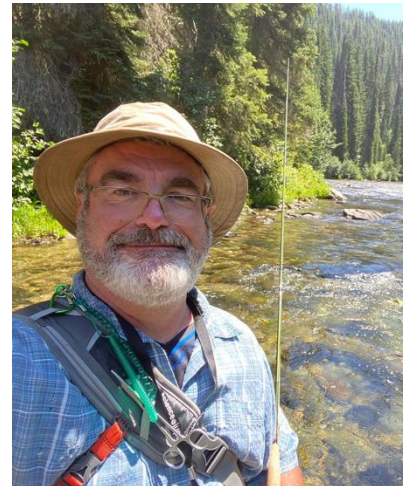
Let the numbers do the talking!		
New members this month	New members this year	Total members
4	61	202

**Please welcome these four new members to the club:**

- Vander Linden
- Jerry Hust
- Krystin Symonds
- James Zimmerman

**Who are we?** The membership committee, along with the board of directors and leaders from other committees, have realized that we don't really know enough about our members to make good decisions about what new programs to offer, what changes to existing programs need to be made, and generally how to improve our organization.

We have decided to create a series of surveys to learn more about who our members are and where their interests lie. We will use this information to create some exciting programs! We hope to start sending out these surveys in early spring, so please watch your email!



### Badges

We are currently making badges and will start bringing them to monthly meetings! If you need a badge, please let me know via email or at the front desk at the monthly meetings.

### Looking for a way to help out?

If you are interested in helping the club welcome new members, manage statistics, and other membership-related things, I could really use some help on the membership committee. Currently, the committee is just me!

Brad Collins  
 Membership Committee Chairman  
 Membership@spokaneflyfishers.com

# 2024 Fly Fishing School

By: Paul Olsen and Claude Kistler

The SFF Fly Fishing School starts on February 29th and again includes a great lineup of program presenters who will provide both indoor and outdoor instruction. The indoor sessions will be held at the Inland Northwest Wildlife Council Building at 6116 North Market Street.

Indoor class times are 6:00pm to approx. 8:30pm as follows:

**Class #1** Thursday, February 29th (Equipment)

**Class #2** Thursday, March 7th (Knot Tying)

**Class #3** Thursday, March 14th (Entomology)

**Class #4** Thursday, March 28th (Moving Water - Streams and Rivers)

**Class #5** Thursday, March 21st (Still Water - Lakes and Ponds)

**Class #6** Thursday, April 4th (Water Safety)

**Class #7** Thursday, April 11th (Fish ID and Conservation)



Outdoor Casting Classes are held on three Saturdays in March at Franklin Park (Division and Queen - North Spokane) from 9:00am to 11:00am.

**Casting Class #1** – March 23<sup>rd</sup>

**Casting Class #2** – March 30<sup>th</sup>

**Casting Class #3** – April 6<sup>th</sup>

**The final class (#8)** is Saturday, **April 13<sup>th</sup>** at Waterfront Park, Medical Lake, WA (9:00am – 12noon.) This class includes additional basic field instruction as well as casting on the water. We may need to relocate due to tree destruction and removal from the August fires.



School is a great opportunity to learn a lifetime skill at a great price. Current SFF members pay \$120.00. The spouse pays the same. The non-member fee is \$150 for ages 18 and over. The non-member plus spouse fee is \$275. Ages 12 thru 17 pay \$80.00. The non-member fee includes club membership thru May 2025. All fees include the Orvis Guide to Fly Fishing which is a great lifelong reference manual.

Membership allows new members the opportunity to participate in club meetings, and outings. Begin now to enhance your flyfishing knowledge and skills and join other SFF fly fishing enthusiasts on area rivers, streams and lakes.

To register, access the Spokane Fly Fishers website at [www.spokaneflyfishers.com](http://www.spokaneflyfishers.com) and select the "Education Tab" or "Fly School" link. If you have questions, contact Claude Kistler at [fs@spokaneflyfishers.com](mailto:fs@spokaneflyfishers.com) or by phone at 509.747.2268.



## BEGINNING FLY TYING CLASS!

Beginning **January 6, 2024**, and continuing for six consecutive Saturdays, the **Beginning Fly Tying Class** will be conducted by the Spokane Fly Fishers. Times for the classes are 10:00 a.m. until noon. Attendance and participation will be limited to club members. Your Instructor will be **Chet Allison**.

