



The Cast

Russian River Fly Fishers

Sonoma County California
Volume 49, Number 4
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Sailfish on a fly, Sea of Cortez
(See "Binky Castleberry's Interview", pg. 2 below)

Since June 1977
Visit our website at
www.rrflyfisher.org

President's Message *Spring Approaching*

With warmer weather on the way and spring just around the corner, it's time to shake off those winter doldrums and get casting again. The RRF will be having casting clinics at our casting pond in Galvin Park weekly on Thursdays, 4:30 – 7PM (weather permitting). The sessions are open to the public, so feel free to bring friends or family who are interested in learning to fly cast. We will have some rods available for loan to visitors who do not have their own equipment.

We are beginning the process of electing RRF Board Members. We have one vacancy on the board and nominations are open if you are a current member and would like to join the Board. See the ballot on Page 6.

For those of you who want to cast and feel a tug at the other end of the line, early spring in California offers some of the best fishing opportunities. The past two months of drought have halted steelhead fishing on our coastal rivers, so be sure to check for low-flow closures before heading out (707-944-5533). Lake Ralphine at Howarth Park in Santa Rosa gets bi-weekly plantings of rainbow trout (check CDFW website for dates) that can be caught on a fly – a good setting for beginners. Elsewhere in Northern California, the Lower Sacramento River and Baum Lake have been providing good rainbow trout action (see articles in last month's CAST). Further away, there are reports of a trophy-sized Lahontan cutthroat trout being caught by fly anglers at Pyramid

Lake in Nevada. Those are just a few of the possibilities, and there are many others in between.

With this winter's COVID outbreak waning, opportunities to get out of the house are appealing, but please continue to follow all local regulations to ensure your health and safety while you enjoy the great outdoors.

Tight lines,

~ Ed Barich

Check out the Russian River Fly Fishers
on the Internet at

www.rrflyfisher.org

for outings information, RRFF events,
member news, photos and more!

Note:

We encourage members to check our **website calendar below** and get out there and go fishing.

<https://www.rrflyfisher.org/club-calendar-and-trip-signups.html>

We continue to have monthly outings planned through June (with signup sheets and trip leaders) and later months are still in planning stages.

April 8-10th - Clearlake (Mike Borba, trip leader)

May 5-8th - Baum Lake (Ed Barich, trip leader)

June 9-12th - Manzanita Lake (Ed Barich, trip leader)

July 16th RRFF Picnic Dinner (Details will be announced soon).

Talk to the trip leaders if anyone needs any suggestions on equipment or mentoring on the water.

RRFF General Meeting

Penelope Gadd-Coster, VP & Program Chair

Wednesday, April 13th

7:00 P.M. – In-person & Zoom Meeting

This month's speaker will be George Revel of Lost Coast Outfitters – The San Francisco Fly Shop.

George will be giving an educational talk about fly fishing for local stripers, surf Perch, and Halibut. For those of you that enjoy the tug of saltwater fish, this will be a presentation you won't want to miss.

There will be a raffle at this meeting. See you on the 13th.

Important Message: Mark Your Calendar

for the **RRFF Summer Picnic** at Galvin Community Park **July 16th 4PM - 7PM** (north of the casting pond). This event will be a gathering to rekindle friendships, memories, eat good food and drink. Dinner will be catered and there will be raffles and silent auctions. Ticket sales for the dinner will be announced soon.

Binky Castleberry—Interview

Interviewer—Dave Stone, Editor, The Cast
Interviewee—Binky Castleberry, RRFF club member

Editor's Note: All fish photographed were caught by Binky using a fly rod. This interview was lightly edited by Binky and Dave Stone. And to my surprise, this interview brought out a connection and passion we both had for surfing Pleasure Point and other surf breaks that Santa Cruz had to offer during our youth.



How did you get the name Binky? My mom slapped it on me when I was just a little kid. I kind of liked it as I was growing up and I got used to it. Even the kids at school used to call me Binky.

