North Arkansas Fly Fishers meetings are held on the 3rd Tuesday of each month. Meetings are held at the Van Matre Senior Center located at 1101 Spring St Mountain Home, AR 72653. Membership meeting starts at 7:00 pm. All members and guests are welcome and encouraged to attend.

NAFF Board of Directors’ meetings are held on the first Tuesday of the month at 1:00 pm 1st Security Bank on 9th St. All members are welcome and encouraged to attend.

Visit North Arkansas Fly Fishers Online at
www.northarkansasflyfisher.org

At the January meeting, NAFF Vice President Susan Parson will discuss the waterborne insects that live in the White and Norfork tailwaters. These are the "naturals" that we try to mimic with our fly tying. This will be a program of interest to all fly anglers.

Susan Parsons has always been an avid outdoors woman, with a love of exploring the outdoors, hiking, windsurfing and hunting with her Jack Russell terriers. She and husband Steve were introduced to fly fishing in 2008 while visiting the White River with friends. Both quickly became hooked and Susan soon became addicted to tying flies. Susan enjoys fishing for any fish that will take her flies, be they trout or warm water.

The planning and preparation for the 23rd Annual International Sowbug Roundup are moving forward. Tyer invitations have gone out and tyers are now whining and pleading for better times for their tying. The local solicitors have been briefed and are out going door to door. Club members have been coming forward with donations for the auctions and raffles. The Galyardts are back in town and next week will soon start sorting the goodies. Everything is in pretty good shape and moving forward!

But! We still need a lot of volunteers. The smoothly running show that the tyers and attendees see only happens because
species. She mostly fishes the White and Norfork rivers locally and also enjoys time on Bull Shoals Lake. Though she has been fishing for a relatively short time, Susan has traveled to fish and take in the scenery in Missouri, Minnesota, Montana, Colorado and Wyoming.

Back in her undergraduate days Susan took a course in entomology which she truly enjoyed. Her interest in that science marries well with her love of fly fishing and Susan believes her knowledge makes her a better angler. This month she will speak about aquatic entomology, specifically the four major orders of insects that inhabit cold water streams where trout thrive.

January President’s Message

Happy New Year and hope you all have a great year fishing, locally or on any trips you have planned! I am still relatively new to the area as I have lived here just over a year. I find the diversity of the local fishing fantastic and still have not taken the opportunity to catch my first small mouth. To introduce myself, many of you know I started visiting the area when I lived in Dallas and tied at my first Sowbug Roundup about 12 years ago. Since then, I was back every year until I took the plunge and moved. I started fly fishing with my Dad’s bamboo rod back in the early 60’s and flogged around with it for a number of years. Then in Dallas my youngest son came to live with me, and I found warm water and saltwater fly fishing. I have jumped into the sport with both feet, not only with tying, but am also on the Board of Directors with Fly Fishers International, took on coordinating the tiers this year for the Sowbug Roundup and now as the new President of the club.

I look forward to meeting and hearing from everyone as we have such a diverse membership with all kinds of experience. I am interested in all ideas as to how we make the club as diverse an organization as possible serving the Fly Fishing Community. We have plenty of programs through not only our club, but coordination with Friends of the River, Friends of the Hatchery, TU, CTO and others. We influence local policy and work on regional and state policy that affects our fisheries.

We are a great vehicle for teaching fly fishing and tying skills through our mentoring programs, class offerings in casting and tying and working with our youth in the Home Schooling program and other classes. We are a force in conservation, whether as just a voice to the state and local entities, or by helping with programs like the TU Bonneville cutthroat.

Dave Boyer, Our new NAFF President
egg planting, etc. Our new NAFF Secretary, Patty Lueken, is also an FFI Board Member and in charge of the FFI Women Connect program nationally. She provides a great local resource for promoting women’s programs.

Through fund raising from our major event, the Sowbug Round-up, we help fund not only scholarships, but have a well-known guest do a presentation the first weekend in November, free to the public. This year we are scheduled to have George Daniel, who has been a competitive angler in addition to have written books on nymphing and streamers. He is familiar with and has fished the White and Norfork River systems so should be a great upcoming event for us locals. Our funds help provide fishing access to the Roundhouse area in Cotter, a pavilion at McCabe Park, restoration of the walkway at Dry Run Creek to name a few.

This is a great organization and I hope to help guide it for the next couple of years. If you have any ideas or concerns, please feel to contact me at dboyer@glodesigns.com, or call at 972-670-2425.

Dave Boyer

Fly of the Month
Mayer’s Mini Leach

Hook: Nymph/Scud hook (Here a Hogs skin Creek CHW35 #12)
Bead: Optional, sized for hook
Thread: Black 8/0 or 70-denier
Underbody: Black holo Flashabou
Rear Body: Black Pine Squirrel mini zonker
Front body: Black Ostrich herl

This popular fly was introduced locally when Landon Mayer spoke to NAFF a few years ago. In the last few weeks it is responsible for a bunch of fish for Bob Jensen at the Geezer Hole and at Mirror Lake at Blanchard Springs Caverns. Mike Enger recently caught a nice brown trout on a Mayer’s Mini Leech.

