

An Evening with Mark Frondorf: Findings from the 2021 Chesapeake Bay Smallmouth Bass Health Symposium

By Larry Forte

At our virtual club meeting on January 11 at 7:00 PM, Mark Frondorf with Shenandoah RiverKeepers will recap and present the findings from the 2021 Chesapeake Bay Smallmouth Bass Health Symposium held last March.

This symposium brought together state fisheries biologists overseeing the management of smallmouth bass from the James, Shenandoah, Upper Potomac, Potomac, and Susquehanna rivers. In addition, Dr. Vicki Blazer with the U.S. Geological Survey, National Fish Health Research Laboratory, presented findings and analysis from her research on Mid-Atlantic rivers.

Mark has also been a local guide for several years and will also talk about his experiences guiding on both the Potomac and Shenandoah rivers. Plus, he will offer some tips about where to go and what to use. See you on the 11th!



IMPORTANT: Our January Club Meeting Will Be Virtual

Given the recent COVID spike, we will NOT meet at Tuscarora High School for our monthly meeting. Instead, we will meet via Zoom at 7:00 PM. The Zoom link will be sent by email before the meeting. We will make a decision about February's meeting later in January.

Beginner's Fly Tying: Two Winter Patterns

By Don Fine

IMPORTANT: I would appreciate for those who plan to attend on January 18th to notify me at dfine1443@gmail.com to ensure I have enough materials available that evening for the class.

Our first Beginner's Fly Tying session of 2022 will be held January 18th at Trinity United Methodist Church, starting at 7:00 PM. Seeing that winter is upon us and freshwater fish (e.g. trout) are lethargic in colder water, I chose two winter fly patterns for our class to tie. Both of these patterns, the **Buzz Ball** (developed by Gary LaFontaine) and the **zebra midge**, represent two forms in which a midge, a major food source for trout during the cold of winter, can be found. While the **Buzz Ball** represents a cluster of midges which have collected on the stream surface, the **zebra midge** represents a single emerging midge.

For those who cannot or prefer not to attend in person, we will continue to prerecord the tying procedure and post it and the tying instructions on the PVFF website, as we did during 2021. However, we **will not** mail out materials to those who are not attending in person.



Zebra Midge (top) and Buzz Ball



We Need You! Consider Volunteering to Support the Club

PVFF is member driven, which means volunteers do everything. Volunteer positions include elected board positions — as well as other areas, such as mentoring, leading outings, website, social media, newsletter, conservation, feeding the trout at the trout pen, and other opportunities. Everyone has a unique talent, come share yours with your fellow club members! Contact Andy Mekelburg at andymekelburg@outlook.com.

Advanced Fly Tying: Three Dollar Dip

By Larry Forte

At our Advanced Fly Tying gathering, on January 19 at 7:00 PM, I will tie the **Three Dollar Dip** (aka serendipity), an effective and simple nymph pattern.

We will meet in Room 109 at Trinity Church. For those that prefer to join us via Zoom, no problem.

We will have a Zoom hook-up at the church for folks. Interested? We would love for you to join us. Just let me or Don Fine know. You can sign up on our website or you can email me at lbforte@verizon.net.



Three Dollar Dip

Time to Renew Your PVFF Club Membership Dues for 2022

Please fill out the **Membership Application/Renewal form** at the end of this newsletter and send with your payment to the address shown on the form to Dave Dowiak, membership chairperson. Be sure to provide your email address, as the monthly "Streamlines" newsletter and virtual monthly meetings (in addition to other important announcements) are sent via email. If you prefer to renew online, visit pvff.club/club-membership/ to fill out the form and pay with PayPal or credit card. — **Dave Dowiak**

Remembering Bob Abraham

By Don Fine

It is with a heavy heart that we relate to our Potomac Valley Fly Fishers membership that Bob Abraham, 88 years old, died on December 15th from complications of COVID19 and pneumonia. Bob was a long standing (more than 53 years) member of PVFF, considered by many as one of our club's 'founding fathers.'

