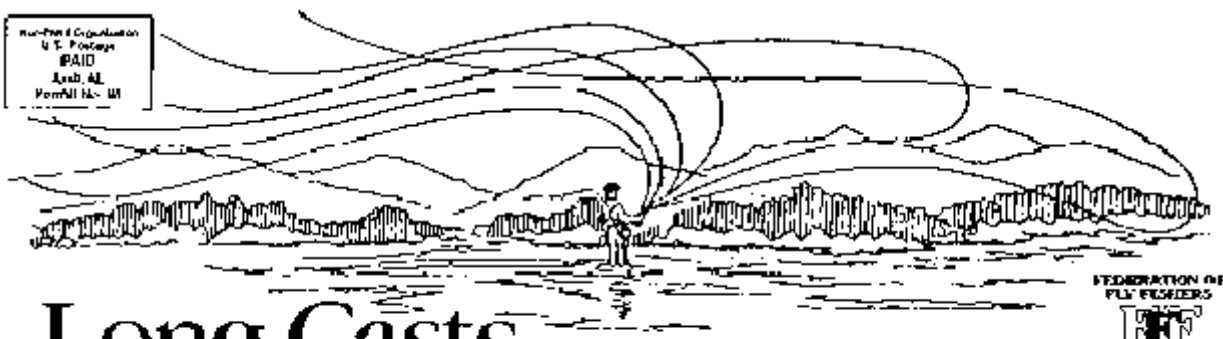


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Long Casts

Southern Council Federation of Fly Fishers



WINTER ISSUE

December 2004

Pres Sez

This has been a productive year for the FFF and the Southern Council. Our new board is now installed with mostly familiar folks and a new face or two. Sheryl Knight comes to us from her role as Outreach Chair to serve as our VP of Conservation. She replaces Bob Tabbert, who in my mind, has done one of the best jobs in that position for many years. Tom James is replacing Bill Brant as our website guru who should be commended for the many years keeping up with our stuff. Mac Caradine is replacing Mike Reuck as our VP of Education. Mike has brought us many great candidates for scholarship funding. Lori Sloes (Berry) will assume the Outreach Chair from Sheryl. I attended my first Outreach luncheon this year and the ladies under Sheryl really know how to get the job done! I was totally impressed.

Our eternal gratitude is extended to Bill, Bob and Mike for their service to the SOC. While I am extending my appreciation, I want to recognize Chet Smith and his conclave chairs for a super effort this year raising in excess of \$30,000 for us! Thanks Chet. To all the other board members, thanks for hanging in for another term with me full knowing that I tend to be a pragmatic and severely opinionated person.

There are no words befitting the praise and esteem that can be offered to Pat Smith. What can I say, you are the best!!! This goes ditto to Dennis Slane who is the steel in the backbone for our conclaves.

Michael Ames has had his first conclave 2005 meeting with his committees. He has already assured us of great success by securing a 14 foot Mitzi skiff, donated by Tom Mitzlaff the company owner, valued at \$12,000! All need to get on board with Michael to keep the successes of the SOC in the forefront of the FFF. Anybody want to donate a motor, trailer or fishing accessories?

Flies flies flies (an AA problem?)

Well I am outing myself on this, I suffer from AA. Not the more common addiction to the demon rum but to AUCTION ADDICTION. It seems the power of the paper plate in hand is too strong for me to overcome. Suspecting I caught this from Tracie and enticed deeper by Johnny Chamness by his self serving coaxing, this plague bit me again (in the wallet) at our last conclave.

Thanks to the donation of the massive fly collection back to the SOC by Richard “Griff” Griffin, I was drawn into a bidding war once again with a unknown adversary in the back of the room. When the smoke cleared I was the proud owner of 116 dozen flies! Having suffered silently with AA for many years, the addition of 1400 flies to my already excessive collection was quite sobering. There is simply no way to get another fly box in the over flowing cabinets, draws and closets at the cabin. Tracie and I spent an entire day trying to condense the evidence of AA and in doing so the feelings of pride in our council came over me. The boxes of flies mostly contained the donors’ card, club names or simply “Bill” scratched on a piece of paper. Tracie and I spent a most pleasurable afternoon thinking and talking about the many folks and clubs who labored to produce the stuff now spread out over our entire dining room table. It was an awesome sight. We offer our deepest appreciation to all those who donated their efforts on what now may be the largest collection of flies by the best tiers in the FFF.

FFF Happenings

There are still some battles being waged as the vision of Gary Grant, FFF Board Chairman, unfolds. I hope all of you got to meet Pete (Van) Van Gytenbeek at conclave. As the new President of the FFF, Van brings superior credentials, tireless effort and burning enthusiasm to the Federation. Inheriting a break even operation, you will see some changes in the future to boost our overall operation and membership from Gary and Van.

Casting to Recover

The SOC Outreach will be supporting two ladies this year to participate in this cause for breast cancer survivors and recovery. This is a two day event to offer encouragement to those who are suffering this dreaded disease and those in stages of recovery. This weekend is coupled with a fly fishing experience as well. Stephanie Pinion, Wanda Taylor and Sister Caroline are among many in our Outreach group working hard in this effort. There was not a dry eye in the room after Stephanie sang “Cast Upon The Water”; this recording of her feelings and thoughts is available on CD.

Livingston Internship

The Federation is seeking an intern to work in the Heritage Center next summer. Although a non paying position, this experience would be a life time remembrance for some young person. Contact Pat or me if you can recommend someone. Time is short to place this person so work on this please!

