



Rhody FLY RODDERS

America's Oldest Saltwater Fly Fishing Club

THE CURRENT

"The lifeline of the estuary and knowledge"



New Year's Fishing Resolutions

Around this time of the year, I find myself reflecting on the previous fishing year as well as day dreaming about my future fishing outings. Undoubtedly, I end up hoping the new season will be my best season yet, and with that goal in mind, I always set a few objectives for the season.....*continued on page 5.*

"Pass on to all, who ask, what you learn here"



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It's a New Year! Let's keep our momentum going? Wow! 2025, at the quarter century mark. Time flies, no pun intended?

We ended last year on a high note with some thoughtful and kind gestures. North Kingstown Food Pantry was the recipient of our Holiday Food Drive, the December Tying Meeting was a success, and a group of fly fishers from several clubs around the state held a breakfast that donated over \$200 to our charitable efforts. You can find out more about these events on [page 15](#).

It's the time of the year to re-new membership. It's a modest \$30.00 per year, and there are a lot of benefits to being a member. We have our Pizza Night, Spring Barbecue, Tying Night, guest speakers, outdoor clinics, fishing nights, and much more. We have fiscal commitments such as hall rental, business supplies, printing, and food service. The good news is all the money we collect goes back to the members. We are always trying to keep our cost down and be respectful of our mandate. For example, all board members and officers volunteer their time, and all newsletters are emailed instead of printed and mailed. Please remember to pay your dues it's important to running the club. There are some who just forget each year and still come to the meetings. Payments can be made at the January Meeting or you can mail a check to John Pope, 6 Canonchet Drive, Portsmouth, RI 02871.

We are running out of bucket raffle items! Please keep us in mind when sorting through your gear this off season. Feel free to donate books, tying material, and fishing items you no longer need. You will keep them out of the landfill while also helping the club out. Proceeds from raffles help us keep the cost of our dues low.

The Fly Fishing Show dates this year in Marlborough, MA are January 17, 18, and 19 at the Royal Plaza Trade Center. It's a change of pace to break up the winter month and stay connected to fly fishing. Several Rhody members will be at the show. Check their web site for more details and the schedule for theater presentations.

Capt. Ray Stachelek

Capt. Ray Stachelek



President
Rhody Fly Rodders

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intended?”

Preview



Tuesday, January 21st, 6:30pm

Riverside Sportsman Association
19 Mohawk Dr., East Providence, RI 02915



January is when club dues are renewed every year, and most members usually use the convenience of this meeting to pay their dues. **Payments can be made at the January Meeting or you can mail a check to John Pope, 6 Canonchet Drive, Portsmouth, RI 02871. Checks are to be made out to Rhody Fly Rodders.**

January Guest Speaker

Ask any seasoned fly fisher how the shore fishing has been the last few years and they will not say many positives. The most successful anglers typically cover more water and are more more flexible. In an effort to improve their chances, many are moving into uncharted waters and purchasing kayaks and small aluminum boats. These vessels fit most budgets and are easy to car top or trailer without a special vehicle.

This month we have **Capt. Jerry Sparks** as a guest speaker. Capt. Sparks is a registered Coast Guard Captain with over 20 years of experience. He operates **Northeast Boat and Kayak Charters** in RI. He's on the Pro Staff of most tackle manufacturers including AFTCO, Yo-Zuri, and Florida Fishing Products. Jerry specializes in striped bass, bluefish, bonito, and false albacore, but he also jigs for sea bass, mackerel, and scup.



His presentation will focus on productive small coves and kayak-able waters that can be accessed within Narragansett Bay. Jerry has decades of experience fishing from a kayak. He's also very successful catching winter holdover stripers in RI and CT. He'll explain anything you want to know about different kayaks, accessories, and what makes one spot better to fish by kayak than others.

Directions

From Providence take Rt.195 to Exit 2B. Bear right on the ramp and follow Rt. 114 S for 2 miles. Look for WPRO Studios on the left, then take first U-turn back to Rt.114 north. Continue north and look for the Riverside Sportsman Club (blue) sign on the right.

New Year's Fishing Resolutions

Around this time of the year, I find myself reflecting on the previous fishing year as well as day dreaming about my future fishing outings. Undoubtedly, I end up hoping the new season will be my best season yet, and with that goal in mind, I always set a few objectives for the season. In the past I have aimed at more fish or bigger fish, but in reflection my most memorable days were neither the day I caught the biggest fish nor the day I caught the most fish. So, this year I propose different New Years's fishing resolutions for all of us to get behind.

