

Don't Miss Our (Virtual) Annual Banquet and Raffle!



This fishing kayak is one of the many items donated by club members that could be yours. Head to potomacvalleyflyfishers.club for more banquet details and to view photos and descriptions of ALL the items up for grabs in our raffle. **We will accept raffle donations until Oct. 17. We will accept checks for the raffle up to the day of the event on Oct. 24.**

The PVFF Virtual Banquet is **October 24 at 6:00 pm on Zoom**. Not only will we pick the raffle prize winners (although you don't have to be present to win), but it's shaping up to be a fun program – we have lined up some live entertainment, amusing videos, and recognition awards given to deserving individuals. We'll be sending the Zoom

invitation to everyone via email as we get closer to the big day. If you're participating in the raffle and sending in a check, this is also a great opportunity to **pay your 2021 dues!** Last but not least, this is a good time for you to **consider a nice donation** to add to the list. Thanks in advance for your help in keeping us strong.

Beginner's Fly Tying: Stancev Caddis Larva Pattern

By Don Fine

Our PVFF virtual fly tying sessions continue to be a success with over 20 members participating in each of the past 4 months.

Thus, we are encouraged to continue our Beginner's Fly Tying sessions through the remainder of this year and into 2021, with new patterns and new tying techniques. We appreciate the positive feedback and photos (of the flies) which several tiers have shared with us.

You may recall the focus of our Beginner's Fly

Tying program this year was to help those new fly tiers to learn the basics of fly construction in a step-wise fashion with patterns increasing in complexity through the year, and covering various 'fish food' grouping, e.g. minnows, aquatic nymphs and emerging mayflies, and terrestrial insects.

The pattern chosen for our October virtual tying class (*Stancev Caddis Larva*) represents another



major fish food grouping, the Caddisflies. More specifically, this pattern imitates the larval stage in the life cycle of a caddisfly.

I came across this pattern while reading the Autumn 2020 issue of *Fly Tyer* magazine and found it closely resembles the larva stage of the October caddis, which will be prevalent on many streams and lakes in the coming month. Head to our website to sign up.

How to Participate in our Oct. "Fly Tying at a Distance" Session

No later than **October 14**, head to the PVFF website to sign up for our *Fly Tying at a Distance* event. We will mail you the hooks and materials needed to tie this month's flies. All instructions for tying these patterns will be available online by **October 16**. Then consider sending us a photo of your fly and/or you at the vice to contact@potomacvalleyflyfishers.club.

Fly Fishing the San Juan with Noel Gollehon

October Club Meeting

By Andy Mekelburg

Please join us on **Tuesday, October 13, at 7:00 p.m., via Zoom** for an exciting presentation by club member Noel Gollehon.

The San Juan River has been described as one of the most famous tailwater trout fisheries in the world. At this month's meeting, we will learn about the San Juan River by someone who has been fishing it for 20 years. The San Juan River starts in the San Juan Mountains in southwest Colorado. It enters the northwest corner of New Mexico before heading towards Utah and the Colorado River. The 4.25 mile stretch below the Navajo Dam holds an estimated 80,000 trout averaging 17" in length and fish over 20" are abundant.

Noel's presentation will discuss fly fishing the river, proper rigging, flies to use, and what areas of the river to fish. Plus, he will talk about his experience with some of the best guides on the river.



In addition to Noel's presentation, we will have another fishing roundtable, which is becoming increasingly popular.

The roundtable offers great conversation (telling fishing stories) among our members — sharing where we went, what we caught, and what we caught it on. Look for your Zoom invitation!

It's Time to Renew Your PVFF Club Membership!

