



# The McKenzie Messenger

DECEMBER 2015

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

[www.mckenzieflyfishers.org](http://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.

## McKF 2015 Annual Awards

At the Annual Holiday Party on 12/04, Jim Williams presented two awards.

The first was the '2015 Boatman of the Year' Award. The award was presented to Sparky Rice for his ability to eject himself from his driftboat while being the sole occupant! Fortunately, a couple drifting the river on the same day and slightly behind Sparky were able to rescue both him and his boat and he was able to relate the tale in such a way that allowed him to survive his bride's concern. Congrats, Sparky.

The second was the '2015 Flyfisher of the Year' Award. Jim presented this award to Bob Rasmussen for his willingness to help complete club goals. Congrats, Bob.

**Photos on page 6.**

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## 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: January 6, 2016.**
- **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: January 18, 2016.**
- Our next **ANNUAL AUCTION**: will be held in lieu of our **November 21, 2016**, General Membership Meeting.
- Our next **HOLIDAY PARTY**: will be held Friday, **December 27/97, 2016**, at???

# Prez Sez



As December brings about shorter days and colder weather, I find myself in a reflective state of mind. As I round the bend of finishing my year serving as your President, I am awed by the talent and passion each of you bring to the Club. No better way to experience this than by attending the outings.

Well organized by the individual Fish Masters, I found an environment of members helping members, sharing of fly patterns that work, and good fellowship by eating together, and sitting around the campfire

telling tall fishing tales, some of which might actually have been true.

What a gift we have by the active engagement of Founder members and those who have been in the Club for years. They bring a sense of history, tradition and provide guidance to those who follow. We need to make sure their legacy and spirit is part of the Club's DNA for many years to come.

I will save my other "thank you's" as I don't leave office until after the January meeting elections when the officers and board members are voted upon.

However, I will say we are in good hands as John O'Connor takes over at that meeting. I look forward to helping him and I encourage each of you to do the same.

## FISHING ADVENTURE - OREGON TO MONTANA AND BACK

**Bob Howell**

My old fishing buddy, Phil, and I decided to make Montana our next fishing adventure. We had gone to Yellowstone with Mike Brinkley a couple of summers before and wanted to hit some of the same spots as well as some new ones. With our characteristic detailed planning (wine—check, beer—check, pretzels—check, bacon—check), we headed for Idaho, stopping the first day at our 'in state' favorite, the Owyhee River.

The flow was perfect, about 100cfs, and risers were all around. I hate using dry flies that I can't see, but size 22 tricos were the ticket to the dance, so that's what we used



with great success. When trout weren't rising, we discovered that a plain red wire with no embellishments, a fly we've used successfully at the San Juan River, worked well. Phil remembered the huge brown that I had hooked the last time (for which I won my Calamity Award) and decided to fish the same spot. He proceeded to catch four big fish, but none had the tip of my fly rod attached.

Of course, none of our trips is ever without drama and it happened the next day when I was trying to get some flies out of the RV by opening the window over the couch. Apparently designed to be opened for emergencies, the window popped out and fell to the ground, breaking into a zillion pieces. It then dawned on us that wind and rain might become an issue, so we rigged up a temporary window involving a trash bag and lots of duck tape.

We then set out toward our next destination, tentatively the South Fork of the Boise River. Stopping at a Boise fly shop first to get information, we bought

## FISHING ADVENTURE - OREGON TO MONTANA AND BACK

(cont'd)

the requisite boatload of local flies, among which were some “pinks”, and more small tricos. We arrived on the river after lunch, set up camp, and began fishing in the very clear and wadeable water. It wasn't long before we were both into some very fat, healthy rainbows which treated us to numerous aerial displays. I also caught several large mountain whitefish and Phil had a big bull trout on before a long-line release. We also saw a large number of mostly small pink salmon spawning and swimming around. It is a beautiful river and pretty easy to access. We may spend a little more time there next time.

Our next stop was recommended by the fly shop, the Big Lost River, north and east of Sun Valley. A chat with the local Ranger in the town of Lost River gave us directions (sort of) to a couple of promising creeks and rivers in the area. They turned out to be fairly remote with miles of bumpy dirt/gravel roads, herds of cattle blocking the road, and mostly private land. One spot, however, had a fence crossover so we hiked a ways down to the stream. I caught several different kinds of fish—a brown, a rainbow, and a fine spotted cutthroat. All were an appropriate size for a small stream, although the cutthroat was about 13” and a beautiful fish.