What did you do for work? I taught my whole career of 25 years at Santa Rosa Junior High. I got started late. I had worked for the City of Vallejo for five years. And then I worked at C&H Sugar for another five years. Then I became dissatisfied with those types of jobs because I wanted to finish my education. I had dropped out of college. But I decided I had to finish, so I made up my mind to go back to school. I had a little bit of a bankroll, so I quit my job at C&H Sugar and got my degree and received my teaching credential too. Then I taught math right here in Santa Rosa for my entire teaching career.

What attracted you to fly fishing? It was just a natural progression from regular fishing. I grew up in Vallejo and I started fishing when I was young because I could walk to the water. I was only seven or eight years old. I could walk down to the water and fish with hand lines. At that time, we fished with artificial lures and plugs. Then I started fishing for bluegill. Everybody that has a chance can get started that way. I started fishing for bluegills and then it went on from there. I started fishing Mare Island Straits, between Vallejo and Mare Island. That is where I hung out because I lived in Vallejo right on the edge of the government housing—right near the water, where I could walk down to the water anytime.

So, you caught your first fish on a fly line in that area? You know where Great America, the theme park, is in Vallejo? Way back before it was Great America, before it was a golf course, before it was anything, it was just a lake. We used to go there and camp out overnight and I saw those little bluegills rising. I started fishing with a dry fly and catching those bluegills. That caught my attention. I was already fishing seriously with plugs for striped bass, but I start fishing for the first time with a fly rod at that lake. That is what got me really going, but I didn't know very much.

Many years later, Hal Janssen kind of latched on to me and started giving me some fly-fishing pointers of this and that. In return, I put Hal onto some stripers. I was fishing plugs, but he came with his fly rod. I took him out to this kind of a secret place, and he got five or six

nice stripers that day. And I thought *that's it*. So, I quit carrying my spin rod and I just carried my fly rod. From then on out, I fished nothing but a fly rod.

What year was that? It was probably about 1978 or 79. The club got started around the end of the 70s and I had met him at a club meeting.

You're referring to the Russian River Fly Fishers Club? Yeah. They were just getting started. The practice pond was built in the mid 1980's. They had only been going for a short time before that. In the club there was guy named Joerg Olson. Joerg had been a seventh grader in my math class at Santa Rosa Junior High, and he knew I was interested in fly fishing. His dad, Ted Olson, invited me to come to one of the original Russian River fly meetings at Cattlemens. This guy named Doug Swisher was the speaker that night. He had a book that was very popular at the time called Selective Trout. I went to that meeting, and I didn't join the club right then, but I got to know some of the guys and then I got into the mix and joined.

What fly fishing tips would you pass on to others interested in fly fishing? Well, the secret for me was I stayed single my entire life. The guys that I know that are special fly fisherman dedicated their life mostly to fly fishing and the things that go on with fishing. So, if you want to be serious about it, I think you ought to stay single or find a woman who's just as passionate about fishing as you. Because otherwise you'll never get the opportunities that you should get.

...if a person wants to really get into fly fishing, you got to go fishing.

When I heard about some spot with good fishing, I packed up my stuff and went.

And when summertime came and I was released from my teaching duties, my truck was loaded, and I headed to Idaho.

I'd be gone for two months just traveling around Idaho and Wyoming. What I will say is, if a person wants to really get into fly fishing, you got to go fishing. You can't wait until your buddies wanna go,

or when you can find somebody to go with. No! Get in your car and in five hours you are somewhere good to fish.

Do you have any favorite California rivers or lakes you like to fly fish? Well, the Smith River is only a couple of months a year, but it's a special, special place. Manzanita Lake and Hat Creek are good too.

