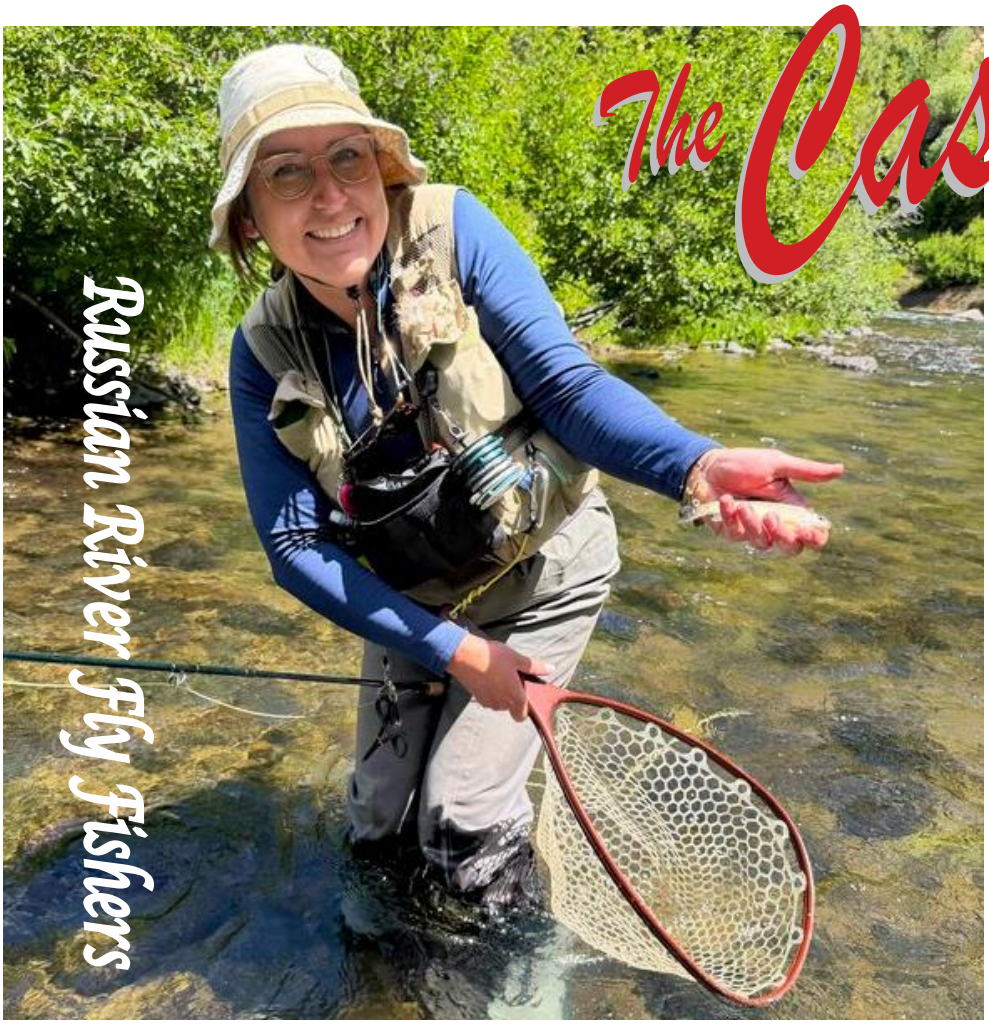
The Cast
Russian River Fly Fishers



RRFF Member Jenny Tighe with a Truckee small brown. Jenny never fails to express happiness whether her fish is large or small. Jenny's story, page 2.

Sonoma County, CA
Volume 53 Number 8
August 2026

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

President's Message

By Daniel Powers

July Board Meeting Update

The July board meeting was productive, and I want to keep all members informed about the current state of our club. Whether or not you were able to attend, you deserve to know what your board is working on, and I am pleased to report that we have strong momentum heading into the second half of the current calendar year.

