

# Creel Notes from the



P.O. Box 639, Mercer Island, WA 98040



December, 2011



## President's Riffle

In the last edition of the "President's Riffle", I was ruminating the tough decision I faced each year at Thanksgiving: steelhead on the coast or pheasant hunting near Pomeroy? I figure I owe you all an outcome on this year's dilemma.

To make a long story short, Mother Nature made the decision for me. It rained damned hard for the four or five days leading up to Thanksgiving Day. Looking at the USGS river-level graphs was astounding. For all the coastal rivers, the lines on the graphs went straight up vertically. There would be no fishing on the coast this Thanksgiving. Maggie (my yellow lab) and I made the LONG drive "over the hills and far away" (you like the Led Zeppelin reference?). The weather was terrific. Saw a bunch of posted land saying "Stay the hell out or you will be shot", or something to that effect. This was typically in front of picture perfect cover, with roosters playfully bouncing above the brush, and just begged to be hunted. Saw other signs with WDFW logos in green saying "Feel Free to Hunt" ... but the land behind those signs was nothing more than endless acres of dirt. You could have seen a pheasant two miles away, but I didn't. My reaction was "Thanks a lot for nothing."

After spending the night in Walla Walla, Maggie and I did find a real nice draw with excellent cover, winding through the folds of rolling wheat fields. The draw went on forever. We were by ourselves with no other competition. The walking was easy for me while Mags covered the brush nicely. She put up a nice, cackling rooster that I missed. It was an easy shot – I just got too excited. Sometimes I look like Elmer Fudd out there.

Later that day, we met up with my hunting buddy, Doug Gable, and his German Shorthair, Mia, around Sunnyside. They are both excellent hunters and a pleasure to hunt with. We got into a nice covey of quail.

Doug got one, while I never squeezed a shot off. Those birds are too darn quick for me. It felt great to walk off the big Thanksgiving meal and get some fresh air. Maggie enjoyed the exercise as well. I will hit those coastal rivers later this month. There is a steelhead or three over there with my name on it.

This is my final Riffle! Hard to believe, actually. The year flew by. Honestly, I am very pleased with what we accomplished. The goals on my list for 2011 were admittedly modest, but we did what we set out to do ... and for that I am proud: the Home Waters structure is pretty much done (just needs roofing material); we had excellent participation on our club outings; we printed new brochures; and we managed to get the budget turning in the right direction. There are more, too numerous to list. To top it off, we had fun in the process. That, more than anything, was my goal. After all, we are just a bunch of fly fishermen who like to have fun. I want to give a sincere "Thank You!" to the Board (Club Officers and Committee Chairs) who served alongside me. These guys were all terrific!

(Continued on page 2)

## Inside.....

Club Officers for 2012	2
On the Fly	3
Holiday Fundraiser	4
Photo Shoot	4
Fly Box Raffle	5
Oregon Coast	6
Hoh Magic	6
Fly Tying Classes	7
Outings and Home Waters	7

(Continued from page 1)

***(Note to the Club membership ... do not take them for granted. The Board very seriously considers all matters pertaining to the well-being of the WFFC. Trust them! You should.)***

It has truly been an honor to serve as your President for 2011. I was humbled to have been chosen a year ago to lead this club. Today, a year later, I feel the same way. Hopefully, I left the club a little better off than before. Congratulations to Mike Wearne as the new President for 2012! As individuals, do whatever you can to make his duty easy and productive. Mike is going to do a great job, but it all depends upon how much YOU help.

See you all at the Christmas Party ... spend money, buy raffle tickets, and HAVE FUN!

Rocco Maccarrone  
President

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## This Month's Meeting

Next Tuesday, Dec. 13<sup>th</sup>, is the WFFC Holiday Fundraiser and Christmas Party! Look at the details on page 4.

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## Club Officers for 2012

The following members will serve as officers and trustees during next year:

Trustees for a three-year term: **Don Schroder & Gene Gudger**

Second Ghillie: **Peter Draughon**

First Ghillie: **Jim Macdonald**

Secretary: **Ron Tschetter**

Treasurer: **Don Barton**

Third VP – Holiday Party: Open

Second VP – Programs Chair: **Bob Burdick**

First VP - Membership: **John Gravendyk**

President: **Mike Wearne**

Thank you, Nominations Committee, for your work in nominating these members. The Committee included **Kris Kristoferson, Bill Neal, Peter Crumbaker, Bob Birkner**, and Chairman **Jim Young**.

