



The McKenzie Messenger

AUGUST 2015

**Newsletter of the McKenzie Flyfishers
PO Box 10865, Eugene, Oregon.**

www.mckenzieflyfishers.org

**The club currently lacks a permanent Newsletter Editor.
We are publishing newsletters as best we can.
Thank you for your understanding and patience.**

August Program

Bill Laing

The Deschutes River Alliance:

is a science-based advocacy organization seeking collaborative solutions to basin-wide threats to the health of the Deschutes River and its tributaries. We (the alliance) advocate for water quality, a healthy ecosystem, and for the establishment and protection of robust populations of resident and anadromous fish throughout the river's entire watershed.

On the Lower Deschutes River, hatch timing has been altered and several aquatic insect populations appear to be in decline. Upon initial investigation, these changes may be due to the recent appearance of a new algae proliferation, not previously documented in the river. The algae are responding, based on expert opinion, to a change in water quality. The DRA is aggressively and diligently working to determine the

(cont'd on page 4)

IN THIS ISSUE:

- **AUGUST PROGRAM** - Program Committee, Pg 1 & 4.
- **PRES SEZ** - Jim Williams, Pg 2 & 3.
- **MILLER LAKE OUTING** - Clint Brumitt, Pg 3 & 5.
- **KALAMA CUP OUTING** - Clint Brumitt, Pg 4.
- **FISHING REPORT** - Scott Halpert, Pg 5.
- **NEW MEMBER**, Pg 5.
- **OUTINGS OF 2015** - Clint Brumitt, Pg 6.
- **NEWSLETTER EDITOR** - Bob Rasmussen, Pg 6.
- **A SMALLMOUTH REPORT** - Bill Laing, Pg 7 & 8.
- **ANNOUNCEMENTS** - Pg 9.
- **FUTURE CLUB PROGRAMS** - Program Committee, Pg 9.
- **BOARD AND COMMITTEES** - Pg 9.
- **MFF Purpose/Invitation** - Pg 10.

Calendar

- **BOARD MEETINGS** are held the first Wednesday of the month, 7-9 p.m., Market of Choice Conference Room, unless announced otherwise. **Next meeting: July 1, 2015.**
- **GENERAL MEMBERSHIP** Meetings are held the third Monday of the month, 5:30 to 9:00 p.m. at Willie's, 400 International Way, Springfield, OR. **Next meeting: August 17, 2015**, then, September 21.
- **ANNUAL AUCTION:** will be held in lieu of our **November 16** General Membership Meeting.
- **HOLIDAY PARTY:** will be held Friday, **December 4.**

Prez Sez

JIM WILLIAMS



THE THIRD OAR

My story starts in 1972. I was rather new to flyfishing and my McKenzie River fishing experience was wading in the vicinity of Deadmond Ferry. I would watch anglers pass in their drift boats giving me a wave and a look that seemed to say, "Don't you wish you had a boat?"

I had recently returned after three years in the US Army and had started working at the University of Oregon Bookstore. Having shared my lament with Bonnie's father, Bill Taylor, he suggested, "Let's build a drift boat!" He made it sound so simple.

One of my tasks at the Bookstore was to take typewriters, used as student rentals, to Stevens Typewriter in Eugene for maintenance. Vince Mataga, the shop owner, had a "double ender" (bow the same as the stern) drift boat in his shop getting it ready for the start of fishing season, at the time, several months away. Bill and I went to visit Vince and take measurements of his boat. We wrote the measurements on the inside of a matchbook cover. We did look at a more "traditional" drift boat and from



that limited research we started.

Working after work in the evenings and during the day on weekends, we methodically built our drift boat. Truth be told, I was Bill's assistant. He built the boat! The most agonizing part of the project was painting, both inside and outside, then waiting for the paint to dry. Our goal was to have it complete in time for the start of fishing season in April.



Bill was a man of many talents. He gathered necessary parts and built a trailer! The total cost for the entire project was \$250! This included: three sheets of marine plywood, brass screws in the hundreds, oak, mahogany, paint, eyebolt, oarlocks, oars, and the trailer parts, including rope.