Bob enlisted in service to our country during the Korean War and served as a Staff Sergeant in the Army Security Agency. During his time of service, Bob was also a member of the All-American rifle team, and later helped establish a rifle team for the U.S. Army Reserves. Following his career in the military, Bob worked 30 years for the State of Maryland as a game warden, with fisheries and wildlife and later in public relations for the Department of Natural Resources. Following retirement from the DNR, Bob continued his passions for the outdoors as a Potomac River fly fishing guide and had the honor, and received recognition, for serving as a fishing guide for Presidents Jimmy Carter and George H.W. Bush. Bob's life was devoted to education of youth having served for over 50 years as a mentor in the Brotherhood of the Jungle Cock, by serving as the Director of Education for many years, and as a past president of the BOJC. He was a proud supporter of Project Healing Waters and had a standing relationship with the military support staff at Camp David until his passing this week.



Bob Abraham with a young participant of a Brotherhood of the Jungle Cock gathering in 2019 at Camp Airy in Thurmont, Maryland.
Photo by Dan Neuland

Bob was also a devoted conservationist, most notably the first advocate for catch & release ethic for the Big Hunting Creek fishery, and a proponent for fresh water fisheries and stream management in and beyond the Catoclin Mountains.

I am honored and blessed to have known Bob Abraham and his wife Barbara for over 20 years. Bob Abraham was a devoted father and husband, military veteran, educator of our youth, conservationist (and guardian of our natural resources), and a dear friend to all who knew him – he will be sorely missed.

For those seeking to honor Bob, memorial contributions may be made to **Project Healing Waters, P.O. Box 695 LaPlata, MD 20646** or **Brotherhood of the Jungle Cock 6310 Howard Lane, Elkridge, MD 21075.**

Giving Gratitude as 2021 Ends

By Mike Holland



As 2021 comes to a close, I thought I would take a moment to share some things for which I am thankful. In fact, as I fish, these items often pass through my mind.

To begin with, I am thankful that I am healthy enough and manage to find time to fish. I am also thankful for those I fish with and have fished with over the years. For example, I will never forget the afternoons I spent fishing the brook near our house with the neighboring Riley boys.

With our Zebcos and worms that we dug out of the garden, we had hours of fun catching nice brookies and an occasional brown. The brook is not productive now, five decades later. My Dad recently explained to me that our success back then was the result of an unscheduled stocking. As my Dad tells it,

while he was socializing around an old Franklin store at Red Mallette's garage with other neighbors one Saturday morning — a common occurrence — a man with a truck load of fish to stock stopped by. As the conversation progressed, he realized that my Dad had young kids, so he drove a couple miles to our farm and generously stocked the brook.

I will never forget the first time I went fly fishing in the late 1980s. I was working as a summer caretaker on one of the great camps in the Adirondacks and a kind colleague took me out on a pond one misty morning. Somehow, I was able to catch a nice 12-inch trout. Looking back through the decades, I recall it was a brown and that I caught it on dry fly; it might have been a Royal Wulff or stimulator. The other thing that made that morning unforgettable was the Timber Wolf I saw as I drove back deep into the

Adirondacks. It had an unforgettable, square black snout and an utterly unafraid, defiant gaze. I am thankful for he gave the time to take me out that day and for the generous advice and great companionship that friends, like Andy Mekelburg, other club members, and guides have since given to me.

I also am very thankful for the peace fly fishing brings to me and so many others. In fact, I once had

a guide tell me that fly fishing had saved his life during high school, which highlights the critical importance of the efforts by those club members who give their time Project Healing Waters.

As I close, I am thankful for the past and present leadership and members of this club. And, of course, I am thankful for that “tug” we all know, love, and ardently pursue.

