



The Evening

# Hatch

The Newsletter of the Michigan Fly Fishing Club

February 2018

## Enjoying Seasons Of The Muskegon

By Sybil Hunter

The Michigan Fly Fishing Club welcomed Kevin Feenstra speaking about fishing the Muskegon River at our February speaker meeting. Feenstra runs a guide service out of Newaygo, MI. Newaygo is located on the west side of the state between US-131 and Lake Michigan. The Muskegon river connects with Lake Michigan in Muskegon and its tributaries run as far northeast as Houghton Lake.

"The Muskegon River is 230 miles long," said Feenstra. "For Trout fishing, the 20 miles below Croton Dam is the best fishing. There are a lot of good tributaries in the Newaygo area... Bigelow Creek has Brown Trout and Steelhead." A guide picks a food source and fishes it. There is tremendous diversity on the river.

"The Little Muskegon is harder to access but is great fishing," said Feenstra. In late September, the river becomes weedy. "Insects live in the weediness; throw a Scud with olive dubbing and a bead on to catch Trout. Fish it under an indicator. Throw it at the back of the weeds."

"In spite of those invasive species, the river is really thriving at this time," said Feenstra. If you are crazy enough to go fishing in the winter, Feenstra said the



waters of the Muskegon get low in January and sometimes February.

"The water is low and clear. One of the best ways to learn is to fish when the water is low."

**Scuds** are a fresh water shrimp. If you fish the Muskegon in winter months, Feenstra suggested tying them orange, but scuds can be fished any time of the year.

"Rainbows get their spawning colors in January and at the end of February." Feenstra also suggested tying the Cress Bug in grey.

"**Sculpin** have no swim bladder. They can't sit neutrally buoyant. They don't have any scales, so every predator knows that they go down easy." Sculpins like rocks. The bigger the rocks, the bigger the Sculpin. "...and where there are Sculpins, there are Brown Trout." If you're gonna fish Sculpin patterns in the winter months,

*Continued on page 2*

## MFFC Calendar



**March 7, 2018**

**Activities Meeting**

Clarenceville Middle School  
Livonia, 7:30 p.m.

**March 10 & 11, 2018 MFFC Expo**  
**Macomb Community College**  
**Sports & Expo Center, Warren**

**March 21, 2018**

**Speaker Meeting**

**Speaker: Mark Hendricks**

**Topic: Casting Demonstration**

Clarenceville Middle School  
Livonia, 7:30 p.m.

**April 11, 2018**

**Speaker Meeting**

**Speaker: TBD**

**Topic: TBD**

Clarenceville Middle School  
Livonia, 7:30 p.m.

**April 25, 2018**

**Activity Meeting**

Clarenceville Middle School  
Livonia, 7:30 p.m.



# MFFC

*Continued from page 1*

fish them closer to the edges. Right after Christmas, use Christmas colors - green and red. "Cast it out, mend the line until you touch the bottom. If your fly is getting really, really deep, you want the top to look like the top of what you're imitating," said Feenstra.

"It turns out the Gobies have been balancing out the zebra muscles, another invasive species," said Feenstra. "One of the features of Gobies is they have big beady eyes and you want to imitate that if you can [in your fly]."

When the water rises, it is time to nymph fish **Stone Flies**, brown and black, said Feenstra. "In March, April and May, the Trout are very stupid, but they get sharp fast." Everything becomes active during that timeframe.

**Egg patterns** and **nymph patterns** are best after the Steelhead spawn. Then when the water warms up, fish eat the baby Steelhead, so in May, imitate the baby Steelhead. Feenstra advises olive and copper flies if fishing Steelhead flies. "Watch the fry size and match with flies," said Feenstra, "With a little fry pattern, use a sinking leader, seven foot is ideal."

Suckers usually spawn the last week in May or in early June. "A lot of times we will fish right behind the suckers spawning. There are really dumb Trout [at that time], my boat was just five feet away from them. Tie very, very tiny eggs." Feenstra said Scuds, Brassie or Pheasant Tails are also good options. "The Trout will keep gorging on the Suckers, but don't come in right there on top of them."

Use **Shiners**. Said Feenstra, "Brown Trout will cue on that color (copper flash). Throw a bright copper one, then follow with a more natural color. Use stripping." The next slide donned a close up of Shiners noshing on orange rotini. "Sand Shiners really like pasta," said Feenstra. "I didn't know that..." until one of his clients dumped the dregs of his pasta dish into the river.

"**Ruby Darters**, the Trout will definitely key in on those guys!" said Feenstra.

"The **Caddis** numbers took a dive when Zebra Muscles moved in in the 1990's. Prior to that point, there was nothing but Caddis," said Feenstra. "Caddis hatch, in May then again in September. Use a green body Caddis."

Activities Meeting - March 7, 2018

May is dry fly season said Feenstra. This is when he ties a Cadulfur (half Caddis, half Sulfur) fly. Use an orangish body for the Caddis half, and an orangish shuck for the Sulfur half.

**Grey Drake** are next, they are mostly along the weeds along the shoreline. They crawl off into the woods when nobody sees them, then come back as Spinners for the Spinner fall.

