

The Cast



Sonoma County California
Volume 49, Number 9
September 2022

Fall River, July 2022 Sunset
See "Fall River Memoir & Report" by Greg Jacobs, pg. 3

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

President's Message

It is September already! The sun is showing lower in the sky, days shorten—the normal course. This year there is more as rivers and lakes recede and water temps warm showing the climate changes that are ever present.

This should move us to do more with conservation efforts. Your membership is a way to be a part of conservation. The club has memberships with Fly Fishers International- Northern California Council:

[Click here to view their website.](#)

and we work with Trout Unlimited:

[Click here to view their website.](#)

We also support and assist with Steelhead in the Classroom program:

[Click here to view their website](#)

an incredible conservation teaching tool led locally by our Board Member Karl Joost. Karl is always looking for volunteers. Please take a moment to check out these websites as well as the Russian River Fly Fishers site:

[Click here to view the RRFF website](#)

Check out the calendar page to sign up for one or both upcoming outings – Jackson Meadows Reservoir (September) and Lewiston Lake (October).

I would like to encourage all members to attend the meetings, whether in person or online with Zoom. We

are continuing these “mixed” meetings so that anyone can find a way to be an active part. **The next meeting is September 14th at 7pm.** Doors will open at 6:30 PM, so you can meet the speaker, Lee intends to tie flies, and come to socialize with friends.

Participate in person at the Veterans Hall in SR or online. Please watch for the email with the meeting invitation.

And don’t forget—the casting pond! Thursday evenings from 4:30 PM - 7:00 PM. After daylight savings, the pond clinics go to our winter schedule which is the first and third Saturdays 12:00 PM - 2:30 PM. The main purpose of the casting clinics is to improve your cast. We would like you to join us so you can improve your casting technique. We have instructors at the pond that will help you improve your casting that in turn will help you land fish when you’re on a fishing outing. That and to socialize is why people come. Let’s make these times enjoyable when we get together out in the open air.

Finally, I will be attending the Yuba Fest sponsored by Northern California Council, Fly Fishers International and South Yuba River Citizens League on October 15th and 16th. I invite you to come along. It is labeled as a “Gathering of the Clan” with many fly-fishing activities and information. Also, there will be a special tribute to Jon Baiocchi.

[Click here](#) to go to our RRFF website to read more about the Yuba Fest.

THANK YOU for your membership and I look forward to seeing you!

Penelope

Important Notice

Spencer Bader, Finance & Membership

Invoices for RRFF membership dues for fiscal year 2023 will be sent out soon.

As a reminder, single membership cost is \$50, \$55 for a family membership; and \$25 buys a Junior Membership (age 16-17) or a non-resident member (living greater than 75 miles away).

Payments are due by September 15th and if not paid by October 1, 2022, the member will be taken off the active membership list and not receive The Cast.

Payments can be made via PayPal or by sending a check to 3310 Conifer Dr., Santa Rosa, CA 95404

If anyone has a question about whether they have already paid for July 1, 2022 - June 30, 2023, you can contact me at my email address [click here](#) or by phone, 707-794-4823.

RRFF General Meeting

Penelope Gadd-Coster

Wednesday, September 14th, 7:00 PM

For our September General Meeting, we have Leonard C. Curry, author of “The Irresistibles.” Leonard has been a fly fisher and fly tier for more than forty years. He is a familiar face on steelhead and trout rivers in Northern California. He is a graduate of Saint Mary’s College, where he played intercollegiate basketball and rugby. He lives on a ranch along the Russian River near Healdsburg, where his family grows fine wine grapes, and he gets to spend time—alone or with companions—casting his yellow spider flies to the lurking fish of the Russian River. He has been a real-life Irresistible since 1983. Leonard is an enthusiastic advocate for the restoration of all anadromous rivers and streams and sustainable watershed practices.

“The Irresistible” can be purchased through Amazon and Barnes and Noble:

[Click here for Amazon's website.](#)

[Click here for Barnes and Noble's website.](#)

"The Irresistibles" can also be purchased at Corrick's in Santa Rosa, and Levin & Company (on the square) in Healdsburg.

Don’t miss Leonard’s presentation at the Vets Hall, Santa Rosa, 7:00 PM September 14th.

