



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



Prez Sez

By Kevin Brannon



As I look forward to the upcoming year as President of the Club, I'd first like to take a look back and recognize some of those who have brought us to where we are now. Virtually everything we do relies on the efforts of dedicated volunteers. What drives these folks to contribute their time and effort year after year probably varies for each of them but all we can offer any of them in return is our gratitude and appreciation. So, the next time you run into someone going above and beyond as these folks have, please offer them your thanks and encouragement.

Several key roles in Club leadership were transferred to 'fresher horses' earlier this year and even more roles will be transferred in the coming months. At the risk of leaving someone out, let's give a heartfelt shout out to:

Doug Keene – Doug was the architect and builder of our contemporary website, which is now the primary source for Club news, activities, resources and archives. He also developed and integrated our membership services platform into the website to allow, for example, the membership directory to be accessible and searchable online and constantly updated, rather than periodically printed and mailed. The same system allows us to sign up for activities, circulate forms and collect payments electronically, which saves untold volunteer labor hours. After managing his creation for many years, Doug helped hand off these responsibilities this past winter.

Doug also long served as the Club's Publications Chair with overall responsibility for The Barbless Flyer, having taken our newsletter through the transition from ink on paper with a postage stamp to its current electronic form. He handed off that responsibility in January 2024.

Rolf Marsh – Rolf had to learn a new set of skills when he took on the job of editing The Barbless Flyer and did that job faithfully and well for several years until last September.

Claude Kistler and Ken Moore – These two stalwarts organized and ran the annual Conservation and Education Raffle (now more honestly called the Annual Fundraising Raffle). This historically has been one of the two largest sources of the Club's income; it brings in nearly twice as much as our membership dues. It involves soliciting, collecting, cataloging and storing hundreds of raffle prize donations and selling thousands of tickets and organizing a substantial group of volunteers to put on the event. Claude made the transfer of these responsibilities almost painless by making and maintaining a detailed log of the steps for putting the Raffle together. They handed this work off before this year's raffle.

Claude Kistler and Paul Olsen – In my mind, probably no Club activity better demonstrates what we're about or is more important to our long-term survival and growth than the annual Fly-Fishing School. Paul and Claude have shouldered responsibility for the school for some years and decided to move it along to others after

successfully wrapping up the 2024 session. Scheduling locations, making lesson plans, organizing our amazing squad of volunteer instructors to teach 10 different lessons over a seven-week period, publicizing the school to potential students outside the Club and integrating their 40 students into additional Club activities every year is a big job. Filling it is among the most important tasks the new board will face in the year ahead. True to form, Claude has handed off a detailed notebook that is almost a step-by-step manual of how to run the school which will make the job much easier for their successor(s).

Paul Olsen – As if presiding over the Club and keeping the wheels on through the pandemic were not enough (and it was), Paul retained responsibility for chairing our Outings Committee through '23-24. With Doug's assistance, Paul also shepherded us through the transition to electronic processing of waivers and releases (a crucial, if mundane-sounding step) and setting the Outings template we continue to follow, he handed the job off before this year's planning began.

David Marshall and Larry Ray – These two long-serving officers and directors each served out the entirety of the two-year terms as Sgt. At Arms and Secretary permitted by our bylaws. They provided indispensable experience and wisdom to a Board of Directors with a sizable influx of rookies. David served on the Board for a possibly unprecedented 6 consecutive years and is now taking a “break” while continuing to handle our audio/visual productions. Larry is coming off a two-year stint as Club Secretary (and de facto parliamentarian) after having served in other capacities in prior years, while maintaining his role as the Club's Librarian and unofficial historian. Both gentlemen will be missed.

Craig Adams – I am very grateful to have had Craig's respectful, quiet, calming brand of leadership in our Board meetings as we felt our way throughout this past year. He modestly told us that he was “a follower, not a leader” and “not an arm-twister” but he moved the Club forward in many meaningful ways. His brand of respectful humility brings out the best in those around him and I saw the members of this year's Board step up to help in new ways, maybe because they felt Craig would support them and give them freedom to act on their ideas, which he invariably did.