After 18 years I have decided to step down as the PVFF Membership Chairperson. David Dowiak has agreed to take over my position. I will be working with him through this transition until the end of the year. So to help this process go smoothly, please use the **PVFF Application/Renewal form at the end of this newsletter to renew dues for 2021 or to join as a new member**. All the required information needed is on that form. Thank you. — Ruby Fine

Tying the Schminnow Fly Pattern

Project Healing Waters

By Andrew Frutiger

In our eighth installment of online fly tying seminars, Patrick Staley, U.S. Army retired, led our veterans through tying the Schminnow. Originally designed by Norm Ziggler to fish for Snook near St. Annabel Island in Florida, it has proven to be an all-around great summer fly for larger rivers like the Shenandoah, Monocacy or Potomac. This easy to tie fly only takes a few minutes and consists of: a hook (size 2), thread, marabou, estaz, and large bead chain eyes. Using chain eyes vs. weighted eyes allows the veterans to present the fly with very little splash (the chain is not much bigger than the chains that dog tags are on).

During “Story Time with Larry Forte,” local fly fishing experts walked the veterans through the various Maryland streams, how to fish them, when to fish them, what to bring, and how to stay safe. This is especially important as we move into fall and will be sharing the outdoors with many hunters, as well as bears fattening up for winter.

Even though we are still many months away from official Project Healing Waters events, it is great to see the number of volunteers and veterans who continue to make our virtual meetings and continue



Image credit: CaptJD, flymastery.com

to increase the number of flies in their arsenal, as well as their knowledge of how and when to use their tackle. We are all looking to get back on the water as a group once it is safe.

If you have any questions or would like to participate in any of our upcoming fly tying sessions at Fort Detrick, please reach out to me at any time at andrewfrutiger@yahoo.com or go to our Facebook page at *Project Healing Waters* —
Frederick Chapter.

Conservation Update: October 2020

By Dave Keane

Help support our friends at Stream Link Education by participating in a stream buffer planting this fall. Follow the link below to register for an event.

www.streamlinkededucation.org/plantings

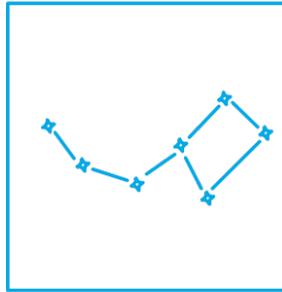
How does drinking scotch support Atlantic Salmon populations? Check out the link below:

www.themacallan.com/en-us/the-river-spey-one-of-the-last-sanctuaries-for-atlantic-salmon

Astronomy Minute: October 2020

By Russ Hanson

It's Autumn, so the cool clear nights can make for great "seeing" opportunities. Mars will be in opposition on October 13. That is, our faster orbit will swing us past Mars on that date. Since we will be closer to Mars, it will appear very bright. I was up before dawn on one of those clear and chilly mornings recently and was surprised by how bright the red planet was (it actually looks orange). Where to look?



It will be approximately opposite the sun for weeks before and after opposition. Secondly, you'll probably see a lot of news articles about the Blue Moon on October 31st (Halloween). Yawn. Full moons are nice, but having a second one in one month is more of a calendar anomaly than a celestial event. Lastly, look for the Orionid meteor shower the night of Oct. 20-21. Orion should rise in the east around midnight, so it's a late night/early morning event. The moon won't interfere this year. I have put my order in for clear skies.

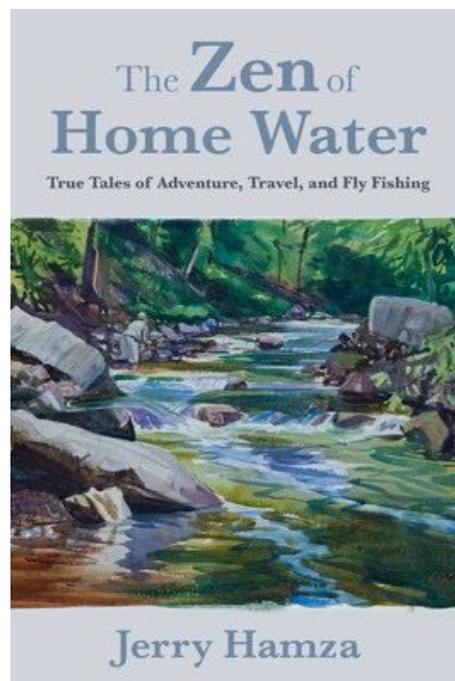
Review of "The Zen of Home Water," by Jerry Hamza