**The price for the entire six sessions is \$50.00, which will cover classroom rental and materials.** The sessions will be held at The Sportsman's Warehouse at 6720 N. Division (though this may be subject to change). Tying materials (beads, feathers, fur, wire, hooks, etc.) will be provided. **Attendees will need to bring their own vise and tools to the classes.** Basic tools should include a tying bobbin, scissors, hackle pliers, and head cement with applicator. Questions about equipment can be directed to Larry Ray at 425-299-1488 or at [hoodnfly@aol.com](mailto:hoodnfly@aol.com).

Enrollment can be made through the Spokane Fly Fishers web site, or by emailing Larry Ray at the address shown.

**THIS CLASS WILL EMPHASIZE SIMPLICITY IN LEARNING TO TIE DURABLE FLIES! WE WILL TIE PRACTICAL PATTERNS THAT ARE APPROPRIATE FOR OUR AREA. A FAIR DOSE OF HUMOR AND LEVITY, WITH PERHAPS A BIT OF IRREVERENCE THROWN IN, CAN BE EXPECTED. AFTER ALL, DON'T WE ALL DO THIS FOR FUN...?**

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## 2024 Intermediate Fly-Tying Workshop

By Brad Collins



The SFF Intermediate Fly-Tying Workshop is going to be held at the Inland Northwest Wildlife Council at 6116 N Market, beginning Thursday **January 4<sup>th</sup>, 2024**.

**Please sign up before it is too late!** The **class fee is \$35** and can be paid on the Spokane Fly Fishers website, [spokaneflyfishers.com](http://spokaneflyfishers.com), under Events.

Each of the 6 nights you will learn to tie two intermediate fly patterns. There will be a different instructor each evening, all of whom are advanced tyers. I know many of the instructors and I am certain you will be learning some great patterns and techniques.

So, if you've been thinking about improving your fly tying, this is your opportunity!

### 2024 INTERMEDIATE FLY WORKSHOP SCHEDULE

The class is 6 weeks on the following evenings from 7:00 PM to 9:00 PM

Thursday, January 4th  
 Thursday, January 11th  
 Thursday, January 18th  
 Thursday, January 25th  
 Thursday, February 1st  
 Thursday, February 8th

So, if you've been thinking about improving your fly tying, this is your opportunity!

# Winter Fly Fishing Experience– Part 2

By Ken Moore

Winter fly fishing has some unique challenges you typically do not encounter during other seasons. Fish are predictable and often in softer "winter" water. The flow rate is slow and clear. Fly selection is different, and your fly rod guides will ice up. Allow me to assist you in overcoming some of these challenges with a few winter tips.

**Tip number 1. Fish the warmest part of the day.** Fish react predictably to water temperature. Since fish are poikilotherms (cold-blooded), their metabolism is significantly slower in winter. They appear more lethargic in their movement patterns. Your casting has to be precise. It is rare for a trout to chase down a fly in winter. The fish are not very active, so the best times to fish in the winter are from 11:00 am to 3:00 pm. A few degrees warmer water temperature makes a big difference in eliciting a strike. In the winter, the sun, which produces heat, is your friend.

**Tip number 2. Lower metabolism equals soft, slow water.** The colder the water, the lower a fish's metabolism. You will find your target prey in the slow-moving, almost pillowy water, and they will be deep or near the bottom of the river. Because of their lower metabolism in the cooler months, fish will not chase a nymph or dry fly like in the summer. Skip the faster water and skip the riffles. Fish in the winter are very conservative in their movement behaviors. Look for slow, deep pools, side channels, and slow-moving seams along the banks. These are the water types you are seeking.

**Tip number 3. Limit your bug selection.**

Most days in the winter, there is little bug activity. In the winter, ninety percent of your fishing will be nymphing or streamers. If there is a hatch, it will typically be a Midge hatch. If you get a warmer day, say above 30 degrees, you may get some midge activity; in that case, you can throw on a dry fly. Two of my favorite midge dry flies are a Griffiths gnat or a suspended midge in sizes 18-22. I fish two nymphs if the regulations allow. On my point fly, I will tie on a heavier fly as an attractor, and this assists in getting my flies to depth quicker. My tag fly is eight to twelve inches above my point fly. My tag fly is typically a zebra midge size 18-22. Nymphing eggs and scuds can also work well in the winter months. If you want to try streamers, go with a small leach pattern or wooly bugger.

