



Vol. 29, No. 9

STREAMLINES

potomacvalleyflyfishers.club



September 2020



Club member Don Fine on Middle Creek. Image credit: Turner Photography

Want to Improve Your Cast? Don't Miss our Clinic!

Improving your casting techniques can help you catch more fish. While we can't guarantee you'll cast like a pro after our upcoming casting clinic, we can guarantee you'll walk away with improved skills that will help you make better casts on the stream. Join us on

September 8 at 6 P.M. at the Middletown Community Park in Middletown, Maryland — our first in-person event in a long time! Don't miss the "Last Cast" article at the end of this newsletter for more details about this upcoming event, as well as other important updates.

Beginner's *Fly Tying*: the Leech-a-ma-call-it Pattern

By Don Fine

We hope that all of you who have been participating in our virtual fly tying sessions have been both enjoying tying the various fly patterns and advancing your tying skills at the same time. We are very encouraged to continue with this theme into the fall of 2020 and winter of 2021 with new patterns and new tying skills. We also want to thank those who sent positive comments and/or photos of the flies which you tied in the past several months. These photos will be a great incentive for other

members, who take up tying artificial flies, as part of their passion for fly fishing. You'll find a couple of great photos sent in by members of last month's pattern, the curly tailed jig, later on in this newsletter.

The pattern chosen for September is an awesome (albeit easy-to-tie) streamer pattern, first described by Scott Sanchez (manager of JD High Country Outfitters in Jackson Hole, Wyoming) in *American Angler*, July/August 2018. Borrowing the description from Scott's overview of his *Leech-a-ma-call-it*, the pattern includes no novel materials, rather it is a compilation of wet fly tying methods and materials



of construction. Nevertheless the pattern, due to the arrangement/rearrangement of its tying materials, has incredible life-like movement in the water for a variety of freshwater fish species. Furthermore, beginner and more advanced fly tiers will enhance their tying skills in learning the *wrap-and-fold* method for applying mylar-containing hackling materials in building the body of a streamer fly pattern.

As in previous months during the pandemic, those who intend to participate will need to register in advance in order to receive by mail the tying materials for the pattern.

How to Participate in our Sep. "*Fly Tying at a Distance*" Session

No later than **September 14**, head to the PVFF website to sign up for our *Fly Tying at a Distance* event. We will mail you the hooks and materials needed to tie this month's flies. All instructions for tying these patterns will be available online by **September 16**. Then consider sending us a photo of your fly and/or you at the vice to **contact@potomacvalleyflyfishers.club**.

Tying the Peacock and Partridge Fly Pattern

Project Healing Waters

By Andrew Frutiger

In our seventh installment of online fly tying seminars, Chuck Dinkle led our veterans through one of the most versatile and complex flies to date, the Peacock and Partridge wet fly.



Chuck also led our veterans through a primer on wet fly fishing (what the angler is trying to imitate as well as the proper technique to present the fly. Wet flies are trying to imitate: larval and pupal forms of aquatic insects, swamped still-born flies, and drowned adults or drowned terrestrials such as ants and beetles.

The best way to fish a wet fly is to cast 45 degrees downstream, allowing the fly to sink and swing with the current, and as the fly straightens it will begin to rise to the surface just like a hatching insect.

Remember: presentation is everything, you can have the most perfectly tied fly, but if the presentation is sloppy, the fish won't take.

If you have any questions or would like to participate in any of our upcoming fly tying sessions at Fort Detrick, please reach out to me at any time at **andrewfrutiger@yahoo.com** or go to our Facebook page at *Project Healing Waters* — *Frederick Chapter*.



The fly itself is a classic, a centuries old pattern that can be fished in both streams and still water, weighted or unweighted. Tying the fly involves a size 12 hook (you can go smaller), black 6/0 thread, green or red silk thread, fine gold wire, peacock herl, and partridge neck feather. This is a great fly for the local streams and ponds and one that I know our veterans will get a lot of use out of.

