



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



March Meeting The Roundtables



Our March meeting will feature a unique format aiming to benefit newer anglers, new arrivals to the Inland Pacific Northwest, newer Club members and anyone willing to share stories. We recruited experienced local anglers with extensive knowledge of different local streams and lakes to host a roundtable and share their insights about fishing locally.

Breaking into four small groups who will rotate together between each of four Roundtables every 15 minutes and learn a bit about all of these four different regional waters.

The goal for this evening is to teach and learn from each other:

- Where to go, where to park and where to camp
- Where are the best wading access points
- What gear to bring along
- Which bugs generally hatch at certain times of year and what flies generally work anyway
- Any other questions that may come up

Equally important, though, is the opportunity we hope this program provides for our newer arrivals to get to know long-time members and anglers with more experience fishing area waters. We are making a concerted effort to urge current Fly-Fishing School students to attend. By nature, many fly fishers are somewhat solitary souls and this can come across as being stand-offish when we're in crowds. And like most people, we tend to hang around with people we already know and are comfortable with.

The four Roundtable Hosts are:

- Dave Marshall – North Branch, Coeur d'Alene River
- Ken Moore – St. Joe River
- Wayne Jordan – Spokane River
- Chip O'Brien – Coffeepot Lake
-

The meeting will take place at 7:00 p.m. at St. Francis of Assisi Catholic Church, 1104 W. Heroy Ave. in Spokane. Please join us for conversation and FREE coffee and cookies any time after 6:00 p.m.



Prez Sez

By Kevin Brannon

As I write this, we still have snow on the ground, but the temperature has soared into the mid-40s, and even warmer temps in the upcoming forecast. Late winter can be a tough time for some of us and this winter has been later than most. But I want to focus on the good news here – the harbingers of spring, many still hidden, are starting to pop up.

As a young kid, the first of these that I noticed and remember were the blossoms that would magically appear (sometimes while it was snowing) on the giant camelia bush that grew outside the living room window. Later, my favorite one was reading the magic words, “Pitchers and Catchers Report” (to spring training). These days, I associate the coming of spring with contacting old fishing buddies to arrange the trips we talked about doing while we were fishing last season and making those arrangements. Also checking my fly boxes and realizing how few flies I actually have gotten around to tying so far. In the past few years, a sure sign that spring is on the way has been the increased pace of activity and planning by our Club’s members and Board of Directors. We are definitely in that phase right now.

I hope most of you were able to catch the masterful presentation on Eastern Washington stillwaters by member **Wayne Jordan** at our regular February meeting. Wayne spoke from the perspective of a fly fisher, rather than a biologist or hydrologist (though he consulted with both in preparation for his presentation). He prepared a bunch of high-quality graphics, and his talk made it obvious that he had personally fished and knew about most of the places he talked about. He spoke about lakes I had never heard of and feedback from other members indicated a few other eyes were opened, too. Wayne is a tremendous asset to the Club and we all owe him our thanks.

The cherry on top of our month of stillwater fly fishing, of course was two very full days of free instruction by **Phil Rowley**, master of lakes and the tying vice. This opportunity came up fairly suddenly, shortening our usual planning period, and we couldn’t have pulled it off without the work of Phil’s friend **Mike Berube** and several others. According to all the reports I’ve heard, these events were very successful, and Phil lived up to his reputation as an engaging and expert speaker and presenter. The crowds were excellent and brought together anglers not only from our Club but also from our co-sponsor Inland Empire Fly Fishers, Spokane Falls TU, Spokane Women on the Fly and members of the public. But wait, there’s more!

For the March meeting (on the 12th), we are reprising last year’s “round table” event. Four advanced angler-members will present practical information about waters they know well and fish frequently. Attendees will rotate among these tables and have the chance to hear about all four venues. While we hope this will be of special interest to newer anglers, including those who will be enrolled in the fly-fishing school by then, we may all pick up a few tidbits of new information and contribute to the education of others in the groups. We will be led by **Chip O’Brien** on Coffee Pot Lake, **David Marshall** on the North Fork Coeur d’Alene, **Ken Moore** on the St. Joe and **Wayne Jordan** on the Spokane River.

It is also time, actually, past time, to get started on planning for our outings schedule. If you are willing and able to head up that effort, please contact me ASAP.

