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**Inside this issue:**

Presidents Message	1
November Meeting	2
GLC Fly Expo	2
Rifle River Trout Fishing	3
Refrigerator Reminders	4

# Tippets, Tapers & Tales

November 1, 2011

## President's Message

### *Greetings from the President:*

As I write this, the east coast is being pounded with their first winter storm of the new season. Up to 30" of snow in some areas. Three million people without power. Airports closed, with thousands of stranded travelers. Ski resorts open, with thousands of happy skiers. And it's not even Halloween yet!

Although the storm missed Michigan, we all know it won't be long before it's our turn. With the colder weather and significantly shorter daylight hours, most of us are about through with fishing for the year (except for you lucky snowbirds who get to spend the winter a little closer to the equator!).

My gear bag is chock-full of just about every gadget that has ever graced the pages of an Orvis

catalog. But one thing that is missing - and will always be missing - is "Stanley's Ice-Off Paste". I'm not sure who this Stanley guy is, but he's apparently a heartier soul than I if he fly fishes in below-freezing weather. Hats off to those of you who fish with Stan.

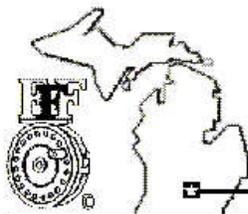
Nope, if the temperature is below 32 degrees, you won't catch me standing in a stream in spikes, chipping ice off my guides and reel, trying to throw tight loops with a frozen line. I would much rather be sitting behind my vise, tying some bugs, and daydreaming about next June's hex hatch. And like many of you, I am always interested in seeing new fly patterns and learning new tying techniques.

We are very fortunate that one of the best fly tying events in the entire country is held annually - right in our own backyard. The



FFF-Great Lakes Council's 12th annual "Fly Tying Expo" will be held on Saturday December 3rd at Holt High School. Typically, many well-known and award-winning tyers attend the Expo, including Dennis Potter, Julie Nielsen, Chris Helm, Ray Schmidt, Chuck Hawkins, and RCFF's own Jeff "Bear" Andrews. I extend a warm welcome to all of you to come on out and watch the masters in action. I learn something new every year.

*Continued on Page 2.*



## RED CEDAR FLY FISHERS

*Okemos, Michigan*

### 1981 McKenzie Cup Winners

The Red Cedar Fly Fishers is a Charter Club of the Federation of Fly Fishers.

It's purpose is to promote fly-fishing through Education, Restoration and Conservation



## President's Message Continued

We are always looking for volunteers to help the Expo vendors and exhibitors with set-up and take-down. So if any of you are interested in helping out, please sign-up at our November general meeting or let me know. In the past, the attendees have really appreciated the assistance from our club members.

Year 2012 will be the 35th anniversary of the Red Cedar Fly Fishers. The board is considering moving our annual banquet from February to May,

with the hopes of making it more convenient for many of you to attend - especially those of you who winter out-of-state. Details regarding date and location will be announced in the near future as plans are finalized.

Special thanks to those of you who helped with the yard cleanup project at John Brinkerhuff's house - Neil Gross, Marty Crimp, Terry Greiner, John Ross, Lisa Ross and Harry and Bonnie Barnes. With seven of us raking leaves, weed

whacking, and mowing the lawn, we had his very large yard cleaned up rather quickly. I know Brinx was very appreciative, as he was able to spend the day with his kids instead of doing yard work.

Hope to see all of you at the November general meeting.

*Support Your Local Fly Shop!*

Mark



## November Meeting

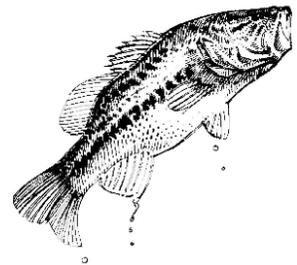
Todd Schotts ([www.grizzlyfliesbyschottsie.com](http://www.grizzlyfliesbyschottsie.com)) will provide this month's presentation, "Smallies of the Flats-On the Fly." For the past six years Todd has run an outing to Eagle Bay, (which is up on the tip of the thumb by Post Austin) for members of the Michigan Fly Fishing Club. They have had great success targeting the smallmouth bass that move onto the flats in the spring. Last year was their best

year yet.

Todd will provide information on places to stay, where to eat, equipment to use, flies to use, as well as maps of the two areas to fish with noted hotspots.

There will be lots and lots of fish pictures that will make everyone wish that it was spring already.

