



January 2021 President's Message

Welcome to winter and a new year for our Lee Wulff Chapter. The year 2020 was certainly a difficult year and one that hindered our activities and our ability to meet with friends. But thankfully, the Zoom platform has allowed us to continue to have monthly meetings and to continue our fly-tying sessions and even offer a raffle to our members.

Our guest speaker this month is Jim Romberg, a guide from Fennimore WI. Many of you know Jim and how helpful he has always been to our chapter. Jim has guided in the Fennimore area since 1977. Through the Zoom format we will have **"A Conversation with Jim Romberg"**. Jim has agreed to answer all fishing related questions with no holds barred. He will identify the best times of the year to fish specific streams, and what flies and techniques are best for catching those big ones. You will have Jim as your guide for the hour. Please prepare your questions ahead of time. You will not be disappointed!

There have already been two fly tying sessions this winter with quite a few attendees. If you would like to join the group; fly tying continues through March on Tuesday evenings at 7:00. If you are interested in participating, send your email address to sapp375@aol.com to be added to the Zoom invitation list.

For those of you who want to get outside there are several activities planned for later this year. At the Fox Bluff site there are some brush piles that need burning and one that needs to be moved. This spring we will be working in Wisconsin installing some more stiles and hopefully doing some fishing along with that.

The Chapter is kicking off its first internet-based fundraising raffle that will be open after the January meeting! Tickets go on sale Thursday January 21 after 8:00PM. and can be purchased through the secure online system endorsed by TU national (see link below). We believe you will find the system easy and fun to use. The current raffle includes three exceptional prizes:

1. Sage model TCX 590-4 Fly Rod 9' 5wt. with case (*used but well cared for*)
2. Fishpond Gear Bag 19"x11"x11.5" with pockets and dividers (*new*)
3. A \$100 gift card from the Driftless Angler fly shop in Viroqua, WI

First winner drawn gets to pick one of three prizes, second draw picks one of two, and third draw gets the remaining prize.

Visit <https://go.tulocalevents.org/lwtu-0221-sweepstakes> for raffle prize photos, further details, and to purchase tickets. Tickets will be on sale through February 04, 2021 at 11:59 pm CST, the drawing will be held February 05, 2021 at 2:00 pm CST. Funds raised help support our ongoing chapter activities. We plan to hold additional raffles and online auctions in the coming months, stay tuned!

And for all those hardy fishers, remember catch and release fishing is open in Wisconsin.

Wear those masks,
Jerry Sapp

January Lee Wulff T U Meeting

Zoom meeting Jan 21, 2021 06:30 PM Central Time

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/86567834104?pwd=SURqc3FaTVhVUWE4THkxRWwN5S1FNQT09>

Meeting ID: 865 6783 4104

Passcode: 981941

Dial 1 312 626 6799

Bob Olach's Fly of the Month

**Golden Plover & Yellow
North Country Spiders**

About 15 – 20 years ago, I somehow got in touch with a fellow who has homes in both the UK and in France. Initially, I purchased from him several Partridge-of-Redditch bamboo rod blanks to assemble and also a few completed bamboo rods that had been made in the Partridge-of- Redditch rod shop.

During one of our exchanges of e-mails, I learned that (literally) had many hundreds of thousands of the old Partridge trout, salmon and coarse game hooks that have been long discontinued.

As some people may know, Albert Partridge originally founded the company that bears his name and somewhere around 1970, his son, Ted, sold the company to Alan Bramley. After Alan Bramley's death, Bramley's family sold the company to the Mustad Company in 1998.

In 2009, Mustad subsequently sold the Partridge brand and company back to another British Company called Fishing Matters Ltd. who now own and market the Partridge products.

But, going back to my first paragraph, the UK fellow has a web site where he continues to sell the OLD Partridge hooks (<http://www.troutandsalmonhooks.com/products/popular-trout-hooks/>).

Recently, I realized that I had quite a few of the OLD Partridge hooks and decided to start using these hooks in tying some of the North Country Spiders with silk threads that are traditionally used in the old North Country Spiders and with some Golden Plover hackles that I had purchased from Steve Cooper at Cookshill, resulting in the following dressing:



Hook – Partridge L2A size 14 or 16

Thread – Pearsall Gossamer or YLI 100 Yellow Silk

Body – Pearsall Gossamer or YLI 100 Yellow Silk

Thorax – Peacock Herl

Hackle – Golden Plover



Grumpy's Page by Kurt Haberl

So last month my brilliant idea for our fishing friends to share a favorite secret spot with one other friend didn't turn out as expected, um, it didn't turn out at all. It was an idea ahead of its time. It was an idea that depended on the sharing and kindness of friends willing to give others the chance at some top notch fishing. It was an idea that probably failed because we already have shared most of our best fishing spots, and we all have mostly the same ones. That's why it wasn't a complete failure; it was a confirmation that friends share, and, um, actually it was a complete, unmitigated failure.

