



# Alpine Fly Fishers

*Our Next AFF Meeting*

*Will Be Tuesday*

*December 15*

*We will be meeting at the*

*Puerto Vallarta*

*215 15th St. SE*

*Puyallup at 6 PM*



## The Dead Drift - December 2015

### In this issue:

#### **Pages 2 & 3**

*IFFF Fly Of The Month  
~ Common Chernobyl Ant-  
AFF Meetings 2016*

#### **Page 4 & 5 & 6**

*Back of Beyond  
~ Storms ~  
FTG - Oscar Feliu (Obit)*

#### **Page 7**

*More Than Matching  
FAOL Article*

#### **Page 8**

*December Meeting  
A Fly Fishing Quote  
NW Youth Academy  
TFO Rod Raffle Board*

#### **Page 8**

*Save The Dates*

#### **Page 9**

*Calendar  
Editor Information  
Mailing Address  
Board of Directors*

### **President's Line**

*By Larry Gibbs*

We kicked off our TFO raffle rod board at our November meeting. I would really like to finish off that 30 square board at our December meeting and pick a winner. The TFO Lefty Kreh TiCr X Series 9 ft, 5 wt 4 pc rod will be a great fly rod for trout.

The weather, or lack there of, is a concern again this year. So far, the mountains in Montana have been averaging about 80% of normal snowfall. It is still early but I do hope those percentages go well up above 100% before this winter ends. Our own Cascades are not looking very well. There sure isn't going to be any early skiing this year. But the fall/winter season has just started so there is still hope we get a lot of snow to feed our rivers next summer. So far we have exceeded our normal rainfall in western WA but it has come in several massive and warm doses, flooding the rivers and not giving us any snow to speak of in our lower mountains.

We meet again a week early in December, on the 15th. Otherwise we would be too close to the holidays. As I mentioned recently, we will have an extended raffle at our December meeting. The purpose of course is to raise money to help pay for our expenses. The club does have expenses. The biggest is paying for our guest speakers, which is well worth it. However, we do need money to pay them. Our fund raising efforts have yielded a decreased amount of income this past couple of years. We can not sustain our club expenditures without money coming in. So, please come to the December meeting to have a great time talking to other club members, watch a power point presentation from photos by our club members, and spend some money on raffle tickets to help increase our bank roll. Looking at the budget, I can see that in 2016 we will not be able to donate any money to other non-profits, which disappoints me tremendously. Those non-profits, like Project Healing Waters and Casting for Recovery and the Youth Academy depend on donations to stay in existence. But, I am afraid that our estimated intake of funds will not justify donating any money this next year. Maybe in 2016 we can turn that around and bring in more money so we can donate in 2017. Time and the bank balance will tell.

I don't usually place obituaries in our newsletter, but I lost a friend and the fly fishing world lost a great person in November. See page 6.

We had two new guests at our November meeting, Steve Burns and Steve Klein. They both indicated that they would like to join our club.

Good fishing.

Larry



**International Federation of Fly Fishers**  
**Fly of the Month**  
**~ COMMON CHERNOBYL ANT ~**  
**December 2008**

By  
Bob Bates



Here is an ant (or beetle) pattern that every fly angler can use. It can be tied on large hooks like the size 4 in these step pictures or on small hooks like the size 20 beetle in the fly box below. It can be painted black, red or two tone red/black. Best of all it uses packing foam that most of us throw away. Tom Berry from Fairfield Bay, Arkansas showed us this pattern at the 2008 FFF Fly Fishing Show and Conclave, Whitefish, Montana. There are many times when an ant pattern is the best thing to use. It seems that when ants are on the water fish will hit an imitation without hesitation. Some writers say it is because of the taste, but I wouldn't know because I have never eaten an ant, even chocolate covered.

Use floating pattern techniques when fishing it. A drag free float is the starting point in moving or still water. On lakes and ponds let it sit quietly or drift with the wind. Sometimes a slight twitch will trigger a strike. On streams follow the fly with your rod. Or using a reach cast might be the thing: Simply lean your rod and body upstream just before the line lands on the water. Other techniques include S-cast, sloppy cast, throw the line a little high so it will fall with Ss or pull the line back upstream just before it lands. You might think that I am kidding with the sloppy cast, but years ago some cutthroat in a northern Idaho stream taught me that it was the best cast to use.