Hooked on a Cure

This memorable event will be back to the White River for the third year. We ask those who wish to participate go to the SOC or HOAC websites for details. This non-competitive celebrity fly fishing event has been most enjoyable and successful in raising money for St. Jude Children’s Hospital.

The Southern Council Board will have its annual business meeting January 15 at which our funds are to be allocated for 2005. In 2004, we reinvested in excess of \$9000 in our home waters and hope to continue in this effort. Our success also allowed us to fund about \$5000 at the National level. We are the best and you, our clubs and the members of the FFF are to be thanked for getting us there.

Regards and a happy holiday season to all,

Roger Maler
President

Congratulations FFF SOC Award Winners

Congratulations are in order for some members of the FFF Southern Council. They were recently recognized with awards presented during the Southern Council Conclave on October 2th in Mountain Home Arkansas.

Bob Temper is the recipient of the FFF Southern Council **Conservationist Of The Year Award**. Bob has been a leader in providing a strong voice on the gravel mining issues in Missouri. He has testified before that states Land Reclamation Commission about the need for strong, reasonable rules on gravel mining. He has been a leader in collaborating efforts with The Sierra Club, the Missouri Smallmouth Alliance, The Missouri Coalition for the Environment, Trout Unlimited and other FFF Clubs on conservation issues. Bob has traveled many miles and has worked many hours writing letters, making phone calls and coordinating this effort with the use of his club's web site. He is well respected and effective due to the reasonable position that he takes on conservation issues. Congratulations Bob!

Roger Maler is the recipient of the FFF Southern Council **Federator Of The Year Award**. He has been the president of the FFF SOC for the past 2 years and has been on the Board for four years. He has been instrumental in making Mid-South Fly Fishers the largest and one of the most successful clubs in the Federation were he has served as president for two terms. Roger is a writer, lecturer, FFF Certified Casting Instructor, and he instructs in the many aspects of fly fishing. He has done an excellent job in insuring that our club and council positions are well represented within the Federation. His regard for the Federation and its goal are foremost in his actions and we deeply appreciate him for his efforts. Congratulations Roger!

The Sage Rod Company is the recipient of the FFF **Friend of the Southern Council** which is an award given to groups or individuals who have befriended the Southern Council in some way. For twenty plus years Sage has been an integral part of the Southern Council Conclave. Their representatives Cary Marcus and Jack and Rose Birkner have made a huge selection of Sage Rods available for anyone to try. They have been most gracious in their donations to our council and they have provided many of our educational casting assets. The Sage Rod Company is truly a Friend of the Southern Council!

Sheryl Knight is the recipient of the FFF Southern Council **Woman Of The Year Award**. Sheryl has always been a passionate supporter of the Southern Council and the Federation. For the past two years Sheryl has been Chair of the very successful Outreach Committee, which has made tremendous inroad in making the organization more than just "a ladies group". During the many years Sheryl and her husband Ron have been coming to the Conclave, she has been busy behind the scenes lending a hand and support where needed. Congratulations Sheryl!

The **co-winners** of the FFF Southern Council **Man Of The Year** award were presented to both **Bob Temper and Steve Atonic**. Every club is lucky if it has one member who can be relied on to always be available for whatever job needs to be done. Ozark Fly Fishers and the Southern Council are extremely lucky to have these two. They have always assisted at conclave including much more than

just running the casting games and setting up and tearing down the casting pools. They have served as Auction and Raffle Chairs at the Conclave, which is a very important responsibility. Their dedicated education and conservation efforts has made their club one of the most accomplished clubs in the nation and they both have held numerous offices in that club including president. When Chet Smith presented his nomination for these gentlemen he stated, "I cannot see nominating only one of these individuals so if it can be done, I believe these dedicated gentlemen deserved to be named Southern Council Men of the Year." The Board of Directors agreed. Congratulations Bob and Steve!

The **Junior Fly Tyer** was awarded to **Scott Manley** from Powderly, Texas. Scott is 16 years old and is a self-taught fly fisherman as well as an artist, hunter, and Eagle Scout. You may have seen him tying at the Sowbug Roundup last March in Mountain Home. Congratulations Scott!

The recipient of the FFF Southern Council **Fly Tyer Of The Year Award** is **Mike George**. The Southern Council consistently produces some of the most innovative fly tyers in the federation. Also nominated were Steve Flannigan and Colby "Popp" Sorrels. Mike George specialty is spinning deer hair and he is one of the best. His demonstrations include Bass Pro Shop, Sowbug, Houston Fly Tying Festival, Smallmouth Rendezvous, SOC Conclave, and International Conclaves. His flies have been featured in Flyfisher Magazine, Fly Tyer Magazine, Art and The Angling Journal. In April 2004 he was awarded a First Place in the Open category of the 2004 Mustad Scandinavian Open Fly Tying Competition. Mike has already achieved nationally status as a fly tyer and continues SOC long legacy of innovative deer hair tyers. Congratulations Mike!

We have **co-winners** of the FFF SOC **Teacher Of The Year Award** and they are **Michael Ames and Tom Criswell**. Every year we receive several outstanding nominations for this award and it is indicative of the out-standing educational activities within the Southern Council. These gentlemen are responsible for instructing over 300 individuals in the fly fish arts. This very important work provides the main source of new members within the federation. Congratulations Michael Ames and Tom Criswell!