That's why when Schnoz called to say he had a brilliant idea, something so much better than last month's situation comedy, something guaranteed to work, something that would benefit not just our small group of fishing buddies but the whole chapter and the fly fishing public everywhere, it piqued our interest. Plus, when it comes to Schnoz, most of us believe that a magnificent catastrophe is better than an ordinary snafu. Go big, or don't go at all. Schnoz usually goes big.

That is how we all agreed to Schnoz's idea, and a week after his proposal, we all logged into the meeting software again to share. Schnoz's brilliant idea was for each of us to search his or her own fishing experience and write up some pages with diagrams if necessary explaining the best tip we would give to anyone hoping to someday live up to our expertise. Due to our age and experience totaling a span of over 200 years, we thought it would be a welcome gift to the world of sport fishers. Dewey had a brother who was a journeyman in a print shop and offered to compile our combined wisdom into a spiral bound book called *A Flyfishing Compendium, Experts Sharing Secrets*. We agreed to read our secrets aloud and send a written copy to Dewey's brother.

Schnoz said it was his idea, so he wanted to go first.

"I stand among you," he began in his most stentorian voice, which was absurd because his oratory would never be evident in the book and he wasn't actually standing, "to praise the lowly strike indicator. Whether it be foam, cork, Merino wool looped on one's leader with a plastic applicator, or a small neon plastic ball with those little round plastic screws that tighten your fluorocarbon on a split post if you don't drop the screw into the grass, the humble strike indicator serves six important purposes to aid in catching more trout. First, it often causes one's leader to hinge, drop the loop into a casting knot, perhaps a rat's nest, and force the angler to do something important, and that is change his leader and tippet often. Second, a strike indicator can be adjusted to keep a weighted fly or beadhead nymph tumbling past trout at the proper depth, usually two inches off the streambed. Third, the predictable snagging of flies which sink below the two inches off the bottom will often break off, thus aiding our economy and keeping fly shops in business as anglers replace lost flies, beads, hooks, feathers and thread. Fourth, the strike indicator may actually hesitate, bob, or otherwise telegraph that a fish has taken the fly, sometimes before the trout spits the fly out, sometimes after. Fifth, the strike indicator is an aid to the angler who fishes into the glare of the sun and glittering water to be sure he does not cast a shadow over the fish, an aid which tells the angler the general vicinity of where his leader is. And finally, even if none of the above happens, a strike indicator may sometimes

be mouthed or bumped by a fish playing with it on the surface as a seal does with a ball by striking it out of curiosity, thus alerting the angler that a fish is actually holding in that water and may be willing to eat plastic, foam, cork, or Merino wool. Such information causes hope, the one thing that keeps fishers fishing or anglers angling."

Schnoz finished and then looked at us in our computer screens as if he expected applause. There was about ten seconds of silence instead, which seemed to last for two awkward minutes, and then Wet Curtis, the most honest and kindly among us said, "That was a terrible tip. Strike indicators will cause you to catch fewer fish. Here's my tip. If you want to catch more trout, dump all your strike indicators into the trash and learn to fish the Czech nymphing way with a tight line leading the anchor fly and a brace of emergers above it just enough to feel a take by a fish. A tight line keeps direct contact with the fly; it allows you to control the depth of the fly's drift, and then to strike before the trout telegraphs its take well before a curved tippet wending it way to a bobbing strike indicator three seconds after the trout has spit out the fly. Direct feel and control is not just better in Czech nymphing; that's how Tenkara fishing works, and that's how the very traditional and very successful North Country of England wet fly fishing worked for centuries. A strike indicator isn't really a strike indicator; it's a miss indicator."

"Oh, yeah?" Schnoz said, and as the one who opened the Zoom meeting and had the control, he muted Wet Curtis. Wet Curtis just smiled and crossed his arms.

"Me next," I said, hoping I could bring some sense back into our meeting. "My best tip is that when the fish have gotten picky and you know they're there, go small. You might have to use a heavy attractor like a Pink Squirrel or Prince nymph to get a fly down, but then attach a small midge or buzzer on a dropper. The fish will look at the attractor and then take the midge. It might mean going down to 7x fluorocarbon too."