Fall River Memoir & Report

By Greg Jacobs



Greg's rainbow on the Little Tule leading to Fall River

Twenty years ago, give or take a few, I started fishing the Fall River. A friend found a ranch that was converted to a fishing retreat right on the river. Whipple Ranch had been a cattle ranch, but when you drive up to the old house, there is a CA License plate nailed to the barn that says "NOMOCOWS." We could get 6 guys into the main house, and 2 to 3 in a newer granny unit nearby. When we started fishing there it could be incredible, especially on Zug Bug Alley, the special stretch of the Upper Fall River. And, oh the evening Caddis hatches!

We all came up from Sebastopol, and we all had a great time, cooking for ourselves, and then after dinner, sitting on the deck overlooking the river, enjoying cigars and a libation of choice.

Over time, the river vegetation changed as did the bottom. Too much mud and sand, the guides would say. But still the views of Shasta and the river beckoned until October 2019. That was the last time the group would go up. No more farmer's breakfasts, no more Margaritas, no more BBQ on the deck. And no more fish.

I fished with Ken Magoon on his last outing on the Fall, a river he dearly loved. Same for Jack Vallerga. But I kept coming up pretty much by myself and fished with my favorite guide, Jason Cockrum of AC Fly fishing. He started taking me to the Ajumahwi Lava Springs State Park area, which some of you have fished. Lots of springs that feed into a series of lakes and ponds before flowing into the Fall River, which is also spring fed.

I usually fish Fall River in late April or May, but this year, my wife and I were "invited" to babysit our two granddaughters in Ventura for two weeks. My daughter had some new job demands, and her husband, who teaches biology at Cal State University Channel Islands was also busy. So, this year I fished June 25 and 26, later than I like. And I decided to come back from July 14-16. The last two Julys were pretty good, so I looked forward to those dates. I was also going to fish the Hex hatch at least one night in July. I did well on the June dates and caught a lot of very nice fish. Jason knows the river very, very well. He is inventive and always figures out new ways to present flies, under new conditions and locations.

This July was a different trip altogether. By the way, when by myself, I stay at the Himont Motel in Fall River Mills. It's a decent motel and convenient to the Fall River area. Burney has some small but clean motels; I think all under the same management. I cannot recommend many dining spots around Fall River Mills or Burney. I will let you explore what there is. It won't take long.

Well, this time, Jason said the fishing had been tough, so we decided to take his small raft down the Pit from Lake Britton to Pit 3. When a guide says, "Fishing is tough," you know you must scale back your expectations.

There was a ton of water in the Pit River. It was a Mr. Toad's wild ride! I could hardly hang on as Jason instructed me to hit every little fishy spot in the river. We did not get any lunkers, but we caught a lot of nice Rainbows.

It takes a bit to get used to hooking and playing fish as you bob and weave in the current. I was tired by the end of fishing that day, and it was getting very, very hot. It was in the 90's in the Fall River Valley. The second day, Friday July 15th was a different story. We fished the Fall River up by Whipple Ranch, toward Spring Creek. Lots of boats on Zug Bug Alley—meaning guides. They did not all get along. We went farther downstream for some peace and quiet. I did well, but when I hooked a big fish, I lost my balance. I went down headfirst, with feet up in the air, but was able to hand the rod to Jason. I was stunned, tore my

shirt, and bruised my side. But by God, I took that rod back and played that fish to the boat. My, aren't we tough.

Saturday was spent around Ajumawhi Lava Springs State Park, trying to get some of those big fish hanging around the many springs. It was hot, the water was shallow, and the fish spooky, but I hit a pod of big fish and landed several—a spot where Jason said he had never fished. We were really sight fishing and looking for biggies slurping Trico Spinner dry flies. He was as excited as I. We hit two spots where we had never hooked a fish before. But the day got a lot hotter and the fish a lot more wary.

One thing I want to mention is the bird watching in the entire Fall River Valley. There are incredible numbers of migratory birds roosting in and around the farmland surrounding the river. We always see Eagles, Osprey, and many other species.

In short, I love the Fall River, but I hate the fact that I cannot come up and stay with my fishing buddies as we did for nearly 20 years. The camaraderie was wonderful, and we all got to play and land a 20-inch Rainbow on 6x tippet. Well, land sometimes.