1) Fish with someone new to fly fishing and share your knowledge with them. Being on the water with someone when they catch their first fish and seeing their excitement is a memorable experience. Even if it is not their first fish, sharing in someone else's success can be just as rewarding as catching more or larger fish.

2) Spend some time catching fish in a different way. There is nothing more memorable then succeeding in a new or different way. This could be catching fish at a new spot, on a new style of fly that you rarely fish, or with a different technique. If you fish only during the day, try to catch a fish at night. If you never fish poppers, let this be the year you catch a fish on a popper. If you have never been to a worm hatch, make this the year you find worms. Do you always fish the Narrow River and never leave? Try catching a fish in the surf on Block Island or the Outer Cape. Have you never been in the middle of a blitz with bass at your feet? Go find yourself a blitz this October. If you haven't spent sometime sight fishing for stripers, give it a try. Have you ever caught two stripers at once? What about three at once? For some nostalgia, try catching fish on the first rod and reel you ever owned. Change things up and I promise it will be a rewarding experience.

3) Fish with someone you haven't fished with in a long time. Maybe some time has passed since you fished with your friend, son, father, mentor, grandchild, or significant other. Spend time on the water with someone who matters to you.

4) Target a new species of fish or a species you rarely catch. I don't spend much time targeting largemouth bass or carp, but when I do fish for them, I always enjoy the experience. I think many of you would enjoy the frustration of carp fishing too.

These are just four ideas to get you thinking of what New Year resolutions you want to make for yourself. There is no correct answer to any of this. I encourage you to come up with your own set of goals and enjoy the journey they take you on. Lastly, don't be afraid to commit fly fishing heresy and add something silly to your list. Someone needs to be the person who catches a 36-inch striped bass on a squirmy wormy. Why not you? Good luck this year, and I hope I get to fish with you this season.

By Patrick Williamson

Upclose

We would like our membership to get to know one another. What better way to do this than to feature a member profile each month.



Shane Denherder

North Kingston, Rhode Island

How long have you been a member?

3 months

Favorite places to fish?

Estuaries

Favorite flies?

Black Balanced Leach. For saltwater, I am still figuring out what I like to fish with and how I like to fish. So far, the lighter the fly the better.

Boat or shore fishing?

I prefer boat fishing, but I don't have the time, so I mostly fish from shore.

How long have you been fly fishing and tying flies?

I've been fly fishing for 5 years, and I have not tied since I was young.

Any notable catches?

24 inch brown and cutthroat trout when I lived in Utah.

Favorite species to catch?

Cutthroat and smallmouth, but I'm really interested in catching stripers (no luck yet).

Favorite fishing partner?

My most frequent fishing partners are my two children, but since moving here, I haven't fished a lot. I fished with Dave Loren last year, and I'm always up for fishing with anyone who wants to go.

Any notable stories?

Ooof. Most Include falling down in a river and losing gear, up to and including a rod and reel combo. It turns out they don't float, and they are really hard to find even in small fast streams.

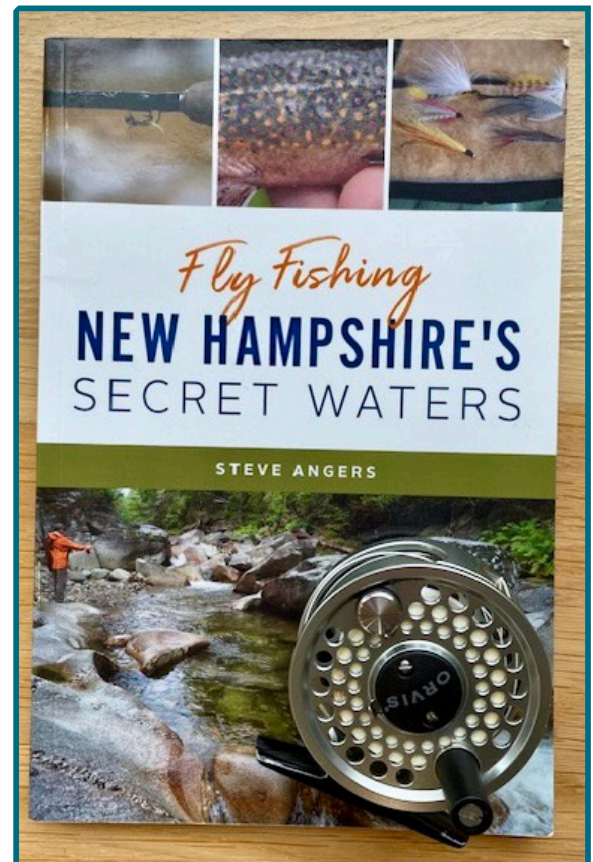


Book of the Month:

Fly Fishing New Hampshire's Secret Waters by Steve Angers

When my parents were sixteen and got their licenses (mid 1970's), they would escape Hudson County, New Jersey with their friends every weekend in search of trout. Without a doubt these camping and fishing excursions were half about the fishing and half about a party around a campfire. Regardless, one of the many places they would frequent was New Hampshire (NH). When I was eleven and started fly fishing, they began indoctrinating me with tales of the fishing in these once remote places. Thus, began my fascination with fly fishing in NH. Eventually, I came across the book *Fly Fishing New Hampshire's Secret Waters* by Steve Angers.

Even though I was fortunate to learn a good deal about where to stay and where to fish in NH through family vacations, this book was worth every penny I spent on it. *Fly Fishing New Hampshire's Secret Waters* is half a trip planning tool and half a field guide to use when fishing for native brook trout in NH. Angers opens the book with a section on what gear and knowledge you need to be successful in the state. The second part of the book **details rivers and ponds throughout every region**. Specifically, Angers lists **where to access these spots, what to fish these spots with, where to stay, and how to string successive spots together to cover multiple locations through out a day or entire trip**. I do not go to NH without this book in my backpack, and I frequently sit by the campfire flipping through the pages to plan the next days adventure. If you fish for native brookies in NH or enjoy blue line fishing, this book is a must have.



Bonito Jiggy



This is a simple and effective jiggy fly for bonito. I prefer it in white with a silver jiggy head (green eyes) and silver body braid, but here it is tied in gold, pearl, and tan.

- 1) Slide on the jiggy head then start your thread at the hook bend.
- 2) Tie in the body braid, so an inch hangs back off the hook as a tail. Pick this out so its just flash fibers. Advance your thread up to just behind the head, and wrap the body braid around the shank till you meet your thread. Tie off the body braid and cut the excess away.
- 3) Tie in a very short piece of bunny strip and pull it straight up. Preen the fibers, so the fur is only on top. Put super glue on the top of the hook shank and pull the hide down so it sticks to the shank.
- 4) Put super glue on the first inch of the thread hanging down. Wrap it as close to the back of the jiggy head as you can. Push the jiggy head back over the thread. It should glue in place. Now cut your thread.
- 5) Use light cure epoxy on the bottom to make a belly.

Materials



#1 short extra strong



Mono thread



Small jiggy head



Body braid



Light cured epoxy



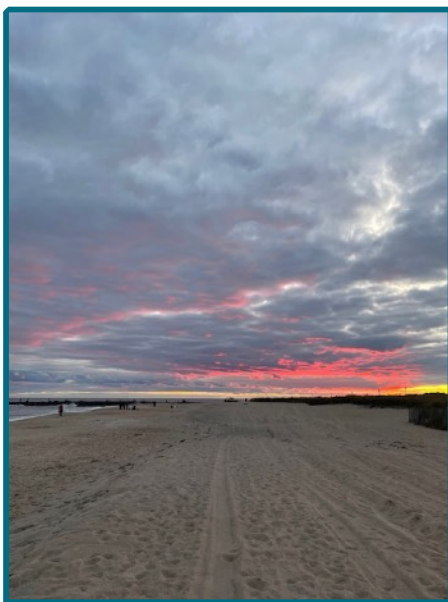
Bunny strip



Spotlight: Charlestown Beach, Charlestown

This section is meant to highlight well known fishing spots in order to provide information to new saltwater fly fishermen. The intention is to provide basic information without providing specifics that could be considered a spot burn.

Charlestown Beach has a well earned reputation for being a reliable spot to find a fall blitz. Bookended by the Charlestown Breachway to the west, this beach typically has a conveyor belt of bay anchovies and peanut bunker passing by in the fall. The prevalence of this bait draws stripers into the shore break and within range of the fly caster. The beach itself does not have much structure except a few slightly deeper holes and a sand bar or two that change location after every storm. The main structure here is the jetty at the breachway, but this jetty is worth an entire article on its own. That article must wait for another day. Regardless, access to this beach is easy as you can park at the Breachway or at the Charlestown Beach lot.