It's Time to Renew Your PVFF Club Membership

I can't believe it's September already. But even though we haven't had any meetings, we are still operating as a club with Zoom and the PVFF website. **Please note that dues for 2021 have been increased to \$15 single & \$20 family.**

Using the form at the bottom of the last page of this newsletter, please fill out and return it along with your check to the address shown on the form. Be sure to give a phone number so we can contact you in case of a cancellation of the monthly meeting or other functions. Please also indicate if you are an FFI (Fly Fishers International) member. — **Ruby Fine**

Astronomy Minute: September 2020

By Russ Hanson

The Great Conjunction is coming! No, Charlie Brown, it's not the Great Pumpkin. Keep an eye on Jupiter and Saturn. They will continue to get closer and closer to each other until they are right next to each other on December 21. The Great Conjunction! Conjunctions of these two planets occur every 20 years. So if Mother Nature doesn't give us clear skies, there's always 2040. This will be the closest the two planets appear to each other since 1623. Oddly, I don't recollect that one. Check these two out from time to time as they cozy up to each other.



In Memoriam: PVFF Member Bill Lukens

By Don Fine

Long time PVFF member William Howard "Bill" Lukens, 82, passed away on August 18. Bill was a U.S. Air Force veteran who subsequently completed his undergraduate degree at the University of Maryland and his Juris Doctor of Law degree from Cleveland-Marshall College of Law. Bill practiced law for 37 years in Maryland.

After retirement from his law practice, Bill continued to serve the community as a member of the Frederick County Parks and Recreation Commission, where he was instrumental in helping establish several

county recreational parks, including Fountain Rock Park and Nature Center and the Catoctin Creek Nature Center (which is located on the hill above

Catoctin Creek, PVFF's home waters). Bill loved fishing and shared his love for our sport through several Kiwanis fishing clinics for youth. Bill also served for a number of years as PVFF's *pro bono* attorney where he reviewed legal documents pertaining to our club's bi-laws, and our association with the Federation of Fly Fishers (the predecessor organization to Fly Fishers International). Several years ago Bill also donated his fishing equipment to PVFF, in support of our annual club banquet.



I Should Have Brought a Net

By Karen Baker

In mid-August, Chad and I went to visit our daughter in Minnesota and made plans to spend a few days at a lovely B&B in Ely, Minnesota, on the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, part of the Superior National Forest. This area is famous for its beauty, wildlife, and fishing. NOT fly fishing, though. I did not bring any equipment with me so I went down to Arrowhead Tackle Shop, one of the many tackle shops in Ely, to get information. I told the nice guy at the counter that I was a fly fisher and totally ignorant about spin casting but wanted to give it a try.

So he fixed me up with a starter rod and tackle box set for \$35! Can't beat that! It was probably a kids set, but I was OK with that. I told him I wanted to fish for bass and he said that kit should do the trick, but I might get a Northern Pike. OK, I say, I need a license, too. I pay and happily head out.

We take the kayaks and head out to try my luck on Farm Lake. My first cast, using a Muskie/Pike No Roll Spinnerbait from the dock, gets stuck on a lily and Chad kayaked out and got it loose for me. We head out onto the lake and, after several attempts, finally I get the hang of it and have some good casts along the shore in between the lily pads and the wild rice.

To my great surprise I had a hard strike and the rod bent almost in half as I reeled it in. It was a Northern Pike about 16 inches or so and really gave me a fight. I got it to the kayak and about to get a picture when it flipped itself off the hook (which I had flattened). If I had a net I would have been able to grab it for a picture. So you will have to take my word for it that I caught a beautiful Northern Pike on a spin rod on the Boundary Waters.

The take away message is have a net with you!



Conservation Update: Aquatic Invasive Plants

By Dave Keane



A new type of invasive water chestnut species has been found in northern Virginia. *Trapa bispinosa* has been discovered in 54 locations and 5 counties in Virginia. Currently, it's the only state in the country that has this new species. Visit chesapeakebaymagazine.com and search on "invasive plants" for the full story.

Earlier this year, the spring house that supplies our fish pen with water had an outbreak of Watercress, *Nasturtium officinale*. Watercress is a very aggressive invasive aquatic plant that can quickly colonize and overwhelm waterways. Watercress is actually an edible plant that thrives in cold spring water. Fountain Rock Park in Walkersville was once a site where watercress was farmed and then sold at markets in Baltimore. Aquatic invasive plants can be spread by waterfowl, humans, and seasonal flooding. These plants reproduce rapidly and can choke out streams, ponds, and waterways threatening aquatic life and organisms.