How about outside of California? [Laughs] Yeah, now you're talking. The Dean River in British Columbia, that's my favorite. That's the most picturesque and best, best fishing. It's outstanding. I used to fish five weeks every summer on the Henry's Fork in Idaho. I'd make my camp there and I would travel around that area, but I'd be located right on the Henry Fork for 5 weeks. I probably caught more fish there than any place in my life. I got to know that river and it's really a special river—was. I can't say what it is now. I fished every place there is to fish: Washington, Oregon, California, Idaho, Montana, Florida, and Mexico. I had some terrific fishing in Mexico over the years. I used to go there every year. I think I went for 15 consecutive years.



Tarpon, 7-Mile Bridge

The most spectacular fishing and something that every fly fisher should do is go to Florida and catch a tarpon. There're other places to go and catch them down in Mexico but there's nothing like Florida. Those big groups of tarpons come through. There they are right in front of you. The average weigh about 60 pounds and there's 100 fish right there in front of you. And there you are with a full-on tarpon rigged fly rod with the guide yelling at you.

Everybody's got to do that. There's some fishing in Mexico that's spectacular but fishing in Florida for tarpon—you just can't beat it! That's why they get \$800 a day to take you out.

So, in Mexico, you were saltwater fly fishing. For what type of fish? I went to Loreto, Baja for about 15 years in a row and caught a lot of sailfish on a fly rod. Another spectacular fish and not as big as a sailfish is the dorado. They're right in there with tarpon as far as a great fly-rod fish. They go crazy when you hook them.

In Mexico the fishing is reasonably priced compared to what all the other people charge. The only other place around the same price as Mexico, is Christmas Island. It's a fun place to go to fish.



Dorado, Sea of Cortez

Do you have any favorite memories of fishing one of those locations? Yeah, the very first sailfish that I caught was in Loreto [see front cover photo]. I had been going down there probably three or four years. Occasionally, we got a shot at sailfish. I didn't expect it to work out, but I got a good guide. We had a year down there when there were a lot of sailfish. This guide really knew what he was doing. He got us in position for these sailfish. I threw my popper out there and the son-of-a-bitch took it. I can remember saying "He's got it! I can't believe it; I can't believe it!" Then after that, I learned a little bit about some of the things you need to do to take a sailfish on a fly. It got to be where it wasn't too hard to do. I probably caught 50 or more.



Marlin, Sea of Cortez

And I caught two Marlin also on a fly down there. But that very first sailfish, wow!—Steve Tubbs was with me on that trip. We had groups of like 15 sailfish and we would throw live bait out and then they come in and take the live bait. Then you throw your popper in there and hopefully catch one. Steve got a sailfish that trip too.

Over the years what changes have you witnessed concerning our northern California fisheries? The number of fish is gone to hell. We had such wonderful fishing for many years for striped bass, for salmon and for steelhead. You could always count on the fish to be in the rivers; lately, I haven't even seen a steelhead. Of course, I'm not fishing heavy for them like I used to, but I haven't even seen one in four or five years.

Any last words you'd like to share about fly fishing? Well, one of things that helped me so much as I came up in the fly-fishing world, were guys like Bill Schaadt, Hal Janssen, and Bob Nauheim. I got to know Bill well. All three guys helped me. Bob was one of these guys whose life has been dedicated to fly fishing and he sacrificed everything else for fly fishing. I appreciated that about his approach to fly fishing. And Hal, I mentioned before, was very helpful too by basically showing me the art of fly casting for the first time.

So, I was very lucky. I got to know some of the best guys. There was a group of about thirty guys from California. Bill, Hal, Bob, and Neil Light were part of that group. Wherever you went in California, Oregon, Washington, if it was fly fishing, especially steelhead and salmon related, you could probably bet that some

of those guys were fishing there, and I would know them. The group from Santa Rosa got a real bad reputation. I think it was jealousy because the guys from California were excellent fisherman and put a lot into it. They learned all the stuff then and were very innovative. Bill Schaadt was so innovative and ahead of everyone else. Do you know Doug Brutocao? He's in our club, sometimes he's out here at the casting pond. He worked for Dwight Longuevan at King's Western Angler on College Avenue, Santa Rosa.

