



# FLY PAPER

October 2024

wenatcheevalleyflyfishers.com

## Looking Upstream

Oct. 17 **WVFF General Meeting – Fly Fishing WA from Desert to the Coast**

Wenatchee Valley College 6:00 pm No food service  
Van Tassel Cafeteria Meeting Room

Nov. 7 WVFF Board Zoom Meeting

Nov. 21 **WVFF General Meeting – Presenters – Conservation Grant Recipients**

Dec. 5 WVFF Board Zoom Meeting

Dec. 19 **WVFF General Meeting – We are the Presenters**

Bring your best 2024 Fish Tales and share with the membership. Power Points, Maps, Pictures or sketches on a matchbook are also good.

**January 18 WVFF Banquet** at Wenatchee Valley College Social Hour 5:00 / 6:00 Dinner

## October 17<sup>th</sup> Presentation at 7:00pm

### Fly Fishing Washington from Desert to the Salt



#### With David Paul Williams

David will take us on a descriptive trip from the lakes of the basin to the beaches of Puget Sound. Covering the fisheries and techniques needed to fish each. If time allows, he might sneak in a few secrets about fishing the rivers of the Olympic Peninsula.

He's a well-known writer, speaker and fly fishing professional and you'll enjoy his information-packed hour with this where-to, how-to presentation.

David Paul Williams has written for American Angler, Fly Fisherman, Northwest Fly Fishing, Southwest Fly Fishing, American Fly Fishing, Eastern Fly Fishing, Fly Fusion, Bassmaster, Fly Fishing & Tying Journal and Game & Fish magazines and wrote the book on smallmouth bass, Flyfishing for Western Smallmouth.

He writes the Good-Gear Guide at [good-gear-guide.blogspot.com](http://good-gear-guide.blogspot.com) and is the former Editor-In-Chief of Flyfisher and Department Editor at Flyfishing & Tying Journal. He gives entertaining media presentations to clubs and organizations on carp, smallmouth bass, saltwater beach fishing, panfish and alpine trout. Also known for his simple, yet effective fly patterns, he has been fly fishing since he was ten years old.

# Volunteers Needed

Leavenworth Area

October 7-10<sup>th</sup> & 14-17<sup>th</sup>

# Riparian Planting

This opportunity can be paired with a visit to the famous Oktoberfest. Have some fun and plant which we all know will immensely benefit the fish populations by retaining ground water, providing shade and reducing soil erosion into the creek.



Trout Unlimited's Wenatchee-Entiat Beaver Project will be planting and fencing 1,000 plants this fall for USFWS where a new intake was constructed for the Leavenworth Fish

Hatchery on Icicle Creek last year. These plants will provide valuable habitat for local wildlife and shade for Icicle Creek.

We are looking for volunteers who can dig holes with manual augers, construct planting platforms/terraces on steep slopes, spread compost and mulch, put plants in holes, and construct browse exclusion fencing. Volunteers will need to be fit and sure footed as the soil is very compacted, and most of the work is on steep ~50 degree slopes.

**When:**

October 7-10

8am-4pm

Digging holes/terraces, spreading compost/mulch, and some planting, all on very steep ground

October 14-17 and October 26

Make a Difference Day

8am-4pm

Digging holes/terraces, spreading compost/mulch, planting, and constructing fence, all on very steep ground.

**Where:**

Drive through Leavenworth to the roundabout and go south / left and take the Icicle River Road heading up the Icicle drainage. Drive a little past MM 3 (just upstream of the Icicle River RV Park) and park at the large streamside pullout. Walk east/downstream to the new hatchery intake site on the creek side of the road. If you drive to the big Snow Lakes Trail Head parking area, you have gone too far upstream.

**RSVP**

And to get more information contact: Mike Wyant at 509-548-747

# Editorial

by Dan Hammond

The recent situation with the Eagles over-riding our next two scheduled meetings (with their own activities) prompts our club to reconsider our continuing presence at their facility. Because of the factors involved with WVFF using the Eagles' facility, making a decision as to whether-or-not to remain there needs a discussion. Also factoring in the loss of 30% of our membership this year signals the potential need for a major paradigm shift regarding our club. I will attempt to address a number of these items in this editorial.