By Kevin Haney

To the uninitiated, it might be somewhat surprising to discover that fly fishermen tend to be rather contemplative sorts. During those dark nights and long seasons when fishing is not a promising endeavor, we settle down to the next best thing, reading our vast libraries of ancient fishing lore, interspersed with the odd philosophical tome. And when we do, we usually don't want to read proverbial stories about "landing the big one," or lengthy how-to expositions on how to catch the aforementioned big one. Rather, we tend to prefer stories that place our beloved piscatorial pastime within the larger context of life and nature. Stories that, as Hamza describes, "...sparks a light. A

light that is both familiar and comforting." Such is *The Zen of Home Water*, the latest angling book by Jerry Hamza. Hamza is a John Volker for the new millennium. His book is interspersed with stories about monster brook trout, beautiful north woods streams and lakes, quirky backwoods guides, and legendary fly hatches. Through it all, he shows us one of the most profound truths of life, that "It takes the acquisition of wisdom to understand that a happy life is actually a mosaic of small and insignificant events...we string together moments in life—like pearls becoming a beautiful necklace."

The iridescent pearls that Hamza strings together are many and include the importance of "freestyling," that uncontrollable escape impulse that implores us to drop whatever we are doing and head to the stream, any



stream, with fly rod in hand. Another recurring theme is the need to unplug from the modern, electronic world. He instructs us how to trespass (with bartered permission) and fish those waters that look so inviting yet so out of reach to the (usually) law abiding. His recipe for squirrel stew is not jealously guarded but freely shared. And his stories of catching giant brook trout in the Maine North Woods allow the reader, who usually can't participate in such acts of angling greatness, to at least know that they are occurring to someone, somewhere.

Hamza is a member of that peculiar subset of anglers, the bamboo rod aficionado. While acknowledging the cold, hard fact that bamboo rods are nothing more than conglomerations of "expensive blades of grass," he also realizes that these handmade treasures passed down to us from previous generations will hopefully outlive us (and our car doors) and that we are merely their caretakers for a time. Although the dreaded "g" word (i.e., graphite) does make a brief appearance, Hamza is definitely one of those anglers who would rather hold an aged, organic creation of the bamboo rod maker's art than the latest admittedly efficient chemical concoction straight from the laboratory. This puts him squarely in the tradition of John Gierach, although Hamza's writing is better and his stories more entertaining.

Hamza's own home waters are dual — Maine's Grand Lake Stream area and the southern shore of the Lake Ontario region. There are echoes of Thoreau's *Maine Woods* in his stories of remote lakes and plentiful trout. And while he takes us all around the country when relating his angling exploits (Kerouac's *On the Road* is a particular favorite of his), it is evident that the concept of "home water" carries a lot of weight with him. His beloved "Zen Lake," with its less than perfect history and many small fish, could be the home water of any of us.

Near the end of his book, Hamza talks about what he terms "glimpses of perfection," those evenings that you dream of, which are "...the gift fish gods give you perhaps once a decade or two..." These are those all too rare times where everything seems to come together to produce a magical outcome, a coherent, beautiful whole that will live in memory forever. I call them "moments of grace." In such moments, everything doesn't have to be perfect, but all of those different elements somehow come together to create a perfect, organic whole. Exactly how this happens will probably remain one of those eternal mysteries of life. Taken as a whole, *The Zen of Home Water* is one of those moments of bibliophilic grace. Anglers and philosophers who choose to add it to their winter reading pile will be much better off for the effort.

Fishing the Savage River in Western Maryland

By Mike Holland

I recently had the opportunity to fish the Savage River area in Western Maryland with PVFF President Andy Mekelburg, Vice President Dave Keane, and member Denny Grizzle. We were joined by Denny's friend, Randy Augustine, of Charleston, West Virginia, who is a member and Past President of the Ernie Nestor Chapter of Trout Unlimited.