Drakes are drawn to body heat, so it is not uncommon for a column of Drakes to form above the fisher, and if there is a column, there is no good fishing. Feenstra said it is key to tie brown in a Drake pattern.

**Isonychia** excite the fish, said Feenstra, "Little Isonychia swim like minnows. Tie little wet flies to imitate these. We have tons of Hexes in a lot of places we don't have Trout."

Then there is always the good old **Woolly Buggers**. Feenstra suggested tying them in olive. "Fish along the edges of the river."

With **Hellgrammites** especially, "Tie them chocolate colored with a little bit of copper flash on the side. They can be two to three inches long," said Feenstra. "They are a really creepy insect. They fly around you like a hummingbird." They are big and creepy.

"What Trout and Smallmouth have in common is their love to eat winter **Crayfish**," said Feenstra. "They won't touch the big Crayfish unless they are soft shell Crayfish. Tie them bright orange." They can also be tied with olive or tan bodies. "Fish will look for the antennae. A few sprig of deer hair will do the trick. Tie them 3/4 inch to an inch long and give it a little twitch when fishing. In May, June and July they are molting at a faster rate."

Usually **Blue Winged Olives** hatch anywhere from July through September, Feenstra indicated these dry flies are effective all the way through November.

At the end of summer in September to October Feenstra suggested flies with a basic white pattern and a little chartreuse. "Brown Trout spawn when the temps drop. Fall is a good time to see the Michigan Rivers." An otter snarfing a large salmon popped up in the next slide.

More of Feenstra's amazing photography can be found on his website <http://feenstraoutdoors.com/wordpress/>.

Around The Country

## Members On The Fly



*The Klimko Fishing Report: The above two photos are from our stay at the Lodge at Glendorn in Bradford, PA. This fish was caught a mile below the Kinzua Dam on the Allegheny River on a gorgeous afternoon in September. Our Orvis guide was unsure of the trout species, suggesting it might be a tiger trout. Our little friend was released to befuddle another fly fisherman another day.*



# MFFFC Business

## Minutes

Michigan Fly Fishing Club Board Meeting  
December 20, 2017

1. Call to order
2. Present: Freeburg; Vanderhoof; Bada; Nowicki; Strachan; Selinger; Oehring; Summers; Finstad  
Absent: Bocks
3. Approval of Minutes
4. Approval of Agenda
5. Officer's Reports
  - \* President - *Freeburg*  
Scott will mill the Jan 10, 2018 meeting due to business commitments  
2017-2018 Clarenceville Schools meeting contract complete, including insurance
  - \* Vice President - *Vanderhoof*  
Spencer thanked Board for meeting to cover the snowed out Dec 6 BOD meeting
  - \* Treasurer - *Nowicki*  
Advance made for Steelhead outing  
2016 tax return submitted  
Gift/appreciation certificates for Clarenceville staff approved
  - \* Corresponding Secretary - *Bocks*  
Absent
  - \* Membership - *Bada*  
Current approximately 384 active members  
12 new members recently added
6. Events & Outings  
International Fly Fishing File Festival - IF4: Dec 6. Club response was excellent. Board will pursue making the IF4 a regular club meeting event.
7. New Business
  - \* Library  
Board agreed to designate the Club Library as the "Joe Sattler Memorial Library."
  - \* Website SSL Certificate  
Board discussed and agreed to obtain a "Secure Sockets Layer" for the club's website. Cost and implementation to be determined at a later date.
9. Old Business  
No old business
10. Visitor Comments: None
11. Roundtable: Banquet going well
11. Adjournment at 7:04 PM

John Pinto's Sand In My Shoe Will Return Next Month.  
In the meantime, here's a teaser:

We hooked up right on schedule and began walking across Paul's sixteen acres towards the river. Somehow the conversation was not about trout... The next words out of Roger's mouth would change me for the rest of my life!



### 2017 – 2018 Officers

#### President:

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# February Fly Of The Month

## Lethal Impaling Fly

# Rattlesnake

By Todd A. Schotts

For this month's fly, I really didn't have to look far for this fatal pattern. On my first ever float trip, I bought one of these flies before we headed out on the Au Sable River below Mio. The fish I turned, and the hook-ups were tremendous using this lethal pattern. It is as deadly as a rattlesnake, and if not handled carefully it can also bite your fingers. This pattern comes from one of our own Michigan greats, Ray Schmidt, and is called the "Rattlesnake."

If you're not too familiar with Ray Schmidt, he started in the sport as a young boy tying flies with his Uncle Clarence Roberts, a famous Grayling, Michigan fly tier and conservation officer. Ray owned and operated the very successful and well known full service fly shop "Schmidt Outfitters" in Wellston, Michigan for over 30 years. After retiring from the shop, he and his wife Kate took over marketing and sales for Temple Fork Outfitters (TFO) in the Great Lakes Region. He is also a tier, a guide, and consultant through Double SS Outdoors. Now that is a busy retirement!