"This area was really a hotspot of fly fishing, right here in Santa Rosa."

Hal Janssen took him under his wing when he was about 15. Doug really latched onto that stuff. He's spent his entire life fly fishing and things connected with fly fishing. He is probably one of the best anglers I currently know. You think I know how to cast? You should see Doug cast. He can really cast. This area was really a hotspot of fly fishing, right here in Santa Rosa. The other guy that I should mentioned is Bob Nauheim. He had Fishing International Travel Agency here in Santa Rosa. He was one of the old timers back with Bill Schaadt when those guys got started.



Permit, 7-Mile Bridge



Fly of the Month
Zebra Midge: Baum Lake Outing
By Mike Borba



Zebra Midge:

A standard pattern for our May outing to Baum Lake is the Zebra Midge. This easy to tie fly can be used in streams and lakes for trout.

Zebra Midge Materials List:

Hook: Dai-riki 125 or Tiempo 2488 size 16-20

Thread: black 8/0

Bead: 1/16" silver

Rib: small silver wire

Tying note: If you don't have much experience tying small flies, tie this pattern on a larger hook, then gradually move down to smaller hook sizes.

Cartoon Corner
The Winning Caption



Her: "Thanks for holding my other fish." Him: "Thanks for letting people think I caught it."

Winning caption submission: **Mike Borba**

Cartoon Artist: **Greg Jacobs**

Other submitted captions:

He: "Honey, mine is a lot bigger." She, with an eyeroll: "He says that about everything." Mike Spurlock

"Hey...extending your arms doesn't make your fish bigger!" Steve Tubbs

"Thanks for sharing your big fish for my picture, Carol." Roger Bradley

"It was all they had at the Fish Market!" Michael Wrisley

"Mine is bigger than yours!!!!" Gary Grutkowski

"Sorry, Hon, but you were supposed to toss yours back." William Michell

And so, she sang, "Anything you can do, I can do better." John F. Shea

"See? Guys can have beginner's luck too!" Ed Barich

Link to on-line nomination ballot

Russian River Fly Fishers
2022 Board Nominations
for Officers & Board of Directors

The following candidates have been nominated by the RRF Board of Directors to serve for the fiscal year beginning July 1, 2022. As a RRF member, you may also choose to write-in additional candidate nominations and submit them for inclusion on the ballot. All nominations will be vetted to make sure that they are current RRF members and are willing to serve if elected. According to our Bylaws, our RRF Board of Directors can have up to 15 members.

President
 1.) Penelope Gadd-Coster
 2.) _____

Vice-President
 1.) Ed Barich
 2.) _____

Board Members - (Elected for a 2-year Term)

1.) Mike Spurlock	5.) Karl Joost
2.) Doug Mackay	6.) Penelope Gadd-Coster
3.) Ed Barich	7.) Dave Stone
4.) Tim Reuling	

8.) _____

Returning Board Members (beginning second year of 2-year term)

1.) Steve Tubbs	5.) Mike Borba
2.) Gregg Wrisley	6.) Jeff Cratty
3.) Spencer Bader	7.) Brendan Galten
4.) Don Shaw	

Please return all nominations by May 1, 2022
Nominations can be submitted online at rrflyfisher.org

Nominations may be mailed to: **Russian River Fly Fishers**,
 c/o Spencer Bader, 3310 Conifer Drive, Santa Rosa CA 95404.

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www.sportsmanswarehouse.com

Calendar of Events

RRFF Thursday Evening Fly Casting Clinics will start up again this month. We will have our final winter casting clinic on the 5th. We are OPEN TO THE PUBLIC and beginners are welcome.