In my opinion, the main event at Charlestown Beach are the blitzes that pop up and can run the entire length of the beach. These are much easier to fish as a fly fisherman than the jetty, but do require some skill and strategy. Knowing where the next blitz will pop up is half science and half an instinctual gut feeling. You must also know how to out maneuver the other fishermen who often prowl the beach on bikes or in their trucks. Most of these fishermen wait till they see blitzes with birds diving

before casting, but a keen angler will be able to pick up subtle cues in the surf that tell you where the fish are, or when they are passing by, without seeing splashes or birds.



December

DECEMBER, 2024



A Memorable Story: The Underwear Blitz of 2024

Names have been changed to protect the identity of those involved. This is a true story.

We all like to characterize ourselves as die hard fishermen, but when push comes to shove, what would you do to catch one of the most epic blitzes of the season? Would you sneak out of work early? Would you speed across the state? Would you wet wade in November in your underwear? This is a story of how sometimes we push past what some would consider reasonable just to catch fish.

It was a warm windless November day, and I was fortunate to be able to leave work early to fish one of my favorite beaches. As I walked up to the beach, I saw peanut bunker being harassed by an occasional schoolie, but by the time I got there it was over. As a good fishing buddy should, I took the lull to text a group of friends and tell them what was happening. I sent, "There's a few fish and tons of bait at [REDACTED] beach." My friend Dan was in Providence at work and sent back "If I sneak out of work an hour early, can I get there in time?" I responded, "You might as well try." I waded around for an hour changing flies and casting at a splash or two looking forward to him experiencing this frustration with me. I managed a fish, and was enjoying the weather more than anything else.

Then a wall of splashes formed on the horizon. At first it was moving slow. Then it began to move quickly. I sent out a text, "Get here now." Dan responded, "I'm just leaving. Do I have time to go home and change?" I said, "No. Speed." The fish moved right to my feet and another angler moved a respectable distance to my right. We both began catching fish every cast. As a good friend does I began to text Dan as he was speeding across the state, the number of fish I was catching. Every few fish I would just text a number. Then, I lost count. Soon after, I saw a man in a suit and dress shoes running towards me with a fly rod. It was Dan. By now the sun was low in the sky. He arrived exhausted and exclaimed, "I need to take my shoes and socks off or I'll ruin them." He quickly removed them and started to fish, but he needed to add a few more feet of distance to his cast. He turned to me and the other angler and nervously asked, "Do either of you care if I take my pants off and wade in my underwear? I don't have my waders." I laughed and questioned, "Dan, the water is 58 degrees, and people usually walk on this beach. Is it worth the risk?" As the words came out of my mouth, I already knew the answer. I quickly added, "Just don't get caught." The other angler was also laughing. He said, "If I was younger, I'd do the same thing." We spent the next forty minutes catching fish every cast. It was so prolific bass were bumping into our legs. Eventually the sun went down and the blitz died off. Dan got dressed, and we walked off the beach. I said to Dan, "I don't think anyone is going to believe how good the fishing was today. This is a day to remember." Dan replied, "Yeah, the Underwear Blitz of 2024 was as ridiculous as it sounds."



Destination: Island Beach State Park, NJ

JANUARY, 2025

I have been fortunate to spend way too much time at **Island Beach State Park (IBSP) in NJ**. I have taken conference calls from the marsh, lost multiple phones to the Miracle Mile's surf, paddled out to snake ditch in pitch black, fished the outer bar and jetty by boat, and walked the entire 10 miles of sand many times over. If you have never fished here in the for striped bass, you really should.



IBSP is located at the very southern end of the northern most barrier island that separates the Barnegat Bay from the Atlantic Ocean. The park itself is a 10 mile sand spit with one road that runs down the middle. There are access points spread out along the road until the last parking lot. Beyond this lot, you must walk through sand or drive on the beach to continue the last 3 miles to the Barnegat Inlet.

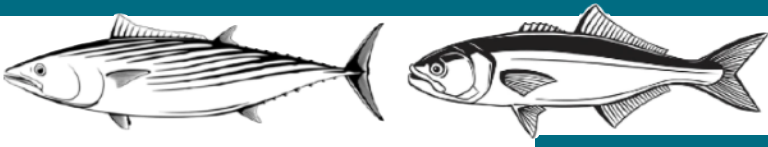


The entire Park is fishy. The surf has everything one can dream of from **steep drop offs, deep holes, sand bars, a massive jetty, and even point bars**. The bay side of the island has **mud flats, sand flats, winding channels through salt marsh, deep holes, and rips**. There are too many famous spots to list, and many are the spots where Bob Popovics proved the effectiveness of his famous flies.