**By: Neil Gross**



## GLC Fly Expo

The Great Lakes Council will be hosting the 12th Annual Fly Tying Expo again this year on Saturday, December 3rd. at Holt High School in Holt, Michigan from 9am to 4pm. The Red Cedar Fly Fishers have always been a great help with setup and take down for this event and this year is no exception. There will be a sign up sheet at the November general membership meetings for you to volunteer. There will be more information and times at

the meeting regarding what is needed for our club to do for the upcoming expo. So plan on attending and signing up to help out with this always fun event. This is the Council's major fundraiser for the year and your volunteer help is necessary to make it run smoothly.

**By: Mark Johnson**

## Rifle River Trout Fishing from Greenwood Road North By Bob Kren

All waters south of Sage Lake Road are open year-round, and trout season north of Sage Lake Road spans from the last Saturday in April through September 30. The West Branch of the Rifle enters the main stem below Highbanks Access (see below). The West Branch is a marginally coldwater stream, so fishing downstream of its confluence yields more and more bass and pike during the summer months, though there are brown trout year round; the local custom is that all pike caught are gently released and encouraged to walk back to the river. Easy canoe launches and takeouts are at several spots in the Rifle River Recreation Area, and at Sage Lake Road, Peters Road, Klacking Creek access, and Kenneth Road. There's a skid at Highbanks access, but it's a long haul up or down. Remember that in good weather you'll face the strong likelihood that there'll be traffic on the river. Be sure to wear an orange hat during hunting seasons! The Rifle's flow is fragile, and rain raises its level and increases its murkiness quickly; you can go to [http://waterdata.usgs.gov/mi/nwis/uv?site\\_no=04142000](http://waterdata.usgs.gov/mi/nwis/uv?site_no=04142000) and compare current flows with average values before you waste your time driving up. There's a big run of suckers in early April, and steelhead follow them in. The steelhead subsequently spawn from mid-April through mid-May; they also follow the salmon run during October and November. DNR fish plantings are listed at <http://www.michigandnr.com/fishstock/>, Ogemaw County/Rifle River/all species, for brown and rainbow plantings during whatever time period you choose.

Kenneth Road turnoff: 44° 14.703'N, 84° 04.498'W. There's a small standard sign indicating a canoe launch. Proceed west on Kenneth Road (dirt), don't turn onto roads on left, that lead to houses. The next sign to the canoe launch is ambiguous, but take left-hand fork, downhill to a big parking lot/canoe launch; the memori-

al to Harold Kleinert is here, so take a moment. You can walk upstream on land, but if you do, the first possible entry to the river – there's a steep bank until this – is a quarter mile, at least. You can proceed on land even further, if you care to. Nice water, riffles and runs and deep holes. If you go downstream from the launch, you'll find the same sort of stream features. You can walk back through the woods on the west bank. Further downstream is very marginal trout water, and smallmouth start to become dominant; all fishing below Greenwood Road is considered warm-water.

Pipeline public access: 44° 13.212'N, 84° 03.940'W. Look for a fence with a short, fence-bounded road to a parking lot, on west side of Rifle River Trail. It's about 100 wooden steps down to a small beach. Upstream is pocket water, out from the beach is a broad, shallow hole. Downstream and across the Rifle is a deep hole that can hold good-size fish its full length. Be careful wading across the river, since the bottom is rock, and has many slots that grab your feet. Bottom is not slippery, but be careful, anyway. This stretch is supposedly good for steelies after 10 November.

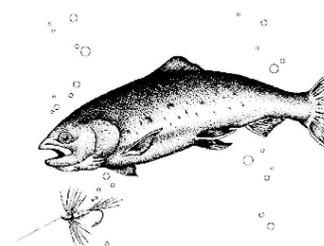
Highbanks public access: 44° 14.703' N, 84° 03.826'W. Look for a big parking lot on west side of road, easy to spot. Steps lead up to an opening in the fence, then about 100 steps take you down to the Rifle. You can then cross the river and walk either up - or downstream. Upstream water tends to be riffles and runs; downstream the river veers right and there's a deep hole on the outside bend, with some good fish in it. Downstream the water can get a bit deep, so walking back through the woods is a good idea. You can also park in the lot and walk along the hilltop fence, back south, to a set of stairs down to the river. That's nice as a concept, but the steps end at deep water, which you can fish to from the bank, but probably shouldn't try to get into.