**Eagles**

Historically our club has had an understanding with the Eagles for quite some time (I don't know how long WVFF has been using the Eagles' facility to meet). The Eagles offered us:

1. Their back room on the third Thursday of the month. The back room could be closed off to the Eagles' membership.
2. We had access to tables, chairs and power that facilitated a members' meeting that included our PA system, our LCD projector and a screen for presentations.
3. In addition, we had access to the Eagles' bar for cocktails, beer & wine plus the fact that we could order meals.
4. Finally, we could use a portion of their storeroom to store our library cabinet that we could wheel out for our meetings.

We had a very good relationship with Chad, the manager of the Eagles, for a number of years. However, Chad has recently departed as manager. Coincidentally (after Chad's departure), we've recently discovered that the Eagles have decided that they are going to use our next two scheduled time slots (September and October) for their own activities. The question to our board: didn't we already book those time slots?

### **The Decision to Remain at the Eagles or to Move Elsewhere**

The WVFF Board needs to consider whether-or-not we should remain at the Eagles or search for another location.

#### **Pros for staying**

- Separate meeting facility.
- Table, chairs, power.
- Storage for the library cabinet.
- Ability to purchase cocktails, wine & beer.
- Ability to purchase meals.

#### **Cons for leaving**

- Are the Eagles going to continue to over-ride our scheduled meeting dates?
- The food is mediocre.
- The atmosphere is mediocre.

#### **Opinion**

With Chad's departure, I don't know that the current Eagles management is really interested in respecting our scheduled dates in the future. The two main reasons to remain are:

1. Storage for our library cabinet.
2. Access to their bar.

It is evident that our members enjoy sharing an alcoholic beverage during our meetings. I believe that a number of our members purchase a meal just to support the Eagles, not for the quality of meal.

The library is rarely used any more (although it was heavily used during the 1990s and early 2000s). It seems that our current membership is no longer interested in checking out the books and DVDs, despite the fact that our library offers a wonderful collection for use. Maybe it's time to re-evaluate our library. Perhaps we should consider other options for the library. For example, parting with the library (and cabinet) would remove one major reason for staying at the Eagles.

### Other options for the library:

1. Donate the library collection to an institution that would allow our members access to it.
2. Allow our members to purchase books from the collection.
3. Allow our members to own books from the collection.
4. Sell the collection.
5. Donate the collection.

If an institution, such as WVC would accept our collection and allow our members access to it, it seems a viable solution. At least any member of our club (in good standing) would continue to have access to the collection. We could rid ourselves of the cabinet which would eliminate the need to store it somewhere. It would also eliminate one major headache (storage) for any other venue that we would consider as a potential meeting place in the future.

If we decide to part with the library all together, I believe that our members should have first choice to obtain parts of the library. We would have to decide on a fair way to offer the books to the membership. Would we sell the books to members (perhaps a silent auction) or give them away?

### **Paradigm Shift**

Given the need to discuss a possible meeting place change, the 30% drop in membership and the retiring of a number of board members begs the question: do we need to develop a new paradigm shift in order to save WFFF?

1. Longtime board members Bruce Merighi (Conservation/Education and the Flypaper), Gary Anderson (Programs), Fred Kunzmann (Gilly) are retiring from the board.
2. It is hard to find members to participate as board members.
3. Many of our members that do participate in the club are aging (70s & 80s). In fact, a significant number of our stalwart members are starting to step away from fly fishing, as well as fly tying due to health issues.
4. We have difficulty attracting and keeping younger members.

### **A Short History of our Membership**

We should keep in mind that a number of our WFFF 'elders' were in their 30s and 40s when they joined this club in the 80s and 90s. A strong friendship bond was formed. The bond was strengthened because they had other hobbies in common as well. The gentlemen not only had a passion for fly fishing, but for skiing and for hunting game birds with their bird dogs. Not only did the men share a bond, but a number of their wives were members of the local quilters guild and they became friends as well.