RRFF Women's Voice

By Penelope Gadd-Coster

Welcome to our newest women members! I look forward to meeting you all and would like to invite you to join our RRFF General Meetings every second Wednesday of the month. Our next General Meeting is September 14th, and it will be a mixed meeting—you can either show up in person or attend online with the zoom invite within the meeting invitation email.

I would like to share with you two websites that I like to follow.

- 1) United Women on the Fly
[Click here for their website.](#)

Fly Fishers International - Women- Connect
[Click here for their website.](#)

Both organizations have trips, learning, and camaraderie – Next year I'm looking forward to

joining a couple of the trips. As for our trips, I am still working on a surf fishing trip—stay tuned!

Lassen Road Trip

By Mike Spurlock

I was unable to make it to the June club outing to fish Lake Manzanita in Lassen Volcanic National Park. But it started me thinking about Lassen and my wife and I decided to spend a week RV camping and site-seeing in August. I managed to get in a bit of fishing along the way.

We camped at Manzanita Lake for several nights and one day I went out in a float tube to try one of Jeff Cratty's damsel nymphs using an intermediate line. No luck there during my mid-day session.

One day, as we drove around the park stopping to check out some of the trails and read the displays, we came to a beautiful meadow with King's Creek meandering through it and a view of the peak of the Lassen Volcano in the distance.

As I stopped along the road and looked down at the creek, I observed some trout in about 6 to 12-inches of water. I grabbed my 7.5 ft 4 weight rod, tied on a hopper and sneaked down to the stream. First cast, as the hopper drifting along the creek edge, floating by a bush hanging over the water, a little brook trout darted out and fish on. Second cast, second bush, same result.



Mike fishing Kings Creek in the meadow

I walked up the creek through the meadow for about ½ mile without results and then returned to where I started. This time, I followed the creek downstream through the forest for about ½ mile, picking out areas where I could get my line through the brush to float a

fly. I raised about half a dozen more trout, probably all brookies, before returning to resume our drive.

The fire last year had closed the park and there was evidence of fire damage in many places from the Dixie fire. We camped for a few days at Summit Lake. The fire burned tight down to edge of the lake on the east side.

At one point on the road through the park near the highest point, we could look southeast and see Lake Almanor about 15 miles away with a lot of burned forest in the view. Eagle Lake was also visible slightly to the north.



Lake Almanor about 15 miles in the distance

One day we drove over a Hat creek crossing near its head waters. Source waters originate in the park from snowmelt and water from the volcanic geology of Lassen. I followed the stream for a mile or so and saw no fish, but it was a very beautiful little creek.

We later took a side trip outside Lassen Park to follow Hat Creek for a few miles to Old Station and Hat Creek Campground situated on the banks of Hat Creek. From there Hat Creek continues to flow about 25 miles to the most famous fly-fishing section of Hat Creek near Baum Lake. I tried a few spots away from the campground without seeing any fish.

After spending 5 days in the park, we drove a few miles on Highway 32 toward Chico and camped along Deer Creek at a first come first served campground called Potato Patch. It was not crowded, and we were able to camp right along the beautiful creek and listen to its sound during the night.

I waded the creek for several sessions casting small dries (Adams or Humpies) with a 4 weight 7.5-foot



Deer Creek Waterfall

rod. Fish were eager and I caught six 9-inch rainbows and one 12-inches. Wading was difficult with lots of current and slippery boulders to contend with. I had fished the creek in June during the outing to Lake Almanor and had similar results. All in all, a fun time.

Fish and Beyond

By Dave Stone

On Thursday August 18th, I planned to go to the casting pond early. I had my switch rod and reel packed so I could continue my practice of spey casting. I have been focusing on the three steps of that cast: 1) the setup stroke, 2) the D loop stroke, and the forward stroke, hence the Snap T Cast. I'm looking forward to trying my hand at steelhead fishing for the first time using the Snap T on the Trinity River this fall.

So, when I reached Galvin Park around 2:30 PM, I expected I would have the pond to myself since the official practice hours were 4:30 PM to 7 PM. As I pulled into the pond's parking area, I noticed Don Shaw's '67 Ford pickup with its stocky, electric powered crane bolted to the bed of his truck (I must say, the first time I saw that truck, I thought, "Wow, that's badass!"), and Doug Mackay's vehicle parked next to each other in the shade near the picnic table.