The Fly-Fishing School, under first year director **Bill Wagstaff**, is fully subscribed with a waiting list. It will begin on March 6th, 6:30 p.m., at Hamblen Church. **Thatcher Beaty** is again setting up an “instruct the instructor” session for the casting classes on February 26th.

The Annual Raffle is scheduled for the regular April meeting on the 9th. We have already gathered up a good collection of rods and some reels but not a lot else. If you have any gear you can stand to part with, please give me a call or bring it into the March meeting. The Raffle is a big fundraiser for us, bigger when we have lots of stuff to bid on.

Also at the April 9th meeting, we will hold our annual elections of officers and vacant board positions. Please think about who you would like to see in leadership roles and communicate your ideas to **Craig Adams**, the chair of the Nominating Committee, ASAP.

As you can see, we have a busy couple of months ahead of us. If you can assist in any way with these projects, please contact me or the person responsible for leading the activity you are willing to help with.



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March 2025

Spokane Fly Fishers Club Calendar of Events

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
						1
2	3	4	5 6:00 Monthly Board Mtg	6 6:30 Fly-fishing School	7	8
9	10	11	12 7:00 Monthly Membership Mtg The Roundtables	13	14	15
16	17	18	19	20 6:00 Thirsty 3rd Fly Tying at Lumberbeard Brewery	21	22
23	24	25	26	27	28	29
30	31					



KID'S FISHING DAY 2025

By Craig Adams

The return of Kid's Fishing Day is May 10th, 2025

It will be held at the Air Force Resort, on Clear Lake

**Registration forms are available at the WDFW Office at Mirabeau Park,
or online at wdfw.wa.gov/fishing/contests/youth.html**

**As usual each child will receive a fishing rod, T-shirt, and other goodies.
Each child bringing 2 cans of food to donate to the food bank will be
entered in a special drawing**

**Volunteers are needed for rod building
at the Inland Northwest Wildlife building on May 1st at 5:00 pm**

**Volunteers needed at Clear Lake on May 9th at 8:00 am
to stock the net pens**

**Many volunteers needed at Kid's Fishing Day
starting at 7:30 am, May 10th**

**Lastly volunteers are needed to bring in the net pens at 3:00 pm
For inquiries, please contact Craig Adams, 509-999-5660**



MEMBER SHOWCASE

By Al Odenthal and Brian Desautels

All things must pass, as the song goes. And the Club is watching the passing of the leadership baton in our Fly-Fishing school. For most of the last 10 years, two of our Club members, both Past-Presidents, have been overseeing our very successful and worthwhile school. And we give our largest Thank You to Paul Olsen and Claude Kistler for their immense contribution.

But, how well do you know each of them?

Paul Olsen - If you attend a monthly Spokane Fly Fisher's club meeting you might very well pass right by a quiet, unassuming, soft-spoken man that has been a club staple for over 20 years—his name is Paul Olsen. He's not one for much fanfare but he's been a club president for two terms and a co-chair for many years of the club's Fly-Fishing School with fellow club member Claude Kistler.

Paul has been married to wife, Linda, for 34 years. Paul recently retired from a lengthy career operating his own insurance and investment firm in Spokane. His Grandparents were immigrants from Norway and Germany, making Paul a 2nd generation citizen of America.

Paul first fished for trout on the Smith River near White Sulphur Springs, Montana as a young man. He still has fond memories of the Smith River and identifies that body of water as his "favorite fly-fishing destination". He has several boats including a Duraboat, pontoon boat and a drift boat. He's active on Eastern Washington lakes but denies any great expertise a. o lake fishing—though others are quick to contradict that self-assessment.

Paul favors Chopaka Lake and especially Coffeepot Lake (when there's sufficient water to fish the larger water). He's practiced with streamers and particularly Woolly Buggers as he claims, "they're easy to tie and I have a bunch of them in a lot of colors."

You may find him in the fields with his new bird dog pursuing upland birds as he's also an avid hunter. Mostly you'll find him a generous wealth of fly-fishing knowledge and a willing source of information on Inland lakes. Stop by, introduce yourself, and enjoy some enjoyable conversation with this quiet, unassuming club member.