For this articulated Rattlesnake fly pattern, the idea originated around 1985, when he started guiding a stretch of the Manistee River below a certain Dam. Ray met an angler as he was floating in the area, and he shared his secret to his success, as Ray put it, it looked like half a chicken and deer tied to a 6x long size 2 hook. They nicknamed the fly "The Youngblood Special" after the gentleman that shared his secret. But as with most tiers and fly designers, you always have to take it to the

extreme; so, Ray did just that, as he increased the fly size, added a stinger hook, and added brass beads. After much trial and error, a very successful fly was designed. Now how the fly got its name, Ray mentioned, is that the fly reminded him of a Rattlesnake for two reasons (1) first the beads looked like a Rattlesnake tail, and (2) while tying the fly, the trailer hook would frequently bite him.

This is a pattern of medium difficulty. The major trick is not to impale your finger or fingers on the stinger hook when tying these rattling flies. There are some tricks that will help to keep your fingers from getting bitten. You can put a piece of foam over the trailer/stinger hook or even a straw. There are a bunch of different color combinations out there, but try to stick with your more natural muddler collars. Like olive, brown, black, tans, and white are great colors to have. You can even experiment with colors like yellow, orange, or maybe even a blue. One thing to really remember is to keep the head like a Muddler style as it represents Sculpins in the river system. One last thing, if you are wondering about the length of these flies, they can be in the range of 4 to 4 1/2 inches, or in the range of 6 to 8 inches. The bigger the fly, it reduce the number of fish coming to your fly by 70 to 80 percent, but the ones that come are serious fish, and it usually eliminates all the dinks.

When fishing this articulated rattling monster, a fast 6 weight is recommended or bigger fly rod with a great fighting butt. Ray mentions if using a 6-weight fly rod, a 200-grain sinking line is best with short leaders - 3-4 feet max. The formula is: 2 feet of 20lb, and 2 feet of 12lb. He likes to use a small ant swivel in between the 20 and 12lb lines for two reasons. (1) it makes a great step connection and (2) it eliminates line twist when your fly gets the "Streamer Spins."

## Rattlesnake



**HOOKS:** Dai-Riki 135, TMC 2457, Daiichi 1120 size 10 heavy scud hook (stinger)  
Short shank nymph size 4 (body)  
**THREAD:** 3/0 or 210 Denier White  
**CONNECTOR:** 20lb coated braided wire or saltwater bite tippet  
**EYES:** Black Bead Chain Eyes  
**BODY:** 1/8" (3mm) diameter brass or nickel beads (5)  
**WING:** Rabbit Zonker w/Red Krystal Flash & 3 pieces of Gold/Silver Holographic Fly Fiber  
**HEAD:** Deer Body Hair (Muddler Spun)

Ray uses a non-slip mono loop knot to tie the fly on, as this will add a lot more action and movement to your fly. When he is fishing this fly, he does with a fast retrieve, twitching the rod tip and stripping the line. Be very careful of the hooks. It is best to make sure to de-barb them; it makes it easier to get the hooks out of you or your fishing partner in case of an active "Rattlesnake Impaling."

This is one of my favorite flies to use, not to just move big Trout, but also Bass and Pike. So, get your rattle on, and until next month, tight lines and snazzy flies.

## 2018 Midwest Fly Fishing Expo Turns MCC Into The Region's Largest Fly Fishing Academy

The Michigan Fly Fishing Club again brings the largest fly fishing show to Metro Detroit on Saturday, March 10, and Sunday, March 11. The 2018 Expo will turn the Sports & Expo Center at Macomb Community College into a weekend fly fishing academy, offering dozens of presentations and demonstrations on topics ranging from casting to fly tying to “reading the water” to those places most likely to be occupied by fish.

“Once again, we’ve got a great lineup,” said Expo Chair Jim Telinda. Leading the way is an impressive group of headline speakers: Tom Rosenbauer of Orvis, a name synonymous with fly fishing; Virginia’s Blane Chocklett; Canadian stillwater specialist Phil Rowley; Michael Mauri, the German-born casting impresario; and noted Pennsylvania fly tier Tom Baltz.

“Not only do we have a remarkable group of headliners, we’re offering a boatload of regional speakers who hail from Michigan and Ohio,” Telinda said. “Are you interested in fly tiers who specialize in traditional Michigan patterns or fly designers who create flies for pike and musky? We have them. Are you looking for a new venue to cast your flies? We’ve got travel specialists who will help get you to the destination of your dreams. If you’re a fan of angling literature or art, we’ve got those too. If you only need to restock your supplies for the upcoming fly fishing season, we’ve got outfitters who’ll be happy to introduce you to some of the newest products available,” Telinda said.

“We’ve even got an area where kids can learn to tie flies and cast a fly rod,” he said.

The 41st annual Expo will feature dozens

of free seminars about fly fishing techniques, fly tying and fly fishing locales and will bring together more than 100 exhibitors, including dozens of fly tiers, rod builders, artists, guides, outfitters and conservation organizations. “We’ve got exhibitors from every corner of the country,” Telinda said.