Financial Update

Treasurer Traice Koenig delivered the financial report. I am pleased to share that our club insurance has been renewed and that the club remains in good financial standing.

Conservation Support

Board member Ed Barich brought forward a request for a $500 donation to Russian Riverkeeper, a local nonprofit organization working to protect and restore the health of the Russian River and its fishery that we all value. The board reviewed the request and remains committed to financially supporting the Russian Riverkeeper organization.

Casting Pond Access Improvements

Vice President Mike Samuelson provided an update on improvements underway at the casting pond road and parking area. The County has agreed to supply road base material, which will allow us to grade the full road.

Work is actively in progress. We are currently looking into securing a tractor and resolving the dirt mound situation on site. The goal is to eliminate the mound of soil to create more and improved parking space for our members. These improvements will make access to the pond easier and more comfortable for all members. We appreciate your patience while we work to complete this project.

Membership Update

Mike Spurlock reported our current membership numbers. At the end of the fiscal year on July 1, 2026, we are at 220 members. This number is at an all-time high for our membership. We were at 210 July 1, 2025. In 2016, we were down to 164 members and have gradually increased since then. Prior to 2016 there were sparce records before then. But Mike is keeping records to provide all of us current and accurate membership numbers.

Lastly, as the weather gets warmer, remember to seek colder water when fishing and stay self-hydrated!

Daniel Powers, President

Click link to club's 2026 Calendars & Outing Sign-up Sheets.

Club Activities	August '26 Date & Time	Sept. '26 Date & Time
Fly Casting At the Pond	Daylight Savings Time Casting Clinic every Thursday 4:30 to 7 PM	Daylight Savings Time Casting Clinic every Thursday 4:30 to 7 PM
General Meeting **will not** be held at the Vets Building during August, restarts September	**No General Meeting "Let's go fishing!"**	**9/9 General Meeting Vets Building 6:30 –9:00 PM**
Board Meetings	**8/19 6:30 – 9:00 PM**	**9/16 6:30 – 9:00 PM**
Eel River Pikeminnow Derby (Ed Barich)	**8/20—23**	**X**
Wading Clinic at Del Rio Woods Park on the Russian River Sign up **(click)** (Mike Spurlock)	**X**	**9/5**
Upper Sac River Women's Outing Sign up **(click)** (Genie Praetzel)	**8/28—30**	**X**
Fishing at Foothill Regional Park, Windsor Sign up **(click)** (Pam DeCoite)	**X**	**9/12**
Russian River Watershed Cleanup Sign up **(click)** (Ed Barich)	**X**	**9/19**

RRFF General Meeting

By Mike Borba

For General Meeting information, review the Calendars & Outing Spread Sheet starting at the left column of this page.

Fish, Friends & Fresh Mountain Air

By Jenny Tighe

At the end of June, twelve women from the RRFF women's group (Angela, Betty, Carole, Debbie, Genie, Jenny, Jodi, Kim, Lynn, Maria, Penelope and Tracie), along with mentor Mike Spurlock, gathered in North Lake Tahoe for a weekend of fly fishing the private waters of Sawmill Lake and on the Truckee River with local guide Peter Santley. Due to increased interest in Peter's clinic this year, the group split in half, with guided sessions held on Friday and Sunday.

Carole, Lynn, Genie, Kim, Penelope

Friday's group met Peter at Trout Creek Outfitters before heading to the Truckee River off Glenshire Drive. With Peter's guidance, Lynn landed a small fish. And while demonstrating various fishing techniques, Peter hooked into a healthy rainbow trout and demoed how to play and land a fish in the current.

On Saturday, the group fished Sawmill Lake near Northstar Resort. Sawmill Lake is fishable from the

shore or with a nonmotorized boat. But strong winds made for a challenging day, with most of the women hiking to the end of lake near the inlet to avoid the wind. While fishing was slow overall, in the afternoon Carole landed a beautiful rainbow trout from shore near the inlet at the edge of the aquatic weeds. Jodi helped unhook the fish to release it. Carole's catch was the highlight of the day!