Claude Kistler - Claude began fishing in his youth on the lakes and rivers around Spokane but it wasn't until he spent some time in Wyoming did his interest in fly fishing explode. There, he and his brother-in-law would fish the creeks for Browns. There, in Canyon Creek, in and around the mines near Kirwin Wyoming, Claude caught his largest ever: an 18-inch Brown. While Kirwin is pretty much a ghost town and the Creek is pretty much a stream, the memory of the fight with the Brown remains strong.

There is a 9-hole golf course in nearby Tennight Wyoming which butts up to another Creek where Claude and his Brother-in-law would hold the 'Hook and Hackers' Tournament. Rather than play straight through, they would play a few holes, stop at the creek and fish for a while, then resume the golf game. After the 9th hole, they'd total their scores, subtract the number of inches of the fish they

caught, and the lowest score won. So, if you shot a 45, caught a 14-inch Bown, your score would be a low 31. Claude says he cannot remember what he won.

Claude joined the Spokane Fly Fishers in the 1970s but only for a few years. Like many of us, his priority as an active Dad in his kids' active life placed his own interest in fly fishing on hold. He came back again in the 80s and, then too, other involvements in his life again caused him to place fly fishing on hold. Then, around 2011, he came back to the Spokane Fly Fishers for good.

Claude contributed to the Club in many ways, selflessly giving his time as a Board Member, as the Club President and, along with Paul, managing the Fly-Fishing School since 2014. He is immensely proud of the fact that the school has been well attended each year, that high-quality instructors have always volunteered to lead the class discussions, and that many of the students continue forward as Club members. He also speaks with pride about all the students and club members who have become friends.

Now that the baton has been passed to the new School leaders, Claude and Paul continue to join us at the monthly meetings. But, more than that, they look forward to joining the Club at our many summer outings, to be there on the river fighting another Brown. If you see them, say Thanks.

Thanks Paul and Claude. Tight lines, Gentlemen.





ROWLEYPALOOZA

February 18-19, 2025

Spokane Fly Fishers Club presented two very full days of entertaining and educational talks, demonstrations and hands-on teaching by Phil Rowley, one of the true giants of Stillwater fly fishing, fly design and fly tying. The four sessions were co-sponsored by our friends at Inland Empire Fly Fishing Club and were held at the South Side Senior Citizen Center. Anglers from our Club, IEFEC, Spokane Falls Trout Unlimited, Spokane Women on the Fly and the public were invited and we had attendees from all of these groups. We had very good crowds and, from all accounts, folks had a fun time and learned a lot.

Soaking Up Wisdom



Phil on Chironomids



Phil at the vice



CASTING CALL

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED!

By William Wagstaff



The annual Spokane Fly Fishing School is looking for club members to volunteer their time and expertise for casting instruction, fly tying and two outings. Hopefully, you will consider volunteering for all three, but any help would be greatly appreciated. Contact Bill Wagstaff at bwagstf@hotmail.com or 509 951-6697 to volunteer or if you have questions.

Casting Instruction 4-5 volunteers

Casting instruction will take place on 3 Saturdays, March 15, March 22, and April 12, from 9-11 am at Balfour Park in Spokane Valley. Thatcher Beaty is the lead instructor and will be holding a "teach the teachers" class on Wednesday, February 26 at St. Francis where we hold our monthly meeting. This is a wonderful opportunity for you to meet new members and refresh your casting technique.

Fly Tying 4-5 volunteers

This year's fly-fishing school's last class, Thursday April 10 6:30 - 8:30 pm, will be an introduction to fly tying with the goal of having students tie one or two simple flies that will likely catch fish. Chris Rose will be the lead instructor and will be using club vices. If you have any fly-tying ability you could help.

Outings. 4-5 or more volunteers

This year we are planning on two outings for the fly-fishing school attendees. A lake outing and a moving water outing.

The lake outing is planned for Saturday, May 10, 9 am - noon at Amber Lake. Volunteers would take students out in member's boat to demonstrate and let students practice still water techniques using chironomids, balanced leeches, sinking lines, etc. In addition, there would be instruction on shore as to rod set up for various techniques. However, this is not a guided fishing trip! It is an opportunity for students to directly observe and practice the techniques. Members would take students out for perhaps ½ hour and then rotate with additional students. Ideally, a 12-14-foot boat with an electric motor that could take 2 students at a time would be best. Overall, it should last about 3 hours or less.