The annual Expo is the oldest all-fly fishing show east of the Mississippi and is hosted by the Livonia-based Michigan Fly Fishing Club. Here’s more information about the Expo’s featured presenters:

**Tom Rosenbauer, Vermont:** Tom Rosenbauer has been with the Orvis Company for more than 30 years, and while there, has been a fishing school instructor, copywriter, public relations director, merchandise manager, and was editor of The Orvis News for 10 years. He is currently Marketing Director for Orvis Rod and Tackle. Tom was named Fly Rod & Reel magazine’s 2011 “Angler of the Year,” recognizing his decades of educational efforts through his books, magazine articles and podcasts.

Tom has been fly fishing for four decades and was a commercial fly tier by age 14. He has fished extensively across North America and internationally — Christmas Island, the Bahamas, Belize, Russia, Chile, and on the fabled chalk streams of England. He is credited with bringing bead-head flies to North America, and is the inventor of the “Big Eye” hook, magnetic net retriever and tungsten beads for fly tying. He has nearly two dozen fly fishing books in print, including “The Orvis Fly-Fishing Guide,” “Reading Trout Streams,” “Prospecting for Trout,” “Casting Illusions,” “Fly-Fishing in

America,” “Approach and Presentation,” “Trout Foods and Their Imitations,” “Nymphing Techniques,” “Leaders, Knots, and Tippets,” “The Orvis Guide to Dry-Fly Fishing,” “The Orvis Encyclopedia of Fly Fishing,” “Fly Fishing for Trout: The Next Level,” and “The Orvis Fly-Tying Guide,” which won a 2001 National Outdoor Book Award. “Salt,” his collaboration with photographer Andy Anderson, won a National Outdoor Book Award in 2014. He has also been published in Field & Stream, Outdoor Life, Catalog Age, Fly Fisherman, Gray’s Sporting Journal, Sporting Classics, Fly Rod & Reel, Audubon, Men’s Journal, and others. Tom is the writer and narrator of “The Orvis Fly Fishing Guide Podcast,” one of the top outdoor podcasts on iTunes.

He lives with his wife and son in southern Vermont on the banks of his favorite trout stream.

**Blane Chocklett, Virginia:** For the past 30 years, Blane has lived his passion. He grew up fishing the small mountain streams in Virginia’s Blue Ridge Mountains. In the mid-90s, he opened Blue Ridge Fly Fishers in Roanoke, VA, one of the most respected full-service fly shops in the region. About a decade ago, he returned to his river roots as owner/operator of the New Angle Fishing Company, specializing in float trips targeting the regions predatory fish including musky, striped bass, smallmouth bass and trout. Today, Blane operates a guide service specializing in float trips on four premier Virginia rivers: the James, New, Roanoke and Jackson.

Recognized as one of the most cutting-edge fly tiers in the sport, many of his inventive fly patterns are produced through Umpqua Feather

# Midwest Fly Fishing Expo

## (Continued) 2018 Midwest Fly Fishing Expo Turns MCC Into The Region's Largest Fly Fishing Academy

Merchants. He has served on the board of the American Fly Tackle Trade Association (AFFTA) and has worked as a consultant/ambassador to several fly fishing companies including Yeti Coolers, Temple Fork Outfitters, Scientific Anglers, Patagonia, Costa Del Mar Sunglasses, Fishpond USA, Renzetti/RD Distribution, Flymen Fishing Company, Hedron Flashabou, Hareline Dubbing, Hyde Drift Boats, Towee Boats, and Hog Island Boat Works.

He has designed flies for Umpqua Feather Merchants since 1998. Through his Hybrid Series™ and other innovative designs, Blane crafts traditional and synthetic tying materials to achieve the subtleness of flies and the strike-generating action of conventional lures.

He is the Southeast Regional Field Editor for *Fly Fisherman Magazine*, but also has been published in a variety of outdoor publications.

**Phil Rowley, Alberta, Canada:** Phil has been fly fishing for more than 30 years. His love of fly fishing has taken him across North America pursuing trout, Atlantic and Pacific salmon, char, pike, walleye and numerous other species on the fly. But Phil is probably best known for his stillwater exploits, especially as the host for stillwater segments of Canadian video program "The New Fly Fisher."

A former commercial fly tier, Phil has written for almost every major fly fishing publication in North America. He has authored three books and numerous feature articles and two regular columns. Phil's first book, "Fly Patterns for Stillwaters," is a best seller. In 2014, Phil was a proud recipient of

a Lifetime Achievement Award from *Fly Tyer Magazine*.

In addition to his writing, Phil has five instructional DVDs. In 2007, Phil was a member of the gold medal-winning team at the Canadian Fly Fishing championships.

When he isn't on the water Phil travels North America performing at outdoor shows, providing seminars, speaking to fly clubs and conducting fly fishing schools. Phil also provides instructional stillwater guiding on the lakes located a short distance from his Edmonton area home.

**Michael Mauri, Florida:** One of the world's outstanding and most entertaining fly casters, Michael was born and raised in Germany. He caught his first fish at age six from a small stream in Bavaria and soon began focusing on every facet of the sport of fly fishing.