Ozark Fly Fishers is the recipient of the FFF Southern Council **Club of the Year Award**. This is the second year in a row that this club has won this award. They have been in existence for thirty-three years now and have consistently maintained a membership of over 250 members. They are a leader in working fisheries conservation issues in Missouri and keep very busy with their numerous educational programs. They have specific activities to promote women and youth involvement in fly fishing. They have always been a huge supporter of the Southern Council and the Federation. Congratulation Ozark Fly Fishers!

John Berry was awarded the FFF Southern Council **Tall Tale Teller Award**. In the short time since becoming a guide after his retirement from the CPA Profession he has astounded everyone with his ability to quickly hone his professional guide skills of fibbing to the masses. He is quick to elaborate on the fishing "just last week", bemoan the barometric pressure, weather, or high water situations to his customers. We appreciate your tall tales John! Congratulations!

Now is the time to be thinking about nominations for the 2005 FFF SOC Awards. Nomination letters will be accepted until June 17, 2005. Please submit your nominations entries as soon as possible. If you are a club officer you should consider it you duty to make certain that your club

members worthy of these awards are nominated. A list of the awards and requirements for nomination appear on the Southern Council web site.

Any Southern Council member in good standing may submit nominations, however, those nominated must be members in good standing with the Federation of Fly Fishers. Please try to limit the nomination letters to no more than one page and submit a separate nomination letter for each candidate. Nominations may be submitted via US Mail or e-mail, however email submissions are preferred. Either way your submittal will be acknowledged.

Please send your nomination letters to:

Brian Ellis, V.P. Communication
2216 Viewroyal Dr.
St. Louis, MO 63131
314-822-1819
E-mail: brian.j.ellis@boeing.com

CONCLAVES, 2004, 2005, 2006

I hope that those of you that made the trip to Mountain Home for Conclave 2004 and enjoyed the changes that were made in an effort to improve our conclave. I have not heard back from very many of people as to what you all thought of those changes.

Please get back to me as to your thoughts on these changes, as we do listen very closely in an effort to make your conclave better in the ways that you want it to be.

Michael Ames is the conclave chairman for conclave 2005. He made the decision to do this last year and has had a year to get his ideas and thoughts together for this year ; and they are showing up big time already. I will let him announce all the good stuff that he has going on! However; I will tell you that conclave 2005 (the 25th of the Southern Council as we know it today) is shaping up to be one of the best ever! On this note—I would like to have the chair for 2006 on board ASAP! If you have the desire to help mold conclave 2006 – Please contact me!! Now is the time to step up for this most important job. You will have the opportunity to help

The Southern Council to move forward in our desire to serve you in the best ways possible.

I would love to hear from each and every one of you as to your thoughts as too how we can make improvements to conclave.

Thank you for the opportunity to serve you in making the Southern Council the best Council in the Federation of Fly Fishers.

Dennis Slane
VP of Development

CONCLAVE 2005

Planning for the 2005 FFF Southern Council Conclave is in full swing. Next year will see an expanded Thursday pre-conclave program. These programs will be value added programs and will require an additional modest fee. Most will limit the number of participants. When the registration form is printed in the Long Cast, be sure to send you registration in early to insure you a place in the program of your choice.

Joe Humphreys and John Wilson will conduct an all day program on Advanced Nymph Fishing. Joe taught fly fishing at Penn State for twenty years. He hosted an eight-part series on flyfishing for ESPN and wrote a regular column for Fly Rod & Reel magazine. In addition, he has written two books – Joe Humphreys Trout Tactics and On the Trout Stream. John has fished for the US Fly Fishing Team in Sweden and Spain. He placed 5th in the Southern qualifier of the Fly Fishing Master's competition. He competed in the ESPN Great Outdoor Games and the Masters again in 2004.

Duane Hada will present a one half-day program on Reading and Fishing the River. Duane has qualified for the Master Angler Program and is an accomplished fly fisherman as well as a gifted artist.

Art Mazzier will offer a program on Stream Sided Entomology. Now you can learn what the actual bugs look like that you try to imitate with your flies. Art is a retired oral surgeon and an avid outdoorsman with extensive experience in fly fishing. He is a life member of the FFF and a Certified Master Casting Instructor.

George Harmeling will teach you how to spin deer hair. You have all seen his flies now you can learn to tie them for yourself.

Friday and Saturday programs will include Duane Hada again talking about Reading the River. Jud Parker will teach us How to Play Big Fish. Chuck Easterling and Art Mazzier will present Take Me to Your Leader and Practicing with a Purpose. Jamie Rouse will speak on Fly Fishing for Trout on High Water. Bruce Whittel will teach you how to Tie Flies the Paraloop Way. Harry Boyd will speak about Building Bamboo Fly Rods. Gary Grobeck will talk about Fishing the Little Red River. Michael Lack will show you How to Build the Mini-Mac Drift Boat from Scratch. Bob Rodgers, a Key's guide, will have an open forum about Fishing South Florida and outdoor writing. And, finally, Roger Maler will again present his Sink Tip Symposium and Stream Strategies. These programs are 2-hour on stream instructional demonstrations.

As you can see we already have a number of programs and speakers committed for next year. Of course everything is subject to change and will not be chiseled in stone until the final program appears in the Long Cast. If you have an idea for additional topics or speakers, please get in touch with one of us.

A number of exhibitors have already committed to attend the 2005 conclave and some new ones have asked about the availability of exhibit space. It does appear that there will be additional

available space for 2005. If you know of some one who would like to become an exhibitor, please have them contact Michael Lack at mdlack@cox-internet.com.