Our boat attracted a fair amount of attention from other wooden boat owners that opening day as well as over the years as it seemed to have more rake than the traditional drift boat even though it had a squared off stern. Maybe it was the "inherited" lines of Vince's boat.

The photos with this article show the boat under construction, the finished boat on the trailer, and both the outside lines of the boat sitting in the water and the inside lines with me at the oars.

Bill and I fished out of our boat, quite often, for a number of years. Our home water was the McKenzie but it found its way to the Alesa and Siuslaw from **(cont'd on page 3)**

PREZ SEZ

(CONT'D FROM PG 2)

time to time as well as to some of the high lakes. Like most wood boat owners we held the metal drift boats in disdain because of how noisy they were!! We loved our "quiet" wood boat.



As time went by, Bill fished less and I "inherited" the boat. Also, attention to maintaining her waned. Rock hits to the boat's chine allowed a path for a modest amount of water. Dry rot was also a big problem. I knew I needed to tend to the dry rot but I did not have the time. Bonnie knew I had been looking at boats at the Boat and Sportsman Show at the Lane County fairgrounds while I worked at the Oregon Trout booth.

At breakfast one morning Bonnie said, "Don't you think you need a new boat?" After some halfhearted responses such as, "No, I can fix the boat," or, "New boats are so expensive," she stated adamantly, "You need a new boat!!" I "acquiesced" and ended up with a new Koffler drift boat. That was 1986. I felt like a traitor!!!

John Shepherd, a longtime McKenzie Flyfisher, had heard that my boat might be on the market so he called. "How much might you want for the boat?"

I replied, "\$250."

He and his son, Pete, became the new owners.

The year now is 2015. Pete recently told me that the boat is still in the family giving her 43 years of experience!



That's a pretty good run for a boat built off measurements written on the inside of a matchbook cover.

One last thing. Bill and I quickly learned the reason for a third oar in a drift boat. Above Hayden Bridge rapids on that historic opening day, we were catching planters and a few natives. Preoccupied with our fishing, I suddenly became aware that the left oar was no longer in the oarlock! We spotted it floating about 30 feet downstream of us. A one oar boat does not maneuver as well as a two oared craft but we were able to catch up with our runaway oar becoming greatly relieved and learning a very valuable and lasting lesson.

Miller Lake Outing

Clint Brumitt

A few years ago, the club scheduled an outing to Miller Lake. It was canceled due to snow or some other unimportant reason. The lake is nestled in the high Cascades just above 5000 feet, just northwest of Chemult, Oregon. We are going to have another go at it.

The lake's resident brown trout, rainbow trout, and kokanee are happy and contented. Some grow larger than normal; many attack flies with wild abandon. We will be fortunate to be able to entice both the large and **(cont'd on page 5)**

August Program (cont'd from Pg 1)

nature and extent of the water quality changes as well as the extent of the algae growth and its consequences.

Our Speakers—

A. Andrew Dutterer, Executive director Deschutes River Alliance.



Andrew moved to Oregon from Vermont in 2002. His passion for flyfishing quickly led him to the Deschutes River where he managed the Deschutes Angler Fly Shop for five years. Andrew then worked for Trout Unlimited in Bend on

collaborative stream restoration and policy issues in the upper Deschutes Basin. Most recently Andrew worked in the Policy Division of the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board. Andrew is a graduate of the University of Oregon with a MS in Environmental Studies and a MCRP in Planning and Public Policy. His graduate studies focused on collaborative watershed management and stream restoration.

**This should be a very informative program. Many of the issues occurring on the Deschutes are also occurring on the McKenzie. Both rivers have issues with salmon return and downstream migration. Both rivers have high dams with water/temperature control towers, both are experiencing a decline in aquatic insect activity, both are popular destination flyfishing rivers and both have a heritage wild trout population.*

B. Greg McMillan, Bend, OR Director of Science and Conservation.

Greg directs the Deschutes River Alliance's work on monitoring and fixing water quality issues in the lower Deschutes. Greg's educational and work background in geology and molecular biology, paired with his business development and clinical science



experience in the private sector gives Greg solid experience in leading a group of experts in examining the health of the Deschutes River. Greg also served as vice-president of the Board of Directors for Oregon Trout and was president of Anglers Club of Portland for three terms. Greg also was volunteer director of conservation for two terms at Anglers Club of Portland and an unpaid staff member for Oregon Trout's Deschutes River Project in the early 1990s.