The fly fishers started with equipment like doughnut-shaped float tubes and camped in tents. Over the years the technology with fly fishing equipment improved. The doughnut-shaped float tubes gave way to U-shaped float tubes, torpedo-pontoon float tubes & pontoon boats. As the fly fishers aged, the tents gave way to travel trailers and RVs. Many of the wives, who didn't fish, joined their husbands in the comfort of the trailers and would get together with the other wives and talk 'quilting.' I believe that sometimes they would actually quilt together on these trips.

The club members were enthusiastic about club outings. Fabulous outings were offered. There was a club member that had property on the Methow River. Caravans of trailers would park on that property and the group would float the Methow fishing for steelhead, trout and salmon. Lake Chopaka, Dry Falls and Blue Lake (Sinlahekin) offered great fishing as well. Some members would travel together to the lakes of British Columbia or Central Eastern Oregon.

As the years passed by, this group watched their children grow, become adults, get married and they, in turn, had their own children. That friendship grew stronger as well. However, as the years passed by, the pressure of fishing our area increased from the general population. The numbers of fish also decreased. Fishing for steelhead in our area was closed. One could no longer fish for salmon or trout in the Wenatchee or Columbia rivers. Restrictions for other game fish grew tighter. In addition, the water level in a number of some lakes decreased: Big Twin, Dry Falls, Blue Lake and, more recently Chopaka.

In recent years, a number of these aging fly fishers, now in their 70s and 80s, have adopted fishing in small prams rather than float tubes or pontoon boats. A number of these fly fishers are experiencing medical issues that have caused them to limit their activities or quit fly fishing altogether. Finally, our club has lost some longtime members due to their passing: Ralph Jordan and Steve Harvey to name a couple of gentlemen. Several members have lost their spouses. Several have relocated to other communities to be closer to their remaining family members. The friendship bond is still there, but the numbers of those members are on the decline.

### A Recent Conversation

I recently had a candid conversation with Mike Scherer (owner of Wenatchee Fly Co.) regarding WVFF. As I reported earlier in the year, I attended one of Mike's fly tying sessions downtown and discovered that there were no less than 28 **young** fly fishers (20s & 30s) in attendance that night, all local people. By contrast, our club is lucky to have 25 members attend our meetings and they are mostly our 'elder' group who are loyal to the club. Last month we had only 14 members attend the meeting.

Below is the synopsis of our conversation:

1. Mike tried to join our club during Covid (via our website) when he first relocated to Wenatchee. He could not get the website to accept his payment. Consequently, Mike gave up trying to join.
2. There is a glaring need to update our method of communication with our members and our community at large. Websites and e-mails have their place but are largely outdated. Other platforms, such as Instagram, are the way younger people communicate today.
3. Meeting at the Eagles is a turnoff to younger people. It spells 'old'. The venue is just not attractive to potential new members.
4. Younger people are not necessarily joiners of traditional clubs. They don't feel the need to meet on a regular ongoing basis.
5. Despite the fact that we have a wealth of knowledge to offer within our membership, younger people can access that knowledge through platforms like YouTube and are more likely use it for information rather than listening to our members disseminate information.
6. Does the club really need to have a business meeting and presentation every meeting? Mike felt that the format of our meetings was a turnoff for younger people.

7. Having more casual, social events that concentrate on having fun may attract younger people to our club.

## **Conclusion**

***We really need to find a way to attract new, younger members who are willing to take leadership positions in order for this club to survive.***

We are also going to lose some key board members this next year as well:

1. A number of our older members are weary of serving on the board anymore (having served in various positions over the years).
2. Some members have to step back due to declining health issues.

I don't think our club is dying, but I fear that it is 'circling the drain' despite being true to our 501 (3) (c) mission statement. A significant number of other fly fishing clubs in our state have already made the decision to shut down due to declining membership. It is fair to say that we would all hate to see that happen to our club. However, despite our recent successes (being awarded 'Outstanding Volunteers- 2023' by WDFWs Region 2, fly casting clinics, youth education programs, good programs for the membership at meetings, etc.), we continue to lose members.