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## Dues are Due

See the form at the end of the online Creel Notes, or the insert in the middle of the paper version. The dues includes an increase to \$100 for Regular Members and \$70 for Associate Members. To avoid a late fee, submit it by Feb. 29th.

## Creel Notes

...is the official publication of the Washington Fly Fishing Club. Subscription is free with membership.

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### Trustees

Scott Hagen '09 Jim Young '09  
Andrew Bennett '10 Craig Koeppler '10  
Bob Young '11 Chapin Henry III '11

## Club Aims and Purposes

The purpose of this club shall be:

1. To improve and increase the sport of Fly Fishing in the State of Washington.
2. To promote and work for the betterment of trout streams and lakes.
3. To encourage and advocate the conservation and increase of trout, steelhead, and salmon in state waters.
4. To promote a campaign of education against pollution in streams, lakes or Sound waters of the State of Washington.
5. To encourage and assist others — particularly young persons of high school age—to become fly fishers and true conservationists.

## On The Fly by David Ehrich

**Rocco Maccarrone** introduced himself to great applause and opened up the floor of his last regular meeting for introductions and fish stories. Lots of guests joined us tonight. In terms of reports, WET-BUNS was a grand success. **Hugh Clark** heard about great fishing, but not when he was on the river. **Abe Lillard** hit a few rivers and snaked his first steelie out of a good hole on the Stilly.

**Burdick**, who holds himself in high esteem, tackled the Madison on some new exotic fly pioneered in Bohemia and made famous on the Madison. This fly uses rubber from a condom, so Bob got a few and learned how to get the party started. Just to make sure we understood the brilliance of this fly, he demonstrated with a couple actual condoms. Women and children were exited from the building in case things went awry. It turns out the “rubber” fly is too heavy and yields more headaches than fish. But don’t despair, he’s not done trying, so Bob asked members to bring any condoms, new or used, to the next meeting.

Sadly, this story led other members to tell other R rated stories. **Jim McRoberts** found out that flies stored near marijuana do pretty well. **Jack Crowley** found the Home Waters to be “No Country for Old Men”, but still found fishing. Other reports featured the Methow, frozen guides, and chilly angling. Rocco earned the Skunk Hat for his report.

Announcements centered on the Holiday Fundraiser. The February Awards meeting will feature a group picture that will be available for sale. The Board raised dues to \$100 for Regular Members and \$70 for Associate Members. **Mike Hurt** and **Chapin Henry** gave us a progress report on the Christmas Wreath sale. Keep your eyes open for emails regarding pick-up sites and times.

Yours truly reminded members that dues are due, as per usual, before February. So take it upon yourself and get your dues paid as soon as possible and save everybody a lot of trouble. Go to the WFFC website, pay up, and be done. Or print out the form and send it to the specified address or bring your check to a meeting. Easy!

We’re looking for someone to take over **Dave Hawkinson**’s long tenure as raffle leader. He has twenty years on the job, so as Rocco said, “It can’t be that tough.”

Then the venerable **Gil**, the Nymph, **Nyerges**, took on the pleasant task of inducting Abe Lillard into the club with the usual warnings, admonishments, and then a few handy flies.

Rocco introduced **Jim Young**, Chair of the Nominations Committee, who honored his committee of **Kris Kristoferson**, **Bill Neal**, **Peter Crumbaker**, and **Bob Birkner**. He then opened up the magic envelope to reveal an excellent slate of candidates, all unopposed (see below).

Programs Chair (and future President) **Mike Wearne** introduced long-time member **Jack Berryman**, who thanked club members for years of service to the sport, most lately our support of the Steelhead Coalition. Jack also told us a short story of why we haven’t seen him much lately as his daughter had a very premature baby who after 100 days in the Swedish Neo-natal ICU, is now a healthy two-year old. With a sigh of relief, Jack started on a favorite angler and wordsmith of his, Ben Hur Lampman.

Ben dropped out of school, started a newspaper in the Midwest before raising a family and moving to Gold Hill, OR, on the banks of the Rogue River. The morning *Oregonian* offered Ben a job in 1916 for \$25 a week, more money than anyone in Gold Hill had ever heard of. He started right in writing about fishing along with poetry, short stories, and non-fiction pieces for local and national publications, including *The Saturday Evening Post*.

The presentation was accompanied by historical photos of Ben and his colleagues and chums, some of who mixed fishing and drinking. Naturally such behavior led to exposure to steelhead, a fish he called “the aristocrat of fishes” and the disease was nearly fatal. Lampman wrote in a way that made fishing come to life for thousands of readers, mixing the modes (poetry, news reporting, and fiction) to describe his experiences in many sports. He cautioned readers against taking too many quarry, instead suggesting that a fish left for another season is a gift to one’s self.