Will you consider helping? We have some big shoes to fill at the Fly School before winter. We also recently learned that we are starting 2024-25 with two empty board seats. As outlined elsewhere in this issue, I plan to appoint two limited term Advisory Committees, one to review our financial and budgeting assumptions and another to review and revise our Bylaws and Standing Rules. I hope these groups will start their work before Labor Day and complete it by November. And we always need short term help with the October Fly Auction, Holiday Dinner Party and the Raffle, as well as instructors for the Fly School and fly-tying classes and planning outings. I've found working with other Club volunteers to be fun and rewarding. Maybe you would too.

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Spokane Fly Fishers Honored Our 2023-24 Awards Recipients at the Annual Awards Picnic

By Awards Selection Committee and Larry Ray, Chairman

The Club held its Annual Awards Picnic on a brisk, cloudy and windy day at the Clear Lake Recreation facility at Fairchild Air Base on May 18, 2024. After some members fished in the morning, everyone ate hamburgers and brats beautifully grilled up by all-around utility player Brad Collins. Then it was time for President Craig Adams and Awards Selection Committee Chair Larry Ray to present awards to four member-volunteers being recognized for their contributions to the continuing success of the Club. This year's honorees were:



David Marshall received the Club's highest award, the **Founder's Award**. Per our Standing Rules, *"This award is given to an individual, family or groups who represent the highest standards of the club and are actively involved, as evidenced by their frequent participation in club events and projects. The winner must be very visible and contribute time and effort to the needs of the club."* The committee cited David particularly for his sustained service as an officer and director of the club; his constant and long-standing work providing and operating the audio/visual equipment indispensable to monthly meetings, Fly Fishing School sessions, fly tying classes, the fly auction and other events; teaching Fly Fishing School classes; and his active support of club members' fishing efforts at outings and elsewhere. The Committee further expressed appreciation for David's jovial smile and unfailing willingness to lend a hand. The Founder's Award comes with a pre-paid lifetime Club membership and is only awarded occasionally, to the worthiest recipients, at the discretion of the committee.



Brian Soth was recognized as the **Lambert Award** honoree. *"This exceptional award is given to an individual who has made very unique contributions to the club and has been actively involved in club programs over a sustained period. Due to the unique qualifications required, the award is given on exceptional rather than annual basis."* Brian is now entering into the second year of his second two-year term as the club's Treasurer. Not only does his position require a particular professional skill set, it requires close attention and focus. The Committee noted that during this past year alone, Brian improved the Club's cash flow by investing some of our surplus funds in higher yielding (but very low-risk) accounts, improved our financial recordkeeping and rebuilt our budgeting process by involving committee chairs and the directors of fiscally important programs in budget planning beginning early in calendar year 2024. He also serves as the Club's liaison to Fly Fishers Int'l, which among other things, gives us access to the specialized insurance policy that protects the Club and its members.



Brad Collins was honored with this year's **Mover and Shaker Award**. *"This annual award is given to an individual, family, or group that has been particularly active in club events and projects. The recipient is normally a relatively new member of the club or one who has only recently become actively involved."* The committee pointed out that Brad "jumped in 'waders first' to serve in several areas." This year, Brad took over management of the Club's website and recently made it possible for us to update and edit its content as needed (rather than once monthly) without the paid assistance of our web host, among other improvements. As Membership Chair, Brad has taken over management of our membership service and record management platform and implemented significant improvements. He also planned and organized this year's new member orientation and intermediate fly-tying classes and served as an instructor at the Fly-Fishing School. A glutton for punishment, Brad is our incoming Sgt. At Arms and will serve on the board of directors this coming year.



Kevin Brannon received this year's **Fly Fisher of the Year** award. *"This annual award is given to an individual, family, or group who represents the highest standards of our family club. They show active involvement as evidenced by their participation in meetings, outings, and conservation projects, with time and effort contributed to the needs of the club."* According to the Committee, Kevin has demonstrated "boundless energy" and has "worked to move the club forward in many areas," acting as a "cheerleader" who "positively encourages and assists others." This year he succeeded Claude Kistler and Ken Moore in organizing and managing the annual fundraising raffle. He also succeeded Doug Keene as Publications Chair, where he recruited and now supervises an independent contractor (Jacki Brannon) who edits *The Barbless Flyer* and assists with website content by making annoying suggestions that he does not know how to implement.

