

— CLUB MEETING: DECEMBER 12, 7 PM —

Travelogue and Annual Elections

By Andy Mekelburg

This month's program will feature a travelogue on two destination fishing locations – Alaska and the San Juan River in New Mexico. While appearing to be informational, it's actually about two great trips I took this year and, following the Mike Holland dictum, making a fishing excursion out of everything. These were two unique adventures that have now been crossed off the bucket list. In June, I took a cruise along the Alaska shoreline with my son, Cory. I was able to arrange a fishing trip out to Orchid Lake for cutthroat trout. Amazing scenery, no one around, clear waters, Orcas and float planes – with an unbelievable finish!

At the beginning of August, I flew to Dallas and drove with my son-in-law, Nabeel, to Seattle, Washington — approximately 3,000 miles, we did it in 8 days. My one request was to go through Navajo Dam, New Mexico, to fish the San Juan River. I had done this in 2022 while driving with my son Cory from San Francisco to Maryland. Nabeel had never done any kind of fishing, never mind fly fishing. “They” say that the San Juan has 10,000 trout per mile. Not sure of that, but we had 12 visit us in our net for a short time. Finished with a rainbow caught on a San Juan worm!



In addition to this sure to be fascinating presentation, we'll also conduct our annual elections. We're a member run organization so we're always looking for help. Come volunteer, this is how we come up with programs, we talk with members and see what they would like to do, then band together to get it done.



Trophy striper caught by Dan Neuland while fishing with Kevin Josenhans on the Susquehanna Flats in 2017.

Combined Beginner's and Advanced Fly Tying: The Half-n-Half Pattern

By Larry Forte

Given the Holidays and busy schedules, this month we are going to combine both classes and meet on Wednesday night, Dec. 20, at 7:00 PM.

Our guest tier is Dan Neuland and he will teach us how to tie the half-n-half.

Here's information from Dan about the fly:

"In recent years, my fly fishing and fly tying focus has shifted onto the waters of the Chesapeake Bay and its tidal tributaries. It is no secret that the Clouser Minnow and Lefty's Deceiver are two of the best general saltwater patterns. So, it should be no

surprise that a combination of these two classic patterns would be just as or even more effective than the originals. I first discovered how effective this pattern was while striped bass fishing with guide, Kevin Josenhans on the Susquehanna Flats in April of 2017. It was the color pattern of white and chartreuse that I took note. Since then, I have used my version of this fly to catch stripers on both sides of the Chesapeake Bay including locations such as Fletcher's Cove on the Potomac River, Jane's Island on the Tangier Sound, the Severn River and at Sandy Point State Park. In addition, I have caught many other saltwater species with this fly such as blues,

red drum, sea trout, Spanish mackerel and others while fishing with Bill Kulp off the coast of North Carolina. PVFF member, Mark Richardson uses a smaller version with the same color pattern to catch some impressive smallmouth bass on the Monocacy River each spring. This fly is a must-have addition to both saltwater and freshwater fly boxes!”



Dan's Half-N-Half: an adaptation of the classic combination of the Clouser Minnow and Lefty's Deceiver.

I hope you can join us. This is open to everyone. The club will provide all of the materials and hooks. We will meet in Room 108 at Trinity Church. 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.

** Note for all fly tying newcomers. Our PVFF fly tying instruction has been broadened to provide

monthly instruction for those who might never have tied a fly (i.e. true beginners), as well as for those who have some experience in fly tying and wish to expand their skills by tying artificial flies which imitate natural fish foods.

If you are planning on attending and do not already have your own basic equipment for fly tying, please let Don Fine (301-371-5617) know prior to the December 19th session, so a tying vise and tools will be provided.

Support the Club: Volunteers Needed

As we are a member run organization, we always are looking for members that want to volunteer to help. There are many areas where you can volunteer: being on the board, helping with the newsletter, website, outings, mentoring, trout pen stocking, project healing waters, the banquet, picnic, fly tying and whatever your imagination or talents can contribute to your fellow members. If you can spare an hour or two a month, join the effort! — Andy Mekelburg

Time To Renew Your Membership

A reminder to go to our website or use the form at the end of this newsletter to renew dues for 2024 or to join as a new member. Whether you renew online or in-person at our club meeting, note that you can purchase more than one year at a time. — Dave Dowiak



Project Healing Waters: Harmon's Creek

By Andrew Frutiger

Thank you to the anonymous donor who made our second trip possible. We hope you know what a wonderful gift you've given us! Harmon's Creek is a phenomenal experience from the location to the cabins to the fishing. We spent many hours over 3 days catching fish, sharing meals, and unhurried conversations and stories whether in the warmth of the cabins, or the chill night air around the campfire. From Billy Nolan making Dave Wooster work his tail off netting some giants to Jeb and Russ disappearing off the beaten path to find new opportunities in seldom fished areas.