Lampman wrote about NW nature trails, stories for children, accounts of fishing, and fantasy, including *At the End of the Car Line*, which included a chapter on steelhead from which Jack shared some of his favorite passages. The University of Oregon awarded Ben an honorary Masters, describing his ability of relating to and elevating the common man

(Continued on page 4)

(Continued from page 3)

in his writing. The governor of Oregon dedicated a park to Lampman and nominated him for State Poet Laureate, a post that he held in 1951.

Not long after this honor, he was stricken with a series of strokes and passed away in 1954. The *Oregonian* remembered him on their front page as a founding influence on many readers, a man considered without peer in his day. Ben Hur Lampman did not fade into obscurity since he was kept alive by members of the Oregon Fly Fishing Club. Bob Wethern, a retired reporter from Bellingham, WA, did a little research and found that Lampman's writing was still on the shelf in the *Oregonian* editorial offices. That got Bob re-reading Lampman's work and reprinting some of his favorite sections in their club publication. He was not alone. Members going back to **Walt Walkinshaw**, **Doug Schaad**, and others filled their shelves with his work. And many sports writing anthologies have included his work.

### **Holiday Fundraiser** by Mike Santangelo

The time is coming close. We are just a week away from the WFFC Holiday Fundraiser. Have we got some entertainment and goodies for you! A "Half Assed" award, a "doggie" skit, "Robert Service" poetry, a Winston "Leetle Feller" bamboo rod, the new Sage "One" rod, Douglas Lake, casting lessons, and lots of beautiful flies, just to name a few.

As a final reminder, the Holiday Fundraiser is on Tuesday, December 13<sup>th</sup>, at Seattle's Herban Feast in SODO. This is the second Tuesday of the month and not the traditional third. The party starts at 5:30 pm with dinner at 7:00 pm.

We still have some good seats left, so if you haven't reserved, get your RSVP's in now. Use the following link to make your reservations: <http://www.wffc.com/dec11respayment1.php>. This saves you some snail mail time and gets you into the queue faster. Especially with so little time left.

Some of you are still planning on making donations, which is great. We need them. However, if you have a donation in mind or on the way, please let me know what is coming, so I can plan for it.

For those of you who already have your reservation, here is a chance to plan your bids. The list of "Live Auction" items (STC):

- Hood Canal Fishing Trip – Jay Deeds donation
- Oahu, HI – Day Bonefishing with Coach Duff - Thanks again to Jay
- Sweetgrass Rod Certificate - any rod of choice 50% off retail – Thanks Boo Boys
- Day on the Stilly with Breakfast and Lunch - Preston Singletary donation
- Douglas Lake Ranch, BC - 2 nights for 2 people – Thanks Rebecca at Douglas Lake Ranch
- Burkheimer 7127-4 Spey Rod /Sage 4200 Spey Reel - Thanks Kerry Burkheimer
- Gil Nyerges' Fly Plate – 2011 "55 fly donations from the WFFC Membership" – Thanks, Gil
- Winston "Leetle Feller" Bamboo Rod - Bill Redman donation
- OR coast trip 16:00 the 4th of March through noon the 9th of March - Doug Schaad donation
- Lake Chelan fishing package, 2 nights - Chuck Ballard donation.

Raffle items include:

- A Sage "ONE" rod featuring the new "Konnetic" technology – donated by Creekside Angling Company.
- An outstanding collection of flies tied by the WFFC membership assembled in beautifully handcrafted fly boxes made by Dick Brening.
- Spey Casting Lessons donated by River Run Anglers.
- A variety of fine "Fly Fishing" art work.

See you there,  
Michael Santangelo, 3<sup>rd</sup> VP WFFC  
[mikeonthefly@gmail.com](mailto:mikeonthefly@gmail.com)

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### **Photo Shoot** by Mike Hurt

Let's bring back tradition by capturing the present! Have you noticed those great black and white and early color photographs of the early WFFC membership, as illustrated within our own "Backcast" book? Have you ever reflected on those



photos and had them bring back great memories, or just have them stir your imagination? As we all know, we are extremely fortunate to have some incredible members within our fly club. It's also accurate to say this club even has some legends of this great sport we call fly fishing. So let's seize this special moment in time by participating and purchasing a beautifully framed color photograph of the 2011 WFFC member base so you may proudly display it within our dens at home or offices at work.