Thanks to this year's Awards Selection Committee: Roger Bertsch, Jola Pieslak, Carla Ferguson, Al Odenthal, Claude Kistler and, especially its chair, Larry Ray.



Outings Schedule Summer 2024

By Robin Gavelin



The Outings schedule for the balance of the summer through September is complete and you can see it below.

Please note these features of the outings registration process. First, all outings require online pre-registration at <https://spokaneflyfishers.com/events/#myaccount>. If you have not already agreed to the Club's standard form of waiver and release (such as when you joined the Club, renewed your membership or registered for a previous outing), you will be required to do so now. Please also note that this requirement also applies to any guests you may wish to have join us (see below). A link to the description and registration portal for each outing is provided in the following schedule. For overnight outings, you must register at least 10 days in advance to allow the hosts adequate notice for purchasing food, choosing the right sized campground, planning activities, etc. Second, we have added a guest sign-up portal that allows non-members to register for outings without logging onto the website as a member. All guests will be required to identify the member they are accompanying and click "agree" to the waiver and release of claims required of all attendees. If you are inviting a guest, you will be asked to identify your guest(s).

Note, too, that this schedule has been updated since the version published in our May issue. We've added the highly anticipated Spokane River Workshop with Chip O'Brien on July 18th and 20th, an outing on Fish Creek in Montana on Sept. 5th - 8th, hosted by Robin Gavelin and a Georgetown Lake (Montana) float on September 12th - 15th, hosted by Dan Wight.

June - September 2024 Outings Schedule

June 5 - Silver Lake weekday float (Hosted by Robin Gavelin) - Click here for info and registration): [Weekday Float at Silver Lake - Spokane Fly Fishers](#)

June 8 - Badger Lake Saturday float (Need volunteer Host, please contact Robin Gavelin) - Click here for info and registration: <https://spokaneflyfishers.com/event/badger-lake-1-fly-contest-2023/#!event-register/2024/4/30/2024-badger-lake-weekday-float>

June 11-16 - Lower Selway River, O'Hara Campground (Hosted by John Hudson) - Click here for info and registration: <https://spokaneflyfishers.com/event/lower-selway-river-outing/#!event-register/2024/6/11/lower-selway-outing>

June 21-23 - North Fork of Coeur d'Alene River (Hosted by Chris Bryant) - Click here for info and registration: <https://spokaneflyfishers.com/event/nf-couer-d-alene-river-outing/#!event-register/2024/6/21/nf-couer-d-apos-alene-river-outing-2023>

July 18 and 20 - Spokane River Workshop with Chip O'Brien - Click here for info and registration: <https://spokaneflyfishers.com/event/spokane-river-outing/#!event-register/2024/7/18/spokane-river-workshop-with-chip-o-apos-brien>

July 26-28 – St. Joe River, Fly Flats Campground (Hosted by Ken and Alicia Moore) – Click here for info and registration: <https://spokaneflyfishers.com/event/st-joe-river-outing/#!event-register/2024/7/26/st-joe-river-outing-2023>

August 15-18 – Kootenai River Float and Wade Trip (Hosted by Dan Wight) – Click here for info and registration: <https://spokaneflyfishers.com/event/kootenai-river-float-and-wade-trip/#!event-register/2024/8/15/st-joe-river-outing>

September 5-8 – Fish Creek Outing (Hosted by Robin Gavelin) – Click here for info and registration: <https://spokaneflyfishers.com/event/fish-creek-outing/#!event-register/2024/9/5/kootenai-river-float-and-wade-trip>

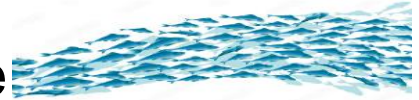
September 12-15 – Georgetown Lake Float (Hosted by Dan Wight) – Click here for info and registration: <https://spokaneflyfishers.com/event/georgetown-lake-outing/#!event-register/2024/9/12/georgetown-lake-outing>



Firehole River in Yellowstone

Education Committee

By Chris Bryant, Education Chair



The Education Committee will offer two streamside clinics this summer!