Harmon's Creek has become a very special trip for our entire chapter. Anyone who attends, whether a



veteran or a volunteer, comes away wishing we had more time.

If you have any questions or would like to make a donation to the program, please reach out to me at any time at andrewfrutiger@yahoo.com Facebook page at:

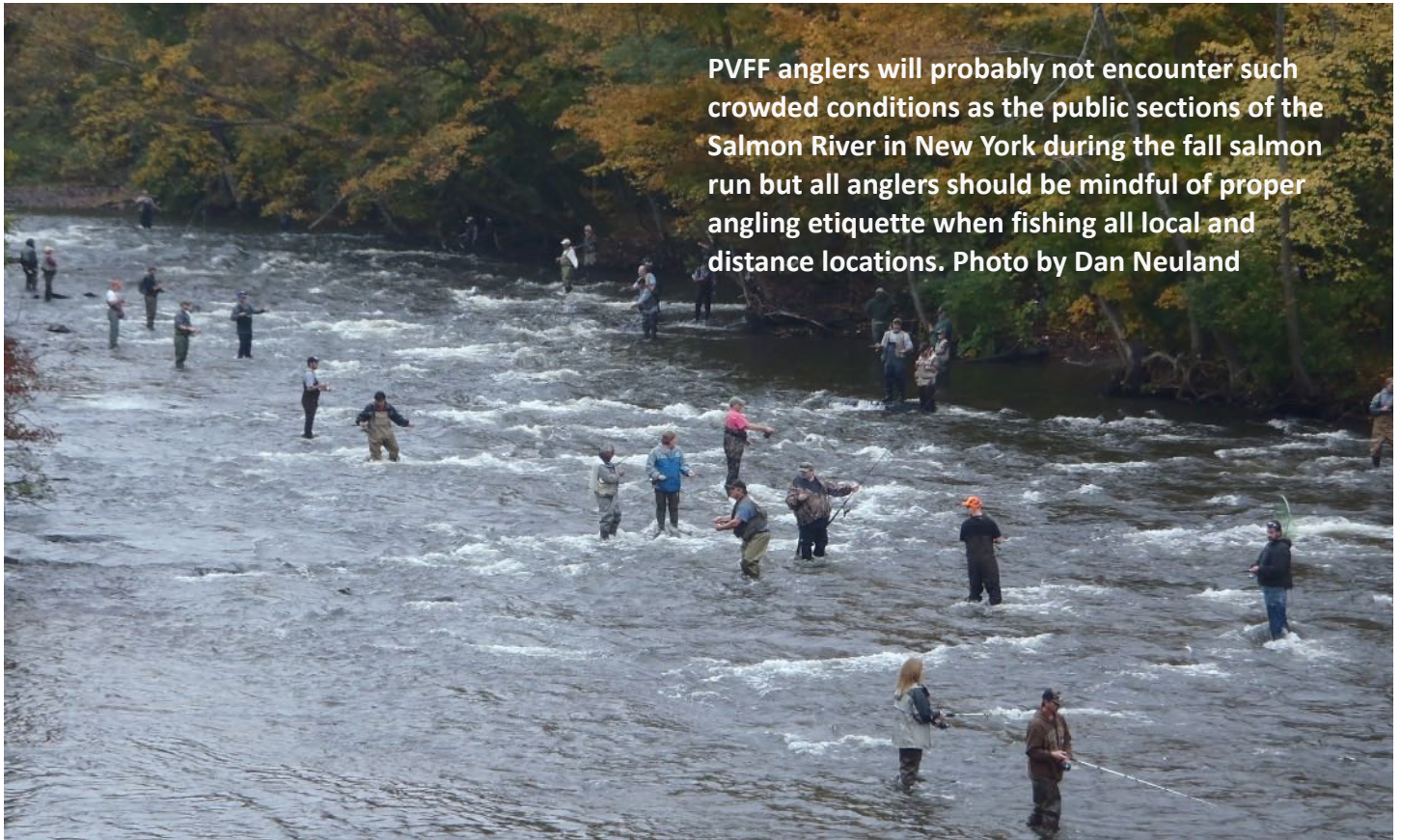
[Project Healing Waters — Frederick Chapter.](#)