The 2012 WFFC photo shoot will be held during the 2012 awards banquet in January. All you have to do is be a WFFC member and wear a nice sports coat and tie. Yes, we are requiring sport coats and ties for this historic snapshot of our member base. There is no cost to be included within the photo shoot; it's free. However, to proudly possess and display one of these beautiful timepieces of WFFC history, you will need to make a modest purchase of \$38. All profits from the sales of these photographs stay within the WFFC, and this event will be treated as our first 2012 fundraiser of the year. The framed photos will be distributed to the members who ordered them during the next couple of WFFC meetings. Let's not miss this great opportunity to own a special piece of Washington's Fly Fishing history.

## Christmas Party Fly Box Raffle

*by Dick Brening*

Here are samples of the over twenty handcrafted fly boxes filled with member-tied flies that will be raffled off at the Christmas Party.

Don't miss out on getting one of these truly unique raffle items.



*Jim McRoberts - Tube Fly Collection*



*Tim Bohlin - Steelhead Shrimp*



*Scott Hagen - The Great Pumpkin*



*Dick Stearns - California Neal & Cutthroat Yellow*



# **REPORTS**

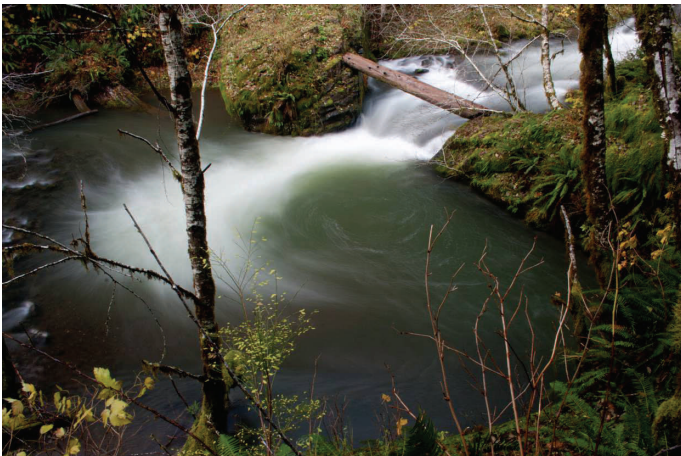
## **Oregon Coast Report** *by Doug Schaad*

My natal river on the Oregon coast always calls at Thanksgiving. It's always a crap-shoot, with most years a total washout. If you can recall the week before Turkey Day (as opposed to this week), it was major-league wet. Rivers were at flood stage throughout WA and OR. I headed south with minimum expectations, a nice weekend for reading books and watching the surf roll in.

I skipped the Friday fishing, while Conrad and my youngest son headed into the highest reaches of the watershed. A great day, they found chinooks spawning into the smallest reaches of the creek.



*Conrad Gowell hooked up*



By Saturday the river had cleared, though flows were substantial. We headed out for a short day of fishing. There were no skunks. Coho seemed abundant, most between 12 and 16 pounds, and in great shape. Even the bucks had yet to develop the red-sides. Steelhead were absent, but that's not unusual.

With the current dry weather, I'm sure that I'll be catching bright coho, steelies, and cutts over the Christmas break.

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## **Hoh Magic** *by Craig Koeppler*

In the mid 70's, my final requirement for University of Washington graduation as a Forest Engineer was a quarter-long stint of indenture to the Washington State Department of Natural Resources in Forks. Thirteen of us were stationed at the Clearwater Honor Camp, which was then decommissioned as a prison facility, and designed logging roads and bridges. I've returned to the land of fly water Oz only sporadically over the years and each time ask myself why the homage hasn't been more frequent.

Good friends now reside, and have for the past few years, in Beaver, a short distance from Forks. I visited them several weekends ago. They've given up drift boats simply because foot access is plentiful to incredible steelhead drifts on the Hoh, Sol Duc, and Bogachiel, among others in the area. Sure, the occasional Neanderthals float by winging hardware, but it's a small price to pay. And not dealing with shuttles or two cars in this age of petroleum hyperinflation is comforting and reduces my otherwise size 15 carbon footprint down to maybe size 12.

We arrived well after dawn and fished a long, walking-speed Hoh drift on Saturday. Just after

stepping in above a taylor, one of my compatriots was so surprised at a monstrous take and momentary hookup, that he neglected to perform even the slightest hook set toward the bank. Gone. Below him, I threw my usual lumpy and chaotic spey casts, all the while working toward two rocks about mid-swing in a quartering cast. Damned if instincts of fish and fisherman don't meld sometimes.