Sunday's group met Peter at Horner's Corner, a popular access point for the Truckee River right off the I-80.

Angela, Debbie, Betty, Jenny, Maria, Tracie the Horner's Corner Crew.

I had fished Horner's Corner many times in early spring to no avail, so I was excited to venture back to the same water during a different season with Peter. The river looked completely different from winter—lower flows, accessible wading, rising fish, and colorful wildflowers made for ideal summer conditions. Peter began by demonstrating dry fly fishing to rising trout, and I was chosen to give it a try. Within a few casts, I hooked a small brown trout, much to everyone's excitement.

Throughout the morning, Peter taught indicator nymphing, dry dropper rigs, and Euro nymphing as we rotated through hands-on stations. After switching to a dry dropper setup, I landed two small trout. It was Tracie's first time fishing the Truckee River and Peter helped Tracie catch her first Truckee River trout! After the clinic, Mike helped Tracie land another fish on the Truckee, while Penelope and Genie explored Cold Creek off Highway 89 and enjoyed catching small wild trout.

Overall, it was a beautiful weekend filled with fishing, laughter, and time spent with an amazing group of women. The best catch was the company! We're already looking forward to our next women's outing on the Upper Sacramento River at the end of August.

For more photos of this Truckee River/Sawmill Lake Outing visit our website. Click link and scroll down.

Fly Fishing Chrystal & Sapawe Lakes,

Crystal Beach Resort, Ontario, Canada

By Susan Bostwich

Lee started the motor in the small outboard (seats two) to begin a morning of *snooping* for small mouth bass and northern pike. He never starts off just fishing. He snoops first.

I am not like that!

I do not want to search the lake edges, watch for circles on that water, or see the babies hugging the shoreline, or watch for birds while he tells me where the fish are located, or hold my hands on either side of my eyes to block the brutal sun (better to see grey shadows of fins and tails swiftly dodging our stares. I just want to wet a fly. NOW! Just toss it off the dock and "Voilà."

Susan & her small mouth bass.

So old fly fisher Lee taught me the lesson: Stop. Look. Seek. Snoop. Then wet a fly. I am not good at obeying. Lee caught 30 small mouth bass before 10 AM, then he picked me up at the dock. I was meditating, but not on fish. He figured out where the fish were while I

talked with God, “Hey, tell me where the fish are today!” Lee snooped and I talked with spirit.

Susan ready to release her Northern Pike.

Atikokan, Ontario is the name of the nearby small village where we ate breakfast the first day. (Yummy and all country). It's also considered the nearest supplies shopping spot to Crystal Beach Resort—give or take 20 minutes. The cabins at the resort are clean, slightly rustic, very comfortable, and overlooking a beautiful blue spring-fed lake. It has a fully equipped kitchen, four beds in two different bedrooms, large dining area, TV in living room, large deck with outdoor tables, chairs and BBQ set up. All we needed was our own food. It was +$120.00 per day per person. Did I mention the fully fueled boat is included? It's a bit extra to tow the boat to a nearby lakes if you wanted to reach out. Lee and I were not planning to go to other lakes, as we found great satisfaction finding fish all over Crystal Lake. However, we also caught northern pike and small mouth bass on Sapawe Lake.

Daily we caught 30-60 fish. I fished top water solely with the Lee Soares’ elk hair frog (why did he forget to bring at least 20 frogs?). I wore out my three frogs—I even caught a pike on one without a steel leader. Oh my!

We readily made friends and were invited to three fish BBQs in the resort’s "party room." To say it was a hoot is understating it. We had a good time. We were told, "Sorry, you missed the spawn." Yet we found dozens of spots where that action was still happening. My last saturated frog was successful harassing a few late bloomers.