We are actively seeking donations for the auction. If you have access to someone who might make a donation to our auction, feel free to ask him or her. Do not limit your request to fly fishing related items. Next year we would like to have a number of non-fishing related item to attract the not fishermen to our auction as well.

And finally, do not forget our special fund-raiser. Mitzie has donated a 15-foot flats boat for this purpose. Tickets and more information will be sent to each club shortly. If you have an opportunity, please let Mitzie know how much we appreciate their donation.

We are always open to suggestions. If you have comments, contact Michael Ames at flycaster@classicnet.net (870-578-2557) or Michael Lack at mdlack@cox-internet.com.

Thank you,
Michael Ames
Michael Lack

Club Longevity

By Walter McLendon
VP of Membership

Our Council membership level has held its own this year compared to other councils and the FFF as a whole, but we lost a few clubs in the process. One problem clubs have is replacing their officers each year or two when election time rolls around. Members are reluctant to volunteer to fill these positions and the old timers in the club are usually stuck with their position until they flatly refuse to continue to serve. I call this burnout! In my club, Pineywoods Fly Fishers, the situation has been much the same over the years until recently. We have gained a few more new members than normal and we are lucky that they have taken more interest in the club. We have strived to return benefits to our members by spending the money we take in during the year on fun events, monthly door prizes, free guided fishing trips and whatever else we can dream up and still maintain our good financial position.

Building a good rapport with new members is the best way to inspire fellowship and loyalty in your club. Making club visitors feel welcome at monthly meetings and outings helps lay the groundwork to good membership. We give each new member a club nametag, a box of flies tied by fellow members and a 50 page package of information and tips to guide them on their path to fly fishing, all for a mere \$15 annual dues. New members need to be personally invited on fishing trips to take opportunities to teach and share what we have received over the years. Also offer help with casting and other areas that help them grow into seasoned fly fishers. We offer frequent fly tying classes and sessions, as well as, an annual rod building class. One of the hardest things to do is provide interesting and informative programs at monthly meetings and when invited speakers cannot attend,

club members can fill in with impromptu fly tying demonstrations or special subjects to teach. With new members who have never fly fished, you know what all they need to learn to become proficient at our sport so you need to offer those subjects at meeting or special weekend sessions. Remember to visit our Council website to read about our Ambassador program to get speakers for your meetings.

Club officers need to be ambassadors of goodwill in their club and plan for their future replacement by building friendships with members who will help in projects when personally asked. Once new members have experienced the personal satisfaction of taking part, they are more willing to volunteer again and for more challenging assignments. It's these special relationships that make club membership a rewarding experience that carries on for years. Do a self-analysis of your efforts and activities and what your club offers new members, if you fail to do this then we may see your club falling by the wayside someday.

EARLY HISTORY OF MIDWEST AND SOUTHERN COUNCILS

Apparently the original files and minutes of the first several years (1973 to 1981) for the Council have been lost. I am preparing a history of the early development of the Midwest and Southern Councils and need council documents or comments from club news letters relating to the establishment of the Midwest Council in 1973, and its history from that point until 1981.

A copy of the original bylaws of the Midwest Council, and revisions up to 1981 would really be of value.

If your club was organized during the period 1969 - 1973 the date it was organized would be appreciated. Please e-mail to grindad2@aol.com or post copies of said documents to R. M. Cunningham, 3213 Harvey Road, Bartlesville, OK, 74006

CONSERVATION OPPORTUNITY

Sheryl Knight
VP Conservation

As fly fishers we have an innate love for nature. This is a broad but, I believe, a fair statement and many of us go out of our way to pick up monofilament left behind by some thoughtless angler or to recycle our soda cans. We will even go so far as to participate in a local stream clean-up day or other similar event; and we go home sore but satisfied that you made a difference. What if I told you that you could make a difference and not have to wear gloves? Or be popping Ibuprofen every 4 hours for the next two or three days?

It's true you can – the Missouri Department of Conservation Stream Team Program has partnered with a number of web retailers to rebate a percentage of purchases directly to the Stream Team. You pay the same price you would have for any web-based purchase and the web retailer rebates a percentage of each sale to the Stream Team. The funds received from the Mall help offset the Stream Team's costs of water quality monitoring equipment, work gloves, incentive items, and more. There is a catch you must access the web retailers web site through the Stream Team On-line Mall hot link www.mostreamteam.org. Icon buttons in the Mall are available to take you directly to participating store websites. Each time you leave a store you must go back to the Mall on the Stream Team web site to enter another store.

It features more than 100 merchants ready to send a donation to the “Stream Team Program!”, according to Mark Van Patten, Missouri Stream Team Coordinator. Mark also reminds anyone using the website to pay special attention to the buttons and banners. Sometimes they will announce special deals on merchandise and even free shipping!”

With Christmas just around the corner this a great opportunity to help out Missouri streams and rivers. Encourage anyone that is struggling to find the ‘perfect gift’ for the fly fisher on their gift-giving list to use the website, www.mostreamteam.org, they will not only find terrific gift ideas but also give the fly fisher the added bonus of a better place to fish.

If you don't live in Missouri or fish Missouri waters you might want to encourage your states' conservation departments to consider a partnership like this to benefit your home waters. I have spoken with Mark and I am sure he would be happy to share information with you. But until your state has something in place please help out the Missouri Stream Team — we all benefit from “Clean Water and Brighter Streams.”