The **best time to visit here to fish is the fall**. Adult menhaden, juvenile menhaden, and sand eels bring big bass into the break for epic feeds in late November. However, fishing for stripers and bluefish is also good in the spring, and fluke fishing can be exceptional in summer. While fishing is not as predictable as it once was, with a bit of effort you can always find fish. This is particularly true if you are willing to fish the bayside or have a kayak.

What makes this destination special is that **one can do it on their budget no matter what that may be**. Numerous accommodations exist right outside the park from luxury beach rentals to cheap motels. Additionally if one goes during the summer, IBSP can be part of a decent family vacation, although nearby Long Beach Island is probably the better spot for a family trip.

Difficulty of Travel: 1
Physical Demand: 3
Fishing: 3
Price: 1
Accommodations: 3
Family Rating: 5
Remoteness: 1
Safety: 5



What's New?

Hairline has introduced its new updated **Pro Anchovy, Candy, and Sand Eel Foils**. These foils are similar to the old **Fleye Foils** popularized by Bob Popovics with a more realistic design. While probably unnecessary, these foils can make a fly look **extra fancy**. You can be the envy of the other fishermen on the water. But will the fish actually care? Priced around \$8.00 for a pack of 20, you can pick some up and find out this spring.



What's Worthless?

Zap-A-Gap has obtained cult status with fly fishermen, but this hype is purely due to marketing. Zap-A-Gap is a cyanoacrylate (CA) glue, and it is very much like all other CA glues. While Zap-A-Gap achieves desired results, there are cheaper CA glues that are exactly the same. **There is no brand specific formula that is better than the rest.** The difference between brands in this category of glue is minimal. **Instead, pick the right viscosity and applicator** for your task. Do your wallet a favor and skip the Zap-A-Gap for a cheaper CA glue this year.

What's Worth It?

If you tie with synthetics, **Fiskar 8 inch scissors** are your best friend. What makes these scissors indispensable when tying with synthetics is the **long straight blade**. A longer blade allows for less and smoother cuts. This will better transfer the desired taper into the fly. While **any long bladed scissors will be an improvement over 4 inch tying scissors**, Fiskar has a long standing and well deserved reputation for making an affordable and durable product that you will only need to buy once in your lifetime. This is why **Fiskar is the number one choice of quilters, sewers, and crafters.**

Core Casting Points

Except for one lesson from the late, great Lefty Kreh, I taught myself to fly cast. I learned from videos and from magazine articles, but mostly from trial and error, including lots and lots of practice on the lawn, the beach and the boat. After thirty years, I consider myself a decent caster. Here's a synopsis of what I've learned.

- 1.** Slack in the fly line foils the cast. Therefore, you must point the rod tip low and remove all slack before beginning the cast.
- 2.** The basic casting strokes, the forward cast and the back cast, involve similar speed-up-and-stop motions.
- 3.** The fly line will go in the direction that the fly rod stops at the end of the cast. So, if you stop the rod at a downward angle on the forward cast or the back cast, the fly line will aim for the ground, and most likely short of the intended target.
- 4.** Generally, the rod hand should travel back and forth in a level plane that is parallel to the ground. This is accomplished by holding the rod as though it was a flagpole; that is, essentially vertical, and by not “breaking the wrist.” At the end of the cast, as the fly line is propelled forward, the rod should be lowered slightly to prevent forming a tailing loop (commonly called a “wind knot.”)
- 5.** The fly line is propelled by the fly rod loading (bending and thus creating stored kinetic energy), and so wait for the rod to load before making the next casting stroke, allowing you to take full advantage of the unloading.
- 6.** Minimize false casting. Learn to shoot line on the back cast. Learn to double-haul, an essential technique to make longer casts with large, wind-resistant flies, since wind and distance are often critical factors in saltwater fly fishing.
- 7.** Practice regularly to become adept. Fifteen to twenty minutes of practice three times a week is adequate until you become proficient. Videos and articles can help refine and correct technique.
- 8.** Unlike spin casting and bait casting (conventional), there is a Zen to fly casting that has its own intrinsic satisfaction.
- 9.** Fly casting is but one essential element of fly fishing. Learn: The feeding habits of target fish species; To “read the water” to know where fish are likely to be when searching for prey; How to fabricate appropriate leaders for floating and sinking fly lines, how to tie proper knots for leader and fly connections, and how to tie your own flies.