**Material List:**

**Hook:** Any light hook you want

**Thread:** Black, 70 Denier, finer for small hooks

**Body:** Packing foam

**Legs:** Silicone legs, thread on small flies

**Color:** Black or red waterproof marking pen

**Tying steps:**

1. Wrap a thread base on full length of hook shank. Leave thread at bend.



2. Cut a piece of foam about a gap width wide. Taper one end a little. Paint both sides with marker. Put head cement on hook.



Continued on Page 3 →

3. Tie securely to hook.

4. Move thread forward to where you want make front of rear segment. Pull foam forward and tie it down. Hold up foam and move thread forward to near eye. Tie foam securely and cut off excess.

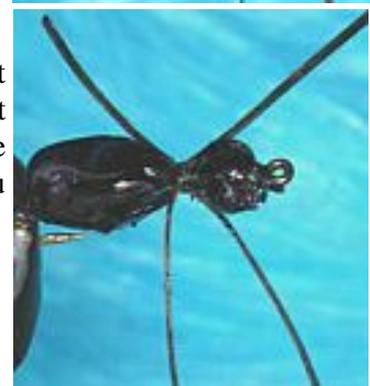
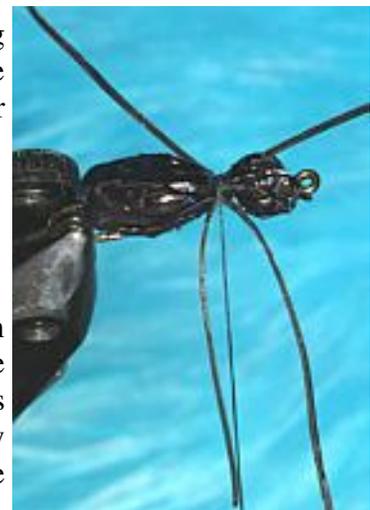
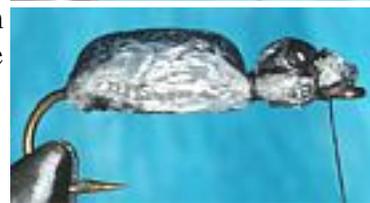
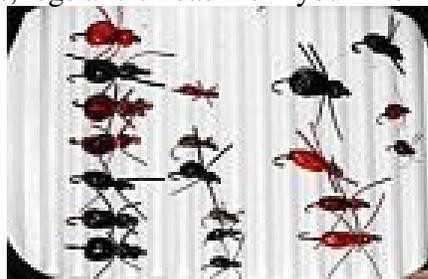
5. Wind thread over cut foam to smash it down and make a little head on the fly. Whip finish and cut thread. Paint all of the foam with marker.

6. Reattach thread in middle of fly. Fold a piece of leg material over the tying thread and move leg to side of hook. Fold another piece of leg material over the thread, and move the leg to the other side of the hook. Put another thread wind or two to secure the legs pull the front legs back and whip finish in front of legs.

7. Trim the legs to length.

8. (Two steps that he didn't do at the Conclave were: 1. Coat the body with Softex, and let it dry; then 2. Coat it with Sally's Hard as Nails, and let it dry. The Softex makes it more durable, and the Hard as Nails makes it shiny. Softex has acetone in it, and he didn't want to take it on the plane.) The fly box shown below has several finished flies including small beetles on the right side. The smaller one is size 20, and it is just as easy to tie a larger ones.

**Closing comments:** Ants, both wet and dry, have been in my fly box since about 1960. This pattern will join the others soon. It is easy and adaptable. Any color ant can be created, and even beetles of any size and color can be tied. Best of all the body material is something that you would throw away or reuse as packing. You will still have to buy hooks, legs and thread from your friendly fly shop.