The weather usually cooperated, however the mosquitos did not. Lemon grass herbal spray mostly worked with its ingredient Tea Tree Oil stopping the bugs from dining on our flesh.

We had a few very warm to hot days with rain sprinkles most days. Nothing stopped our fishing because no weather was that bad. Even the wind cooperated most days of the two-week adventure.

Lee with one of his many small mouth bass.

The nearby lakes are gorgeous and offer walleye, northern pike and small mouth bass. Lee caught all three species fly fishing. We fly fished entirely.

This was our third stay at Crystal Beach Resort, and we are booked for two weeks again in 2027.

Owners Richard and Melanie are terrific people. They are hospitable, knowledgeable, enthusiastic, and willing to tow the boat to any of the other lakes.

I Hooked the Big One!
Casting on the River Spey, Scotland
Part 2
By Peter Taylor

Garry had me fish the Long Hole, near the end of the Grantown beat. After we finished there, we broke for lunch, then arrived at the Cemetery and the beginning of the Inverallan Pools: first Pol Sciordan, then Pol a Clachan and Pol Clach. There, I saw a

beautiful salmon show itself, but it would not take as I cast and swung my fly through the run.

The wading was every bit as challenging as I had been warned, but fortunately it was manageable without a staff. Once again, there was no tug from a salmon, but I was still delighted to be casting and wading the mighty River Spey with my Scottish ghillie in the Highlands.

On the second day, Garry drove through a gate, passing a farm, and he parked just off the dirt road. From there, we hiked across a green field of wheat & alfalfa and the snowcapped Cairngorm Mountains looming with the river just ahead. The hike felt dreamlike.

Garry stopped on the riverbank as we looked over the Little Stream run. He explained how to fish it, and where the salmon typically hold. Then I stepped into the river, wading down through Upper Bend Hole to Lower Bend, and then on to Tarric Mor, the most productive fishing run on the beat, with the Cairn Scotch Distillery overlooking the river. It was a beautiful stretch of fly water. We made a valiant effort, but there were no salmon bites. We saw a few fish show themselves along the far bank of Tarric Mor, but no matter how hard we tried, we could not get a take.

Pete Taylor casting on the River Spey at the confluence of the River Nethy.

As the fishing day wound down, Garry mentioned I would have a much *better-looking ghillie* the next day. I asked, "A woman ghillie?" He said, "Yes." I joked that if the fishing was slow, I could look at my ghillie and be cheered up in a jiffy, and he laughed. It truly had been a great day of fishing. We covered many fine-looking runs and took in the beauty all around us. We also saw a Red Kite hovering above us. The bird is indigenous to the area and is known for its deeply forked, russet-colored tail and five- to six-foot wingspan. Several herons also lurked along the bank.

On day three, I arrived at Mortimers at 8:45 a.m. to meet my ghillie and pick up my usual lunch bag and thermos of coffee. That morning, I met Dani Morey, the "better-looking ghillie." In addition to guiding on the River Spey, she also writes for Trout and Salmon Magazine, one of the most widely read fishing magazines in Europe. Dani was fantastic from the start—a strong woman in a male-dominated niche. It was clear I was in for a treat, and off to the river we went.

While wading the first run of the day, I quickly discovered that Dani was as sharp and funny as anyone I had met. She was surprised that I had no wading staff and told me about one of her clients who had also insisted on going without one. That client ended up falling into the cold water, so Dani gave her an inflatable tube to wear around her waist from then on. I immediately said, "I'm not going to wear a ducky around my waist." Dani shot back, "I was thinking of a pink flamingo for you," and we both laughed.

The wind was strong, and rain showers occurred for the first two days. However, the rain stopped on the third day, but the winds continued, with gusts up to 25 mph. I started a running joke with Dani. I would yell out, "A gentle breeze!" which was the daily weather forecast for the week.