The club will be offering a couple of streamside clinics this summer. The first of these will be an Introduction to Spey Casting, taught by our Club member and certified casting instructor. Thatcher Beatty. The session will be held at 9:00 a.m., June 29th at Peaceful Valley Park in Spokane. The second clinic will be an Introduction to Euro Nymphing, taught by Club member and North 40 Fly Shop Manager Wayne Jordan and will be at 9:00 a.m., August 3rd also at Peaceful Valley Park in Spokane. Note: These times and locations are subject to change if conditions require it. We will send out group email notices closer to the events.

Spey casting

For those new to these skills, spey casting is a fly-fishing technique that originated in Scotland and is different from other techniques because it doesn't have a back-cast. The caster makes a back cast under the rod tip, and the end of the fly line and leader touch the water's surface before the caster launches into the forward cast. This allows anglers to cast farther and cover more water. Spey casting is often but not necessarily utilizing a long two-handed rod and is frequently used to swing wet flies to catch steelhead, salmon and trout. It can also help keep your flies out of streamside vegetation and give you an excuse to buy some really nifty new fishing gear.

Thatcher's program will cover:

- Gear
- Leader Setups
- Fly Selection
- Reading the Water; and
- Casting, Presentation, and Hooksets

Euro Nymphing

Euro nymphing is simply a specialized method of fishing nymphs for trout on a tight line. Heavily weighted (often multiple) flies and light tippet are used to quickly sink flies, and a "sighter"; (multicolored section of monofilament) is used instead of an indicator (bobber). The method is designed to avoid missed strikes by keeping the angler connected by touch with the nymph at all times. Its name derives from its origins in competitive fly-fishing tournaments by teams from The Czech Republic, France and Spain but the method is now used worldwide.

Here are the topics we'll be discussing:

- Gear
- Leader Setups
- Fly Selection
- Reading the Water
- Casting, Presentation, and Hooksets

Please be sure to dress for the weather, bring polarized sunglasses, and wear wading boots. For more details and to RSVP to attend, please visit the Events page on the SFFC website here [coming soon]: <https://spokaneflyfishers.com/events/>.

Join More of Spokane's Fly Fishers for Happy Hour

Thanks to our friends and partners in conservation at the Spokane Falls Chapter of Trout Unlimited (SFTU) and Spokane Women on the Fly (SWOTF), we are getting folks from all three organizations together for an informal, no-host Happy Hour at Brick West Brewing in downtown Spokane on Thursday, June 27th from 5:00 to 7:00pm. Please join in!





Year-End Financial Review

By Brian Soth, Treasurer

To be brief and to quickly allay any concerns, the club's financial condition is quite solid with \$37,083 in assets at the end of April. This money is held in several different accounts including a checking account, a money market fund and two Certificates of Deposit of differing maturities.

Our fiscal year ended on May 31 and, although we were unable to close our books before the Barbless deadline, we can estimate with some accuracy where our club's financial situation was at fiscal year-end. Through April, the club is well in the black for the year, with revenues exceeding expenses ("net income" for you accountants out there) by \$3,385. Although income and expenses for May are yet to be tallied we don't anticipate this figure changing significantly when we close the books for the year.

This rosy picture was not the one we were facing in February. Revenues from one of our major fundraisers, the Fly Auction, came in below budget, and given our budgeted expenses, it appeared that we were going to end the year with a substantial deficit. But both the fly school and the club raffle exceeded expectations, and the Board made decisions to defer or cancel several budgeted expenses. As a result, our forecasted deficit flipped to a surplus.

As a matter of Board policy we have historically tried, especially during and immediately after the pandemic, to ensure that in any given year expenses do not exceed income. But, given our robust cash situation, legitimate questions have arisen concerning how much cash "cushion" we really need and how we can use amounts above that for the benefit of the club and its members.

To help answer those questions the Board has proposed that we convene a financial advisory committee to start work this summer.