We camped in the Savage River State Forest, where the 1989 Whitewater Canoe and Kayak World Championships were held; it is located along the

Savage River Road. The camp site is fairly rudimentary – with just a port-a-potty – and reasonably priced at \$10 per night. Importantly, it is just across the road from the Savage River, affording easy fishing access. Reservations can be made by calling the state forest headquarters. The Savage River is a tailwater and offers the opportunity to pursue wild and stocked brown, rainbow, and native brook trout. As is well-known, it does experience significant pressure, which makes its fish famously

resistant to anglers' offerings, as Andy and I can unfortunately readily attest.

We tried all of the usual suspects – Woolly Bugger, Copper John, Stonefly, San Juan Worm, Prince Nymph, Hoppers, Caddis, and others – to no avail. Andy did greatly enjoy using his Tenkura rod on Licking Creek, a tributary of the Savage River just up the road from the campsite.

Denny had a lot of fun trying to catch some brown trout that were rising in a pool near a bridge below the dam. While he and Randy both got a lot of rejections, they did manage to hook a couple of fish and exercise their excellent “quick release” skills. According to Denny, the key to their success was using some 6X tippet and some very small flies, including a Blue Winged Olive (BWO) around size 20 and one of Randy's self-tied fly that he calls the "the usual.”

However, regardless of fishing success, the Savage River affords an incredibly beautiful and peaceful setting in which to enjoy nature and test your fly-fishing skills.

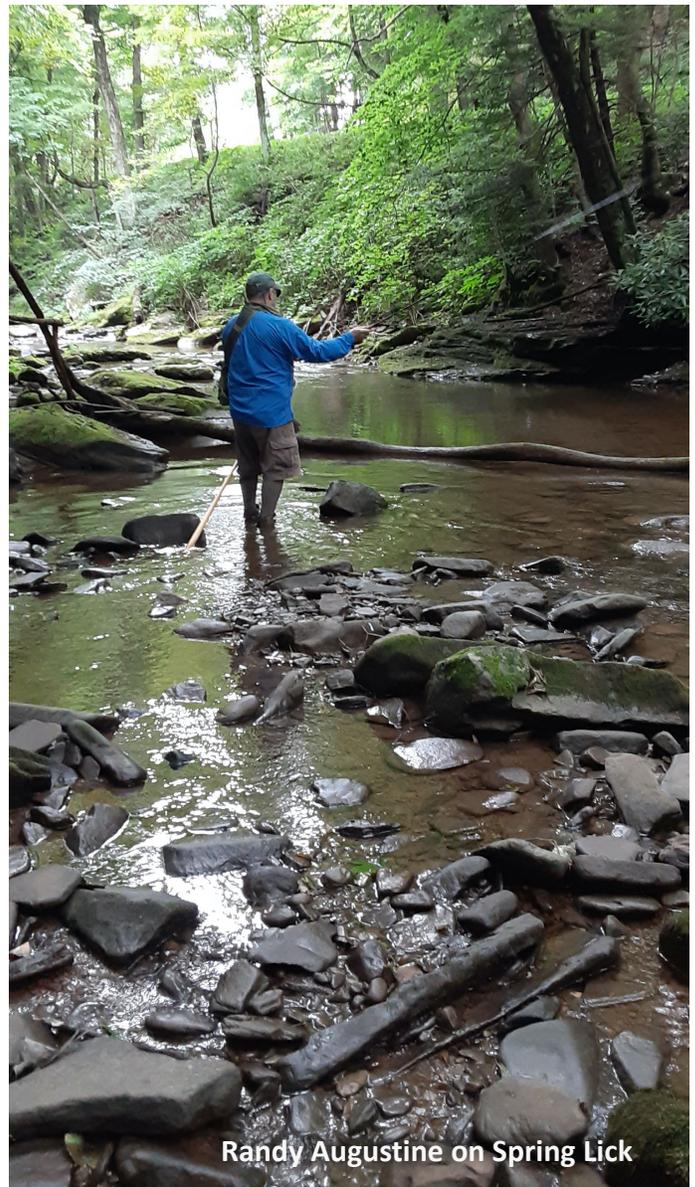
Finally, if you decide to visit the Savage River and surrounding areas, you should be aware that Savage River Outfitters offer flies and other fishing equipment as well as guide service.