Since 1998, Michael has participated in international shows and conducted single- and double-hand casting workshops around the globe. As a professional fly fisher, he has guided throughout Europe, Canada and the United States.

Welcoming new challenges, he continuously hones his skills while - at the same time - coming up with new designs for his own products just as he has long done for equipment offered by leading firms in the fly fishing industry.

Michael is an innovator in all aspects of fly fishing and he has created his own unique casting method, the Effective Fly Casting Technique or EFCT. He says the secret of EFCT fly-casting is natural movement, which makes it easy to learn - whether a beginner, novice, or seasoned casting veteran. Said

Telinda, "Don't miss an opportunity to show or otherwise to join one of the most respected instructors in fly fishing and casting, including all aspects of single-handed and double-handed spey casting and overhead casting."

Now based in Stuart, FL, he offers guided trips and fly casting lessons year-around. In addition to guiding, he consults as a design engineer for a leading producer of graphite and fiberglass fishing rods and designs and handcrafts his own brand of fly rods.

**Tom Baltz, Pennsylvania:** A New Mexico native, Tom Baltz has been a fly tier for more than 50 years, spending much of that time among the legendary tiers and anglers of the limestone valleys of south-central Pennsylvania, near Carlisle. He is the only four-time Pennsylvania State Fly Tying Champion. His flies have appeared in *Field & Stream*, *Fly Fisherman magazine*, *Art of Angling Journal*, *Eastern Fly Fishing*, *American Angler*, the Orvis catalog and numerous other books and publications.

Tom ties fishing and collector flies for discriminating anglers coast to coast. His trout and Salmon flies are in the collections of the Pennsylvania State Museum, the Pennsylvania Fly Fishing Museum and The Angler's Club of New York, as well as private collections worldwide.

A full-time fly angling professional since 1974 and one of Pennsylvania's first licensed fishing guides (PA Guide License #9), Tom was named Orvis's Northeast Trout Guide of the Year (2001).

He and his wife Eileen live outside Boiling Springs, PA, very near such legendary Pennsylvania streams as Mountain Creek, the Letort, and the Yellow Breeches.

# Michigan Fly Fishing Expo

## Meet the 2018 Midwest Fly Fishing Expo's featured fly tiers

**Jim Reed** is a world class deer hair tier. He hails from nearby Howell, MI. To say his ties are amazing would be an understatement. In a 2006 Federation of Fly Fishers (now known as Fly Fishers International or FFI) each of Jim's six entries was award a world champion medal. Besides being deer hair-spinning master, Jim is an incredibly versatile tier. He has demonstrated and taught tying across the Great Lakes region and Midwest, annual FFI National Conclaves in Livingston and and the International Fly Tying Symposium. Jim will be tying his famous deer hair flies and other patterns.

**John Satkowski** resides in Toledo, Ohio, where he fishes for all fish that swim in the rivers and lakes of southeastern Michigan and northwest Ohio. For the past 15 years, he has focused on unlocking the secrets of smallmouth bass, carp, trout, and northern pike on the fly. One of his hallmarks, John always tries to add a realistic flare to his fly patterns. He is a pro tier for Flymen Fishing Company and a commercial tier for Rainy's Premium Flies, tying patterns ranging from dry flies, nymphs, steelhead and streamers to saltwater flies. John's patterns often employ creative fly materials and unconventional tying styles.

**Hunter Hayes**, another resident of the Toledo area, is co-owner of Wildwood Anglers in Ohio. He is a protege of the late deer hair master, Chris Helm. He started tying at the age of seven, and started tying with Chris at the age of 15. His deer hair creations are more masters of artwork than fishing flies. Besides spinning deer hair, Hunter slings bobbins for all types of flies at

his vise, from warmwater species, trout, steelhead, salmon. In addition to tying, Hunter guides on the Maumee, Rocky and Vermillion rivers.

**Steve Wascher**, a third-generation tiers from Greenhurst, NY, caught his first trout at the age of 3 1/2 and began tying flies as a six-year-old. He says, "I tie a wide range of patterns, ranging from midges to huge musky patterns. I also delve in tube flies and Spey and Dee flies." Besides tying, Steve guides during the summer months for a wide range of warmwater species. He enjoys writing as well. His articles and flies have appeared in Hatches Magazine, American Angler, and Mid-Atlantic Fly Fishing Guide. Steve is a Dyna-King Pro Staff member.

**Jerry Regan**, another third-generation fly tier; along with being one of the best commercial fly tiers in the business is one of a small handful of keepers of Michigan's fly fishing history. Just like Trout Unlimited, Jerry was born along the fabled trout waters of the Au Sable River near Grayling. As a kid he learned fly tying and fishing from Michigan tying legends like Earl Madsen and Ernie Borchers. Jerry ties his flies like the legends, shunning the use of synthetic materials used in so many modern flies.