## Alpine Fly Fishers Meetings in 2016

January 26 — February 23 — March 22 — April 26 — May 24

June ?? (picnic) TBD

July & August (No Meetings)

September 27 — October 25 — November 22 — December 13

# Back of Beyond

*By Stephen Neal*

*In Wildness is the Preservation of the World "Henry David Thoreau"*

## Christmas 2015

### Storms

Today, the wind stirs up the day. Trees sway, shudder, and dance, around their crowns, storm crows scatter and dance in the winds, cawing as they fly. They slip stream right then left, their forward movement suddenly arrested as stronger wind gusts hit them ruffling their inky feathers. The sky is molten and rolling with dark moisture laden clouds. Freshly falling leaves sail and broken limbs fall earthward. Rain is eminent, its moisture a welcome entity. It is the season of the witch, the fall of the year is fully emboldened upon us.

1970's - I sit on the hood of my 57 Chevy pickup tucked back in the mouth of a boxed New Mexico red sandstone canyon. The monsoon season is at its height, afternoon thunderstorms are a given, in this high desert landscape. I am surrounded by the history of wind and water, its impact on this landscape is a palpable example of what I am watching. From the West monster sized cumulonimbus clouds extending possibly 20, 30, 50,000 feet or higher, are marching across the canyon lands. Around me the canyon is quite, but where I watch the world is under assault. Distant sounds of thunder hit my ears; lightning strikes flash from heaven to earth and back again. Thor the thunder god is at his best; his beauty and anger flash and flash again, every time his hammer strikes the world is electrified. I spend 30 exquisite minutes mesmerized, watching the storms approach, but with prudence as the lightning strikes the canyon rim at its mouth I pop into the pickups cab and ride out the unleashing of the monsoon rains. No way can my old and tired desert baked wipers keep up with the onslaught of falling water. The outside view is lost; my world shrinks to the pure sound of almost constant thunder and falling water. In mere mortal minutes I am left behind. The sun appears and the thirsty earth drinks up heavens gift and it is time for me to move my truck out of the canyon and possible flash flood waters.



Continued on Page 5 →

My hike in had been hot and dusty for the last 500 feet of elevation gain I had been repeating the backpackers payer "Dear lord if you will pick them up I will put them down". It got me to the pass at 10,400+/- feet. After resting my palms on my knees to catch my breath I looked back towards the Southwest; the whole horizon was dark and moving my direction.

Unbeknownst to me, was the fact that the approaching storm was a 1997 El Nino generated, 100 year, storm event and I was in for a ring side seat. My thought process at that time was a little less prophetic. I had 3 more miles to camp. The approaching storm put a go in my giddy-up and I skedaddled down the trail. I lost 1,000 feet of elevation in less than 1/2 mile over the next 30 minutes, but over the next 45 minutes I gained another 2 to 300 feet back and hiked 2 1/2 miles to get to camp.

My pack came off my back just as the first rain drops fell. For the next 30 furious motion minutes, I set up the tent, ditched around it to funnel the falling water away, threw my sleeping bag and backpack into the tent. I then sat back and let my tired muscles relax while listening to the rain cascaded onto the tents roof 6 inches over my head. I was in my mountain dome home; little did I know that I would spend most of the next 58 hours, reading sleeping and cooking under the tent vestibule, while the heavens poured record amounts of rain on the Sierra Nevada Mountains. The rain that fell over those 58 hours was a deluge with no let up. I made brief forays outside to use the facilities and take pictures; my only refuge from falling water was inside the tent. My world became a water world at 9,600 feet. I was on an island surrounded by three rivers. The seasonal Fault creek behind me turned into a small river, on my right the Hutching's became a mid- sized river and the Lyle Fork turned into a miniature Mississippi. My island acre was my enforced encampment for the next 5 days until the water receded. The Rainbow trout in the Lyle Fork swam around the fire ring stones of my traditional campfire spot.

On my hike out I set up an emergency bivouac camp (well not quite, I did have a tent) on the ball diamond below Isberg pass. I was in a snow storm and lightning was striking the ridge line around the pass. My progress halted by another El Nino event. By the time I got into the tent my hands and tent lines were frozen and I was asking that age old question of myself, "What the heck was I doing this for".