Phil was anxious for bigger game. We drove the 60 miles back toward town and camped overlooking the reservoir. The next morning we fished the Lost River below the dam, with Phil hiking downriver while I stayed closer to the dam. I caught a couple nice fish in some deeper holes, then followed Phil downriver, though his radio reports had indicated many “fishy” spots but no fish. Eventually, we both headed back to the RV for lunch. He fished near the dam while I napped. He caught a couple of fish. Feeling like we had been on a “Lost-Fish-Chase”, we aimed the RVI toward the Grand Tetons and Jackson Hole.

We stopped in Jackson to visit some of the many fly shops. Many flies later as well as X's on our map marking places to fish, we got to a campground on the Gros Ventre River, north of Jackson. The river was well populated with boulders and was pretty low, so we opted for our 59th screening of “O' Brother, Where Are Thou?” and dinner.

In the morning we stopped at the first “X” on our map, a tributary of the Snake called Blacktail Deer Creek. Super clear water made it pretty easy for fish to spot you and take appropriate evasive action. Down the creek, we came to a place where the creek dropped gradually into a deep hole before emptying into the Snake. This deep riffle turned out to be loaded with the fine-spotted Cuts we were hoping to catch. Both of us caught a number of 15-18” fish, on both dries and droppers, before they hunkered down.



On we went, to an area called the Beaver Ponds. As we arrived, several cars pulled into the parking area the occupants consisting of couples inexplicably dressed in fine formal wear. Phil talked to them and learned they were getting ready for a wedding ceremony in this scenic setting. Of course, they all wanted a photo with him in his waders and boots and they in their finery. It was pretty humorous for all involved. I think they would have had him perform the ceremony if he'd been ordained!



Slim pickings here motivated us to move to the Grand Tetons but very low water at two more “X's” on the map pushed into Yellowstone National Park. We had specifically planned the trip so that we would arrive at the park the week after Labor Day. We had been told it was usually



**FISHING ADVENTURE - OREGON TO MONTANA AND BACK****(cont'd)**

cleared of tourists by then and campsites would be plentiful. We checked with the Ranger at the gate about the best places to fish and camp, to learn that all campgrounds in the park were full. It must have been all those damn retirees visiting the park! It only took a couple of stops to confirmed the Ranger's report. A call to a commercial RV park in West Yellowstone got us their last campsite. Arriving after dark, we talked to a fisherman who had spent a few days in the Park. He suggested we try the area we already had in our sights, Slough Creek. He forewarned us that there were only 18 'first-come, first-served' campsites and that a very early in the morning arrival would be required to have a chance of getting one.



Dutifully, we dragged out of bed at 3:30am the next morning and drove two hours in the dark along the Park's narrow, winding, steep, wildlife-dense highways to our destination. Avoiding several deer and antelope, we arrived about 6:30am, in time to



snag the last available campsite. We connected with fellow club member, Allan Stults. We had been texting with him and knew would he

would be there. The three of us headed down river to try out the three highly recommended holes. We quickly confirmed the guidebook recommendations, which had indicated the fish would take dries, especially terrestrials. Big, bushy hoppers caught most of our fish. Over the next three days, we fished the Slough, Soda Butte, and the Lamar, catching some very nice fish, mostly Yellowstone Cuts.

The last day, while Phil trudged up to the famous Second Meadow in the rain, I hiked downstream from the campground to see what I could find. Terrain was very steep and access to the boulder-strewn creek was in short supply, so I continued down to the previously explored "Phd Hole". It was frustrating to see large fish rise to and sip flies, only to have them repeatedly refuse my offerings. I dusted off and utilized my best Phd fishing skills to maximize my chances of success. By myself in the hole, I moved cautiously in the water as the fish started to rise. Careful observation showed me that a small gray drake hatch was occurring and that all I had to do was find a fly that best mimicked the size and color of the naturals. Multiple failed

attempts, led me to a fly that, apparently, looked to the fish like a good match. On my first cast with that fly to a rising fish—BOOM, a strike and a beautiful, fat 20+” Yellowstone Spotted Cut in the net. Unfortunately



he flopped out of my net as I tried to take a photo so no one saw my diploma from the fishing gods.

Allan continued his trip north into Montana and Phil and I headed for the Madison to the west. The weather turned cold and snowy but, being the macho men we are, we fished around the area known as Barns Hole. We heard the browns were starting to migrate up from Lake Hebgen, but apparently a few others had heard the same thing. After rigging up, I hiked to the hole and came upon a strange ritual being performed by six fishermen already fishing the hole. Every few minutes they would all move a few feet downriver, cast a few times, then move again, until the downstream person was out of the hole. He would, then, walk to the upstream end of the hole, enter and join the downstream shuffle in progress. I went to the top of the hole and took my place. It

**FISHING ADVENTURE - OREGON TO MONTANA AND BACK****(cont'd)**

turned out to be trickier than I had thought as I was urged to move by my upstream neighbor, only to find that my downstream neighbor had not yet moved. Though I caught several nice fish, I found the elbow room wanting.