**Al Ritt** is a fly-tying instructor, demonstration fly tier and owner of Al Ritt Flies. He's also the brand manager of PEAK Fishing, a manufacturer of premium-quality fly-tying devices and bamboo rod-making planing forms and tools. His book "25 Best Most Versatile Flies, Their Histories, Stories and Step-by-Step Tying Photos." It is a book for intermediate to advanced tiers, and — true to its title — it gives not just the steps for

tying each pattern but also the entertaining history behind many of tying's most classic patterns. Al grew up here in Michigan but moved to California in the early 1980s. That's where his passion for fly fishing and tying really blossomed. In 1989 he moved to Longmont, CO, where he and his wife Diana still reside.

**Paul Beel** is owner/writer and fly tyer of the website and fly-tying business Frankenfly ([www.frankenfly.com](http://www.frankenfly.com)). His passion of fishing took root early as a child watching his grandfather create homemade lures. He felt he could continue in his grandfather's footsteps as a fly tier. Paul specializes in modern streamers, classic Michigan dry flies, and panfish flies. Paul is on the Pro Staff for J. Stockard, Orvis Fly Designer, HMH Visers, Temple Fork Outfitters, Fishpond, Partridge of Redditch and Deer Creek. He also has his own line of dubbing called "FrankenDub."

**Dennis Potter**, the owner of Riverhouse Fly Company, began tying more than 30 years ago before fishing on the Au Sable River in Northern Michigan. He spent a number of season at the Gates Au Sable Lodge as a fly fishing instructor but is probably best known as a fly tying teacher. "Fly tying is not about speed and quantity. When flies are tied too fast, proper proportion and durability disappear. A "pretty fly" that falls apart is not worth much to you or the fish. Not every fly lasts all day but I strive to tie the most durable fly possible," he says. His fly designs are fished extensively and with great success throughout the U.S. He excels at in-person instruction but also offers various fly tying videos.

# Midwest Fly Fishing Expo

## Expo's fly tiers

**Mike Schmidt** is owner of and tier for Angler's Choice Flies, based in New Smyrna Beach, FL. Mike has been commercially producing flies for more than 15 years. With a variety of established patterns on the books, Mike Schmidt, strives to push the limits of materials on the market to create "the next generation" of flies. His fly tying offerings include winged wets, warmwater, coldwater, and saltwater patterns.

**Eli Berant** grew up and lives in Michigan, so he has been surrounded by big water all his life. After getting his first fly tying kit at the age of 15, fly fishing and fly tying have been passions ever since. "As much as I love the 'traditional' fly fishing experience, I have always wanted something a little different," he said. "That's when I started looking out at the shores of my Great Lakes state instead of inland on the smaller rivers (and smaller fish). Taking concepts and ideas from saltwater fly fisherman on the east coast for stripers and blues, Gulf of Mexico for everything, and the Baja Peninsula of Mexico for roosterfish and jack crevalle, I began to apply them to my exploits here at home."

**Todd A. Schotts**, a long-time member of the Michigan Fly Fishing Club (MFFC), is a production fly tier for Grizzly Flies by Schottsie, and creator of Michigan Bobbin Slingers flitting presence on Facebook. In addition to all his involvements with the MFFC, he has had two of his fly designs featured in Eastern

## With the fishing season approaching, March 21 meeting focuses on casting

Just in time for the fishing season, the MFFC's March 21 speaker meeting will feature ways to tune up your casting stroke. Mark Hendricks, lead instructor for Gate Au Sable Lodge and an alumnus of and teacher at the Wulff School of Fly Fishing in the Catskills, is the featured presenter.

Hendricks, a former Downriver resident who moved to the banks of the Manistee River in 2005, said, "I hope to show how truly easy it (casting) really is and how most people, guys in particular, work way too hard at casting and why that often causes the exact opposite result than what they were hoping for. I'll demo some casts and techniques and I'll bring a casting form that Joan showed me that really clarifies what it is the caster is trying to do."

He estimates that he teaches the vast majority of classes — one-day schools, weekend schools and daily instructional sessions — offered at Gates Au Sable Lodge. On days he's not teaching, he's guiding.

Hendricks called his time at the Wulff School eye-opening. The school was established in 1979 by fly angling legend

Lee Wulff and wife Joan, who was America's national casting champion from 1943 to 1960. He recalled, "I first went there as a student in 1913. I'd been teaching at Gates since 2005 and one day had a thought, I'm always watching other people cast but who's watching me? What if there's some bad habits that have worked their way into my casting? Golf pros have personal coaches (who) watch them every day to keep their swings in line; I might as well do the same thing.

"I wasn't sure how much I'd learn, I mean after all, I'd already been teaching this stuff for six or seven years, right? So I signed up for the three-day student class and subsequent three-day instructors course. What an eye-opener - I learned a TON about fly casting. I was quite impressed about how much I didn't know about fly casting. I knew the 'How' but I didn't know the 'Why.' So much so that I took the student class again the next year. That's when I was asked about becoming an instructor. About a month later I returned to work there for the first time."

Fly Fishing magazine in 2015. Five of his fly creations were featured in the Spring 2017 edition of Fly Fusion magazine. When not at is tying vise, he chases smallmouth and largemouth bass in his kayak and flings flies for trout or, he says, whatever will take a fly. Some of his patterns can be seen at The Painted Trout in Dexter, MI, and Red Fox

## A Note Of

# Recognition

A note of recognition goes out to Michael Matuszewski for these Midwest Fly Fishing Expo content submissions.