Mossy Creek: Public and Private Fly Fishing

By Mike Holland

On December 18, 2021, I had the opportunity to fish Mossy Creek near Bridgetown, Virginia, with Andy and Cory Mekelburg. Mossy Creek is a limestone, spring creek south of Harrisonburg which is renowned for providing the opportunity to fish for large brown trout. It is an excellent example of how collaboration with landowners, the state, and Trout Unlimited can provide anglers with access to quality water and does require a special, free permit from the Virginia DWR.

We started our day on a privately owned stretch of Mossy Creek that we were able to access through a guide, Wayne Sexton of the Mossy Creek Fly Fishing Shop. It was an overcast day in the 50s and the water was opaque. It took awhile but Cory finally started things off with a rainbow which he caught with a Zurtle. He ended up catching four more rainbows and a sunfish.

Andy and I ended up catching two rainbows each. I caught one with a Zurtle and one on a dropper combination with a pink Squiggly Worm that I had tied and a Copper John. I am fairly new to fly tying and can tell you that it was extremely satisfying and encouraging.

When we concluded our time with Wayne, we took the opportunity to find the public access area of Mossy Creek. We fished for about an hour before ending the day. This portion of the stream reminded me of Beaver Creek in Hagerstown, Maryland, as it had a substantial amount of aquatic vegetation and



was not wide open. To me, like Beaver Creek, it presents an ongoing challenge in a beautiful setting that I look forward to pursuing on a regular basis.

For those interested in fishing Mossy Creek, you can find more information, including directions, at: mossycreekflyfishing.com/pages/mossy-creek

PROJECT HEALING WATERS

FLY FISHING

Project Healing Waters: Catoctin Creek Park

By Andrew Frutiger



Project Healing Waters Catoctin Creek Outing

This past month, our veterans were able to get back on PVFF home waters as a group for a fantastic day of being outside as a community. The day started off strong with a sizable amount of trash talk in the parking lot, which centered mostly around Scott offering to use his Toyota to pull Dave's Ford out when it got stuck taking the veterans to the river. After getting down to the river and crushing the Dunkin Donuts, we got out on the water. What started out slowly in the morning, picked up around midday (thanks to a timely bump

in temperature) with several solid fish caught on black woolly buggers and zebra midges. By the end of the day, everyone was talking about the next opportunity to get together, whether on the river or at the Legion.

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*.

Meet a Member: Dave Keane

Column coordinated by Mike Holland



How long have you been fly fishing?

I started fly fishing when I was in the Boy Scouts. My neighbor, Mr. Tom Wiley, gave me a fly rod and I can remember catching fish out of the Octoraro River at Camp Horseshoe while at summer camp.

What type of fly fishing do you like the most?

I really enjoy wet wading local rivers fishing for smallmouth bass and panfish. Late summer in the

evenings tossing a popper and having a fish smash it from the surface is a lot of fun.

What is your favorite water to fish?

Fishing the native brook trout streams in Western Maryland in the Savage River watershed. Hiking around the mountains, catching natives, and exploring the area is always a good time.

What is your best fly fishing memory?

Some of my fondest fly fishing memories are taking my two sons to the annual Campfire weekend for the Brotherhood of the Jungle Cock. Watching them grow and progress through the program and develop into great fishermen has been a real pleasure.

What is your favorite fly?

My favorite fly is whatever is catching fish!

If you could only fish with five flies, what would they be?

For bass and panfish I like using poppers. Woolly buggers, San Juan worm for trout.

What advice do you have for others?

Get involved with PVFF. We have a wonderful club but are always in need of volunteers to lead trips, as

well as to help with planning events like the annual picnic and banquet.

What is your bucket list fly-fishing trip?

My bucket list would be to travel to the west and fly fish for cutthroat trout.

When did you join the club?

June 12, 2012

Do you have any memories of past club events or members you would like to share?

The annual trip to Pulaski, New York, is a great time. Dan Neuland works extremely hard each year planning the trip and making sure that everyone on the trip gets on a salmon. Watching the giant salmon swimming upstream is an incredible sight. Earlier this fall, my son Evan and I joined Dan and some other members and I caught my biggest salmon ever.