2004 CONSERVATION EXPENDITURES

Bob Tabbert
VP Conservation

1. \$2,500 Strawberry River, Arkansas. To the Nature Conservancy for the construction of a working model of a pasture bank stabilization project that will serve as an environmental model for the entire Strawberry's watershed. A matching grant of \$2,500 was approved by the FFF's Conservation Committee.
2. \$1,000 to Joel Helmer, PhD candidate at Oklahoma State University, Dept. of Enviromental Science. Monies to fund research for thesis “From Small Mouth Bass To Tail Water Trout” on the White River.
3. \$600 to the Nebraska Department of Conservation for a cooperative effort with Ainsworth High School students to help preserve the Lone Pine Creek Trout in north central Nebraska.

4. \$1,000 to the Heart of America Fly Fishers, Kansas. To continue the clean up work on the Blue River.
5. \$500 to the Mid South Fly Fishers, Tennessee. Financial help for students attending Mid South's Annual Fly Fishing Rodeo.
6. \$500 to the Alamo Fly Fishers, Texas. Seed monies to start a warm water - stocking program with the Texas Parks and Wildlife.
7. \$1000 to Arkansas. Donation to support Minimum Flow on tail waters.
8. \$750 to the Oklahoma Department of Fisheries for an FFF trout conservation sign on the Lower Mtn. Fork tail water at Broken Bow, Oklahoma
9. \$1000 to the FFF Conservation Committee in Montana
10. \$250 was held in reserve to award at the 2004 Conclave to the winner of the "Protect the Redds" sign contest.

The \$9,100 for these conservation projects came out of the profits of a successful 2003 Conclave. As the outgoing VP of Conservation I want to thank all of the hard working "federators" in the Southern Council who made this happen. The Board of the Southern Council generously approved ALL of the conservation requests that I brought to them. This made my job easy! Thank you all, watch over our fisheries.

Bob Tabbert

MID-SOUTH FLY FISHERS DONATE BOOKS

Robert Prytula
Mid-South Fly Fishers

The Mid-South Fly Fishers have partnered with the Memphis-Shelby County Public Library to donate fly fishing books. The current fly fishing section of the Memphis Shelby County Public Library is limited with several books in need of replacement. The MSFF is conducting a book drive to collect books to be donated. The book drive was conducted through the month of November and the books were presented to the Memphis-Shelby County Public Library. The MSFF is also donating monetarily to ensure the purchase of new text yearly.

THE UN HATCH

Roger Maler
Mid-South Fly Fishers

Thus Sunday was quickly becoming a relatively slow day fishing deep, virtually alone, on my favorite piece of water. Haven't seen a hatch or any significant surface activity for many weeks. Always interested in understanding the ways of trout, I re-rigged my rod with a floating line and plucked a beat up hopper pattern from my "wet" fly box. Selecting a well defined holding spot which as produced before, I plopped the bug loudly onto a seam of a short piece of riffle water. Mending a bad downstream belly in the line, the hopper skittered about a foot and settled into a fairly good drift. Day dreaming about the football game and the \$40 pool I was missing back at the cabin, the splash in the vicinity of my hopper (which I had lost in a long shadow) jerked me back to reality.

Every dry fly fisher has had this experience and has blown the next few casts to the "splash" as I did that afternoon. The third nervous cast to the spot was made with intense concentration and determination befitting the opportunity. Sure enough a fat Bow took the flow, now improperly floating well into the film and the rest was predictable and without further description. The poor hopper was not soaked beyond any ability to float above the water and I changed to another "used" dry imitation in my wet fly box. I had left the dry box back at the cabin, of source. This unnamed pattern (looked like a fat wasp) also produced a strike and fish within a few minutes. I went on to have a nice few hours taking surface fish with out any "hatch" in sight.

Now this would not be worthy of any report such as this, save the fact that this was Super Bowl Sunday and it was 27 degrees outside! Jamming my numbed hands inside my waders, I waddled back to the warmth of the fireplace and my buddies now into the second half of a typically boring game and well into my Jack Daniels!

I have, on more than a few occasions, been successful with dries when there are absolutely no bugs in the air, on the water or emerging to the surface. The lesson learned here is not to leave your "dry" box back at the cabin or parking lot because the conditions of the day or time of the year. Trout are always hungry, curious and not very bright as I have proven to myself many times since this Super Bowl experience. Can't remember who won the game and I didn't with the \$40 bucks either but the learning experience is still with me.

Remember also, if only one thing, every hatch begins with one bug and who's to say if the trout are paying attention or keeping count for that matter!

Tight lines and dry waders to all!

THE WONDERFUL WOLD OF DUBBING

Ron Knight
Fort Worth Fly Fishers

Ever since the pre-historic fly tyers climbed down from the trees, stood upright, and learned how to roll-cast, they have recognized the need for fuzzy-bodies flies. All the flies listed by Dame Juliana Berners in the *Treatise of Fly Fishing with an Angle* call for wool body. Charles Cotton used dubbing on many of the flies he lists in his addition to *The Complete Angler*. Most of the old or traditional dry fly and salmon flies still around today make use of a fur body. In fact, fur bodies are used, somewhere, in nearly every type of fly tied. Atlantic salmon flies, bass flies, nymphs, dry flies streamers — you name it, without fur bodied flies, the list would be much shorter.