# Michigan Fly Fishing Club

## Featured Tyer

### Chris Hunter

I started tying flies in college. While others went to Spring Break in Florida, my father kept me away from fun (i.e. girls) by taking me to Montana to fish for a week. While I knew I had it good, I had no idea how good I had it until years later. (By the end of college I had been to Montana four times, fishing the Bighorn and one of the Spring Creeks (Armstrong, DePuy, & Nelson) each trip with my father.) Given the number of flies I lost, tying was the logical next step. For Christmas my sophomore year of college dad gave me the Dan Baily's Beginning Fly Tying Kit, with an upgraded vise – the state of the art Thompson Model A. I thought I was doing pretty well, and after years of tying Woolly Buggers and Prince Nymphs (the only two flies in the book) I was pretty much tapped out. After college, I put away tying in favor of studying while attending Law School. With more education than I needed, I realized my tying skills were pretty bad. Enter Al Haxton and Joe Sattler. Sybil (my wife) and I signed up for tying classes at Beuter's after meeting Al at the "Southfield Show," and with some strong urging by Joe who let me know in a polite way that my flies would look better in a garbage can. (At the same time, I met Todd Schotts who took time at the Southfield Show to teach my how to tie wings for an Adams.) After tying classes with Al, I was ready for the big time. The next thing I knew, Al talked me into teaching the beginning tying class at the Club. Time just flew by and more than 20 years from my first Woolly Bugger I pretty much have the same skill level as I did when I started.

There is some dispute regarding the origination of the Purple Haze, although both origin stories start with a guide on the Bitterroot River in Montana. (I floated with a guide on the Bitterroot who claimed the pattern was his – and I had the best days of fishing in my life – so in my book, Wes gets the credit for his origin or variation. My recollection is that Wes was also featured in Fly Tyer Magazine for this variation.) The pattern is actually pretty simple, it's an Adams – tied with purple floss, and in Wes' opinion Purple hackle.

### Purple Haze

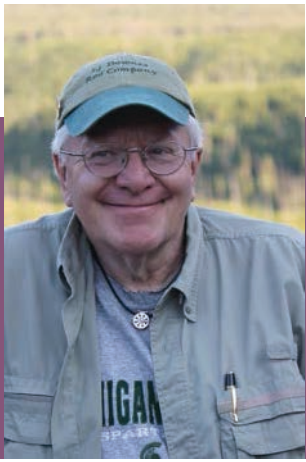


- HOOK:** Size 12-18
- THREAD:** 8/0 – purple
- TAIL:** hackle fibers (natural grizzly or purple grizzly)
- BODY:** purple floss
- PARACHUTE POST:** white calf body or Hi-Vis
- THORAX:** Ice dub - UV purple
- HACKLE:** purple grizzly

## Club Member

### Arkansas Outing





# Meanderings of a Fly Fishing Lunatic

Al Haxton

## It's Show Time!

It's almost time for the Midwest Fly Fishing Expo. It sure seems like it comes around quickly, but I am always excited about the show, and always ready for another fun weekend shared with other members of the best fly fishing club in the world.

A group of us recently drove or flew out to New Jersey for the fly fishing show there. That show, which used to be in Somerset NJ, recently moved to a new venue in Edison NJ. Like all moves this one involved some changes, some improvements and some things that need to be improved. Some history about this trip. Back in 2002, four of us drove out to Somerset to sort of check out the competition. We had concerns about how big the "Fly Fishing Show" was becoming and wondered if it might try to come to Michigan. Long story short, we met the owner of that show, Chuck Furimski, and were assured that he would never come to Michigan and that he had been shown how to run a fly fishing show by members of our club. He mentioned about 10 or 12 members that basically taught him how to put on a fly fishing show and what it took to staff and control it. Well I can tell you his comments and memories about our club made us all feel a lot better. Since then, the group has gotten larger, or smaller, depending on the year, and other stuff. But some go every year, and as we comment, it's a fun show because we don't have to work it, so we can browse the

booths and enjoy some seminars. During the years we have brought some of the vendors to our show too. So we don't goof off all the time.

A truly wonderful thing happened this year during our travels. Each year we enjoy the show there for the entire day on Friday and then head home about noon on Saturday. We drive most of the way home, get into a hotel and have dinner and then look at the items we purchased. Last year we drove to a new spot on the way back that had a nice restaurant right next to our hotel. A good idea that Dan Finstad suggested last year. So we checked into our hotel and walked across the parking lot to the restaurant. The bunch of us got seated and our waitress stopped by to get our drink orders. As is customary on this trip we all had worn one of our MFFC show shirts. She stood in front of our table and said "Hi guys. You are the fly fishers from Michigan. So good to see you again." We were rather shocked and pleased at the same time. Someone asked her if we were remembered well, and she commented that she had waited on our group last year, that we had been fun to chat with and had been generous and full of laughter. She also commented that she remembered us because she fly fishes too. Needless to say, it was a great dinner with commentary going on about fishing and the show we had just visited and such. But to me, the best part was that WE, and I mean all of us in our club, had been remembered nicely, fondly and as good and decent folks. That says a lot, to me. So please remember this, we all reflect on our club and our sport. Always leave a good impression. Always.