Fly tied by Mike Tipton

Membership Report

A welcome into the new year and to our latest members - Randal and Maura Camp of Shreveport, LA. This brings Louisiana memberships up to 16.

The new year is also a good time to remind all of our members about safe email practices. Some of our members have reported receiving fraudulent emails addressed from myself - Paul Ashton. Fake emails are being sent to NAFF members. Use the following guidelines for handling emails that are suspicious.

Carefully check emails

Phishing attacks are seldom perfectly executed. Often there’s a telltale, such as a bizarre From address (e.g. ser-vice145@mail.145.com), unusual links (e.g. amazon.net.ru), or a high number of typos or formatting mistakes in the text. If it looks suspicious, delete it. The name of the sender may look correct, but the return address may show otherwise. The emails being sent our members have my name, but not the NaffMembership email address.

Beware links and attachments

Everyone should be skeptical anytime they receive an email from an unknown sender. Do not click on links or download attachments without verifying the source first and establishing the legitimacy of the link or attachment. Attachments are especially dangerous because

Don’t Forget!
Fly Tying Every Friday
At Dally’s
1:00 to 5:00

Cont. Pg. 4
Has anyone had issues with palmering hackle on a ramped thread base? (Photo #1, green is the thread, pink is the hackle/rachis). Ramps occur when bulkier material, hair wing in this case, is tied in before the hackle collar is palmered. Leaving your thread at the front of the hook and then wrapping, the hackle can slip down the ramp (photo #2). This give your fly a loose color, which is okay if that is what you want. If you want a densely wrapped hackle, consider leaving the thread at the base of the wing, with or without a half-hitch (photo #3), then palmer the hackle and let the thread restrain the hackle and help prevent it from sliding down the ramp (photo #4). Doing this will increase the hackle density so your final collar is much more dense (photo #5 vs. photo #2).

Paul Ashton—Membership

Dave Boyer
Sowbug behind the curtain there are dozens of volunteers scurrying around and working their collective asses off! Volunteering for Sowbug is more fun than work! This year all volunteers will receive a custom, insulated, stainless steel, Sowbug cocktail “glass”. Just the thing to fill with an adult beverage and relax with on Saturday afternoon when the show is over.

Here are some of the opportunities for Sowbug Volunteers.

**Show setup** – Wednesday morning for about three hours starting at 9:00 am. At the Baxter County Fairgrounds. Includes pizza and doughnuts.

**Front Door Ticket sales** – Manning the ticket sales and membership area at the front door.

**Auctions and Raffles** – Setup and collect auction and raffle items. Monitor attendees as they peruse the auction and raffle items.

**Hooks and Books** – assist in selling hook and books to show attendees.

**Sowbug Shindig** – Assist in setting up and collecting tickets for the Sowbug Shindig and Friday night

**Sowbug Shindig Bartenders** – Assist in serving beer, wine, and sodas to Sowbug attendees.

If one or more of these opportunities excite you, please contact Mike Tipton at 870-404-8845 or michael@centurytel.net.

The Sowbug team meets every second Tuesday at 1:00 pm at the Baxter County Library. Everyone is invited to attend.

Ozark Troutfitters
Fly Fish the White and Norfork Rivers
Denis Dundonled (870) 405-9678
Cotter, Arkansas - "Trout Capital USA"

For the upcoming Sowbug Roundup we currently have 120 confirmations with all but the Saturday afternoon session full for tiers!!! It will take some scheduling magic, as some sessions are way over requested so I will try to get all at least one or two of the preferred sessions. Initial scheduling should be done about the first of February, so stay tuned.

I know of some tiers that come yearly that I have not heard back from, so the attendance will increase as we get closer to the event. Please get your information to me ASAP if you plan to tie. Send me an email at dboyer@glodesigns.com and I will try to get you in and scheduled. We will have Larry Wegman teaching a streamer class and a class by Dan Montayne on tying the Texas Red Water Wasp. A third class will be offered by Steve Maldonado. We have confirmed we will honor Dave and Emily Whitlock with a ‘warm water’ theme this year. Signups and further description of the classes will be in a subsequent email to invitees. This is shaping up to be a great Sowbug Roundup, don’t miss it March 26th-28th, 2020.

Dave Boyer
2020 Sowbug Roundup
Fly Tying Chair
Water levels are running at 315 cfs, 350 avg, and water clarity is clear. With the low, clear water at this time the catching has been tough. Cloudy days are normally much better. Casting woolies with a quick short strip back has been working well.

The sunny days have been the tough days. Hands down, the most productive technique for us has been a y2k suspended under an indicator. Nymphs can work well during hatches. Plenty of caddis and small mayflies have been hatching. And when the minnows are chasing the bugs, try a Guppie, my minnow pattern, and they can be very productive some days. The y2k has been the fall back fly. If the trout don’t seem to be biting at all, they will hit that y2k.