To support the local community, please check out:

[Donate to PHW — Frederick Chapter](#)

Five Fly Fishing Rules of the Road: Stream Sportmanship

Editor's note - PVFF member, Chuck Dinkel found this informative article concerning a recent outreach effort that was posted online by the team at [Accent Fly Fishing](#).



PVFF anglers will probably not encounter such crowded conditions as the public sections of the Salmon River in New York during the fall salmon run but all anglers should be mindful of proper angling etiquette when fishing all local and distance locations. Photo by Dan Neuland

As the sport of fly fishing explodes in popularity and tens of thousands of new anglers look to wet a line, the question that the fly fishing community needs to answer is **“How do we equitably, and sustainably share the water?”** Back in March I asked the Ascent Fly Fishing community of more than 60k anglers to join us in forming a New Anglers’ Ethic, outlining how best to share the water and keep the peace as so these anglers have begun to join us on the water. Whether you’ve been fishing for decades or are just getting your feet wet for the first time this spring, you have either felt the frustration of encroaching anglers crowding you on the water or the sting of scorn from other anglers directed at you due to some unspoken offense. Just as the spring runoff yearly changes the contours of the river and how we fish, so too must

the rising flow of anglers to our local waters change the way we fish and share the river.

When asked to be a part of the solution and to help us form an angler ethic that we can all embrace and commit to sharing with the new generation of anglers, the response and feedback of the community was overwhelming!

After reading scores of emails, facebook and Instagram messages, and posing this question to countless anglers in the shop, the consensus of the community was uncannily aligned!

While we are not looking to carve in stone a rigid 10 Commandments of Fishing Ethics, I believe that these simple **Five Fly Fishing Rules of the Road** are ones that we can all stand behind and will allow

us each to enjoy the river and the sport of fly fishing while maintaining peace within ourselves and with each other.

Signal Before You Merge

The universal consensus of the community was that **anglers need to speak to each other on the water in a give-and-take exchange to determine how we are going to share the water.** Just like when someone is looking to merge into a crowded highway, it is appreciated and space more graciously given when someone uses their blinker, makes eye contact, and signals their intent instead of just squeezing in front of you and forcing those around them to slam on their brakes and make room. We've all been there and hate thoughtless drivers like that!

When you encounter other anglers on the water cordially engage them. Ask them which way they are heading, if and where it would be ok for you to merge onto the water and wish them luck! Not only will this keep the anglers on the water from having to slam the breaks on their fishing, but it will also enable you to help keep the peace on the river and maybe even gain a little intel on which flies are working well or possibly even gain a new fishing buddy!

Maintain a Minimum Space

Nothing will raise our communal blood pressure as fast as someone riding your bumper or having someone cut you off on the road! When other anglers crowd us on the river (which typically only happens if the first Fly Fishing Rule of the Road isn't followed) tempers flare, people get defensive, and no one has a good time on the water so let's agree to keep a minimum distance when fishing. On crowded waters **close to the city, 30 yards is a reasonable minimum distance** that will keep people from tangling lines while allowing you some space to breathe. If you've made the effort to get out of town to **more secluded waters, moving upstream a quarter of a mile from an established angler or out of sight around the next bend** will help to maintain the peace and seclusion that you both were

looking for by getting off the beaten path. If there isn't enough room on a specific stretch of water to keep this minimum distance between yourself and other anglers, take a walk upstream, chat with the anglers you meet along the way, and merge back onto the stream where there is space.

First in Time = First in Line

Just line like when merging into traffic on the highway, the vehicles merging from the on-ramp need to yield to the cars already on the road. The same is true on the river. The anglers who got up early, rigged their rods in the dark, and are drifting a particular run have the right to fish that water and not be encroached upon or rushed. But, if you speak with them and discuss which way you are both heading and where you would like to fish, not only will you both share a good day on the water, but you might also even get invited to join them for a bit!