April

- 8-10 Clear Lake Outing (Mike Borba – Trip Leader
- 13 RRFF General Meeting at the Veterans Memorial Hall, 1351 Maple Ave – doors open 6:30, 7:00 PM Zoom
- 20 RRFF Board Meeting – 7:00 PM, Zoom

7, 14, 21, 28 Fly Casting Clinics – 4:30–7:00 PM (Thursday's)

PLEASE FOLLOW ALL COVID-19 PROTOCOLS!

Visit www.rrflyfisher.org for a complete list of upcoming events!

Important Change

How to Contact Board of Directors & Coordinators

If you want to contact one or more of the Board of Directors and/or Coordinators below, then click on this link, which will bring you to our website.

<https://www.rrflyfisher.org/board-of-directors.html>

The names of our Board of Directors and Coordinators will appear. You may click on a name and leave a message for any person below and our website will send it to their personal email address, and they will respond to your message.



RRFF Board of Directors

President: **Ed Barich**

Vice President & Program Chair: **Penelope Gadd-Coster**

Secretary: **Brendan Galten**

Treasurer, Membership: **Spencer Bader**

Webmaster: **Mike Spurlock**

Casting Instruction Chairman, Facebook: **Steve Tubbs**

Member at Large: **Don Shaw**

Outings Chairman: **Chris Castellucci**

Membership Badges & Pond Steward: **Doug Mackay**

Raffle Coordinator: **Gregg Wisley**

New Member Mentoring: **Jeff Cratty**

Steelhead in the Classroom: **Karl Joost**

Member at Large: **Tim Reuling**

Member at Large: **Mike Borba**

The Cast Newsletter Editor & Publisher: **Dave Stone**

Coordinators

Day Fishers & Fly Tying: **Lee Soares**

Casting Pond Monitor: **Binky Castleberry**

Conservation Coordinator: **Charlie Schneider**

Conservation Coordinator: **Tom Greer**

Russian River Fly Fishers

c/o Spencer Bader
3310 Conifer Drive
Santa Rosa, CA 95404



Russian River Fly Fishers Membership Application

I acknowledge in this agreement, and fully understand, that it is a release of liability. I further acknowledge that I am waiving any right that I may have to bring legal action or to assert a claim against Russian River Fly Fishers (RRFF) for its negligence. Any member who invites a non-member (including member's spouse and family) agrees that such guest is bound by the same conditions and agrees to so advise the guest. I have read this statement and agree to its terms as a condition of my membership in the Russian River Fly Fishers. This agreement is valid for all RRFF sanctioned events, (fishing outings, picnics, meetings).

*Indicates required field.

*Name _____ *Date _____ *How did you hear about us? Referred by? _____

*Address _____ *City/State/Zip _____

*Preferred Phone: Home _____ or Cell _____ *E-mail _____

Occupation _____ *Signature _____

*Mark the following: I'm applying as a new member or I'm renewing my existing membership

Single membership - \$50 annual dues Junior membership (age 16-18) - \$25 annual dues Gold membership - \$1,000 (one-time)

Family Membership - \$55 annual dues—List family members: _____

The club would like to help you meet your needs. How many years have you been fly fishing? _____

Choose any areas you want help with: I would like help learning or improving my cast. I would like advice on fishing equipment.

I would like a lesson in tying knots I would like a lesson in tying flies I would like to have an experienced member mentor me

on local waters or on a club outing. Any other areas not mentioned above? _____

*How are you planning to pay? _____

Note: Dues paid by a new member joining the RRFF after March 1st of any year will cover the balance of that year and the membership dues for the following fiscal year. The RRFF fiscal year runs from July 1st to June 30th. **IF YOU PREFER, YOU MAY JOIN OR RENEW ONLINE at www.rrflyfisher.org**

OR NEW MEMBERS, MAY MAIL THIS APPLICATION TO:

RUSSIAN RIVER FLY FISHERS, C/O SPENCER BADER, 3310 CONIFER DRIVE, SANTA ROSA, CA 95404