The task of this advisory committee will be to propose how the board should approach budgeting this year and in later years. Some of the questions to be addressed include:

- If we are going to allow ourselves to dip into our cash reserves, how much should remain "off-limits" and held for emergencies? How many years should we plan to make the available surplus last?
- What sorts of expenditures and investments should take priority in such an expanded budget? For example, should we plan more expensive programs for our monthly meetings? Return to the more generous pattern of conservation donations the club once followed? Provide more amenities at our outings? Hire professional instructors to beef up our educational activities and take some of the burden off our volunteers? Hold our holiday party or awards ceremony in a catered location? Rent booth space at public events to attract new members? Implement new ideas or programs?

Our bylaws provide that the president has the authority to convene advisory committees on this and other subjects. If you would like to participate in the work of this committee, please contact Kevin Brannon to express your interest.

Nuts & Bolts

By Kevin Brannon



Insider news, reminders, upcoming events and opportunities to get more involved.

News from the Board of Directors

Vacancies: After the Club's elections in April, three new vacancies were created by resignations. Chris Bryant, who held the seat as At Large Director, Position #1, learned that new duties at his day job would require more extensive travel and let us know that he could no longer serve on the Board. Thankfully, Chris will stay on as our Education Chair. Chris has greatly re-vitalized our angler education efforts in his short time on this job – check out the Spokane River Clinic with Chip O'Brien, click here:

<https://spokaneflyfishers.com/event/spokane-river-outing/#!event-register/2024/7/18/spokane-river-workshop-with-chip-o-apos-brien> and the Spey and Euro Nymphing Clinic announcements on page 7.

After the elections, VP-Elect Dan Ferguson and Secretary-Elect Linda Howe had a chance to think it over and both decided they would prefer not to serve in those capacities for the 2024-'25 fiscal year. Given their long prior service to the Club, this is easy to understand even though it is disappointing to those of us looking forward to working with them. We do appreciate that they gave us plenty of notice and gave us time to find their successors before the upcoming meetings season.

Our Bylaws grant to those who remain on the board the authority to appoint officers and directors to vacancies that come up between elections. On May 16th, the board held a special meeting and appointed Jim Athearn to fill Chris's seat. Jim has a great deal of volunteer experience, both with SFF and IEFFC. He will be a great addition to the board. You can read more about his background below.

We are working to fill the VP and Secretary slots with current directors and officers and hope to clarify those situations in the coming weeks. Even if we are successful in this, though, we will have two vacancies remaining. Please consider giving back to the Club by joining the board! You will find us to be a supportive and collegial group of people who would all rather talk about fishing than Standing Rules (even while we're talking about Standing Rules). Contact any officer or director listed on page 14 for more information or to volunteer.

Meet the Fresh Faces in Leadership

Brad Collins was elected in the April elections to serve a one-year term (expiring in May, 2025) as Sgt. At Arms, a position that provides him with a vote on all matters that come before the board of directors. Brad has been serving as Membership Chair and website administrator and faithfully attended all board meetings last year. Brad grew up in NE Oregon and learned to tie flies and fly fish at an early age from his father and grandfather. He fished the local rivers, including the Wallowa River and Grande Ronde extensively until he left for college at OSU. While in college, he learned to fish the waters of central Oregon and Washington. His favorite hangouts were the Deschutes, Metolius, Yakima, and Crooked rivers. Brad became a high school science teacher and lived in Sequim and Gig Harbor before seeing the light and coming to Spokane. He is currently teaching at Cheney High School and is finally learning how to fish stillwater.

Bill White was elected in the April elections to serve a three-year term (expiring in May, 2027) as At Large Director in Position #2, replacing Bill Millspaugh. A retired Air Force Officer and recovering attorney, Bill grew up fishing the Truckee River behind his uncle's cabin, then spent the next 30 years living in New England. Bill fly-fished primarily in New Hampshire and Maine rivers, but made forays to the trout rivers of Virginia, Tennessee, North Carolina and Arkansas, as well as Montana. Having retired and moved to Green Bluff, WA