Due to the scarcity of plastic and synthetics manufacturing plants, early fly tyers were forced to make do with natural furs for their dubbing needs. As luck would have it, natural selection had seen to it that the underfur from muskrats, beavers and seals were ideal for fly tying. The fur from these animals is very fine and water resistant, making it ideal for the bodies of flies. Additionally, fly tyers, with the assistance of the local trout population, discovered that the “bugginess” of a fur body made a good nymph pattern.

In recent years the proliferation of manufacturing facilities has led to the development of synthetics, making the possibilities for dubbed bodies limited only by the imagination of fly tyers and their ability to let the manufacturers know what they want. We now have super-fine fur, shiny fur, glittery fur, drab fur, hairy fur, heavy fur, furry fur, and so on. There is silk dubbing, ultra holographic, SLF, Flashabou, poly seal, Antron, Kapok, Lite-Brite, and metal synthetic dubbing. And then there are the unnatural blends of synthetics and natural furs. Blends of synthetics with rabbit, squirrel, possum, camel, and most any other kind of fur that can be found, have made the range of fur bodies mind boggling.

Fur dubbing can be used to represent the smooth bodies of aquatic and terrestrial insects, the sparkly body of a minnow, or it can be used to simulate or suggest, without actually imitating anything in particular. Fur also has the ability to trap air bubbles, giving the fly many light refracting properties. An added bonus is that fur bodied flies often become more effective after they have been mauled by a few fish. Continued use causes the fur bodies to become even buggier, giving them more movement in the water, and more light refracting properties.

Who'd have thought something as apparently worthless as a bit of fur could play such a prominent role in the pursuit of piscatorial deception for so many generations of fly tyers?

EYES

Ron Knight
Fort Worth Fly Fishers

Tom Nixon once said that all good bass flies have to have eyes, otherwise they would never be able to find their way home if they got lost. I think he must have been right. Look at the bass flies available at any fly shop, or in any catalog. Nearly all of them feature eyes of some kind. Perhaps the eyes just help them to catch fishermen, but that still makes it a good fly. If the fly gets fished, it will, without a doubt, catch more fish than one that sits in a display case at the fly shop.

Bass bugs, poppers, streamers, divers, etc. all seem to have eyes. The eyes may just be purely visual—perhaps painted on, or maybe they are some type of adhesive eyes that are glued on. Some eyes are glued onto the thread head, or glued onto the deer-hair head. Some eyes, however, become an integral part of the fly. Without the lead or dumbbell eyes, the Clouser Minnow would never have become the successful fly that it is. The eyes are what give the fly its action in the water. Many other flies rely on the weight of the eyes, be they lead dumbbell or bead chain, to give them the action in the water, or to help them sink to the proper level.

Painted eyes, if they are done well, can really give the fly an expression—even a comical look that can be very appealing to anglers. Adhesive eyes are very neat and easy to use. They can add a reflective or holographic property to the fly that, again, is sure to make the fly more appealing. Doll eyes can help the flotation of a deer hair fly and can give the eyes some animation, but most likely, is best at attracting the attention of anglers. Solid plastic eyes give a good impression of real eyes in their shape, and aid in a natural look for the fly. Bead chain eyes are simple, cheap, easy to tie, and give the fly some weight to help it sink. The recent appearance of painted bead chain in colors other than the traditional brass and silver have helped in increasing their appeal. Dumbbell eyes whether lead or machined brass, can really help flies sink, and can improve the effectiveness of the fly by adding some jigging action. The painted varieties of dumbbell eyes available, even further increase the importance of these eyes to the angler.

It is evident that adding eyes to any bass fly will almost surely increase its usefulness, its chances of being fished, and perhaps even its ability to catch fish.

We know that fish key in on the eyes of baitfish when they are feeding, so there is good justification for having eyes on bass flies. But then, good scientific data is not always a good enough reason for anything in fly fishing. After all, if all we wanted was to catch fish, we would be using bait. The important thing is that eyes make the fly look better, and that's all the justification most of us need.

And, of course, the last, and perhaps the most important reason to put eyes on your bass flies is that, after you put all that time and effort in tying it, you want it to be able to find its way home if you happen to lose it.

BASIC CHEMISTRY FOR FLY TYERS

Ron Knight
Fort Worth Fly Fishers

I understand that there are all kinds of secret mysterious chemical and alchemical activities taking place, probably in some dark dungeon in Transylvania, where they make synthetic hair and synthetic fur and synthetic synthetics for fly tyers to use. It is probably best that we remain ignorant of these experiments into the unknown. However, it does seem that fly tying has evolved from a fur-and-feathers art form into the dark mysteries of chemistry.

At one time we had head cement. Tie the fly, and then apply a drop of head cement. What could be simpler? Now there is lacquer head cement, acrylic head cement, Hard-As-Nails for head cement, thick cement, thin cement, Hard as Hull cement, Hi-Gloss Lacquer, etc. We have a wide selection of glues to choose from—Goop, Flexament, Softtex, Super Glue, Zap-a-Gap, Zap-a-Gap-a-Goo, Zip-Kicker, Z-7 Glue Debonder, 2-ton Epoxy, 5 Minute Epoxy, Quick Cure Epoxy, Sparkle Body, Soft Body and Silicon. And you have to have the proper dubbing wax—Wonder Wax, Swax, or Premium wax. There are acrylic paints, lacquer paints, Prismacolor markers, Gesso, not to mention the Veniard Dyes and Synthrapol. You will also need an assortment of thinners, Liquitex, Acetone, and lacquer thinners to thin it down and clean it up. Once you have completed the fly it absolutely must be treated with Gink, Xink, Watershed, Sinket Wetting, Mud, and paste.