**Help WVFF Member Steve Baker find a better vice !  
He's just looking for something newer.  
If you can help him, give him a call or text at:**

Steve Baker

[backcountrywalker@proton.me](mailto:backcountrywalker@proton.me) 509 393-1743



# **Wenatchee Habitat Sub-Committee**

## **Draft Fall Project Tour #1**

Ariel Edwards, Lead Entity Coordinator  
Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board  
Wednesday October 16<sup>th</sup> 9:00am – 3:30pm

This is a great opportunity to check out some of the projects that are going on in our drainage that has been funded in recent years by your tax dollars and the Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board process.

9:00-9:30: Meet at either Chelan County Fire District #3 (Leavenworth) or the Leavenworth Park and Ride. (Will confirm by Final Tour Itinerary)

9:30-9:50: Drive to FS Road for Upper Wenatchee Floodplain Reconnection (RM37-38)  
(Scott Bailey, CCNRD)

9:50-10:30: Drive into Upper Wenatchee Floodplain Reconnection  
Look at staging area, and walk to project location

10:30-11:15: View Upper Wenatchee Floodplain Reconnection (Scott Bailey, CCNRD)

11:15-11:45: Walk back to vehicles and drive back to Highway 2

11:45-12:15: Drive to Upper Nason (Chris Butler, YNF)

12:15-12:45: Lunch

12:45-1:45: Upper Nason Creek Tour (Chris Butler, YNF)

1:45-2:30: Drive to Chumstick Creek

2:30-3:15: Chumstick Low Tech Restoration (Alex Harwell, CCD)

3:15-3:30: Return to either Leavenworth Fire Station #3 or Leavenworth Park and Ride

**\*May extend tour until 4:00 to accommodate a restroom break and other incidentals**

**Interested in attending ? Contact Bruce Merighi : 509-679-2274 for more info.**



# WVFF Board Meeting Minutes

## September 5, 2024

**Attendance:** Present: Derek Corder, Dan Hammond, Bruce Merighi, Tod Treat,  
Allan Warman and Mike Wyant  
Absent: Gary Anderson, Fred Kunzman and John Richmond

**Call to order:** 7:03 p.m.

**Board Meeting Minutes** (recorded by Mike Wyant)

Motion to Approve: Bruce Second: Dan

Vote: Unanimous

**President's Report:** Date and location of 2025 banquet: Saturday, January 18 at Wenatchee Valley College. Same time window as last year. Propose approaching Bruce Phillips to be auctioneer. He had earlier volunteered. Approaching doners: Dan has a list of previous doners and names of members who traditional approached possible doners. Dan coordinated last year and is willing to do so again this year. Derek will assist Dan.

**Education Report:** Dan suggested reaching out to Codi Jaspers at Wenatchee High School to do a casting class with the outdoor education students.

**Conservation Report:** Bruce reported that three speakers are scheduled to talk about their conservation grant projects that were supported by the club. Cascade Unitarian Universal Fellowship Church in East Wenatchee donated \$750 to the club to forward on in support of the regional beaver project. The club is acting as a conduit to get the money to the project. Bruce also noted that three organizations have submitted applications for conservation grants for the coming year.

**Treasurer's Report:** No report as John was absent.

**Outings Report:** No report

**Membership Report:** Allan reported that there are 60 paid club members for 2024. Twenty-seven previous members did not renew by paying dues and so were dropped from the roster. Allan also reported that he is trying to get permanent log in access for member Steve Baker of Leavenworth.

**Program Chair Report:**

September: Mike Scherer from Wenatchee Fly Company October: David P. Williams

November: Conservation grant recipients

**Old business:** Tod revisited the question of providing a year's membership to the club at no charge for people who participate in club-sponsored classes. Specifically, membership should be offered to the women from the Plain group and to participants at last winter's fly tying class and the introduction to fly fishing class last spring.

**New business: Misc.**

Allan reported that the club's storage container is very full and is in need of cleaning and reorganizing. He also reported that a gentleman who is no longer fishing or tying donated a considerable amount of tying material which Allan put in the container. Tod will send the fellow a thank you note. Allan reported that he, his wife, and Bruce Merighi did a casting class this summer with about a dozen Plain Adventure Women.

The club membership meeting for September is the 19<sup>th</sup>.

**Adjournment Time: 7:40**

Motion to Approve: Dan    Second: Allan    Vote: Unanimous