"That never works for me," said Dewey. "If nothing is happening, I go big. Really big like throwing candy bars at them. Maybe a Muddler Minnow or olive Woolly Bugger, a two-inch stonefly or a Chernobyl Ant. You have to motivate them, you know, give them something they can't resist."

"You're crazy," I said, and saw that Schnoz muted me, so I just smiled and crossed my arms like Curtis.

"I admit it's crazy and so am I, but it works. You'd be crazy not to try it," Dewey said. He got muted too.

"My turn," said Ray the Plumber. "I'm all about the enjoyment of fly fishing. That means getting the lightest, slowest action rod possible. I just got a ten-foot, 2 weight nymph rod, so it's real sensitive, but its length helps to manage the fish, and makes casting a breeze. It's all about the 'feel,' the enjoyment."

"No way, it's more about learning how to cast," Billy Bob said. "What good is a ten-foot rod if every other cast goes in the bushes or overhanging trees? If you want fishing enjoyment, you need to fish bamboo. A cane rod is the most sensitive instrument ever devised. You feel every run and throb even on small fish, and nothing beats bamboo for accuracy, once you learn how to cast."

"That's easy for you to say," said Ray the Plumber, "you can afford bamboo rods. But new graphite is just as sensitive and much lighter and you can cast it without hurting your shoulder. You're beginning to look like Quasimodo from casting heavy bamboo."

Then I saw the Ray got muted as well.

"Humph," said Billy Bob and crossed his arms like me and Curtis.

"This is terrible," Schnoz said. "I should mute all of you and just write the book on fishing tips myself."

"How do we mute you?" said Billy Bob, and then he got muted too.

That's when I noticed Ghost Mary's placid, smiling face up in the corner. Besides Schnoz, she was the only one not muted. She waved at all of us.

"Okay," Schnoz said. "Mary, it's your turn."

Mary smiled at us again, kind of tilted her head to the side and said, "You're all right."

"What?" Schnoz blurted out. "All they did was contradict each other like a bunch of monkeys."

"Look at it this way," Mary said calmly. "Trout are only generally predictable. I've caught them in prime lies but also in shallow riffles with their adipose fins sticking out. If there's a big hatch in a shallow riffle, they will be there. I've caught them on Dewey's big attractors and on Grumpy's midges. I've used all different kind of rods, tippets, strike indicators, no indicators, bamboo, fiberglass, boron, and graphite. They all work. Just like anglers, trout can be unpredictable, maybe even grumpy."

"Hey!" I said, but no one heard me because I was muted.

"Not just that," Mary said. "They have bad days when they probably wouldn't even eat a nightcrawler. They like midges as an hors d'oeuvre, and candy bars for dessert. Their unpredictability is what makes it fun. If you caught a fish on every cast, you'd get bored or a sore shoulder. If you never could predict anything, you'd get frustrated and quit fishing. It's all good. All of you are right, but not necessarily on the same day."

That's when Schnoz un-muted us and we all started talking at once. My computer screen flickered with full-face versions of each of us in a momentary montage as each microphone picked up a single voice and made that person full-screen for everyone else - but only for a split second. It took a while, but we all quit talking before we got headaches or worse.

"So what are we going to do about our book on tips?" Schnoz asked.

Mary said, "Let Dewey's brother put it together with all the contradictions. I'll write an introduction so readers can appreciate the variety, predictability and unpredictability of trout fishing in all its wonder. Then the readers can choose and vary strategies. If one thing doesn't work that day, they can try something else. It will be wonderful."

There was a long pause and then Schnoz said, "Mary, I'm going to send you a dozen donuts."

"Boston cream," Mary said.

"See, I told you I had a brilliant idea," Schnoz said. "Who doubts me now?"

That's when all our screens went wacko again with flickering montages that drove everyone crazy until we decided one by one to log off. Schnoz's idea was terrible. Mary saved the day, and he owed her more than a dozen donuts.

Chapter Officers

President	Jerry Sapp <u>prez@leewulfftu.org</u>
Vice-President	Brent Burval <u>viceprez@leewulfftu.org</u>
Secretary	Meg Gallagher <u>secretary@leewulfftu.org</u>
Treasurer	Al Faleskin <u>al.faleskin@gmail.com</u>

Newsletter Editor
Dennis Higham
dennishigham@sbcglobal.net

