



April 2015 Newsletter

*April meeting – Tuesday April 7th at 6pm
BJ's Restaurant – Hamilton*

“Though I eventually moved West for much different reasons, I have come to appreciate this one above all others: it rescued me from seasons. They exist here, to be sure, but less a matter of calendars than of inclination and opportunity. Salmon, winter steelhead, whitefish, trout, smallmouth, summer steelhead, sea-run cutthroat, salmon—they overlap like the scales of a fish, layered three and four deep on some rivers, the smooth skin of a year that is proof against a good many things”

**Ted Leeson
Down to Zero
from *The Habit of Rivers***

The Presidents Message

As I sit here and write this in late March there are skwala's, nemoura's, march browns and rafts blanketing the water and the fish are filling their stomachs from dusk to dawn on the surface. Well, that might be an exaggeration, but they are taking some dries despite the unseasonably high water. April promises more consistent dry fly fishing as long as the river doesn't blow out, so get out there and enjoy it while you can. The snow pack has dropped from 101 percent at the end of last month to 81 percent today, which doesn't bode well for end of summer fishing. Hopefully we will get some more precipitation in the near future.

Dan Shepard from Grizzly Hackle put on an excellent presentation at our March meeting on several destinations abroad, including Andros Island, Kamchatka and Slovenia. The pictures and video of the fish/scenery were truly breathtaking. If you get a chance, stop by his shop and give him thanks for the continued support of our club. Hope to see you all at the next meeting!

Chris Andersen

The Program

This month's program will be a presentation on the dark, seedy, and disgusting world of fly fishing for carp. Jokes aside, carp fishing with a fly rod is a lot of fun and worth a try. Carp are big, smart, and will make you a better fly angler. So if you ever find yourself getting tired of trout fishing once in a while (I know I do!) carp can be a wonderful and incredibly fun change of pace. If you have an open mind, are open to trying something new, enjoy sight fishing, and enjoy catching large technically challenging fish, then carp just may be your thing!

Bob Prince will focus on his experiences and knowledge of pursuing carp in Montana and will highlight some of the world class carp fishing to be had throughout the treasure state. Unlike other places around the country carp in Montana happen to live in beautiful places. From the flats of Clark Canyon and Canyon Ferry Reservoirs to the placid waters of the lower Missouri and Yellowstone Rivers carp can be found almost anywhere. Bob's presentation will focus on the when, where, and how to catch these fish in nearby waters. Don't miss it!!

2015 Outing Schedule

Mark your calendars for the following outings coming up this Spring and Summer.

Missouri River - April 22-26

Georgetown Lake – July 15-19

Summer Picnic and Karstetter Classic – Aug 23

North Fork of the Blackfoot – last weekend of August

North Fork Salmon River – 1st week on November

Fly of the Month Halfback Nymph

Tied by Bob Pearcy

Recipe



Hook: Size 8, 4X long streamer hook

Thread: Black, 8/0

Weight: 0.015 lead wire

Tail: Pheasant tail fibers

Abdomen: Peacock herl

Rib: Small copper wire

Thorax: Peacock herl

Hackle: Two, grizzly dyed brown

This month's fly is an old, well-tested pattern that mimics nothing in particular but many trout foods in general--and importantly catches fish. It can be used to imitate a stonefly nymph, an immature crayfish that has not yet developed the distinctive claws of mature individuals, or in stillwaters, a dragonfly nymph. Tied in the appropriate size it makes a good skwala nymph imitation. It has perhaps been most effective for me when fished in deep runs and seams with a sink tip so that it rolls and bounces along the bottom. It, of course, can also be fished under an indicator as the point fly in a two fly rig.

The Halfback nymph is easy to tie and requires only widely available materials. I normally weight it with 10 or 15 wraps of 0.015" lead wire. After tying in the tail and trimming the butt ends, I tie in a sizable clump of 10-15 pheasant tail fibers by the tips at about the 1/2 to 2/3 point along the shank and then wrap back to the base of the tail. This way the thicker, more robust parts of the pheasant tail fibers will ultimately form the back. I then tie in the fine wire rib and 4-5 peacock herls and bring the thread forward to the front of the abdomen. I form a rope of peacock herl and the tying thread and then wrap to form a tapered abdomen. I then tie in the hackle at the front of the abdomen and then wrap it backwards. I prefer grizzly dyed brown as it adds to the "bugginess" but brown hackle can also be used. I secure the hackle with 2-3 wraps of wire, trim the tip off and then counter wrap the wire forward to lock down the hackle and abdomen. I then bring the peacock fibers forward and tie them off to form the back. For the thorax, I tie in 4-5 peacock herls and a slightly larger hackle. I again form a rope and wrap the peacock herl forward, forming a thorax that is perhaps slightly larger in diameter than the abdomen. Finally the hackle is wrapped forward and tied off. A smooth head is then formed, whip finished and cemented

Bank Stabilization at Memorial Bridge

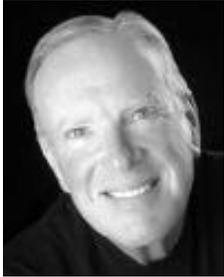
FWP has firmed up plans for a bank stabilization project at the Memorial Bridge launch site. No start date has been announced but the work will likely be delayed until after runoff. FFB had agreed to contribute \$ 3000 towards the project but FWP received additional funding and won't need our contribution. They will, however, be asking for volunteers to help with the work. Stay tuned for dates and volunteer information.

Casting for Recovery

The Club and members are supporting the Casting for Recovery Glacier program serving women from Western Montana. Glacier launched in 2011 and is holding its 5th retreat this year, having served 56 women to date. Ages of the participants have ranged from 36-79. Through the Club's generous sponsorship of women from Ravalli County over the past three years, 10 women from Ravalli County have attended. This year's retreat is scheduled for Sept 11-13, 2015 with an application deadline of July 3. One woman from Ravalli County has already applied with active outreach going on in our area. Women in any stage of breast cancer treatment or recovery may apply online at www.castingforrecovery.org. Peg Miskin, National Program Director for CfR, is our local contact: peg.miskin@castingforrecovery.org.

In addition to our ongoing physical support for Casting for Recovery FFB has, as in years past, pledged a \$2000 contribution to CfR this year. Members are invited and encouraged to contribute directly. Member contributions will offset our \$2000 pledge. Bring your contribution to the next FFB meeting. Thanks for participating!

In Memoriam



On Wednesday, March 25 Jeff, a Club member, lost his life on the Bitterroot. The raft he was in hit a root ball and tossed its members into strong current. Tragically, Jeff was carried down river and drowned.

Jeff was full of life. His infectious humor and twinkle in his eye belied a strong character. He was a dedicated sportsman, fishing and hunting the world over. He was a good friend and those of us fortunate enough to know him will miss him terribly. He leaves behind a loving and lovely wife, Susannah, two sons and a daughter, and a daughter-in-law, a son-in-law and a daughter-in-law soon to be.

There will be no funeral, but rather a celebration of life, Tuesday, March 31. Inquiries can be made to the Daly-Leach Memorial Chapel. Condolences may be left for the family at dalyleachchapel.com. The family suggests that any memorial donations in his name be made to the Marcus Daly Memorial Hospital Foundation, 1200 Westwood Drive, Hamilton, MT 59840.