In early October of this year, Steve, Sean and I sat in our camp on the Deschutes River in Oregon. Resting after an exploration hike down river; over our right shoulders afternoon clouds began to roll in. The approaching storms breeze felt good on our overheated bodies, but soon the tent began to bow from super charged up canyon wind. We raced to tie on guy lines and anchor then with stakes. We returned to our chairs to watch, occasionally rising to adjust a guy line, re-hammer in a wind loosened tent peg or add another guy line. The micro burst wind storm was very entertaining, and then Mother Nature added another element, rain. All three of us sprang into action to put a tarp up to shield us from falling water. Sean and I manned the tarp and poles while Steve pounded stakes and untangled guy lines. Holding the tarp bunched our muscles, stretched our tendons and strained our ligaments as we held onto our tarp turned kite. In the middle of our flight lessons, Steve abandoned us to retrieve camp equipment blown into the Deschutes from down drafts. His retrieval was more of a running float but his feats of miraculous recovery were un-witnessed by us, the tarp holders. We were too busy holding on to watch his efforts. If we lost our grips the tarp would be shredded by the black berry thorns at our back or it would disappear in the up canyon winds to never be seen by us again. Steve returned wet and triumphant with our scattered camp gear, and resumed staking the tarp. When we slipped back under the tarp after rendering it habitable we celebrated with a touch of Scotch and wide smiles as the rain fell. We gave the storm a beer bottle cap 10 rating for its entertainment value.



Continued on Page 6 →

Storms are a very significant component of life. They come in many different forms, storms of the mind, storms of the heart, physical storms, solar storms, political storms. Storms are change and depending on your perspective you might want to classify them as good or bad. But that would be short sighted, who of us really has the long enough vision to know if something is good or bad. What a storm is is a lesson, a time of learning, and as human beings we only learn when we are uncomfortable. That is when we stretch ourselves and grow. That growth is not always seen but it is there.

Take a tree, when a tree is cut open its rings are revealed. Each ring is a record of its life. Drought, wet, stormy, windy, buggy all is revealed in the warp and weave of the wood a good scientist can read the history and an artist can reveal the beauty held within. A fisherman may catch a Steelhead on the Trinity River, but what he holds in his hand is a rainbow trout that chose to go to the sea. He survived all the storms of living in a river and his swim to the sea, he then survived the trials of his sea expedition, and his return to the river to spawn and possibly to return to the sea again. He is not just a steelhead but a creature with a life of learning and surviving, a being of wonder and beauty. A learned man can reveal his story and an artist can reveal his beauty and we as fishermen can appreciate what we truly hold in our hands for that brief moment before our release.

All of us have been shaped by the storms of living. We are shaped, shaved, warped, weaved, bent and straightened by life, how well we learn depends upon how open we are to what is shown to us. Some of us are polished to pure crystal, others crumble to dust. But nothing is lost as we grow; we carry it forward with us into other lives.

Before I close this Back of Beyond, I wish to leave you with these images and thoughts. In almost a month of work, travel and fishing I did not have much time to visit with my grandsons. I missed them very much, but finally the stars aligned and we came together. There was the usual merriment when we were reunited, but what made it real was as we sat to watch a movie, they curled up with me on the couch and we sat with each other, they cuddled in my arms and I held them even closer in my heart.

My Daughters family recently lost a very important part of their family when Zeke passed away. While struggling to understand why the veterinarian could not fix him Colin quizzed his dad on the whys and wherefores. While Brian struggled through his own loss to explain why Zeke needed to leave, Colin's mind, provide him with the true answer, Zeke had gone back to the future! Nothing is lost, with open minds storms can be doors to a life of learning.

*Merry Christmas, May it find you surrounded by family and friends.*

*“Many go fishing all their lives without knowing that it is not fish they are after” Henry David Thoreau*

## *Fly Tying Group*

Message from the Chairman of the Fly Tying Group – Tom H. Logan  
November 2015

It is very sad for me to begin this message by letting those of you who haven't already heard know that our 2014 Buz Buszek Memorial Award recipient, Oscar Feliu, died suddenly on Monday, November 9. It is my understanding that he was on his annual hunting trip in New York. He was telling me only three weeks ago at our Florida Council Fly Fishing Expo how he was looking forward to retirement in the next few months and continuing his activities representing the fly fishing community. Oscar was a great fly tier, teacher especially of youth, musician and entertainer. But he was most of all a good person. He contributed positively to many of our lives and will continue to serve as a model for us all in many respects. Best to you, Oscar; we'll miss you!