Continue north on Rifle River Trail to M-55. Take a slight jog left, and continue on paved road, now Gerald Miller Road. (As an alternative, you can park at the bridge on M-55 and climb down to the river, or go into the Ogemaw County fairgrounds

and drive to the SW corner, then climb down the bank, and fish.) Anyway, continue north on Gerald Miller Road until you run out of pavement, at State Road. (You can turn west on State Road and park at the bridge in Selkirk, then fish up- (that's where the DNR plants steelhead) or downstream.) Turn off the dirt road at 44° 19.276'N, 84° 03.987'W, to the parking lot at Klacking Creek access. River at a canoe launch is down a short trail. You can walk a long way upstream on the east bank, all the way to Klacking Creek, and further if you get into the river and wade. Here, the Rifle is mostly sandy bottom, with some holes, and gravel, and is generally easy wading. Downstream from the canoe launch is more of the same sort of cover. Gerald Miller Road does NOT continue through to Peters Road.

If you drive north on M-33 past M-55 about four miles to Peters Road, you can turn east on dirt and proceed to a Peters Road canoe launch site at 44° 20.083'N, 84° 08.818'W. (If you're coming west from the Rifle, on either M-55 or State Road, turn north on Morrison Road to get to Peters Road) Park on the shoulder, or near the canoe launch, but don't block the launch site! You can walk downstream and fish all the way down past the Prior Creek confluence to Klacking Creek, and further; there is some private property, so plan on returning instream, though there's lots of public land, too. Or you can follow the trail on the west bank, upstream from Peters Road. The nicest water is upstream. Legend has it that the best steelhead water is between Peters Road and Sage Lake Road.

*Continued on Page 4.*



**RED CEDAR FLY  
FISHERS**

P.O. Box 129  
Okemos, MI 48805

[www.redcedarflyfishers.org](http://www.redcedarflyfishers.org)

## Rifle River Trout Fishing Continued

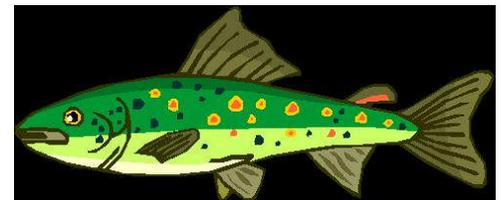
By: Bob Kren

Six miles north of M-55, on M-33, is Sage Lake Road. Turn east and, after you've crossed the Rifle, continue on to Pettit Road. Turn south a mile, then head back west on Twin Lake Road, which is dirt. Go to the end 44° 20.973N, 84° 03.131W. There's an old lunker structure here, and the water's a little deep, but manageable, to get into. Haven't fished this stretch, but it's alleged to be the heart of steelhead country, early in the seasons (see general information and "Pipeline" entry, above). **DO NOT TRY TO ACCESS THE RIFLE RIVER FROM THE WEST**, on Ogemaw Center Road. The two-track at the end sank my car up to its nuts – lugnuts, that is – in mud, and AAA or Onstar will not get you hauled out. Nor will your insurance company reimburse you for your off-road shenanigans. It looks like you might be able to park near civilization and walk in, but there's no need to try, since that water is readily accessible from the east, as already described, off Twin Lake Road.

You can park off Sage Lake Road 44° 21.801N, 84° 02.885W, and walk upstream, or enter the Rifle River Recreation Area by proceeding north

on M-33 to Rose City, turning east at the traffic signal downtown, and getting to the entrance at 44° 25.290N, 84° 01.325W. A Michigan state park sticker is required. In the recreation area you'll find small streams – Houghton Creek, Gamble Creek – that are tricky to fish, and the Rifle, which is pretty heavily-fished, though there's some big fish in there. You can drive the back roads in the recreation area, almost down to Sage Lake Road, but you can't drive out, nor enter the recreation area, there.

Enjoy yourself, and stay safe. -- Bob Kren



## Refrigerator Reminders

### November

8th: RCFF Monthly Meeting, Social 7:00pm, Business 7:30pm. Large Group Room, Chippewa Middle School.

13th: Sunday Fly Tying Night-6:30pm-8:30pm, Piazzanos Banquet Room in the basement

27th: Sunday Fly Tying Night-6:30pm –8:30pm Piazzanos Banquet Room in the basement

### December

3rd: GLC Fly Tying Expo-Holt High School, Holt, MI. 9am-4pm.

13th: RCFF Monthly Meeting, Social 7:00p.m., Business 7:30pm., Large Group Room, Chippewa Middle School.

Sunday Tying Nights to be listed in the December Newsletter.