Kalma Cup Outing

Clint Brumitt

Club members it is time to plan for the annual Kalama Cup outing. Evergreen FF club of Washington will host this year's event in October. The traditional host river, the Stilligumish, was severely damaged in the landslides of 2014 and is currently unfishable. They have found a worthy replacement, the Methow River in north central Washington.

One of their club members has property on the Methow on which we can camp during the event.

Mid October is the general time frame for this outing but we are awaiting a final determination as they plan around this year's low water and the associated difficulties caused to the fisheries.

I suspect to have more complete information before our September meeting and will send it to you as I receive it. We will have a sign up sheet at the September meeting.

Plan on attending and explore this rather small, productive steelhead river, a tributary of the Columbia R. I am sure skating flies as well as more traditional methods and patterns will bring fish to the hook. Of course, as you know, your ultimate success is up to you.

We will be defending the cup which we recaptured last year on the North Umpqua. Plan on attending.

Miller Lake Outing

(cont'd from pg 37)

the anxious. We will be able to leave them grow larger and more contented through catch-and-release or take a select few home for the pan and our personal nourishment. ODFW regulations allow 24 hour a day fishing in Miller Lake! I would not recommend taking a houseboat to the boat ramp!

I stopped in Chemult a few years ago for gas. The attendant found out I going fishing and asked whether I was going to Miller Lake. I said not this time. He said, "Good!" They had been catching lots of three to five pound browns after work. I told him I would put it on my list for the future.

Denny Rickards; in his book, *Flyfishing the Wests Best Trophy Lakes*; says, "Whenever I fish Miller Lake, I have my best luck using my olive Chub Minnow and Seal Bugger in size 8 and 10. I've also done well with my Stillwater and Callibaetis nymphs in size 10 for browns up to 7 pounds. Remember, the emphasis is on presentation, not so much on pattern. Since there are Kokanee in the lake, I am sure they have fed a few brown trout. Bring some streamers."

Bruce Anderson is the fishmaster for this September outing. At this elevation, we may be subject to the beginning weather of autumn or the full warmth of summer. Either way, Miller Lake and its excellent campground will be the center of activity for the club the weekend of September 18-20.

Bring your lake fishing gear, including boats, float tubes, and pontoons. Team up with a fellow club member and camp on and fish this beautiful lake.

This outing will be held immediately prior to our September club meeting, so, you will have to sign up at our August club meeting.

Our Gold Lake outing will follow this on the first weekend in October and the Kalama Cup steelhead outing with the Evergreen FF club of Washington on the third weekend in October. Plan on a busy fall outing schedule and take part in as many as you can.

Fishing Report

Scott Halport

Friday, 8/7/2015:

My fishing buddy Jayson and I went looking for steel on the Willamette today. We knew there were fewer fish in the river but that hasn't stopped us in previous years. We met at the Jasper Bridge at 6 AM and drove up to Dexter dam. There was only one bank gear fisherman and no other cars. I checked the water temperature and it was 64 degrees. This is a beautiful stretch of river and having fished it for a number of years, it usually gives us some steel treats.

We saw two bald eagles sitting in their nests and one amazing Golden eagle. We did see a number of steelhead but we also saw more than a dozen dead carcasses in the river and judging by the number of Turkey Vultures, many more dead fish on the shore. Many of the live fish spotted were small steelhead and the one monster we saw wasn't moving very fast. By 10:30 the river was 69 degrees. We had caught and released a number of cutties and, of course,

even more white fish. We didn't hook any steel but about 2/3 of the way down, a small trout hit one of the flies. It was exciting to watch the fish take two good jumps and then as it was being reeled in, roll and removed itself from the hook. Our joy lasted only a few seconds as we watched the trout roll and try to recuperate from the fight. After a few minutes and a number of rolls, the fish floated belly up down the river.