**Tip number 4. Dead Drift and Water Types**

I typically downsize my tippet in the winter from a 5x to a size 6x fluorocarbon. The fluorocarbon is a bit more stealthy and abrasion-resistant. This smaller tippet allows my flies to drift drag-free better. Concentrate, keep your casting and flies in the seam. If you are not sure what water to seek, I suggest tail waters or anything with a dam on it. The water temperature from a dam will be more constant in temperature and will likely not ice up like a freestone river. Spring creeks and rivers would be good choices, too, as they are less likely to freeze. Anytime you find a hot spring dumping into the river, fish will stack up in the warmer water. Typically, the water flows will be the lowest of the year, and hydrodynamics are straightforward. While this aids a newer fisherman due to the slower, lower volume of water, the water clarity necessitates slower and more deliberate movement on your part. Scared fish do not eat.

### Tip number 5. Ice in your guides

As the temperature drops below freezing, the water from your fly line will begin to freeze in your rod guides, which can be frustrating. There are a couple of solutions you can try. No one fix for ice-free rod guides in winter fishing works. One thing you can do is put your rod in the water and give it a little shake. The ice will loosen up, and you can shake it off. This technique allows you to get back into casting for several more drifts. The following solution is to apply Loon Ice-off, a paste that you apply to your rod guides. Loon ice-off does an incredible job, but you will need to apply it every 15 or 20 minutes, depending on how cold the weather is. Since the water on the fly line causes your rod guides to ice up, if you minimize your casting, you mitigate your rod guides from icing - a simple roll cast is a solution or try not casting as far. I will also fish my European nymphing rods because, in this style of fly fishing, your fly line never leaves your rod tip.

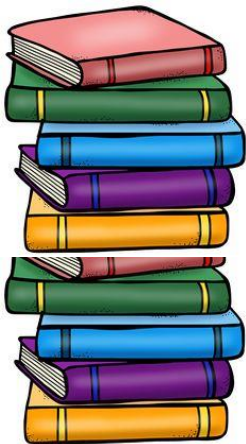
Winter fly fishing has many benefits, such as practicing this sport in solitude. I hope you found these tips helpful. You can still fish just because the riverbank is white and the temperatures are colder. You have something new to try if you haven't fished in winter.

*(See Ken's Part 1 of this article in the December issue.)*

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## A message from our Librarian

By Larry Ray, Librarian and Club Secretary



There will be no book review in the January 2024 edition of the Barbless Flyer. I have simply been too overwhelmed with too many issues – health, home, etc. – to be able to devote the time needed for an honest book review. Hopefully, I will be able to pick back up for the February issue. I realize, too, that the library has not been open for the last two meetings – the Fly Auction in November and the Christmas Party in December. If you brought a book to return in either month, I apologize for not making the library available for that return. I PLAN TO OPEN THE LIBRARY DURING THE JANUARY MEETING. Accordingly, if you have a book to return, please do so. In fact, I will not be asking for late fees, so no matter how overdue the book return might be, please bring it. **We simply want to recover any books that are held out there and for which return is overdue.**

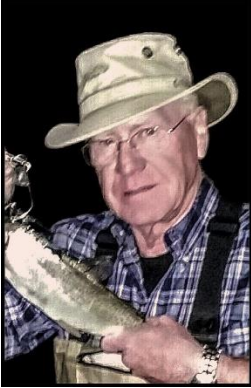
As this is written, our Christmas party was held only two days ago. It was reminiscent of successful SFF Christmas parties in past years. Great food, even better company, and just a fine experience. If you missed it, you missed a good one. A good portion of the success was, of course, due to Carla Ferguson “coming home” to prepare the meal, just as she had in years past. She was ably assisted by her husband, Dan. I want to offer them both a special thank you. Hope Kevin and I see you all next month!





# Important Message from the Acting Editor

By Doug Keene



Well folks, this issue of the Barbless is the last one that I will be putting together for the club. I have been working as an “acting Barbless Editor” since the September issue, after our previous editor stepped down last May. The club has found a replacement editor for this position, so future issues will be edited by **Jacki Shear Brannon**, our new editor and overseen by our new Publications Committee Chairman **Bill Millspaugh**..