The river outing is currently scheduled for Saturday, July 12, 9 - 11 am on the Spokane River. However, this would depend on river conditions. Volunteers would be at stations along the river perhaps 50 ft apart and would demonstrate one technique and allow students to try that technique, i.e., nymphing, dry fly, mending, or swinging, etc. Again, this is not a guided trip so any fish caught would be incidental. Students would move between stations to learn various techniques.

LET'S TALK KNOTTY!

By Ken Moore



A few items keep the new and average fly fisher from moving up the proverbial ladder of flyfishing success. If I were to ask a gathering of avid fisherfolk what they believe, I would expect to hear casting or casting accuracy. Others would point out the inability to understand an insect hatching cycle. Or maybe they do not understand the predatory behaviors of their targeted trout or where they commonly reside in the lake or stream environment. I would quickly agree with these hypotheses. But after nearly a decade of guiding, one item has come up on almost every trip I have led: the ability to tie a knot securely to another line or fly relatively rapidly. The average fly fisher takes eight minutes to secure one line to another with a double or triple surgeon's knot. Ten minutes to tie a loop knot, and most give up or never try a blood knot. I want to give you an alternative to these common fishing knots in this article. My customers love when I share these knots because they are faster, and when the fingers are cold, or the coffee has not grabbed onto the frontal lobes in your brain, they simply work. There are a couple of ground rules to this article. I have provided you with a YouTube link. Does this mean that this is the only way to tie the knot? The answer is no. YouTube has phenomenal fly fishers who want to share their interest in this sport with you. The links are free, but you will watch a commercial or two if you do not subscribe to YouTube. (Proof positive there is no such thing as a free lunch.) Also, I want to point out that there are many versions of these specific knots demonstrated by someone else if these particular versions do not click for you. You will need to search and look for the one that speaks your learning language (but I did mention YouTube is free). If, for some reason, these links are not working, I have provided the title of the video and the author of the video just above the YouTube link.

The Figure 8 Knot- If you struggle to tie a double or triple surgeon's knot, try the Figure 8 knot. Not only is Figure 8 stronger than a surgeon's knot but it can also be placed more accurately when attaching one piece of tippet to another to create a tagline for attaching another fly. For this first knot, I give you Devin Olsen, member of the US Fly Fishing Team and owner of Tactical Fly Fisher. The tying portion begins at 2:21 minutes into this video.

How to Tie a Dropper Tag with the Figure of 8 Knot - Devin Olsen

<https://youtu.be/U5o8rKAlf00?si=NJPHWrVlp46P6qSh>

If you want to use your hemostats to make this knot even faster, I provide Cory from Old Dominion Trout Bum. The tying portion starts at minute 1:01

Figure 8 Dropper Tag Knot: Master it in 5 Minutes! - Cory Old Dominion Trout Bum

<https://youtu.be/HtAnNfRI9QI?si=NdwpavP29YRGkSap>

The Loop Knot- The purpose of a loop knot is to allow your streamer flies to have additional motion as it is being retrieved. However, I will point out that tying a loop knot on your nymphs and dry flies is also a logical choice since the primary purpose after the cast is to minimize drag by creating a dead-free drift. Trout Tornado demonstrates how to get that pesky loop size perfect.

Loop Knot- a must have for Streamer Fly Fishing - Trout Tornado


<https://youtu.be/fxpTCKUII3s?si=NUT1BwkH-jiybIP7>

Blood Knot- I am proud of you if you have journeyed this far with this article. Mossy Creek Fly Fishing demonstrates an easier way to tie a blood knot.

An Easier Way to Tie a Blood Knot- Mossy Creek Fly Fishing

https://youtu.be/7LvznSBh4YY?si=4FWd_PEp6Y4rKube

I hope this assists you with a common struggle that all fly fishers have, but you must practice these knots to attain perfection. Oh, the Perfection loop. There are a lot of videos on that particular knot also, but now that you know, it's not a secret. Feel free to share your knowledge with others.