Last Cast: Holiday Wishes and Let's Go Fish

By Andy Mekelburg

Whew! What a year 2021 was! The year was full of ups and downs for everyone and PVFF. Of significance, this year marked the passing away of two of our long time members, Jim Gilford and Bob Abraham. These two exemplified to me what fly fishing is all about — they gladly gave their time, expertise, and fellowship to build this club and establish the values we hold.

To me, the highlight of the year was the club meeting with Bob Clouser. Again, someone who exemplifies the generosity of spirit in the fly fishing community. Bob engaged us, not only in the tying of his signature flies, but recalled days with Lefty, Rick Loose, and other club members. Great to hear from a living legend.

In 2021, the club grew by 55 Members, an over 50% increase. This represents the renewed interest in the sport in the area. It also reflects the fine work of our

volunteers, who have created and implemented programs and activities that our members' want. We had a number of successes in 2021 that I would like to mention.

First, Don Fine and Troy Kitch combined to create "highly watched" fly tying videos which were viewed by many people, we averaged over 20 tiers that we sent materials to for each monthly Beginner's session. Larry Forte was able to keep the Advanced Tying group running strong, as we transitioned from online, to in-person, to hybrid. The participants all came with some creative flies for the group to learn.

Mike Holland spearheaded the outings this year, with a number of trips and many participants. One of the most valuable aspects of PVFF is to get members out fishing and Mike is diligent in this effort. In addition, he documents the trips for the newsletter to share

what was learned. Mike would love to hear from you if you want to go fishing and don't mind some company.

Kevin Haney led the mentor program to great success this year. The idea of members helping members fits in with our vision and thanks to Kevin for coordinating, mentors for volunteering, and mentees for their interest in furthering their knowledge of the sport.

This year's banquet went quite smoothly thanks to the efforts of Dave Keane. Dave logged a lot of mileage picking up donations for the event. He had to deal with constantly-changing conditions amid health concerns, but everyone attending enjoyed themselves with a night of fellowship.

For those who have been to our "home waters" lately, we have Rick Loose and his dedicated group that tends to the trout pen to thank. There are no small fish out there!

Many thanks to Dennis Allen and Troy for their implementation of the "Paypal" option for the Club to accept payments. This, as much as anything, has led to the great increase in our membership.

I could go on, but Troy would want me to cut down on space (again thanks to Troy for putting together the newsletter), but many thanks to everyone, who I didn't name, who helped and participated this year.

I'm sure that 2022 will continue to have its shares of changing conditions, but I'm confident that now we have the knowledge and technology to meet the challenges. I'm looking forward to the good times and good people that PVFF will put in my life this year. Tight lines and best wishes for a healthy and successful new year.

*We now have an easier way to get to our website. Just type **pvff.club** in your browser and it'll take you to **potomacvalleyflyfishers.club!***

Calendar of Events

- Jan. 11** Virtual Club Meeting — Join us on Zoom at 7:00 PM (link will be sent out via email)
- Jan. 18** Beginner's Fly Tying
7:00 PM
Trinity United Methodist Church
Frederick, Maryland
Room 207
- Jan. 19** Advanced Fly Tying
7:00 PM
Trinity United Methodist Church
Frederick, Maryland
Room 109
(Zoom link provided for those who cannot attend in-person)
- Jan. 27** Board of Directors' Meeting
7:00 PM
Trinity United Methodist Church
Frederick, Maryland
Room 109

2022 PVFF Offices & Directors

President.....Andy Mekelburg
Vice President.....Kevin Haney
Secretary.....Owen Davis
Treasurer.....Dennis Allen
3 year Director.....Dave Dowiak
2 year Director.....Troy Kitch
1 year Director.....Kevin Lynn
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

MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO POTOMAC VALLEY FLY FISHERS. Mail your check with this 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 _____