In just a few more weeks it will be time again for our show. Everyone in our club can take great pride in our show, how long it's been going and all the good it has done, not only for our sport but for the resources

that we all enjoy. Members of our club volunteer every year to make our show the success it is. We put up the booths, watch the doors, help vendors bring items in and out of the expo site, take pride in tying flies, showing youngsters the fun of fly fishing, teaching folks about new fly patterns and products and in general just trying to share our love of this sport with others. Sometimes we even bring a few new members to our club. We show them how the \$35 a year dues are the BEST 35 bucks they will ever spend.

We have just one more meeting before our show, so get up to the front of the room and sign up for some times to help make our show the best ever. Whether you sell tickets, do data entry, stand security at one of the doors, or help in one of the speaker venues, your effort is needed, valued and appreciated. If you have worked the show before try something new this year. Branch out and help a young person make a Tee shirt with a fish on it. Help at the casting pond. Offer to be one of the club fly tiers during the day. Get involved and have some fun. I have said this before and say it again. On the weekend of our show I feel sorry for children. They get one day of Christmas. During our show we all get TWO days of Christmas. It's a wonderful weekend. So sign up and get involved and have lots of fun.

I look forward to seeing you all at the Midwest Fly Fishing Exposition.

Tight lines.





# Michigan Fly Fishing Club

## Club Stuff

Dick Schott

## New Member Outing

By Fred Field

In May, we will once again have our New Members Outing. This is where we give our new members a chance to learn about fly fish with a hands on approach. We will teach participants how to look the river over, read the water, decide where to fish, chose a fly, get in the river, get in good position to make a decent cast, float the fly, and hope a fish will rise. All of this and much in one quick week end.

How did this all come about? Years ago the club had a yearly outing at a lodge on the main stream of the Au Sable called the Matabanic Lodge. This trip ran the second or third week end in June. We were shooting for the Hex hatch. Rarely did we hit it just right. "You should have been here last week," was what we often heard. Regardless, the trips were excellent whether fish were caught or not. Many of our older members have fond memories of the place.

While on one of these outings, the late Dick Schott, Ron Angove, and I were working on our equipment and taking. We talked about renting the lodge for a second weekend; maybe renting the lodge for two weekends, and the week in between. How would that work?

One of us, I'm not sure who, suggested the second week end should be for new members, just learning about the sport. First timers; coming to the "Holy Water" for their first fly fishing

experience. I suggested calling it Rookie Camp." That didn't go over well. But Dick got the bug. He thought an outing for new members was a great idea. Within a few weeks he was working on launching our first New Members Outing.

Quickly it was decided not to have it in June; that early May was much better. We couldn't get the Matabanic lodge, so Dick, and others, worked on getting MSU's Wa Wa Sum lodge which was just down river. Because we had supported Michigan State students in two river study programs, and were a main contributor to conservation on the river, we got a date on mother's day week end. Dick was off and running. He got many established members involved to teach and guide the new members. He decided to start the outing on Thursday, and end it on Saturday, so we would be home for Mother's day. Smart.

This became Dick's project, and a big addition to the Club's education of the next generation of fly fishers. He enlisted a lot of us over the years as instructors, guides, presenters, and demonstrators.

When Dick was diagnosed with a fatal disease it did not stop him. He still ran the trip until he could not do it any longer. Then one of Dick's good friends, Paul De John took over. Today the trip survives as one of our most important outings.

In our mission statement we say that we will pass along to others the knowledge of Fly Fishing. This trip, along with our schools and the Scout outing help fulfill this promise.

Thanks to all who have worked this outing!! Thanks most to Dick Shott, who made it happen in the first place.

Dedicated to the memory of a great teacher!!

Welcome

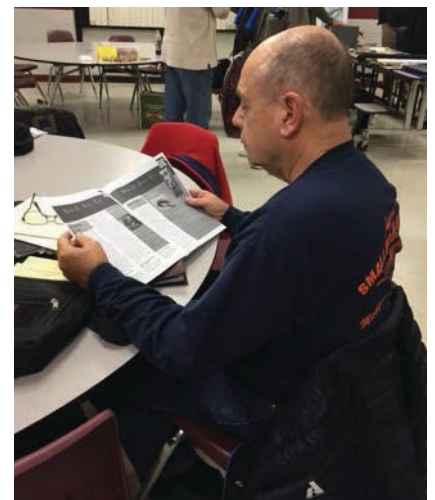
## New Members

Welcome to Nicole and Thomas Watson of Dundee and Ben Hefner from White Lake! We look forward to seeing you around... at the Expo, at the Dick Schott New Member Outing, at the regular meetings...!



Caught

## Reading The Hatch



FOR CLUB INFO: www.mffc.org FOR EXPO INFO www.midwestflyfishingexpo.com

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# Midwest Fly Fishing Expo

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