**Message from the editor** — I have known Oscar for many years. He was an exceptional tyer and a great singer/musician. Just two weeks before his death he sent me his latest fly plate of five Atlantic Salmon style flies based on the fish of the Great Lakes. Yes, he will be missed. Larry Gibbs

Deanna Travis  
FlyAnglers Online  
Publisher & Owner

## MORE THAN MATCHING THE HATCH



The Fly Fishing Enthusiast's Online Magazine  
*'The Fraternity of Fly Fishers'*

November 16, 2009

Matching the Hatch was already a big deal by the time I became seriously involved in fly fishing. The book that made this a common term in fly-fishing vernacular was first published in 1955, and the author Ernest Schweibert was THE big name. He was raised in the Chicago region and as a kid spent many summers on the Pere Marquette River in Michigan. The story goes that he caught a trout at age five, was totally fascinated by the magnificent coloring of the fish and just never got over it.

I loaned my copy of "the hatch" to a friend who didn't return it. Years later I picked up a soft-cover version at the local second hand book store. I was not lucky enough to possess Nymphs, Salmon of the World, or the two-volume Trout. Ernie was educated as an architect, but had a keen sense about all things trout. He personally drew the illustrations for the very detailed nymphs' book, as he did for the other books that he wrote.

Ernie Schweibert probably influenced more fly fishers than any other one person. His book on matching ones fly to the insects on/or above the water made more people aware of the conditions around them when fishing, and by following the instructions in the book, one could really improve the quality as well as quantity of their fishing. Unfortunately the earlier book, A Modern Dry Fly Code (1950) by Vince Marinaro, (which Schweibert acknowledges in "the hatch") did not get the publicity or following that "the hatch" received.

Personally I did not know about Marinaro's book until twenty some years later when I first met him on the South Branch of the Au Sable River near Grayling Michigan. I did have my own copy of 'the hatch' however, and it went with me where ever I fished. Had it not been for Ernie Schweibert's first book I would never had an interest in or learned about insects at all. Entomology was not my field, but it became very important to my fly fishing - more precisely catching.

I ran across a speech Ernie gave at the opening of the American Museum of Fly Fishing, 2005. I know we all fish for different reasons - and in fact you may have difficulty in explaining exactly why you fish.

Here is Ernie's.

"People often ask why I fish, and after seventy-odd years, I am beginning to understand. I fish because of Beauty".

Everything about our sport...is beautiful. Its more than five centuries of manuscript and books and folios are beautiful. Its artifacts of rods and beautifully machined reels are beautiful. Its old wading staffs and split-willow creels, and the delicate artifice of its flies, are beautiful. Dressing such confections of fur, feathers and steel is beautiful, and our worktables are littered with gorgeous scraps of tragopan and golden pheasant and blue chattered and Coq de Leon. The best of sporting art is beautiful. The riverscapes that sustain the fish are beautiful. Our methods of seeking them are beautiful, and we find ourselves enthralled with the quicksilver poetry of the fish.

"And in our contentious time of partisan hubris, selfishness, and outright mendacity, Beauty itself may prove the most endangered thing of all." Ernest Schwiebert - 2005 Dedication of the American Museum of Fly Fishing, Manchester, Vermont.

And how about you? Why do you fish?

# FlyAnglers OnLine

The Fly Fishing Enthusiast's Online Magazine  
'The Fraternity of Fly Fishers'

There are several of us at AFF who belong to FAOL. It is a great site for fly fishers, lots of helpful information and many fly tying recipes and articles about all aspects of fly fishing and fly fishing gear. Check it out.

[www.flyanglersonline.com](http://www.flyanglersonline.com)



3rd Tuesday  
in December

## Alpine Fly Fishers Next Meeting December 15, 2015



### A Fly Fishing Quote:

Fishing always reaches its peak at a time when the bugs are thickest. And bugs are thickest at the places where fishing is best....So whenever and wherever you enjoy good fishing you can expect to find mosquitoes, black flies, midges, deerflies, all lusting for your life's blood.