We didn't come to kill wild trout. We decided to stop fishing and just enjoy the float back to the bridge. Yes, we spotted a number of live steelhead but based on their sluggish movements, I assume they weren't interested in attacking our flies. At the bridge, the water temperature was 70 degrees and rising. I am surprised that ODFW hasn't closed most of the Willamette for fishing anytime during the day.

Sorry no pictures.

NEW CLUB MEMBER

KURT RUBLE

Editor

Greet and welcome new member, Kurt Ruble, when you see him at the meetings. He lives with his wife, Marla English, near Blue River. (Don't you wish you could.) Kurt, welcome to the McKenzie Flyfishers. Hope we can fish with you soon.

Kurt and Marla attended our picnic in July. You may have been fortunate enough to meet them there.

Outings Schedule

Clint Brumitt

Fellow club members:

Mark the following outings on your calendars. The next scheduled outing, the Miller Lake Outing immediately precedes the September general club meeting. Your fishing club is going fishing.

Two outings shown in red and voted for by our members, have yet to snag or even legally hook

FishMasters. Any soul brave enough to herd cats to, at, and from either Davis Lake or the North Fork of the Middle Fork of the Willamette can easily become famous by FishMastering one or both outings. There is no outing scheduled for either July or August.

SEE ME ON AUGUST 17, AT WILLIE'S TO VOLUNTEER.
Clint Brumitt

Remaining 2015 Outings

<u>Location</u>	<u>Date</u>	<u>Target Species</u>	<u>FishMaster</u>
Davis Lake	?TBD?	Trout/Bass	VACANT
N Fk M Fk Willamette	?TBD?	Trout	VACANT
Miller Lake	9/18-20/2015	Trout	Bruce Anderson
Gold Lake	10/2-4/2015	Brook Trout	MckF Board
Kalama Cup Methow R, WA	10/15/2015	Steelhead	Evergreen Flyfishing Club
Crooked R	10-11/TBD/2015	Trout	Bob Howell (?)

NEWSLETTER EDITOR

Bob Rasmussen

Our quest for a Newsletter Editor, even a limited assignment, has garnered no evident interest. We are still in hopes of finding that individual, so . . .

If you know of a person who might have such an interest, no matter how slight or fleeting, please let us know or encourage the person to contact **JIM WILLIAMS** or **BOB RASMUSSEN** to discuss the possibility. Even if now is not the time, please contact us to register your future potential.

BOB HOWELL AND BOB RASMUSSEN ARE WILLING TO HELP anyone gain an understanding of the requirements of the post and to help with transition to said post. Contact any of the following for information about the post.

Jim Williams: jwilliam01@comcast.net or 541.747.5991

Bob Howell: bobhowell05@gmail.com or 541-505-7623

Bob Rasmussen: bobras1940@gmail.com or 541-687-9562.

CONSIDER becoming "TEMPORARY Newsletter Editor" for a period (1 mo., 3 mo., Etc.), of YOUR CHOICE.

At the end of THAT period, YOU will decide whether to
(1) continue as Editor or
(2) extend your temporary status or
(3) step down.

I promise to reassume the post if you choose to vacate it.

Bob Rasmussen

I Never Met a Smallmouth I Didn't Like

Bill Laing

"I NEVER MET A SMALLMOUTH I DIDN'T LIKE"

Or something like that—Will Rogers

Friday Aug 31, 2015

Mike Starr and I spent the day with guide Dean Finnerty flyfishing for smallmouth bass on the Umpqua River downstream from the Smith Ferry Rapids Bridge, a section of the Umpqua I have rarely fished. This section flows through almost all private property and the boat landings are controlled by the landowners. While some access is available it's difficult to obtain and usually involves a locked gate and a fee.



Mike with a nice fish

When I made the arrangements for our guided trip through the Big K ranch I was informed it was a "full service trip" and told to contact our guide, Dean Finnerty. When I called Dean and asked what "full service" means, he said that we would be fishing from his jet sled and that he provides water, soft drinks, shore lunch, and even fly rods if we need them. When I asked about flies, Dean said we could bring what we have but that he would provide flies. He said, "We'll try topwater, that's really exciting but not always effective. We'll swing streamers, especially shad fry patterns; there's lot's of shad fry in the system right now. And we'll probably drift large weighted rubber legged woolley buggers. They're always effective."