Without all these wonderful fly-tying chemicals our lives wouldn't be the same—our hair would be too limp, our eyes wouldn't stay on, our fur wouldn't stick, our bodies wouldn't shine or sparkle, our colors would be bland, and our heads would unravel—none of which is conducive to good fly tying. In addition, our flies would never dry properly, and they would sink when they should float, and float when they should sink. Fly-tying chemistry is with us to stay, so if you feel you need it, go ahead and get a test tube rack, a couple of beakers, and maybe a Bunsen Burner or two. Every laboratory needs some.

WEED GUARDS

Ron Knight
Fort Worth Fly Fishers

It is an undisputed fact that the best thing to use in ensuring that your fly will not get tangled up in the snags, weeds, and other cover that bass like to live in, is by carefully placing the fly inside the mouth of a nice largemouth bass. Since it is generally difficult to count on the cooperation of the bass on each cast you make, and it is almost as difficult to cast your fly with a bass already attached, we find ourselves in need of some type of weed guard that can be counted on to do the job on each cast, and that will not subject us to the crass comments from some of the fly fishing purists in the area.

While a loop made of stiff monofilament can be used rather effectively, the effectiveness of a good wire stirrup weed guard cannot be beat. A good wire stirrup weed guard can literally enable the fly caster to cast a fly into the most tangled snarl of a bass cover, and fish it back out with confidence, and hopefully, from time to time, with a fish attached.

The wire for a stirrup weed guard can be obtained from a music store. Guitar strings, or, if you intend to fish a lot over the next several hundred years, piano wire, in sizes ranging from .008" to .015" inches should do fine. It really does not take a very large wire size to make a fly weedless. For instance .011" wire is usually sufficient for 2/0 size hooks.

When tying in the weed guard, make a small lump of thread about 1/16" behind the eye of the hook, then wind the thread on up to the eye of the hook.

To make the weed guard, first make a 180 degree bend in the wire using round jawed pliers. Bend the tips of the stirrup around the edge of a metal ruler (the one you use to measure the length of the weed guard). The distance between the bend of the stirrup and the bend for the feet needs to be worked out, usually by trial and error, (one trial might be to contact the author) ahead of time. Put one foot of the weed guard, the nearest one, through the eye of the hook from the bottom, and pull it down on the near side of the hook. Make two wraps of thread and then put the other foot of the weed guard through the eye of the hook, and while holding it on the other side of the hook shank, make two more wraps of thread. Pull both legs of the weed guard out into the eye of the hook, and slide them back together to keep them even. Make a few more wraps of thread to secure it in place.

Next, start winding toward the rear of the hook. Notice as you do that the feet of the weed guard will be raised up from the hook shank due to the lump of thread we made earlier. Keep winding back toward the bend of the hook, and the feet will be pulled down. The lump in the thread will help keep the weed guard from twisting around the hook.

A suitably irresistible bass fly should be tied at this point.

Once you are finished with the fly, remove the fly from the vise. About 1/8" from the bend of the stirrup, use your thumbnail and make a bend in the weed guard, at about 30 degrees, toward the hook. After you hook the stirrup over the hook point, you are ready to go fishing.

PAN FISHING

Ron Knight
Fort Worth Fly Fishers

Jungle cock, Speckled Bustard, Blue Chatterer and Indian Crow are just a few of the many exotic feathers and plumage that you won't need in your collection of fly tying materials when you want to tie good panfish flies. In fact, outfitted with nothing more than chenille, rubber thread, some marabou, and some bucktail or other similar hair, you can tie flies that will catch all the perch you can stand to catch. Panfish are not known for their adherence to a strict match-the-hatch regimen. This is not to suggest that panfish are never finicky or hard to catch. At times they can be quite selective in their diet, and really big panfish can be quite difficult to catch even when they are not in a picky mood.

But for good old, day-in and day-out brim fishing, nothing beats the simple chenille and rubber legs brand of flies. Yuk Bugs, Brim Flies, Brim Specials, Brim Bug Eyes, Gill Getters, Hum Bugs, Panfish Polecats, Royal Brim Killers. The list goes on. All of these have rubber legs and chenille as their basic ingredients. Of course, these flies are all very different—fly tyers see to that. Fly tyers are never content to leave well-enough alone. Add a little hair here, a little hackle there, maybe some marabou or some Krystal Flash to make it look better to the other anglers, but it is still the same basic fly—chenille and rubber legs. And we can all be very thankful that, even though these flies all look different, the panfish are very forgiving of our decadence. If it's got some chenille and rubber legs, the fish are more than happy to do their part.

Another bonus to these flies is, if you are a value conscious consumer (i.e. cheap) like I am, you can purchase a lifetime's supply of material for considerably less than the price of a Buick. (You may think this still sound high, but many other types of flies are not able to make this claim.) The relative ease of tying these flies, along with the low cost, also make them ideal for a beginner. When viewed from a cost/benefit analysis, considering the enjoyment of being able to tie a lot of these flies, and the fun of spending many hours catching fish at your favorite brim pond, you can't afford not to tie a mess of them.

AN ODE TO THE PEACOCK

Ron Knight
Fort Worth Fly Fishers

Natures gift to the sport; peacock herl is one of the most versatile materials available for the fly tyer, and one of the most productive materials for the fly fisher that can be found. Peacock herl has the most amazing iridescent colorations of any material, natural or synthetic. Colors from opalescent pink to green to blue give any fly the added aesthetic beauty that is an integral part of fly tying and fly fishing, with the added bonus, that it will catch fish!