PVFF Shirts and Hats

By Dave Keane

We currently have a limited supply of shirts and hats available for purchase. I will plan on bringing our inventory to the casting clinic. If you are interested in a particular size, please call or email me and I can

Borrowing

Each of us who fish love the tranquility of the water and the accompanying gifts of nature, which come along with the fishing experience. So often we talk about these treasures, but perhaps less often do we have the opportunity to spend the time to think about how special are these gifts of land and water. Even less so do we begin to understand that during our lives (on mother Earth), we are in fact renting our time of using the land and water — regardless of who owns these precious resources. As renters, are we being the best stewards of these resources for future generations? Yes, sometimes our efforts are ephemeral; after all, a future landowner could cut down the trees, remove the streamside cover which protects the grass that shades the trout, or turn their herds out on the pasture and graze it down to weeds, despite our best efforts. None of us know these answers, but for now we will try to be good tenants of these gifts of nature. — Don Fine

The theme of the above passage was based on a much longer article with the same title, written by Tom Reed in recent issue of Wyoming Wildlife, August 2020.

see if we have your size and color. If you can't make it to the casting clinic, I can make other arrangements. I can be reached at 240-367-4905 or plantprotection@comcast.net.

Bristol Bay — Pebble Mine Update

By Larry Forte

In the April 2019 newsletter, I wrote about the proposed Pebble Mine at Bristol Bay. I think my tone could best be described as concerned. For several years before that, I was very optimistic that the mine would not happen and that Bristol Bay would remain protected for future generations. Since writing that article, I have become more and more concerned. The Army Corps of Engineers released the results of their environmental study and were getting ready to make their decision any day about issuing a permit to The Pebble Limited Partnership, a subsidiary of Northern Dynasty based in Canada and the owners of Pebble Mine.

Here's the good news! On Monday, August 24th, the Army Corps of Engineers ruled that the proposed

Pebble Mine would likely cause major degradation to the environment and have significant negative effects on the watershed of Bristol Bay. As a result, the request for permit, as proposed by the mining company, would not be approved.

In addition, several days before the announcement, the Trump administration issued new restrictions that the mining company must meet in order to be granted a permit.

While the proposed mine is not dead and the long-term fight is certainly not over, the folks at Northern Dynasty have been dealt a significant setback. Given what is going on today around us, it's nice to have some good news!



Martyn Holland

Here are a couple of images we received from our August fly tying session. Great work from Nina and Martyn! We hope you are enjoying our series of “virtual” fly tying events — if there is anything we can do to improve these online sessions, let us know.



Nina Clemen

Last Cast

By Andy Mekelburg



Savage River

The summer heat is starting to abate, signaling the beginning of the fall fishing season. I've had a couple of opportunities to fish with club members, although it's been hot and the water has been low. Nothing to brag about, except being outside fishing in beautiful rivers and streams with good people. Isn't that why we do what we do? I always go fishing with high hopes and low expectations. I guess I need the *Zen Guide to Fly Fishing*. However, I have learned that if we are patient and enjoy the surroundings and the company, we can get to a "happy" place. Let me bore you for two paragraphs about these trips.

The first opportunity was on the Susquehanna River, near Harrisburg, with Steve. We were in a great location. We decided to take a canoe with fly and spinning gear and traversed the width of this channel of the river, with only a few small pools in it. We waded a bit, throwing everything in the box, but the river was very low, so not many pools — although we did see a bass zip past us. We decided to paddle towards the shoreline towards another spot. The water was so low that we kept getting stuck, until my canoe leader jumped out and led me in pulling it in. After that successful battle, we waded just 20 -30 yards from the shore, which was still only about one to two feet deep. We used specially rigged weedless

lures, that eventually led to my catching a couple of smaller bass, saving the day from a skunking. The highlights were being out in the water in the canoe and wading, the challenge of canoeing in low waters, but the best was hanging around afterwards with nice people talking and sipping adult beverages.