Be Mindful Where You Cross

Often times we need to wade across the river to get to a particularly sweet looking piece of water, but when doing so we need to be respectful of the other anglers on the water. Whenever possible try to maintain the 30 yards of minimum distance between yourself and others when crossing the river. When maintaining the minimum distance isn't an option, speak with the other anglers on the water and ask them which direction they are fishing and where they would be ok with you crossing. While they will most likely ask you to cross downstream of them, be extending them the simple courtesy of asking them where they would like you to cross it will help to ensure that you don't splash through their next fishing hole as well as safeguard your vehicle from having an obscenity keyed onto its hood back in the parking lot!

Assume the Best

We don't know whether the person approaching us on the water has been fly fishing for decades or days, if they have been fishing this river their whole life or are visiting from out of state, or if they are on the water to cap off a great week or to forget particularly

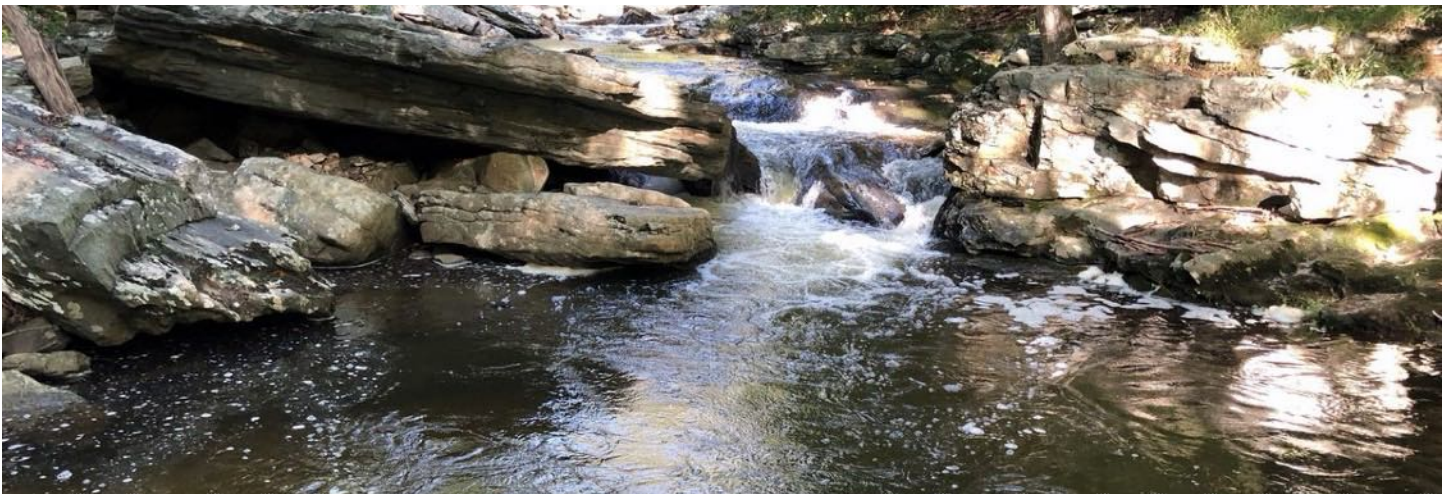
hard one. A safe assumption is that they are seeking escape, excitement, connection (with nature, themselves and possibly others), and that they share your love of fly fishing! What is not beneficial is to assume that they are intentionally using the river in a way that is harmful or inconsiderate. When we see these behaviors, this is our opportunity to engage in conversation and kindly let them know which way we are planning on fishing or to ask them if they open to a shared insight. If welcomed, it helps to couch advise with humor and humility.

“Hey, mind if I give you a quick tip? Wet your hands before handling a fish. Unfortunately, I killed a few in the past and its always bummer.” Or “I didn’t see it initially when I got here this morning, but if you see that bright patch in the gravel right

there with the big rainbow trout on it, that is actually a spawning trout on a redd so I’m giving her some space.”

By practicing these Five Fly Fishing Rules of the Road we should be able to not only weather the growing community of fly fishers on the water but be an active part of guiding and encouraging the new generation of anglers as we share and enjoy the river together!