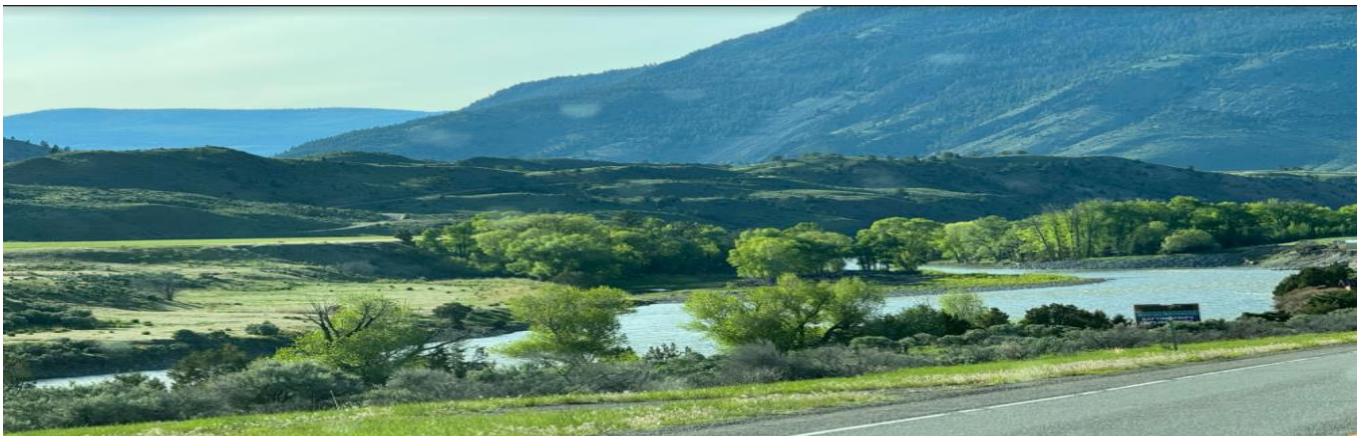
in 2021, Bill is enjoying fishing the West once again. He also enjoys grouse and pheasant hunting behind his Irish Red & White Setter.

Jim Athearn was appointed by the board to serve out the balance of Chris's term as At Large Director in Position #1 (through May, 2026). Jim retired in 2004, after 31 years of federal service – mostly with the Corps of Engineers as a fish biologist/program manager. He and his wife Laura moved to their home on Clear Lake shortly afterward. Jim enjoys all kinds of fishing but his favorites are fly fishing for trout in streams and lakes in the Pacific Northwest, Montana and B.C. and for bonefish in the Bahamas. He has combined fishing with his love of travel to cast for peacock bass in Brazil, golden dorado in Argentina, tigerfish in Botswana and arawana in Peru. Jim enjoys fly tying and dates the beginning of his passion for fly fishing to the start of his tying. He is also a hunter (mainly for big game) and bird watcher. When he travels you will usually see him with a pair of binoculars.

The Board is Seeking Input from Two New Advisory Committees

Finance and Budget Advisory Committee: As Treasurer Brian Soth lays out on page 9, the president intends to appoint this committee to advise the board as to the club's broad budgetary goals and spending priorities to guide the board's fiscal decisions for the new year and afterward. Brian will serve as the board's ex officio representative to this committee and provide it with the club's financial information and other guidance as requested. If you would like to participate, please contact Brian Soth or Kevin Brannon.

Bylaws and Standing Rules Review Advisory Committee: The Bylaws are the club's basic "rules of the road." The Bylaws contain a provision that requires them to be reviewed annually and, if desired and approved by membership, amended. The current Bylaws were adopted in 2018 and have not been formally reviewed for several years. They contain some provisions that apparently have never been adhered to, others that have proven unnecessarily burdensome to adhere to and at least one outright error (they get the legal name of the club wrong). It is time to go through them and discuss changes. The Standing Rules largely govern special situations, including the Awards and our dues structure and they need to work together with the Bylaws. Bill White and Larry Ray have already agreed to serve on this committee. Kevin Brannon will serve as the board's ex-officio representative and will provide the committee with initial comments on the documents to help start the committee's discussions. If you would like to participate, please contact Kevin. Both committees will operate by consensus and will work primarily via email and Zoom. The board hopes to get recommendations in time to consider them and open discussions with membership before November. If individual schedules permit, the committees may try to get started on their work before meetings resume in September.