Phil had returned to the RV when lighting began so radioed him to come pick me up when I could no longer feel my fingers. He mumbled something about "someone in his way" so I trudged the half mile to where we were parked, to find no one in the way. "What a friend!", I thought, and started to direct a fine tongue-lashing at him, when he said they had just left. "Oh, sure," I said, viewing him with doubtful eyes.

A couple days fishing near Campfire Lodge on the river below Hebgen was disappointing compared to that we had enjoyed there the previous summer, so we drove north to a town near the famous



Ruby River. The reservoir above the dam had just turned over and the tailwater, usually very clear, was cloudy and not fishing well according to folks we talked to in the parking area. The reports were correct but we got to see some beautiful mountain sheep grazing nearby and a big eagle sitting on a

telephone pole.

A local fly shop suggested the Big Hole River and a campground on the river. Ever hopeful, we made the drive only to find lots of hiking and casting, few trout and whitefish, and a gorgeous setting.

The next day, we headed north again and fished several good spots on the Big Hole. Fish were not numerous but those we caught were feisty and fought well. We agreed that this river needed a lot more of our future attention, perhaps even with a boat and guide.

It was time to move again and we followed the Clark Fork to Coeur d'Alene and Spokane. There we ran into smoke-filled sky that we thought we had successfully avoided. Staying on the interstate, we headed back into Idaho and south, speeding toward a spot we knew well and were assured of large, abundant fish—The Owyhee. Taking a short detour to La Grande to spend the night and eat breakfast at our friend's cafe, slowed us down only a little.

Below the dam on the "O" the next day, we picked



up where we had left off earlier—catching big, beautiful browns. Then, in the pool below the bridge, rainbows—many, many rainbows were rising. Apparently they had stocked several hundred 13-16" bows and the trico hatch was

bringing them up all at once. I hate missing a big brown but catching any nice fish on dries on almost every cast is as fun as it gets. A couple of days of this nirvana and we were content to head home, agreeing that, for sheer fantastic fishing, there aren't many places better than our own "O".

Our 2015 adventure complete, it's time to start planning for next year. Any ideas, fellow fishermen?

**McKenzie Flyfisher's DUES are due by  
New Years Eve, 12/31.**

**HOLIDAY PRESSURE?**

Remove an item from your "TO DO" list.

**Send your Dues Check to:**

**Mike Layne**

**1574 Coburg Road #399**

**Eugene, OR 97401-4802**

**and MARK YOUR CALENDAR**

**"Dues Paid"**

**for your future reference.**

Regular Dues: \$45    Associate Dues: \$35

Any question about which applies, call Al Eckardt.

Please Note:

If, in the past year, you have changed your  
(1) address, (2) phone #, or (3) email address  
please record the change and inform

Al Eckardt

**THANK YOU!**

**McKF 2015 Annual Award Photos**



BOATMAN OF THE YEAR  
Sparky Rice &  
Jim Williams

FLYFISHER OF THE YEAR  
Bob Rasmussen



# New Club Members

When you see Newt Chapin, Barry Kent, or Kurt Lockbaum at a meeting or any club activity, say "Hi" and pause to engage them in conversation.

They are the future of our club.

Welcome to the club and join us in our activities even if it looks like you are the youngest one there. You probably are!

# ANNOUNCEMENTS

## FLY TYING CLASS

### FLY TYING

### 'Learn to' or 'Improve your' Tying !!!

The McKenzie Flyfishers will put on a fly tying class. The class will start right after the first of January. We are in the 'sign up' stage and have had some good responses from the email announcement a few weeks back.

Interested? Get your name to us soon so we can arrange a time and space to accomodate all interested parties.

To register your interest, contact me, rcrbrumitt@comcast.net, with the following: (1) your tying level (beginner, intermediate, or advanced), (2) your email address, and (3) your phone number. Please let us know **no later than December 18, 2015.**

Clint Brumitt

## BOOK SALE

### "WAITING FOR THE HATCH WATCHING FOR A RISE"

## BOOK SALE

For the club members who said they were "out bid" for my book at the auction and anyone else interested,

"WAITING FOR THE HATCH WATCHING FOR A RISE" by E.

William Laing  
is available at:

The Caddis Fly Shop, Home Waters Fly Shop, and the U of O Bookstore for \$12.

It is also available at Amazon.com/books for \$16.95

+S&H  
OR

any club member who would like a copy can contact me 541-688-5439 or wmlaing@aol.com. I have a few first run editions available for \$12.

# 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**, 541-554-2388.