After lunch we arrived at the Lurg and walked down the steps from the old bridge. Dani pointed above the Lurg and said we would start there and work our way down. Wading to the middle and casting to the far bank to swing my fly through a deep chute with the *gentle breeze* coming from the west, forcing me to make a Double Spey cast off my left shoulder instead of a normal river left Single Spey cast off my right shoulder. As a fly fisherman, I needed that technique to stay safe and keep the hook away from me as it whipped through the gusts of wind. I proceeded to cast, step down, cast, and step down. Many casts later, I began my Single Spey cast. Just then, a gust of

wind pushed the fly toward me, as had happened many times over the past few days. This time, however, the double-hook fly slammed into my lower cheek and stuck. I had hooked the big one! For the first time in my many years of fly casting, it happened on the River Spey in Scotland: I hooked myself. I put my hand up to the fly in my lower cheek and tried to wiggle it out, but I couldn't. Dani waded over to see if it could be pulled free, then said, "You should go to the local health clinic." Dani said lets go back to the car and take a closer look. She asked if it hurt, and I said, "No." I was amazed the wound wasn't bleeding.

I looked in the visor mirror. Dani was right: the health clinic was the best option. She had already called and made the appointment for 4 p.m., and it was only 2:30 p.m. Before the appointment, Dani graciously drove me around to see a few local sights in Grantown. It was a great idea; I did not have to sit in a hospital waiting room thinking about a fly hooked in my jaw. Instead, I saw an area where the Queen would visit by train to go grouse hunting, with the Cairngorm Mountains beautifully dominant in the distance and hairy cows wandering the foothills. It became one of the must-see sights of my trip. We passed a rock with the words, Jesus Saves, which had become a local monument.

Arriving at the health clinic, they were ready for me. An RN rushed me to a room, took a string and strategically placed it on the protruding fly and told me to close my eyes tight, I closed them and felt a yank. The fly flew out of my cheek bouncing on the floor across the room—done! I was aware this string technique—removing a barbed fly from flesh. Now I know firsthand that it works.

I gave the RN a fist pump, and she said there was hardly a mark and only a small bandage was needed. The other RN handed me the undamaged fly and said, "We're done. The way out is this way." I started to take out my wallet, thinking she was pointing me toward the receptionist. I asked, "Where do I pay?" She said, "There's no charge." I couldn't believe it and said, "Thank you so much!" No charge—wow. I was a foreigner in a foreign country, and there was no charge. I drove away thinking that tomorrow was a new day, with new hopes of hooking the mighty Salmo *salar* of the River Spey.

On my last day on the river, Jim showed me a few new nice runs upriver, then said lets go to the Lurg. Jim and I were chatting in the hut overlooking the Lurg run and a fished breached with a big splash, Jim said "Let's go." I waded out and began Single Spey casting. Getting near where the salmon had breached, I lifted the rod high, then down to the right sweeping it low over the water, lifting again and stopping the rod behind my right shoulder, then watching the tip of the fly line to hit the water, which is my cue to pull back with my lower hand and push a bit forward with my upper hand. The line shot forward and unfurled nicely, and I saw the fly splash on the river surface a few feet from the far bank. The current took the line downstream for several seconds, then the line stopped with a heavy weight pulling. Head shakes began along with my adrenaline and I thought, don't lift the rod until the head shakes stop. I lifted the rod fast and another head shake took place at the same time, the line fell slack on the water, the salmon had popped off. Disappointed and marveling how it got loose, but at the same time I was elated I'd hooked a salmon. Thinking there might be another salmon, I continued casting but noticed there wasn't a small splash from the fly as is normal, so I pulled the line in to find out the fly had broken off the tippet.

It all made sense now, I had lifted the rod too fast and broke the fly off. Later Ghillie Jim confirmed and said, "We've all done it." Jim also said, "That's the difference between steelhead and salmon." which is why on the first day, Ghillie Garry said to me, "When you get the bite, lift the rod slowly." As he spoke, he motioned slowly upward with his arm. I should've rehearsed Garry's advice, it's not my natural reaction to a bite.