		
Date of Hurtfulness: _____		
What Caused the Hurt Feelings?		
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Someone Posted Something</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Fishing Photo Made Me Jealous</i>	
Were Tissues Necessary for Your Tears?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	
Are You Able to Recover and Move Past It?		
<input type="checkbox"/> Yes	<input type="checkbox"/> No	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Only if I can Hold Someone's Fish</i>
Reason for the Hurt Feelings (Check All that Apply)		
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>I Was Cut Out of the Group Photo</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>They Won't Tell Me the Location</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>They Blurred the Background</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>I'm a Sensitive Angler</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>No One Liked My Photo</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>I Can't Catch a Fish</i>	
<input type="checkbox"/> <i>They Said My Video Sucked</i>	<input type="checkbox"/> <i>Other (Please Detail Below)</i>	

For immediate sympathy & pity, please submit your Hurt Feelings Report by March 20 to jackishear@gmail.com

Beginner Fly-Tying Pattern

Mop Hopper by Tightline Videos



Hook: Tiemco 200 or 200R, size 8

Thread: Fluorescent green, 6/0 or UTC 140-denier

Body: Chartreuse mop “tentacle”

Adhesive #1: Superglue

Overbody: Green 2mm Craft Foam

Adhesive #2: Superglue

Eyes: Black permanent marker

Leg base: Caddis-green SLF Prism dubbing Rear

Legs: Barred round-rubber legs, medium

Adhesive #3: Superglue

Front Legs: Barred round-rubber legs, medium

Wing: White Polypropylene Floating Yarn

Indicator: Disc of 2mm Craft Foam

Adhesive #4: Superglue

For complete YouTube video, click [here](#).

Intermediate Fly-Tying Pattern

March Brown Intruder by Martin Joergensen (steelhead fly)



Shank: 25-35 mm Intruder shank

Wire: Intruder wire or braided fishing line like Fireline

Hook: Single trailer hook size 6-4

Thread: Tan 6/0 (and yellow 6/0 for the head)

Rear hackle: Yellow golden pheasant body feather and golden pheasant tail fibers

Rubber legs: Yellow silicone, 6-8 strands

Rib: Yellow floss (or 1/0 tying thread doubled or quadrupled)

Body: Hare's wool dubbing

Front hackle: Partridge and golden pheasant tail fibers (see instructions)

Eyes: Tungsten dumbbell, 4-5 mm Ø Head: Yellow tying thread

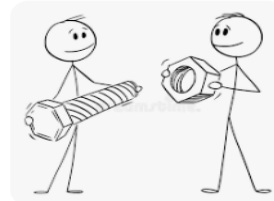
Instructions:

1. Thread the wire through the hook eye so that the wire sticks out straight.
2. Mount the shank in a vise so that it's horizontal.
3. Start the tan thread in the rear of the shank.
4. Thread the wire through the rear eye on the shank or lay it along the shank if there's no rear eye.
5. The hook can be tied in point up or down depending on taste and style.
6. Tie down the wire along the full length of the shank.
7. Thread through the front eye, bend back and secure the tags.
8. Wrap the thread to the rear of the fly.
9. Tie in a yellow GP body feather tip first.
10. Wrap 2-3 times, tie down and trim stem.
11. Cut off 10-15 fibers from a GP tail.
12. Tie in over the hackle in the full circumference of the fly.
13. Add rubber legs in the same length, also distributed around the shank.
14. Tie in the yellow tying thread for the rib. Fold it once or twice depending on thickness.
15. Dub the body all the way to the front of the shank, leaving room for hackles and eyes.
16. Rib the body in 6-8 open turns. Tie down rib and trim excess.
17. Use a partridge tail covert feather for the first front hackle - or a large Brahma hen hackle dyed brown.
18. Cut off 15-20 fibers from a GP tail.
19. Tie in over the front hackle in the full circumference of the fly.
20. Add rubber legs in the same length, also distributed around the shank.
21. Whip finish the tan thread and cut.
22. Start the yellow thread.
23. Tie in the dumbbell eyes under the hook shank.
24. Secure with plenty crisscross wraps and form a large head.
25. Whip finish, cut and varnish.



NUTS & BOLTS

By Kevin Brannon



The year-end push is on to choose our leadership for next year, raise money, bring in new members from the fly-fishing school, recognize special contributions to the Club by various individuals over the past year and get ready to go fishing. First, though, I thought I could recap where we are and how we got here.

We Need Leaders – Will You Step Up?