~ H.G. Tapply *The Sportsman's Notebook* (1964) ~

## NW YOUTH CONSERVATION AND FLY FISHING ACADEMY

It's not too early to start thinking about a candidate for The Academy for 2016. A serious minded boy or girl 12-16 is eligible to attend the Academy. They have to write an essay explaining why they would like to attend and they will need a letter of recommendation from their school science teacher or school counselor.

This experience is an invaluable life event for the youth that they will carry through their future lives. No youth will be turned away because of the lack of funding. The event is a youth education project of the WCTU and WSCIFFF and supported by members of PSFF, SSFF and Olympia TU. So please give it some serious thought, would your boys and girls, grandkids, friends or neighbors be a good candidate for The NW Youth Conservation and Fly Fishing Academy for 2016?

Enrollment for the 2016 Academy will be open on January 1, 2016. The Academy will be held June 19-25, 2016 at The Gwinwood Christian Center in Lacey, WA.

Please see our Facebook page for great pictures.

**Mike Clancy, Co-Director, 360-753-1259, [www.nwycffa.com](http://www.nwycffa.com) or [mtclancy39@comcast.net](mailto:mtclancy39@comcast.net)**

### TFO Rod Raffle Board

TFO Lefty Kreh TiCr X Series 9 ft, 5 wt 4 pc rod.

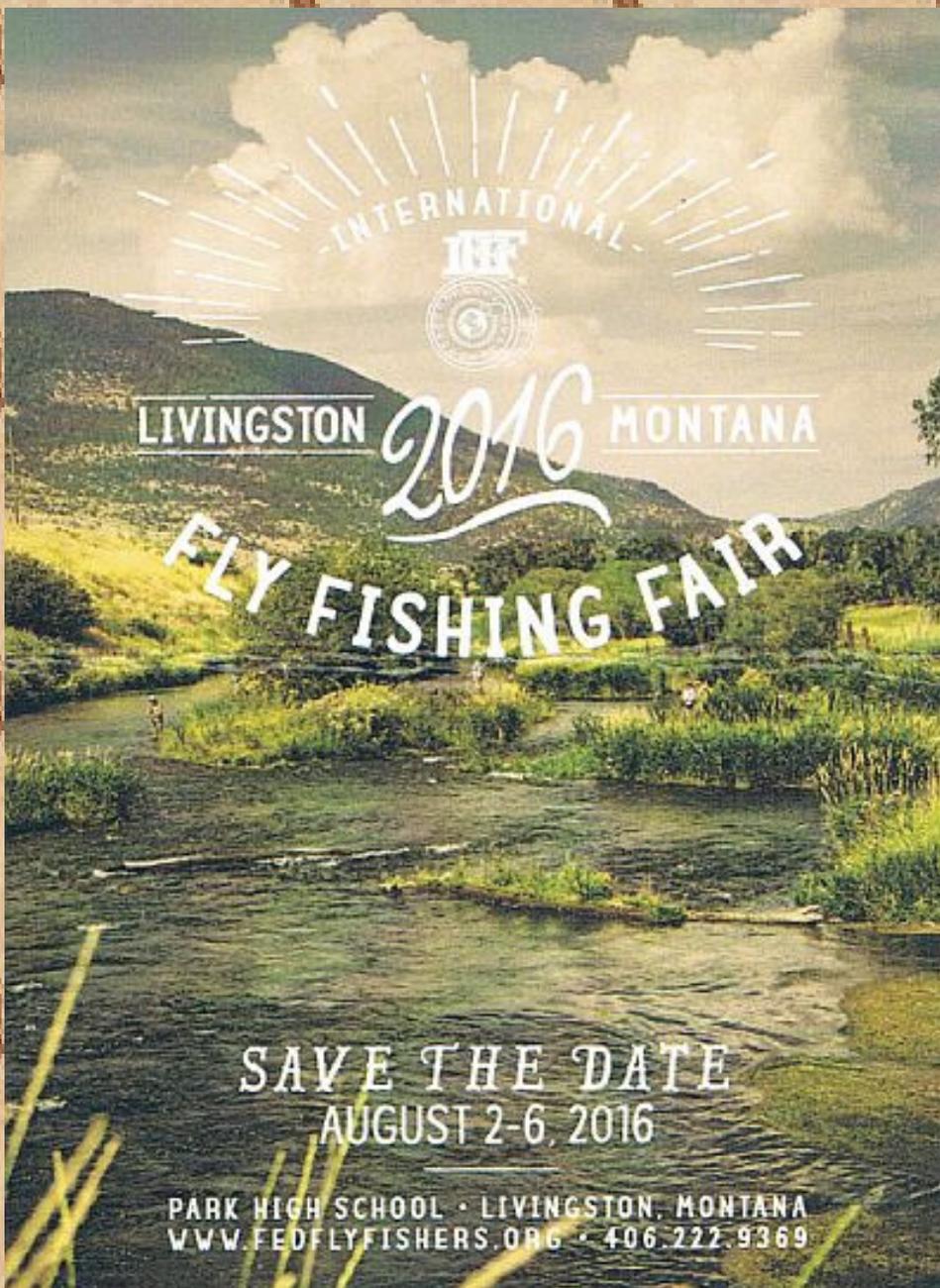
We started with a 30 square rod raffle board with each square selling for \$10. This board was first presented at our November meeting and I would really like to finish selling the squares at our December meeting so we can pick a winner and give that person a very nice present for the holidays.