The team at Ascent Fly Fishing wishes you many tight lines and we hope to see you.



Big Hunting Creek Committee Created

PVFF has created a committee to work on issues specifically affecting Big Hunting Creek. Big Hunting Creek used to be our home waters before it was changed to Catocin Creek and the club stocked it every year. The overall goal of the committee will be to insure that the BHC trout fishery is healthy and available for fly fisherman in perpetuity. Other projects will include the removal of Bentz Pond and the creation of a youth-only fly fishing section, and the creation of a fly fishing heritage trail in the lower national park section. We will be working with other local groups on these issues and more. If you have any concerns or suggestions about improving the trout fishery on BHC, or wish to be available for stream clean ups or other projects where manpower is needed, please email me at kevinhaney1@outlook.com. — Kevin Haney



PVFF member Mark Richardson fishing Catoclin Creek

Public Comment Period Ends Dec. 4 for Important Maryland Non-tidal Regulation Proposals

There are some impactful changes being proposed for all fly fishing only and catch-and-return areas in Maryland as well as a no-kill brown trout rule on Beaver Creek. The opinion of PVFF members can influence these proposed regulations.

- Should the use of barbless hooks be mandatory or simply a matter of choice?
- Is the current 18' leader length limit adequate or should that restriction be removed for non-traditional fly fishing techniques such as those practiced by anglers using Euro nymphing gear?
- Will the proposed zero creel limit on brown trout in Beaver Creek be enough to protect the resource?

The DNR fisheries is seeking public comment on the following non-tidal regulation proposals. Please take the time to read the proposed changes and comment before the public comment period ends on December 4, 2023.

FISHING IN NONTIDAL WATERS – Catch-and-Return Trout Fishing Areas

What is being considered? The Department is considering requiring anglers to use barbless hooks when fishing in all Catch-and-Return Trout Fishing Areas and Delayed Harvest Fishing Areas during the catch-and-return season.

FISHING IN NONTIDAL WATERS – Brown Trout Creel Limit in Beaver Creek

What is being considered? The Department would like to reduce the creel limit of brown trout in Beaver Creek to zero, from the confluence with Antietam Creek upstream to the Albert Powell State Trout Hatchery

FISHING IN NONTIDAL WATERS – Fly Fishing-Only Areas

What is being considered? The Department is considering removing the leader length restriction in fly fishing-only trout management areas.

FISHING IN NONTIDAL WATERS – Put-and-Take Trout Fishing

What is being considered? The Department is considering adding Bynum Pond (Harford County) and Warfield Park Pond (Howard County) to the list of Put-and-Take Trout Fishing Areas and extending the Patapsco River Put-and-Take Trout Fishing Area (Baltimore and Howard County) upstream to

Ilchester Road. The Department is also considering the removal of Forest Hill/Friends Park Pond (Harford County), Pine Lake (Montgomery County), Jones Falls below Lake Roland (Baltimore County), and Beaver Run (Carroll County) from the list of Put-and-Take Trout Fishing Areas.

Calendar of Events

- Dec. 12** Club Meeting and General Elections at 7:00 PM
Tuscarora High School
Room A170
Frederick, Maryland
- Dec. 20** Combined Beginner's and Advanced Fly Tying
7:00 PM
Trinity United Methodist Church
Frederick, Maryland
Room 108
- Dec. 28** Board of Directors' Meeting
7:00 PM
Trinity United Methodist Church
Frederick, Maryland
Room 109

2023 PVFF Officers & Directors

President.....Andy Mekelburg
Vice President.....Martyn Holland
Secretary.....Owen Davis
Treasurer.....Dennis Allen
3 year Director.....Dave Dowiak
2 year Director.....Russ Hanson
1 year Director.....Dirk Vandervaart
Past President.....Larry Forte

Use the link below to read more details regarding these proposals: *What is being considered? Why is this change necessary? Who will this affect? When will this be effective?*

<https://dnr.maryland.gov/fisheries/pages/regulations/changes.aspx#btrout>



Schoolie striper caught while fishing Tangier Sound with Mark Richardson at Janes Island State Park. — Dan Neuland

POTOMAC VALLEY FLY FISHERS

P. O. BOX 3001

FREDERICK, MD 21705

www.potomacvalleyflyfishers.club



FLY FISHERS
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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 _____