Gibbon River in Yellowstone



Larry's Book Corner

By Larry Ray

Some More Summer Thoughts and Wishes. While last month's book review was thought to be the closer for the current year (ending in May), it turned out the club is issuing one more Barbless Flyer before we vanish for the summer. So, in that vein, instead of simply writing another review, I want to share a recent experience with you. In doing so, I hope to demonstrate how fly-fishing literature enhanced that experience.

A few weeks ago, Kevin Brannon (club President-elect Kevin Brannon) and I headed over to the North Fork of the Coeur-d-Alene for a day's fishing. To lessen the possibility of encountering other anglers, we went upstream, near where the pavement ends. While we didn't encounter other anglers, neither did we encounter any fish! Kevin is much more accomplished on moving water than I and he pointed out that there was significant bug activity occurring. After instructing me to look upward, he pointed out the three different bug species that were active – March Browns, a large mayfly, with some stoneflies that were larger still. There were also some smaller blue-winged olives slowly moving upward as well. But, for whatever reason, there were absolutely NO fish activity visible!

As the midday was already quite warm, with bright sun on the water, we separated to try to find shade to fish, thinking the brightness might have put most fish down. I waded almost across the river, where I could fish a shaded run that was moving evenly – no conflicting currents - and skirting some close-in deadfalls that might provide shelter but would not interfere with passing flies. The water was over my knees in fairly swift current and I carefully planted my waders. My position allowed me to cover shaded water, even though I was still standing in sun. As I settled into my casting it became almost rhythmic – but still no attention from the trout. Then, as if by magic, I was startled when near the end of a drift the fly's progress was intercepted by a picture-perfect, pristine rise. One of those that causes a perfect circle – or ring – for a moment before it dissipates when the battle is joined; a rise one hears as well as sees. And so it was, with what was clearly a LARGE fish. Given its size, the strength of the rushing water, and the demure fly (a small black humpy), I did not want to rush things. Yet, neither did I want to waste time playing the fish needlessly. As it tired and I began to gain ground (line), I became aware I would not be able to bring the fish to hand/net where I was positioned. So, keeping firm but gentle pressure, rod with fish in one hand and wading staff in the other, I waded downstream and across to the far bank. Finally arriving in the still water after five minutes or so of careful wading, I was able to net the trophy and, while keeping it under the surface, admire it for a few moments.

In the net was a gorgeous, huge (by upper North-Fork standards) female Westslope Cutthroat. The markers in the net showed it to be a hair short of nineteen inches – I'll call it nineteen! But, more than that, the fish was a picture of perfection – fat, but not bloated, hard and strong. The spots were numerous but fine, evenly distributed over her back from head to caudal fin, though not as concentrated near the tail as on some west slopes. There was, of course, that arc of spotless, pink -blushed side from the vent to the pecs that is the hallmark of all true Westslope Cutts. I could not see any scars or other telltale marks on the lips to betray prior hookups. The fly did not dislodge easily, surprising because of the barbless hook. My concern for the possibility of losing that fish to a thrown hook was probably unfounded. I took my time restoring

the fish's strength and, after holding it gently in the slack water, let it slip from my hands. It did not flee immediately but stayed by my side for quite a long time – minutes – pumping its gills. I would not leave until the fish did – no roving eagles or ospreys for this girl! Finally, with a quick flick of her tail, she was off toward the current and deeper water. I watched her melt into the stream bottom, becoming conscious of just what a profound, almost perfect experience our brief acquaintance had been.