A Series of Unfortunate Events. From my perspective, the past eight or nine months read like a book from the kids' series 'A Series of Unfortunate Events.' The two successful candidates for Vice President and Secretary we elected last April both resigned before their first board meeting was scheduled. Director Chris Bryant took on a project at his company that required him to spend considerable amount of time out of town, so he, too, needed to resign. Brad Collins, Al Odenthal and Jim Athearn then stepped up to serve as VP, Secretary, and At-large Director, respectively. I recall telling Brad, who was then Sergeant at Arms, that he wouldn't really be taking on much additional responsibility other than waiting for me to get hit by a truck. That truck got me in July, when I was diagnosed with pancreatic cancer. Brad, with much help from Treasurer Brian Soth and the rest of the Board, then took over the President's duties alongside his tireless work as Membership Chair and operating our website and Facebook page while I spent almost three months in treatment, emergency rooms, hospital beds and nursing facilities. Already swamped with his full-time teaching job and work for the Club, Brad's father's health worsened considerably. This meant Brad needed to make regular trips to Walla Walla to help his family take care of his dad. It became too much, and Brad had to resign from his offices and his Board seat. Finally, Brian Desautels will be rotating out of his Board seat #3, though he is eligible for re-election. The election will be held immediately before the Raffle on April 9th at 6pm.

So, Here We Are Now. This leaves us with multiple positions to fill. These positions must be filled to satisfy the requirements of our Bylaws and maintain the functioning of the Club. We need to choose a new President, Vice President, Treasurer (Brian is term-limited per the Bylaws), Secretary and at-large Director. Next year's Sergeant at Arms will be nominated by the President, also per the Bylaws. Past President Craig Adams is chairing the Nominations Committee. Please contact him (or me) if you or any member you know would be willing to consider serving in any of these important positions to help guide the Club's activities in 2025-26. You would be joining a lively and collegial group, and the jobs are not as onerous as the titles might make them sound – a couple of hours a week is all it normally takes.

We Need Raffle Donations – Do You Have Any Spare Gear? Can You Take Someone Fishing?

Let's Upcycle! We need your help to turn unused fishing gear, your fishing time and real estate into money the Club can use to put on events like the recent ones with Phil Rowley, Kids' Fishing Day and fund our educational and conservation efforts. Our dues and Fly-Fishing School tuition help do this but are not enough on their own. The Annual Spring Raffle has long been one of our primary fund raisers and has become even more important as revenues from the fall fly auction have declined in the past several years. This year's event to be held on 6pm April 9th at St. Francis Church, 1104 W. Heroy in Spokane. Last year we turned 140 different donations into over \$5000 for the Club's use. To donate, please bring your items to the March meeting on the 12th or contact me via phone, text or email to describe the trip or accommodations you can donate, and I will put you in touch with a volunteer who can arrange to meet you at the Club's storage unit or wherever it is convenient for you to drop them off. So far, we have an impressive collection of donated rods and reels. Other popular donations are wading gear, boats, float tubes and accessories, vests and packs, vintage fly-fishing books, weather gear, even fishing-themed knick-knacks. The night went very smoothly last year, in part because we

were able to catalog all of the donated items in advance and get all of the paperwork sorted ahead of time. Please get hold of me to keep that going. Keep an eye on your email and the Facebook page starting soon to see the updated catalog of items available for bidding those Raffle tickets.

Come help out. The Raffle is staffed entirely by member/volunteers and we will have volunteer sign-up sheets on each table at the March meeting. We limit shifts to only a portion of the evening in order to give the volunteers the chance to look stuff over and bid their tickets. Plus, it can be fun!

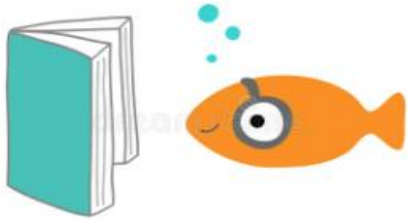
Buy lots of tickets. Tickets should go on sale at the March 12th meeting and will be available thereafter through our website. All tickets will be priced at \$1. And remember, this raffle is what is known as a “bucket raffle” -- meaning you can bid your tickets on only the items you actually want to win, not just random ones. This leaves you with strategic choices in making those bids: go all in on the one thing you have a burning desire for, scatter your tickets among several items or wait until near the end of bidding and choose something you like that has fewer tickets in its “bucket.”