**We sold 17 squares at the November meeting so that only leaves 13 squares. Email me if you want to buy a square before our December meeting.**

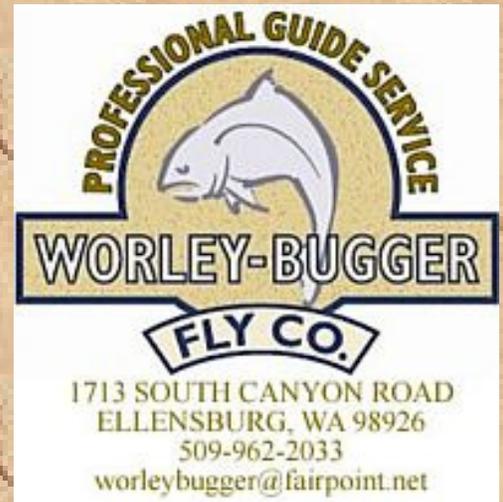


### 2016 Calendar - Club Fund Raiser

I purchased a few of these 2016 fly fishing theme calendars from David Lambroughton as a club fundraiser. I have a limited number of them so if you are interested, please purchase one of them now. The photography is spectacular. Selling at \$10 each. **There are only two (2) left.**



**Worley Bugger Fly Co  
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WA Fly Fishing Fair**



Washington State Council  
International Federation Fly Fishers

[www.wsciff.org](http://www.wsciff.org)

**2016 WA FLY FISHING FAIR**

**SAVE THE DATE**

**Ellensburg, WA April 29 & 30**

**SAVE THE DATES**

**2016**

**2016 WSCIFFF Fly Fishing Fair**

**April 29 & 30**

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**2016 IFFF Fly Fishing Fair**

**August 2 - 6**

# December 2015 / January 2016

SUN	MON	TUE	WED	THU	FRI	SAT
"In the depths of winter I finally learned that within me there lay an invincible summer." - Albert Camus 1913 - 1960		December 1	2	3	4	5
6	7  Hanukkah	8	9	10	11	12
13	14	15 Club Meeting	16	17	18	19
20	21	22	23	24 	25 Christmas	26 
27	28	29	30	31	"The winter comes: the frozen rut is bound with silver bars; the white drift heaps against the hut; and night is pierced with stars." Coventry Patmore 1823 - 1896	

"Nature chose for a tool, not the earthquake or lightning to rend and split asunder, not the stormy torrent or eroding rain, but the tender snow-flowers noiselessly falling through unnumbered centuries." - John Muir 1838 - 1914						1 January	2
3	4	5	6	7	8	9	
10	11	12	13	14	15	16	
17	18	19	20	21	22	23	
24 31	25	26 Club Meeting	27	28	29	30	

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