We met Dean at Tomicellies Pastry Mill and Cafe in Elkton at 6 am. We each ordered a fresh baked pastry

and a coffee, picked up our pre-ordered lunches, and were on our way. Mike and I followed Dean across the Elkton bridge and up the highway a couple of miles, turned off on a limited access road for another couple of miles onto a private drive for another mile or so. We stopped at a drop box and Dean "signed in" then proceeded through a locked gate, another unlocked closed gate down to the launch site. Dean has permission, had the key, and I suspect there was an "understanding" involving an access fee.

The plan was to run up-stream under power and float back using the oars.

We launched Deans jet sled and traveled up-stream approximately 5 miles to just below the Smith Ferry Bridge. Like many rivers in the Northwest the Umpqua River flow is at an all time low for this time of year. Deans Eagle fish locator recorded a water temperature of 76 degrees at 7 am.

Fishing began immediately after Dean shut down his engine. Dean had suggested I try a top-water before the sun hit the water and he set Mike up with a black woolly bugger. After several casts and no reaction I switched to my favorite fly, a weighted, rubber leg, brown, chartreuse-butt zonker. I was hooked up before Dean could even get all the gear stowed and his boat set-up for rowing. It took Mike a little longer to figure it out but once we got the "hang of it"- it was pretty much non-stop catching. Our only problem was that I was out fishing Mike 3 or 4 fish to one, so, he replaced replaced his fly with one of my Chartreuse-butt Brown Zonkers.

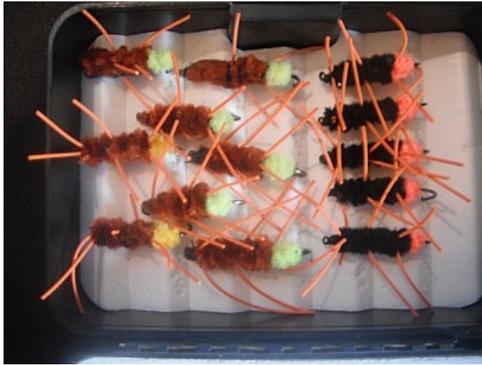
Soon, Mike began getting strike after strike with no hook-ups.

Dean and I



Bill's fly box

I Never Met a Smallmouth I Didn't Like (cont'd)



Bill's fly box

Immediately, he started hooking fish. I fished Mike's rod and experienced the same problem he'd had. Lot's of strikes with few hook-ups.

They were the same pattern same hook size and looked exactly the same, except, the fly on Mikes rod was tied too close to the hook bend. There was no space between the butt of the fly and the point of the hook - mystery solved. I tied on a new fly and donated the "defective" fly to Dean and told him "give it to the next know-it-all flyfisher you have in your boat."

Our fish averaged 10-12 inches with enough larger ones to keep fishing interesting and exciting. We landed more than a few 16-18 inch fish and lost as many "lunkers" as we landed (several were attributed to the gapless hook). Mike caught the biggest fish of the day, a beautiful hefty 21+ inches. It may just have been guide talk but Dean told us that it was the biggest fish he had boated so far this year!

Fish seemed to be everywhere. It was like fishing in an aquarium. We had multiple fish fighting over our presentations, literally, fish on every cast. The trick was not to set the hook on every grab, allowing the fly to drop through the school of small fish fighting over it and wait until a larger one picked it up. A really exciting form of site fishing! We were targeting large individual fish and watching ALL the action. We were teasing them into striking by strategically moving our flies, like the old "cat and mouse" game. Great fun.

were both coaching him and giving him advice; still, no hook-ups. Finally, a frustrated Mike accused me of giving him a defective fly. So, I traded rods with him. Im-

By 1:30 in the afternoon, we were hot, tired, and fished-out. The water temperature had risen into the low 80's and the air temperature was over 100 degrees. Fish were still biting and fighting over our flies. It had been a great day on a great river with a very experienced,

knowledgeable, and personable guide.