The second opportunity was a trip to the Savage River with Dave, Randy, Denny and Mike, camping at the primitive camp sites below the Dam. The owner of the fly shop told us the head waters with the brook trout were low and not productive. He was right. We set up our camp and went up about 100 yards to the Savage River. No luck, though near the end there were trout starting to rise. We had a great meal and campfire. It was nice to sleep in the tent outdoors. The next day, we decided to ignore the advice of the fly shop owner and look for brook trout in one of the feeder streams. I did see one — in the water, not on the rod! I gave the Tenkara rod a good workout. It was a great experience just hiking up that stream dipping and dabbing for fish. The outcome of the fishing didn't matter, it was the experience of the stream and rod.

Which brings me to the Annual Casting Clinic at 6 PM, on September 8, in the Middletown Community Park. You can get in touch with your rod. This is a real good opportunity for beginners, as well as a chance for even the experienced angler to learn some new tricks. It's also a chance for those who have been hunkering down to participate in an outdoor activity and see other actual people. Of course, we will follow all state safety guidelines.

The casting clinic would be good time to bring items for the Annual Banquet Raffle. Karen Baker will be there to collect items. We will also soon begin selling tickets for our raffle. We do appreciate everyone pitching in with a contribution, or purchasing multiple raffle tickets purchased, etc.



Calendar of Events

- Sep. 8** Casting Clinic at Middletown Park, 6:00 PM
- Sep. 14** Beginner's Fly Tying Online Sign-Up Deadline
- Sep. 16** Fly Tying Instruction Available on PVFF Website
- Sep. 23** Board of Directors' Meeting Conference Call, 7:00 PM
- Oct. 24** Virtual Annual Banquet — Join us on Zoom at 6:00 PM (the link will be sent out via email)

2020 PVFF Offices & Directors

President.....Andy Mekelburg
 Vice President.....Dave Keane
 Secretary.....Karen Baker
 Treasurer.....Dennis Allen
 3 year Director.....Russ Hanson
 2 year Director.....Lynn Ashe
 1 year Director.....Troy Kitch
 Past President.....Larry Forte

POTOMAC VALLEY FLY FISHERS
P. O. BOX 3001
FREDERICK, MD 21705
www.potomacvalleyflyfishers.club



POTOMAC VALLEY FLY FISHERS
MEMBERSHIP and RENEWAL APPLICATION and LIABILITY RELEASE

Year _____

The purpose of the Potomac Valley Fly Fishers (PVFF) is (1) to promote fly fishing as the most sportsman-like and enjoyable way of fishing and the most consistent with the preservation and wise use of our resources; (2) to provide advice, suggestions and assistance to club members; (3) to publicize the best practices and techniques of fly fishing, fly tying, fly casting and other related subjects; and (4) to maintain liaison with other organizations of sportsmen and conservationists. By my joining PVFF voluntarily, I understand there are risks involved and will not hold the PVFF club, board of directors, and officers responsible for any injuries, accidents or death as a result of participation in the activities of the Club. Also I grant PVFF permission to photograph me and/or my family at any activities and also to publish them in our monthly newsletter, at the meetings and any PVFF fly fishing functions.

Website: www.potomacvalleyflyfishers.club

The undersigned being in agreement with the above does hereby apply for membership/renewal in the Potomac Valley Fly Fishers.

Applicant's Name: _____ Date: _____
 (Last) (First)

If family membership, other names: _____

Home Address: _____
 (Street) (City / Town) (State) (Zip Code)

Phone Number: _____ E-mail address for e-mailing Newsletter _____

Applicant's signature: _____

Are you a Fly Fishers Int'l (FFI) member? Yes or No

Yearly Club Dues: ☐ \$15 Single ☐ \$20 Family \$ _____ **Donation**

How did you hear about the PVFF? ☐ Friend ☐ Facebook ☐ Club Website / Internet ☐ Club Newsletter ☐ Fly Shop ☐ Other

Interested in a volunteer position? ☐ Officer /Board of Directors ☐ Committee/Chair ☐ Banquet ☐ Trip Organizer ☐ Teaching Fly Tying
☐ Other Activities

Please make check payable to Potomac Valley Fly Fishers or PVFF and mail with this completed form to:

Ruby Fine, PVFF Membership
8712 Baltimore National Pike
Middletown, Maryland 21769-9401

Dues for calendar year Jan 1-Dec 31

Cash _____ Check# _____ Amount _____ Date _____
 Card given _____ New _____ Renewal _____ Life _____