I gathered up my rod, reel, and folding chair and sauntered to where Don and Doug were camped. I was immediately noticed by Stella, Doug's cute Miniature Schnauzer, the unofficial greeter of all that walk through the gate to practice fly casting. I was

surprised Stella didn't bark when I entered *her* Thursday afternoon *sanctum*. For some reason, Stella, for the first time, gave me a bark-free pass. That put a smile on my face. I thought, "It must be those beef jerky style doggy treats I had given her the prior Thursday." Sure enough, I had some in my van and gave her a treat later that afternoon that put a smile on *her* face.

Upon seeing a new portable pump sitting on top of a new sturdy four-wheel, jet-black pull cart, I asked Don and Doug, "What's going on?" Don told me, "Doug and I were just about ready to try out the new pump to see how it works to remove the pond's algae growth." I immediately volunteered. I would pull the cart and pump engine to the northeast corner of the pond. We were planning to hook up the hoses and attach the stainless-steel vacuum sweep that was custom-made specifically for this task by Don.

Don and Doug were eager to try out and test the new pump to see if it would work well with the other components to do the job of sucking up the unwanted algae attached to the pond's liner.



I grabbed the cart's pull handle, Doug changed into his pond boots and carried the vacuum sweep, Don carried the gas container, and the three of us met at the pond's far corner. I helped fit the hoses

together, submerged the hose the best I could, and then Doug fit the corrugated blue hose end to the vacuum sweep. Don filled the engine's tank with gasoline. When everyone looked ready, Don pushed the on/off switch to on and with his second tug of the starter rope the engine came to life and began vibrating atop the support cart. It sounded really good. Don revved the engine a few times. That sounded even better, and it got our attention. We were ready.

Standing in the pond, Doug started to move the vacuum sweep slowly back and forth like one does when vacuuming an overly dirty rug. I'd hop into the

pond with my boots on to relieve Doug and vice versa. The result was immediately evident. The dark liner was being sucked clean of the obtrusive light green algae growth. It was being sucked into the pump and spewed out through an old, worn-out, plastic tube. That far-reaching tube was long enough to discharge the gunk a good distance from the pond's edges and out into the dried grassy area.



That was the good part. Then suddenly, the pump created such a strong vacuum force the blue corrugated hose attached to the vacuum sweep began to collapse on itself at both fittings.

That sight and the strained pumping sound was not pleasing music to our ears. Don shut down the engine. The three of us started contemplating out loud what to do next to circumvent that collapsible hose issue. Don and Doug started kicking around and evaluating different solutions like they have done over the years. According to Don, this has been an ongoing and methodical process. He said, "It was not the first time they had experienced an issue with the concept of using the vacuum sweep to help rid the liner of algae." I got the feeling they were close to a final solution.

Don't worry—you will still be needed for the once per year "Broom Brigade" to push the algae to the pond's drain. Keep your push brooms in good shape.

I'm convinced these two, behind-the-scenes, inventive, analytical, hardworking guys will come up with the final solution soon for the vacuum sweep.

This is the first installment of a two-part story. The next segment will be included in October's issue of The Cast....

Fly of the Month

Denny's Stillwater Nymph

By Mike Borba

[Click here](#) to see a photograph of this fly and learn more about Denny's Stillwater Nymph for lake fishing. How to tie this fly is supported by a YouTube video.

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[Click here](#) to reach the above businesses

Calendar of Events

RRFF Thursday Evening Fly Casting Clinics hours are 4:30 – 7:00 PM. We are OPEN TO THE PUBLIC and beginners are welcome.

Sept. 29th – Oct. 2nd Jackson Meadows Reservoir (Daniel Powers - leader)

Oct. 13th – 16th Lewiston Lake (Ed Barich – leader)

PLEASE FOLLOW ALL COVID-19 PROTOCOLS!

[Click here](#) 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.

[Click Here](#)

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

Vice President & Outings Chairman: **Ed Barich**

Secretary: **Brendan Galten**

Treasurer, Membership: **Spencer Bader**

Webmaster: **Mike Spurlock**

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

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Member at Large: **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**

Member at Large: **Daniel Powers**

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