Last Cast

By Andy Mekelburg

It almost felt like normal, except for the masks and social distancing, but the casting clinic was a great success! Many thanks to Bill Ruland and the Antietam Fly Anglers team. Bill came up with some new teaching methods that had been created for Covid reasons and they went over well. We had almost 20 people there and everyone was happy to see friendly faces in person again.

I had a couple of nice fishing adventures in September. First, I went with club member Denny Grizzle on his boat at Dam 4 in Maryland. Denny did



Randy Augustine on Spring Lick

all the celebrating with fish catches and I enjoyed the sunshine. Great time, great weather, great boat!

My next excursion was to the Susie Q Farm, near Harrisonburg. This is a private stream, arranged through Mossy Creek Fly Shop; each fisher pays them a rod fee and we had the stream by ourselves. Meeting me at the stream were club members Mike Holland and Steve Weinstein; also joining us was Bill Pearsall and first-time fly fisher Kyle Lombardi.

As a side note, I don't know about you, but for me, during the first ½ hour to hour fishing everything

goes wrong – lines tangle, flies catch in trees, bushes, grass, everything. It just takes me awhile to work out the kinks and start fishing like I have a slight idea of what I’m doing. Probably just me.

As we moved up the stream there were many areas to fish, pools and riffles. While waders aren’t necessary, as it is primarily bank fishing, the waders were helpful in a couple of locations. After trying all the recommended flies and set ups by Bill, Steve and Mossy Creek, I fell back to, you guessed it, the old reliable mop fly. Don’t laugh, I was in a nice pool with many rainbows and began catching them. Caught six before the lunch break.

In the afternoon session, we picked up from where we left and continued exploring the stream and saw the many, many fish of a good size throughout. After a couple of hours, I got a call from Steve saying I have to come back immediately to where we parked, Bill has figured out the trick and they were pulling fish out left and right. I made my way back and they said the secret fly was the Kreelex, proclaimed “King of all Streamers,” invented by Chuck Kraft and used a lot in this area. I can attest it worked! Throw it in and if the fish didn’t strike immediately, give it a fast strip and the fish will follow and attach. Thanks to Bill for making that suggestion (I owe you two flies, by the way).

Our first-time fisher Kyle caught on quickly, after an hour of coaching by Bill and Mike. He caught four nice sized fish and is officially “hooked” on the sport! I hope to welcome him into the club soon.



Steve Weinstein (left) and Kyle Lombardi

Great time had by all and would recommend the experience to everyone. Let me know if you need additional information. You know I can’t let this article lapse without mentioning the Virtual Banquet and Raffle. A number of members have stepped up with great contributions. We have some really nice prizes donated, but more importantly, members have been very generous in purchasing raffle tickets. We

picked \$25 for the cost of the first two raffle tickets, as it equals what we have charged for the banquet in the past. So instead of a meal, we'll send you a box of flies and a chance to win some nice awards if you contribute. Just a reminder to everyone to get your forms and checks into Karen Baker as soon as you can to ensure the success of this endeavor.

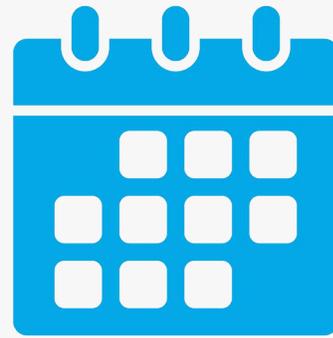
As to the Virtual Banquet itself, plans are coming together nicely. Club member Owen Davis has agreed to perform live via Zoom. Always a treat – send him your requests! Gene and Lynn Ashe have produced a presentation that everyone but me should enjoy. I'll have tales from the year, as I've had the travel rod – no song, sorry, I can't top Lynn. We have awards to present and raffle prizes to give out and some interesting fly fishing history in between.