Now at home, I have already begun making plans for a visit next year. It was too much fun and not landing that salmon encouraged my desire to return. I also realized landing a salmon was not the main point of my trip. As I Spey cast through each run on the River Spey, I couldn't imagine being happier.

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RRFF Obituaries & In Memoriam

To place an obituary notice, send info to Dave Stone, Editor

Lawrence (Larry) Henzerling
8/20/1940 – 6/19/2026
Summitted by RRFF Member Howard Nakagawa

Lawrence Henzerling was a member of RRFF. Larry's passions extended far beyond his professional life. He enjoyed winemaking with friends, raised sheep, pigs, and chickens, and cared for a beloved collection of dogs and cats at his Penngrove home. Lawrence traveled to Montana with friends to pursue his love of fly fishing.

Button (Lee Soares' dog)
Summitted by RRFF Member Don Shaw

Button passed away 7/3/2026. Button was well loved by all of us and a regular at the casting pond. Button happily rode with Lee in his truck to the pond and, in Lee's commercial truck too while Lee worked. Those of us that frequently went to the pond got to enjoy Button's gentle demeanor and happy face. She will be missed.

Russian River Fly Fishers on Facebook

Please click join us online to enjoy:

- **Updates on RRFF Events**
- **Local Flyfishing Information**
- **Flyfishing Instructional Videos**
- **Flyfishing Travel Videos**
- **Conservation Updates**
- **Fly Fishing Industry Updates**
- **Flyfishing Non-Profit & Charity Information**
- **Fishing Reports**
- **Flyfishing Photography & Inspiration**

Our Facebook community has over 1,300 followers and provides links to various vendor and fly-fishing related sites at both local and national levels.

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--coordinators.html

The names of our Board of Directors and Coordinators will appear. You may click on a name and leave an email 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: **Daniel Powers**

Vice President: **Mike Samuelson**

Secretary: **Michael Bluto**

Treasurer: **Tracie Koenig**

Webmaster, Membership, Assistant Treasurer (Square): **Mike Spurlock**

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Outings Coordinator: **Ed Barich**

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Pond Steward: **Doug Mackay**

Casting Instruction, Outings: **Don Shaw**

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Conservation Advisor, Steelhead in the Classroom: **Tom Greer**

Women's North Sonoma County Outreach: **Leafa Fiore**

Fly Rod Building: **Rick Baker**

Russian River Fly Fishers Membership Application

(if possible, we prefer that you use the on-line application on our website where you can also pay online: https://www.rrflyfisher.org/membership-application--payment.html

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. This agreement is valid for all RRFF sanctioned events, (fishing outings, picnics, dinner fund raisers, meetings, pond casting clinics, etc.) some of which are open to the public and all of which are covered by RRFF insurance. As a club member you are approved to participate in certain covered events which are not available to non-members: fishing outings and training for fly-casting certification.

Note: Private activities arranged by club members (not sponsored or approved by the club) are not sanctioned and will not be covered by RRFF insurance.

I have read this statement and agree to its terms as a condition of my membership in the Russian River Fly Fishers.

***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_____

* I'm applying as a new member. Circle (Yes / No). I'm renewing my existing membership. Circle (Yes / No).

*Check the box below that is applicable:

☐ Single membership - $60 annual dues
☐ Junior membership - $30 annual dues (age 16-18 or live >75 miles from Santa Rosa)
☐ Gold membership - $1,000 (one-time)
☐ Family Membership - $65 annual dues. List family members: _____

☐ Membership includes a woman who would like to be contacted by our RRFF Women's Group:

Name: _____ Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

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

Check any areas you want help with:

☐ I would like help learning or improving my fly-fishing 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 MIKE SPURLOCK, 20 SAN DOMINGO WAY, NOVATO , CA 94945