



February 2021 President's Message

I can't believe that in a little over a month we will be able to fish at White Pines for catch and release rainbows. I hope the snow is not too deep. The streams may be a little full this Spring but that will bring in the steelhead on the Lake Michigan tributaries. The Driftless streams will be ready when the weather breaks and I can't wait to get on stream. Winter has all of us anxious to get outdoors. Meanwhile we have completed our first online raffle raising \$1275. The winners were Salina Wunderie, Sage rod, Liz Jacobs, \$100 gift card, and Joe Svoboda the gear bag. Congratulations to all of the winners and thanks to all who participated. We will have an auction next month and bidding will be online with a TU endorsed format. Watch for the e mail announcement soon.

We have a scheduled brush pile burn at Fox bluff on Feb.19 with an alternate date of Feb. 22 if conditions are not good for the first one. Please call Jerry Ward (847 867 1533) or (jaydubdub63@gmail.com) to volunteer to help.

The brook trout are coming along normally in the Belvidere tank which means we will have a record number for release if all goes well.

Our speaker this month is Steve Dally, The Ozark Flyfisher. Steve will present White River Fishing 101. He is on the river constantly as a guide and will present the basics about fly fishing the White as well as discussing fish behavior. Please join us for a lively hour of information and discussion.

Jerry

January Lee Wulff T U Meeting

Join LWTU Zoom Meeting on Feb 18, 2021 6:30 pm

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/84795001002?pwd=VmRiWnpTWEZ1c0wyR1dIRUcrNDdJdZ09>

Meeting ID: 847 9500 1002

Passcode: 401460

Dial 1 312 626 6799

Pro Tips: The 7 Deadly Sins of Fly Fishing

Written by: Daniel Parson

It's cold out, the river is mostly frozen, and my time on the water is limited. A wandering mind—unfocused by a regular dose of flinging feathers—is a dangerous thing. I recently listened to an **Orvis Fly Fishing Podcast** about the “**7 Deadly Sins of Streamer Fishing**.” It was great and got me thinking.

So here are my “7 Deadly Sins of Fly Fishing in General.” Don't take this too seriously folks (see #3 below). By the way, I'm definitely a sinner, . . . but I'm working on it.

7. Thinking equipment will buy success

It won't. Listen, I love great gear as much as anyone. A sweet rod with a low swing weight and just the right action adds to the experience. But I have been out-fished enough by dudes with big-box-store rods, cheap line, and crap bugs to have learned that it's *how* you use your equipment that counts, not what you paid for it.

6. Failure to notice stuff

A day on the water is about the complete package: sunrise, a moose cow and calf, a stooping falcon (now that's a cool sound!), the feel of current against your legs, the smell of sage. As the great philosopher Ferris Bueller once said, “Life moves pretty fast. If you don't stop and look around once in a while, you could miss it.”

5. Counting fish

Why? For what purpose? If at the end of the day you hooked a few, landed a couple, and had a rewarding time, then wasn't it a success? I admit I do silently count in my head while guiding in an effort to compile data on best times of the year, effectiveness of various techniques, and the like because... well I'm a nerd who loves data and graphs and analyzing stuff. (I am a science teacher, after all.) But to be honest, I feel funny about it. When it's just me and a buddy, I don't count. Usually. I still have growing up to do, I guess.

4. Bad manners

I get it. A guy drives three hours to hit a river he only fishes a couple times a season. He has two or three spots he feels confident in and is excited to rig up and get after it. He may only have a few hours to fish before he has to turn around and head home. But when he arrives at the river, some other dude is in his spot. That is disappointing, but it doesn't excuse crowding. Go explore. Likewise, lipping-off at some novice oarsman who low-holes you or accidentally drifts over your run doesn't make the situation any better. There are kinder ways to educate. If the choice is between being right or kind, choose kind.

3. Taking it all to seriously

If your value as a human being is determined, even in a small way, by your success as an angler, I suspect you need to reevaluate what makes human beings valuable in the first place. As John Voelker once penned, "And, finally, not because I regard fishing as being so terribly important but because I suspect that so many of the other concerns of men are equally unimportant — and not nearly so much fun."

2. Elitism

Making fun of how other people fish or choose to spend their leisure time is silly. Except bowlers; they are not to be trusted. Just kidding. If you hate nymphing, then don't nymph. If you love dry fly fishing, do it. I happen to hate eating broccoli. It's a godless, evil vegetable, and I would rather consume asbestos than even smell broccoli. But that doesn't mean I judge others who love it. Same logic.

1. Thinking the river owes you something

I hate when I hear someone say, "That river sucks," as if this were high school and the water shot down your prom proposal. Some waters have more fish than others, some have bigger fish

than others, and *all* of them have stories to tell, gifts to give, and lessons to deliver. Take what the water gives you with a grateful heart, and you are sure to enjoy the day more. After all, those who love fishing understand we don't own the river; it owns us.

Daniel Parson is a veteran fly fishing guide in southwestern Wyoming for Solitary Angler guide service

Bob Olach's Fly of the Month

Zebra Midges Variations

Some of the simplest flies can often be some of the most effective flies!

The Snipe & Purple (Purple silk body and a Snipe Hackle); the Partridge & Orange, Yellow, Green, Blue, etc. (colored silks and Hungarian Partridge Hackle); plus many North Country Spiders that use a simple thread body with various game bird and hen hackles, being examples.

A few months ago, Curtis Watts gave me a bunch of hooks, so I decided that I'd take some of Curtis' curved emerger hooks and tie a few Zebra Midges for use once "*The Amigos*" can again hit the Driftless Area waters.