This is a beautiful section of river, remote, limited access, and full of fish. Smallmouth seem to prefer warmer water, the warmer, the better they like it. I don't know if there is a maximum or lethal temperature for smallmouth as there obviously is for salmonids. We observed several dead or dying salmon and summer steelhead during our trip. At one spot, we observed 3, beautiful, bright, summer steelhead with their noses pointed up into a small spring fed feeder stream, looking for some relief. It was barely a trickle. Below them was a dead steelhead unable to survive the 80-degree water.

A sad ending to a very enjoyable and successful smallmouth fishing trip.

I know there are numerous successful ways to catch smallmouth—I've tried them all with success. Over the years, the Chartruse-butt, Brown, Rubber-leg, onker has been my most consistent producer.



Mike's big fish

ANNOUNCEMENTS

If you didn't attend or haven't seen or heard, our annual Picnic was a huge success. If you missed it, our condolences.

Our heart-felt THANKS to Jeff and Joanie DeVore for again providing their wonderful home on the Willamette for this event.

###

The McKenzie River Cleanup was also a huge success. EVERYONE will be able to appreciate the benefits of the efforts of those who participated in the event. A major "THANK YOU" to those participants.

Future Club Programs

Program Committee.

September:

Our September program will be Steve Mealey, President of the McKenzie River Guides Association. His presentation will bring us information on the planning and progress for the McKenzie River Interpretive Center. The center is planned for the old hatchery site on Leaburg Lake. The property has been secured and a marketing and feasibility study is underway. This is a huge undertaking on the scale of the High Desert Museum in Bend. Don't miss this interesting and exciting program and possibly a chance for the McKenzie Flyfishers to become involved. Plan now to attend the September meeting.

2015 Board of Directors & Committees

Officers:

President:.....Jim Williams
President-Elect:.....John O'Conner
Secretary:.....Dave Thomas
Treasurer:.....Mike Layne

At-large Board:

Carolyn Mason
Clint Brumitt
Mark Campbell
Sparky Rice

Committees:

Auction:.....Lee Lashway
Conservation:.....Arlen Thomason
.....Dave Thomas
Holiday Party:.....Paul Kaplan
House/Raffle:.....Tom Fauria
.....John Ranstad
IFFF Representative.....Greg Pitts
Library:.....Ted Taylor
Membership:.....Al Eckardt
.....Eban Dobson
Newsletter:.....**VACANT** (Bob R, standing in)
ODFW Lawsuit:.....Arlen Thomason
.....Dave Thomas
.....Bob Rasmussen
Outings:.....Clint Brumitt
Programs:.....Dan Robinhold, Sr
Website:.....Liz Yocom

McKenzie Fly Fishers
P.O. Box 10865
Eugene, Oregon 97440
Club President: Jim Williams



MFF Club Statement of Purpose

The McKenzie Fly Fishers comprise a group of people who share an interest in fly fishing and water conservation. The Club was conceived and organized in April of 1964 to:

1. **Enjoy social contact**
with others interested in fly fishing.
2. **Encourage fly fishing**
as a method of angling, and
3. **Protect and increase the fishery resources.**

Membership is open to any person over 21 years of age who is interested in fly fishing. General club membership meetings, board meetings, and fishing outings are open to the public.

An Invitation to Join

You do not have to be an expert fisher to join our group. We have a monthly meeting to share tall tales of fish caught and lost, eat a fine buffet meal, and listen to an expert guide or practitioner of our sport teach us a few of the finer points of the art. There is a cash bar and many of us arrive around 5:30 pm to sip a beverage and chew the fat.

Joining our club gives you access to the expertise and insight of its membership. Many of us have years of experience and knowledge about fly casting, fly tying, and fly fishing in general. Some may even be persuaded to share the location of their "secret" fishing hole. There are occasional clinics in tying, rod building, and casting, as well as a chance to understand insects and their role in our fishing experience from well known biologists in the club.

Campouts and day trips are also arranged every month or so at nearby fishing locations and the camaraderie and social interaction on and off the water is thoroughly enjoyed by the members.

Interested? Call our **Membership Chair, Al Eckerdt**, 541-683-4265.