I regularly utilize all three types of fishing tackle—spin, conventional and fly. To me, the greatest joy comes from fooling a fish into attacking a fly that I tied and that I delivered on a near perfect cast.

Fly Rodders' Philanthropy

We ended last year on a high note with some thoughtful and kind gestures. **North Kingstown Food Pantry was the recipient of our Holiday Food Drive.** It's nice to provide families who are down on their luck with the common food staples needed to get by. Your generosity helps them manage and certainly made the holidays much brighter. It was a job well done.



The **December Tying Meeting** was a success. Members' vises and fingers were busy all night. Many tying



techniques and helpful tips were learned by students. This will help many of them going forward to advance their skills. Due to your kind efforts and expert skills **we now have many more flies to sell.** All the proceeds go to worthy charities. Special thanks to **Jeff Perry and Wes Wyatt.** Thank you for providing the materials to make those tables a success. Many tiers treasure their private stash of fly tying materials. Some even hide them at home, but for tying night we shared materials and knowledge. This led to many flies being tied, so the holidays did bring out the kindness in all of us.

Ed Lombardo gets together a unique caring group of individuals for breakfast several times during the year to raise money for charity and to spread good will and fun. It's an eclectic group of fly fishers from several clubs around the state. It's hard to put a label on them or thank them individually for that reason.

Together they raised more than \$200.00 from the proceeds of the raffle at their breakfast.

This generous gift will be combined with Rhody's effort to donate money to help fishers who have or had cancer. We can't thank them enough for their thoughtful and generous gift.



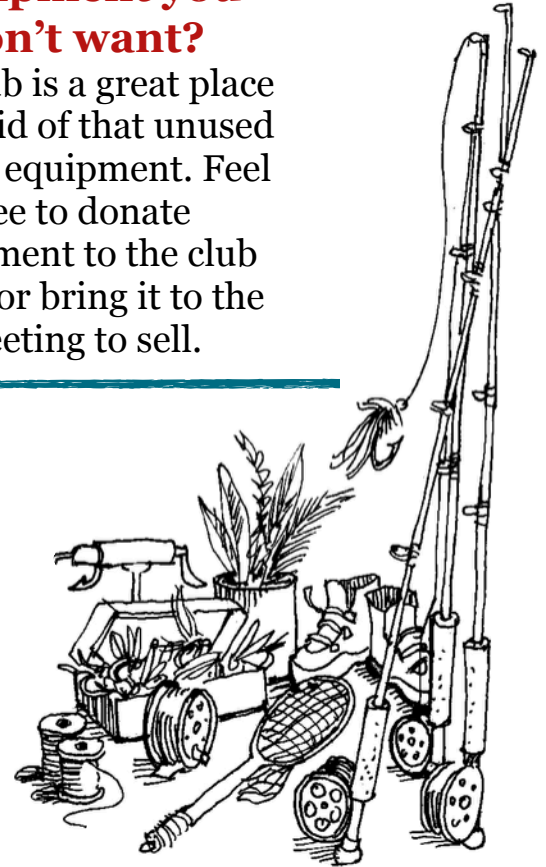
We Need Your Help!

Did you read a good fishing book or go on a trip somewhere? Do you want to share your knowledge of a **well known** spot with members new to the area or new to fly fishing? How about just some pictures of the fish you catch? ***U dun't hav 2 worry about gramma or speling***, we can fix it! Let us know and we will include it in the next issue.

Contact the newsletter team:
Rhodyflyrodder.newsletter@gmail.com

Do you have unused fishing equipment you don't want?

Our club is a great place to get rid of that unused fishing equipment. Feel free to donate equipment to the club raffle, or bring it to the meeting to sell.



Officers and Board

President:

Capt. Ray Stachelek
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Secretary/Treasurer:

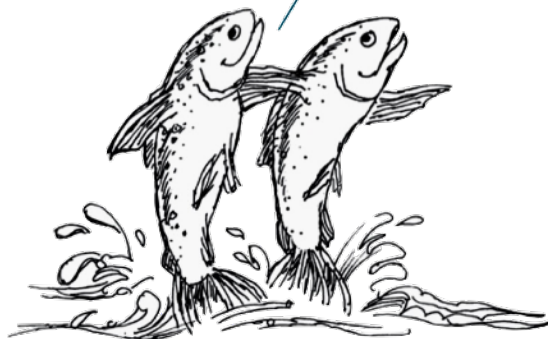
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Gary Menard
Patrick Williamson



Good Times!



Artwork by: **Peter Nilsen**