Although there are / can be quite a few different ways of tying midges using many different materials that might also include wing posts and tails, I decided to do several dozen simple midges using just threads, a silver bead, peacock herl and a very thin silver or red wire, all on size 14 curved emerger hooks.

In the future, I'll probably also put together a few more midges using a gold bead and wire plus rooster pheasant tails for the body (and tails), kinda like very thin / sparse mini Pheasant Tail nymphs.

Hook – Size 14 curved Emerger hooks

Bead – Silver cyclops

Thread & Body – Black, red or olive 6/0 Danville or Uni-threads

Rib – Extra small silver or red wire

Thorax – Peacock Herl



Grumpy's Page by Kurt Haberl

My phone rang, and even though there was no difference from its ring from telemarketers, scammers, phishers, and African sweepstakes officials, I knew the caller was more dangerous than all of them.

"What kind of beer do you like?" Schnoz said. As usual, there was no "Hello, Grumpy," or "How are you?"

"Ale or porter or bock. I like dark beers that taste like more than just tannic water."

"Okay," he said. "Ale for Grumpy. Irish whiskey for Ray. Pinot Noir for Ghost Mary. 100 proof Southern Comfort for Wet Curtis. Dewey said he would drink anything except bleach."

"What's this about?"

"I'm having a midwinter party. February 1 is the pagan holiday of Imbolc, something to do with fire, and since I'm mostly pagan, I'm going to celebrate. I bought one of those new smokeless fire rings, and the fire department is going to send someone out to supervise me. It's going to be above freezing on Monday, so come to my backyard around 4 PM, and bring your 4 weight flyrod, boots, and a camp chair. I'll have everything else.

"What are you going to drink?" I asked.

"Calvados. It's a brandy made from apples picked up from the ground right before they rot. It's a very cultured, acquired taste."

"Yuck," I said.

I went over to Schnoz's Monday afternoon, just as twilight began to settle in. True to his word, he had a nice fire in a stainless steel ring in his back yard. Standing next to it was a young man I didn't know who held a fly rod and a fire extinguisher.

"Ah, Grumpy," Schnoz said. "Meet my friend Eric. He's the newest fireman in town, and Captain Eddy sent him over to monitor me, so they wouldn't have to call out the whole squad and a pumper."

"Hi, Eric," I said. "Welcome to our secret society of relatively harmless sports."

"I'm not officially on duty," Eric said, "but I like to fly fish and the captain filled me in on Schnoz."

"Geez, Schnoz. I don't believe you have your own personal fireman."

"Yep," Schnoz said. "I hear the township has hired a new young cop named Dave. I think I'll invite him over so I can start off on the right foot. Do you want a drink?"

"Sure," I said, although I didn't see a cooler. There was still six inches of snow covering his back yard, so maybe he wasn't going to use one.

"I've planned everything," Schnoz said. "Looky," and he swept his arms wide around his spacious back yard. His yard was dotted with dozens of little popsicle stick pennants in the snow next to drinks and snacks. I saw scattered cans of beer with a

single plastic loop attached to each one. The pennants read "ale," or "IPA," and there were small bottles of Southern Comfort, pinot noir, calvados, and Jamieson's. There were bags of chips, small tubs of dip, small baggies of sausages, slices of cheese and nuts, each with a plastic loop attached to its own bag.

"Here's your fly," Schnoz said, handing me something that looked like a deer hair caddis, but it was tied on an enormous size 6 hook. "Catch yourself a drink and some snacks."

"I'm not that good of a caster," I said. "The rings are too small."

Schnoz just smiled at me. It was a devilish, crooked smile, the kind that said he was thoroughly enjoying himself. "This way you'll never get drunk," he said.

"What if I just walk over and pick up a drink?" I said, "or bribe Mary to cast for me."

"Ah," Schnoz said. "You'd never live it down because the others would remember it forever, and Eric has agreed to shoot anyone who cheats with a shot from his fire extinguisher."

"You're a terrible friend," I said. I was just faking it, because the whole setup sounded like fun.

Soon everybody was there, strung up with size 8 caddis flies, and spacing themselves around the fire to allow room for back casts. Of course Mary hooked a little bottle of pinot noir first, which caused the rest of us to groan, but we just concentrated more, and eventually, amid great laughter, a flurry of insults, and one admission by me that at this point I didn't care if I drank ale, IPA, Southern Comfort, or Jamieson's, just so I hooked something.

Mary came over to help out. "Pick a target. Cast past it, and then mend your line to drag the fly over the snow into the ring. That's not exactly cheating."

I've always liked Mary. How could anyone not like a person who casts better than he does and is never arrogant about it? Eventually I had an ale, a bag of cheese, crackers, and some sausage balanced on my knees while I sat in my camp chair around the fire.

"Pure genius," I admitted. "Schnoz, I take back everything I ever said about you that wasn't an admission of your genius. What pagan holiday are we celebrating?"

"Imbolc. I don't remember what it's about. Solstice or something. Maybe just an excuse to drink and tell stories around a fire. We pagans aren't real big on rules."

"I think I might convert to pagan," Dewey said.

"Me too," I said.

"As high Druid, I'd welcome you," Schnoz said. "We're not particular about who we let in."

I looked around the circle. Schnoz was right. It's best not to be too particular. The richness of our widely-spaced circle was evident. There was Ray the Plumber, Ghost Mary, Dewey, Wet Curtis, Schnoz, and me. What more could anyone ask for? Imbolc celebration or not, this was going to be a better year for fishing and camp fires. I was sure of it. If we celebrate Imbolc, could spring be far behind?

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