The Barbless Flyer has been the communication tool of the Spokane Fly Fishers since 1977, and over the years the newsletter has changed its format and method of distribution several times, but bottom line, it always got out to the members and kept them up to date with club activities and provided many fine articles on fly fishing that have helped the members to succeed in their constant search for the “big one”. This tradition will continue.

I have enjoyed filling in on the editor job while the search for a new editor went on, and I wish the best to our new team. As for me, I’ll be fishing!



## Beginner Fly Pattern

### Black & Red Ice Cream Cone



**Hook:** TMC 200R 10-8

**Bead:** White size to fit hook about 4.0 mm

**Thread:** Black 6/0 or 8/0 or black Frostbite

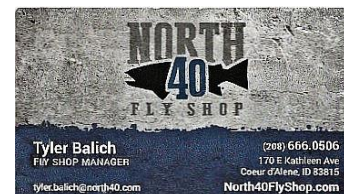
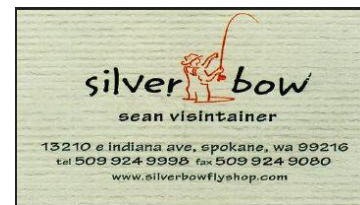
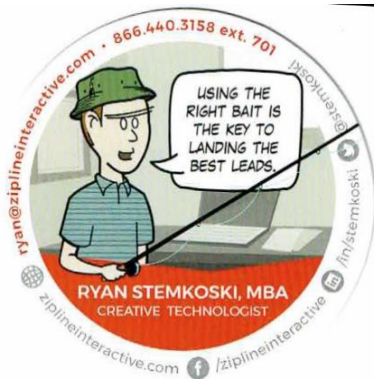
**Rib:** Red wire

**Abdomen:** tapered black tying thread or black Frostbite

1. Place a white bead on the hook, and place the hook in the vice. Start the thread behind the bead.
2. Wrap thread to above the barb of the hook, tie in red wire. Tie in black frostbite if you are using this product if not wrap thread to the bead making several layers building up a slightly tapered body. Stop behind the bead.
  - 2b. If you are using frostbite wrap a few layers of thread then wrap the black frostbite forward tying it off behind the bead.
3. Wrap the red wire forward in a spaced spiral wrap forming a segmented rib. Tie off the wire behind the bead with several wraps of thread. When secured with wraps of thread, helicopter the extra wire off or trim it off and whip finish and apply head cement.

## SFF Business Members

Please support these businesses



Business Memberships are available for \$50/year or payment in kind and include an Honorary Membership if not already a member.

Contact: SFF, PO Box 4141, Spokane, WA 99220.

## SFF Information

### Board Members

President:	Craig Adams
Vice President:	Kevin Brannon
Treasurer:	Brian Soth
Secretary:	Larry Ray
Board Position 1:	Brian Desautels
Board Position 2:	Bill Millspaugh
Board Position 3:	Chris Bryant
Past President:	Chet Allison
Sgt. At Arms:	David Marshall

### COMMITTEE CHAIRMEN

Programs:	Kevin Brannon
Events Chairman	Brad Collins
Barbless Flyer Editor:	Jacki Shear Brannon
Publications Comm.:	Bill Millspaugh
Conservation:	Robin Gavelin
Outings:	Open
Education:	Chris Bryant
Membership:	Brad Collins
Fly Fishing School:	Paul Olsen
Librarian:	Larry Ray
PHW Contact:	George Foster
FFI Liaison:	Len Zickler
Beg. Fly Tying:	Chet Allison
Int. Fly Tying:	Brad Collins
A/V Coordinator:	David Marshall
Web Master	Doug Keene

## Time and Location of Monthly Meetings

Club meetings are held monthly, the second Wednesday of each month, at 1104 West Heroy St., in the basement of the St. Francis of Assisi Church in Spokane.

### SFF Contact Info

Change of Email Address: Log into our web page [spokaneflyfishers.com](http://spokaneflyfishers.com) and change the information on your profile form that is visible after you log in.

### Club Mailing Address

SFF Club, PO box 4141, Spokane, WA 99220

**Board meetings of the Spokane Fly Fishers** are now held every first Wednesday of the month, at the EVCO building located at 3511 East Trent. Meetings begin at 7:00 p.m. Dates, times, and locations are subject to change. ATTENDANCE IS LIMITED TO MEMBERSHIP ONLY