The take and hookup brought back memories of blasting rock during road construction. Only a mile up the salty mouth of the Hoh, the wild hen made multiple runs into fluorescent backing and made strategic attempts to break a stout leader on the rocks. Chrome bright can be an understatement so close to the ocean. Sun rays reflecting off the pure silver sides and barely darkened back nearly burned holes in eye protection. Spots were spare, even sparse; a few sea lice showed their eerie presence.

Blue, according to **Jimmy LeMert**, is the new black. It has started showing up in Comets and any number of other steelhead patterns. The old Winter's Hope used blue successfully for many years, though I've not seen that fly tied for quite some time. I also recall one old, venerable, nameless steelhead icon telling me that "Blue" never caught a steelhead. Maybe he was referring to his dog?

Taking just a moment to inhale the sight of an ocean-fresh wild fish in hand, with a freshly stuck lip, surely removes one from time and place, from reality to dreams. Thanks, Hoh, see you again.

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## **Fly Tying Classes Starting** *by Jim Higgins*

**Only a few shopping days left.** Our fly tying class would make a great gift for that special someone. The class starts on Thursday, January 5, 2012, and goes for eight Thursdays. It will be held at 6:30 pm at Mercer Island Covenant Church located at 3200 78<sup>th</sup> Ave SE on Mercer Island. Our gifted instructors start with the basics and lead you through some of the more advanced tying steps by teaching you to tie 15 different patterns: "the ones that catch fish". This would be a great time to restock the fly boxes and learn to tie a new pattern or two. I am sure you know someone who would benefit from this class: kids, grandkids, or the paper boy? Only \$35 to register or for more information call **Jim Higgins** at 253-350-5085.

## **Outings Committee Request**

*by Dave Schorsch*

The Outings Committee would like to hear any input on prospective destinations, venues, and adventures. Yes, we've already heard about the "titty" bus that will take a group to all the local strip joints, but after serious consideration, we figured that didn't constitute a fishing trip. Things that include fly rods and water, however, are of interest.

Is there interest in an early spring trip into the desert lakes? How about an organized trip on the Deschutes in Oregon? Spring pre-runoff trout or fall dry fly steelhead, either one. Let's hear your ideas!

How about hooking up with our friends in B.C. on one of their great Kamloops lakes?

Of course, we'll keep the usual classic outings, those we all love, but there's more out there! See you on the water!

**Dave Schorsch:** 206-227-6134

## **Home Waters Progress Report**

*by Dave Schorsch*

Well, the last nail is in, just in time for the blizzard. We started in 90 degree heat, digging rocks out of water-filled holes, and finished the roof sheathing with corks on the boots to keep from sliding off in the snow. All that remains is the metal roofing (waiting on the roof contractor) and some site cleanup. A small storage shed will be built offsite and hauled over in the spring. We might shoot some stain here and there to pretty it up a little. Anybody wanna buy some twisty 16 foot 2x6's?

Many thanks to the hardy and foolhardy volunteers who suffered through this part of the project. We couldn't have done it without you! We have a couple of swell structures over there now, so let's use it! The Outing Committee wants to know the best time for an outing in the area, hopefully having the evening gathering at our site. Experienced Yakima ditch fisher input appreciated! Maybe a late winter/early spring trip.

Tight lines.



Washington Fly Fishing Club  
P.O. Box 639  
Mercer Island, WA 98040  
[www.wffc.com](http://www.wffc.com)

Stamp  
here

December, 2011

### Meeting Announcement



Meetings are held on the third Tuesday of each month at the Seattle Tennis Club, 922 McGilvra Blvd. E.

The Wet Fly hour begins at 5:30 PM and dinner is served at 6:45 PM.

This month:

**The WFFC Holiday Fundraiser and Christmas Party**





## Washington Fly Fishing Club

### WFFC Membership Dues Notice

**2012 Dues are due on January 1...**

**Let's all renew by the end of January!**

Pay via website (preferred), or by mailing this form with your check

Type of Membership:	Dues Amount:
Regular	\$100.00 *
Associate	\$75.00 *
Senior or Honorary	\$ 0.00

**\* Renewals after February 29 are subject to \$30 reinstatement fee**

Please fill out completely and note any changes for the Roster:

Last Name: \_\_\_\_\_ First \_\_\_\_\_ M.I. \_\_\_\_\_

Date of Birth \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

Spouse: \_\_\_\_\_

Address:

Street: \_\_\_\_\_

City: \_\_\_\_\_

State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: (Check if you want in roster)

Home: \_\_\_\_\_

Work: \_\_\_\_\_

Mobile: \_\_\_\_\_

Email address: \_\_\_\_\_

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