I have been asked by members as to how the raffle will work. The process will be: we will have a card for each prize, we'll pull a card to see what the prize is, then pull a raffle ticket to see who won. You don't have to be present to win. I very much appreciate the members supporting us and understanding that this is the first time trying this. Remember it's all about fishing!

Parting Shot



Here's an image we received from our September fly tying session. Great work, Nina! We hope you are enjoying our series of "virtual" fly tying events — if there is anything we can do to improve these online sessions, let us know.



Calendar of Events

- Oct. 13** Virtual Club Meeting — Join us on Zoom at 7:00 PM (the link will be sent out via email)
- Oct. 14** Beginner's Fly Tying Online Sign-Up Deadline
- Oct. 16** Fly Tying Instruction Available on PVFF Website
- Oct. 24** Virtual Annual Banquet — Join us on Zoom at 6:00 PM (the link will be sent out via email)
- Oct. 28** Board of Directors' Meeting Conference Call, 7:00 PM

2020 PVFF Offices & Directors

President.....Andy Mekelburg
 Vice President.....Dave Keane
 Secretary.....Karen Baker
 Treasurer.....Dennis Allen
 3 year Director.....Russ Hanson
 2 year Director.....Lynn Ashe
 1 year Director.....Troy Kitch
 Past President.....Larry Forte

POTOMAC VALLEY FLY FISHERS

P. O. BOX 3001

FREDERICK, MD 21705

www.potomacvalleyflyfishers.club



FLY FISHERS
INTERNATIONAL



POTOMAC VALLEY FLY FISHERS
MEMBERSHIP and RENEWAL APPLICATION and LIABILITY RELEASE

Year _____

The purpose of the Potomac Valley Fly Fishers (PVFF) is (1) to promote fly fishing as the most sportsman-like and enjoyable way of fishing and the most consistent with the preservation and wise use of our resources; (2) to provide advice, suggestions and assistance to club members; (3) to publicize the best practices and techniques of fly fishing, fly tying, fly casting and other related subjects; and (4) to maintain liaison with other organizations of sportsmen and conservationists. By my joining PVFF voluntarily, I understand there are risks involved and will not hold the PVFF club, board of directors, and officers responsible for any injuries, accidents or death as a result of participation in the activities of the Club. I also grant PVFF permission to photograph me and/or my family at any activities and also to publish them in our monthly newsletter, at the meetings and any PVFF fly fishing functions.

Website: www.potomacvalleyflyfishers.club

The undersigned being in agreement with the above does hereby apply for membership/renewal in the Potomac Valley Fly Fishers.

Applicant's Name: _____ Date: _____
(Last) (First)

If family membership, other names: _____

Home Address: _____
Street City State Zip

Phone Number: _____ E-mail address for e-mailing newsletter _____

Applicant's signature: _____

Are you a Fly Fishers Int'l (FFI) member? Circle **Yes or No** **Yearly Dues:** ___ \$15 single ___ \$20 family \$ ___ Donation

How did you hear about PVFF? ___ Friend ___ Facebook ___ Newsletter ___ Fly Shop _____ Other

Interested in a volunteer position? ___ Officer /Board of Directors ___ Committee/Chair ___ Banquet ___ Trip Organizer ___ Teaching Fly Tying ___ Other Activities

Please make check payable to Potomac Valley Fly Fishers or PVFF and mail with completed form to:

David Dowiak, PVFF Membership
8920 Bloomfield Road
Frederick, Maryland 21702

Dues for calendar year Jan 1-Dec 31

Cash _____ **Check #** _____ **Amount** _____ **Date** _____
New _____ **Renewal** _____ **Life** _____