Give Back to the Sport. Teach Others What You Know. Presumably, nearly all of us relied on someone, a family member, friend or a stranger well-met, to learn the art of fly fishing. For 40 new anglers, starting in March, Club members will be that friend or stranger well-met. We help create new anglers by way of our annual Fly-Fishing School. Bill Wagstaff is the new director of the School and needs some volunteer instructors, mostly to teach basic fly casting. I tried to help last year and was initially intimidated because my casting style is, well, unorthodox. Not to worry, though, our in-house, certified casting instructor, Thatcher Beatty will again do his class on “Teaching the Teacher” before the School’s casting instruction begins. This year, that class will be held at 6:30pm on March 6th at Hamblen Presbyterian Church, 4102 S. Crestline, Spokane (special thanks to David Marshall for setting us up in that venue). The three casting lessons will take place on March 15th, 22nd and April 12th. This year, the five classroom sessions for students will occur at Hamblen Presbyterian Church, Classes will be held on consecutive Thursdays, with the first on March 13th and the last on April 10th. Please contact Bill Wagstaff to sign up for Thatcher’s class and to volunteer.

Help Build the Club and Teach Other Anglers. Sadly, our enthusiastic new Outings Chair for this year, Gary Myers, passed away in a tragic boating accident while duck hunting this winter. We need someone to step in and take his place. This strikes me as a great job for a two-person tag team. Please contact me or any Board member if you can help out.

Let’s Plan to Fish Together!





Larry's Book Nook

By Larry Ray

Wonderful Reminiscence from A Washington Guy. This month's review will be of Steve Raymond's *A Fly Fisher's Sixty Seasons*, a wonderful autobiographical work that touches on the history of fly fishing in the northwest, along with some of its most notable personages. It is, of course, built around Raymond's own experiences in a lifetime of fishing in our area.

Raymond's career as a writer was fueled by early work on the staff of the *Seattle Times*, one of the two major daily papers in Seattle during most of the last century. The book describes some of his colleagues at the *Times* and what characters they were. Raymond's humor is pervasive throughout, much derived from early experience in the news writing field with some of the eccentrics who populated the newspaper business in that day.

Raymond recalls some other notable northwest anglers who were also writers, like Lee Straight of the *Vancouver Sun* and Enos Bradner, also of the *Seattle Times*. Bradner, author of the seminal *Northwest Angler*, became almost like a father. He was one of the North Fork Stillaguamish steelhead anglers who maintained a small fishing cabin near the mouth of Deer Creek on that river. When Bradner passed away, Raymond and a few others scattered Bradner's ashes in the North Fork. Raymond purchased the fishing cabin and kept it as a shrine of sorts. He called it "Bucktail Camp" and used "Tails from Bucktail Camp" as his byline for a magazine column.

The author's treatment of Roderick Haig-Brown could be used to teach a fine course on outdoor writing. He breaks down Haig-Brown's writing style and technique in such a way that, if sufficient attention is paid, the reader comes away with an even greater appreciation of the great man's work, and even for the man himself. Indeed, this volume is worth the checkout if for no other reason than to read the chapter on Haig-Brown.

Other chapters contribute to the wealth of this compilation. For some fun and laughs, take the Sophisticated Anglers Test. Raymond's review of some of the more obscure works on fly fishing by some notable authors provides some fine recommendations for those who like to search for such writing. His chapters on a lifetime of collecting rods and reels are also informative yet humorous. Like a lot of the great ones, Raymond excels at relating to the reader and holding attention by laughing at himself. For an entertaining, at times humorous, as well as educational read, borrow *A Fly Fishers Sixty Seasons*. You will not be disappointed, especially if you are of Raymond's generation and grew up reading about fishing in the northwest in the last century. (Note: *Northwest Angler*, by Enos Bradner, referred to above, is also available at your SFF Library.)

Sadly, in closing, I want to note the passing of one of the giants of fly-fishing. John Gierach passed away on October 3, 2024. With his departure goes one of the most prolific and artful writers of our generation. His self-effacing, dry humor, coupled with his easy-to-read, unimposing style, made him very relatable. Enough has been written of him that I won't try to add any more, But I will certainly miss him. Meanwhile, our library has an ample collection of his work, should anyone want some great reading.

All the best. Keep a tight line, with the wind at your back and *your shadow off the water*....



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