Peacock herl can be found on just about every type of fly ever tied: streamers, dry flies, Atlantic Salmon flies, wet flies, saltwater flies, nymphs and bass bugs. The list goes on. Peacock herl makes an excellent lateral line imitation for other types of streamer flies, and is used as a tail on many others. It has even been used to make up the entire wing on still other streamers. However, it's most prominent use is wound on the fly to form the body. These fuzzy, iridescent flies are the most consistent fish catchers ever designed.

One of the most popular peacock-herl-bodied flies is the Prince Nymph. This is the nymph by which all others should be judged. It is versatile enough to pass for a vey wide range of aquatic insects, and the peacock herl adds the dimension of working like an attractor patten. Not only should this fly be in every fly fisher's nymph box, there should be a lot of them there. They are easy to tie, they don't take up much room, and, from a purely aesthetic stand point, they are much prettier than say, a Hare's Ear or a Sow Bug.

REFLECTIONS ON BECOMING A 'BUGGER BELIEVER'

Sharon Yoker

Southwest Missouri Fly Fishers

The first year I started fly fishing, I fished quite a bit with John Prugger. Every time we went out it seemed he'd catch fish on wooley buggers and I'd catch one or two on some other fly.

About that time too, I started tying flies and was going to Bass Pro fly tying get togethers every Tuesday night faithfully, learning many different patterns. Conehead Squirrels, Cracklebacks, Glass Bead Befus Midges, Koozie Poppers, Ozark Minnows, Copper Johns, Rubber Schmuckers, Squirrely Tucas, — good lord what names! Every week I was really pleased to be learning a new pattern thinking, man this one would be THE ONE! You know, the 'magic one'. The one where you could wade into the water, tie it on and start catching fish—in a reasonable period of time.

I've had good success with warm water fly fishing, but trout continue to be a challenge. I remember asking John one time, why bother learning to tie all these flies if all I ever needed was a wooley bugger? I get all the magazines and they all show patterns that trout supposedly will take. I've ed some of these patterns, and they never seem to work. I got to the point that I refused to fish a wooley bugger, after all, trout were supposed to take flies that imitated bugs. It made me mad to think I'd invested all this time and money trying to tie all these different kinds of bugs for naught when all I needed was marabou, chenille and grizzly hackle.

Well I've finally reached the point where I believe I know how to tie just about any fly I need at this point in my fly fishing life. Does that mean I have all those techniques down pat? No, but bit-by-bit I've gotten better. It also means that I've reached the point where I've given in to the buggers. I went to Bennett Springs today and I must say that the last couple of trips there and to Taney had not been very good for me and I was beginning to lose confidence in myself. I would go from catching lots of bass and bluegill on my warm water trips, to one or two trout each trip and sometimes zip. When you have fishing trips like that and hear people call them 'stupid trout' I was starting to think that the fish weren't the stupid ones! So I tied up two olive wooley buggers and thought if nothing else, I'd fish those at Bennett – at least for a little while. I was finally ready to give 'em a try.

When I got there and only saw a total of about six other people fishing I thought I'd made a wrong turn somewhere on the highway. I got rigged up with my olive bugger and became a little concerned as I considered my tackle set up. I'd put on a 9' 6x leader with some 6x tippet and when I tied the bugger I did so on a #12 200R hook...and weighted it pretty good....I was also using my Sage 4wt.....hummmmm, this wasn't going to be pretty casting....I bit the bullet and fished it anyway and was very glad I did! In 45 minutes I'd released 3 fish. Then within the next 15minutes I'd caught 2 more. Hummmmm, now I'm getting cocky wishing I had one of those fish clicker counters. After all, this is exciting and my mind is racing,,wondering how many will I catch before my hands are so frozen I can't feel the rod? Well my hands where numb by the time I'd been fishing for 2½ hours and I'd caught 10 fish, lost three and missed several strikes. What an epiphany! I think I LIKE these buggers! Maybe now I can simplify my tying desk and rid it of everything but marabou, chenille and grizzly hackle! NOT, I know those 'stupid trout' will learn to like those other flies one of these days.....

Fly Tyers Corner

Terry Tanner
Southwest Missouri Fly Fishers

“Green Coley”

Material List

Hook	Mustad #3906 or similar, Size 12,10, 8, or 6
Thread	Flymaster 6/0 or Wapsi #70, Black
Body	Green (Bright Green) chenille (size to match hook)
Legs	1 Cog-de-leon feather, bronze or brown color
Wings & Head	Peacock herl (size to match hook)
Head Cement	Dave’s flex-a-ment or flex-seal

Tying Instructions

Fig. 1 Wind the thread from behind the hook eye down hook shank to just past the bend and tie materials on in this order, on top of the hook: 1 bunch of peacock herl (adjust the amount for the hook size). Next tie in 1 Cog-de-leon feather (tip first and concave side up). Then tie in chenille (on the side of the hook shank).

Fig. 2 Wind chenille to a little more than 3/4 of the hook shank toward the eye of the hook, tie and cut off. Bring the Cog-de-leon feather over the top to form the legs, tie and cut off.

Fig. 3 Finally bring the peacock herl over the back and tie off leaving room to form the head. Then hold up the peacock and make several wraps to help form the head. Leave the thread just behind the eye and bring down the peacock herl to finish forming the head and tie off behind the hook eye. Coat the wing with cement as well as the head and thread.