As I re-crossed the river, a bit spent myself, I enjoyed reflecting on the richness of our encounter. Rich simply because of the surrounding beauty of water and streamside, certainly, but richer still because of the literature that had described and framed, for me, the whole experience. The rise that would have done Vince Marinaro (In the Ring of the Rise) proud. The descriptions of Westslope Cutthroat coloration provided by Robert Smith in *Native Trout of North America* and Pat Trotter in *Cutthroat*. Even the stern admonishments regarding careful wading by Rene' Harrop in *Learning from the Waters...*

Kevin had seen the initial fight right after hookup as he responded to my whoop of delight. Later, at the truck, as we took down our rods, I described the fish to him, probably with a bit of child-like enthusiasm and wonder. He noted, calmly, that what made the thing even more wonderful was the fact that it occurred so close to home. As I wondered, once more, at the size, color, and strength of the fish, I was reminded of Thomas McGuane's observations regarding catching fish in one's home waters: "A 5 year-old Brown in Argentina weighs 10+ pounds. On my home river in Montana a 5-year-old Brown is 15" and is just as hard to catch. Maybe it is age related but I'm somewhat over huge, innocent fish in remote places. An actual 18" trout on a dry fly on public water is what I now consider an event." I certainly have nothing against destination fishing and have done my share in Alaska and British Columbia. Yet I think McGuane's opinion has merit. The fact that I caught the largest Westslope Cutthroat I have ever landed while fishing on a day trip two hours from home burnishes the experience in some way. Which does nothing to diminish the fact that all trout are wonderful!

I would like to close this year by engaging in what has become a tradition for me as a club Librarian. The following is taken from *The Fisherman's Bedside Book*. It lovingly admonishes us regarding the beauty and value of our body of literature, and promises to alleviate loneliness and boredom with quiet companionship wherever our travels may lead. (It also warns of the folly of loaning away our own books!)

"Lend me not to another and I will be a quiet companion in all your wanderings. Wherever thou goest there go I, through the eagle's air and over the wide seas; through heat and cold, calm and tempest, and the changing years. When thou layest thyself down upon thy bed when the weary day is over read of me a little and thy dreams shall be sweet; of camp sheathings and murmuring willows, of the weir's thunder, and the bright throats of streams. Ye shall dream of the jeweled fishes that live in those places; of waterfalls, brown burns, and of the wild lilies; of the freshness of morning, the burden of noon, and that tranquil hour when cockchafers are abroad and owls and fishes wake to feed. And so shall ye sleep sweetly for I will ever be beside thee and none shall take me away."

Sweet dreams and, until we re-convene in the fall, good fishing! And, don't forget to READ.



SFF Club Information

Officers

President: Kevin Brannon
 Vice President: TBD
 Treasurer: Brian Soth
 Secretary: TBD
 Board Position 1*: Jim Athearn
 Board Position 2**: Bill White
 Board Position 3***: Brian Desautels
 Past President: Craig Adams
 Sgt. at Arms: Brad Collins
 *3-year term expires May 2026
 **term expires May 2027
 ***term expires May 2025
 President, VP, Treasurer,
 Secretary and Sgt. at Arms
 elected annually

Committee Chairs

Publications Comm: Kevin Brannon
 Conservation: Brian Desautels
 Kevin Brannon (interim)
 Robin Gavelin
 Outings: Chris Bryant
 Education: Brad Collins
 Membership: TBD
 Fly-fishing School: Larry Ray
 Librarian: Open
 Programs: Jacki Shear Brannon
 Barbless Flyer Editor: Craig Adams
 Proj. Healing Waters: Brian Soth
 FFI Liaison: TBD
 Beg. Fly-tying: Brad Collins
 Int. Fly Tying: David Marshall
 A/V Coordinator:

SFF Contact Info:

Change of Email Address: Log into our web page spokaneflyfishers.com and change the data on your profile form which is visible after you log in.



Visit Us on Facebook



Club Mailing Address:

SFF Club, PO box 4141, Spokane, WA 99220

SFFC Business Members

PLEASE SUPPORT THESE BUSINESSES



KEN MOORE
OWNER/HEAD GUIDE
509-953-8669
KENMOORE509@GMAIL.COM



RE/MAX
INLAND EMPIRE

LEN ZICKLER
Broker

C 509.720.3228
O 509.232.0824
E lenzickler@remax.net

1311 N. Washington St
Suite A
Spokane, WA 99201



Business Memberships are available for \$50/year or payment in kind and include an Honorary Membership if not already a member. Contact SFFC, PO Box 4141, Spokane, WA 99220.