On Tuesday of this week (January 7), water at dam 1 in Mammoth Spring was released to drop the water out of the small lake above dam 1. This is done once a year during the winter to try and kill the moss that grows so thick in the river. It did mess the river up today. The water is muddy in town but should clear within a day.

On Monday January 13th at the Mammoth Spring High School cafeteria there will be a meeting on discussing a trout management plan for the Spring River. The Spring River has been a put and take river for over a hundred years. Stocking began from the federal hatchery in Mammoth Spring in 1904, maybe a little earlier. We have been hoping for catch and release areas and a slot limit for many years now. We do not know any plans at this time and the meeting will be a start of the process. Creel surveys and questionnaires were sent out last year. There will be a full report on the blog after the meeting.

The forecast for the end of this week is calling for heavy rains. It will take a lot of rain to affect the river with the dry conditions lately. Always check my blog at springriverfliesandguides.com for the latest river conditions.

Tight lines and good luck,
Mark Crawford
springriverfliesandguides.com
Musings of a Fly Fishing Guide

“Playing a Fish”

Playing a fish on a rod and reel is one of the most important aspects of fly fishing. It can be a challenge and a very exciting time for most anglers; after you hook a fish, do you strip in line with your hand, crank the handle of your reel to bring your fish in? Or do you use your rod like a fine-tuned precision instrument to control, steer, direct and maneuver your fish into position to be netted? Watching an angler using proper skills to control a fish through jumps, turns, leaps and runs is a beautiful sight to see—a work of art when done correctly. In fact, I would put it ahead of a great fly caster who can gracefully move fly line, leader and fly through the air with little effort, which is also considered by many fly fishers to be a work of art.

I have been an angler my entire life and a fly fishing guide for several years now. Based on my fishing and guiding experiences, I have noticed that many anglers have very poor skills when it comes to setting the hook, playing and landing their fish—probably because most are self-taught and learned on their own. When you learn on your own, sometimes you can develop bad habits until someone brings them to your attention.

This applies to both young people just getting into fly fishing as well as veteran fly anglers who have been fishing for many years. Many anglers go to fly-fishing shows and attend seminars on fly casting, fly tying, tackle selection, and other related topics. Have you ever attended a seminar that teaches you the proper skills used to hook, play and land a fish? How many books, magazines articles and videos have you seen that talk about playing a fish? Probably none! Maybe you’re expected to learn on the fly, in the heat of battle between you and your fish. To be honest, I’m not sure why it’s not taught at the fly-fishing venues around the country. They teach everything except one of the most important skills in fishing—how to set a hook, play and land a fish. One thing for sure, it’s one of the most ignored aspects of fly-fishing, even though it’s a very important part of fly-fishing that everyone should learn.

When I was five years old, my father would take me out in the yard and put a fly rod and reel in my hands. He would get hold of the fly line and start moving his hand around, simulating a fighting fish. He taught me how to properly set the hook and use the rod as a tool for maneuvering and controlling a fish under tension and the correct way of reeling up slack line in the process. We had those practice sessions until he felt like I had learned the proper way to hook, play and land a fish. To my dad, learning to play a fish was a very important part of fishing and a skill his son needed to learn.

After setting the hook, many anglers apply way too much pressure on the fish by either stripping in or reeling in their fish. I call that winching in a fish, as though it were an automobile being winched in by a wrecker truck. There should be no stripping, direct reeling or winching in of a fish under any circumstances. Once you hook
your fish, maintain some constant pressure until you can reel up all your slack line then play your fish from rod and reel. There should be some give and take between angler and fish. You must learn when to give line and when to take up line. You should use your rod to do the work, applying some tension or pressure while using your rod tip to pull or steer your fish towards you. You take up line with your reel handle, maintaining tension as you lower your rod tip towards the fish. This is often referred to as “pumping the fish.” Sometimes you don’t take up any line at all when the fish is pulling really hard. You “stand pat,” as I call it, keeping some pressure or tension on the fish but not enough to break your tippet or tear the hook out of the fish’s mouth. This can happen because you and the fish are pulling so hard in opposite directions. Let your drag on your reel do its job. That’s why you paid so much money for that fly reel! It’s a balancing act between you and your fish, as you use your rod to pull and steer the fish towards you, while the fish pulls line away from you. You must learn to control those events or actions with your rod and take up line under tension on the downward movement of your rod tip. Eventually the fish will tire out and give up, often turning on its side, allowing you to pull the fish in so you can net it. You play your fish in this manner for all kinds of fishing: bait casting, spinning, fly fishing, and even offshore deep-sea fishing for very large fish.

One thing I see a lot of bait casters and spin fisherman do is reel their fish right up to or within inches of the rod tip. Then they will pick the fish up out of the water with their rod holding the fish in mid-air. That’s definitely a no. Too many bad things can and will happen when you do that, from a broken rod tip to a lost fish. I tell people to always maintain a minimum distance of six feet or more between rod tip and their fish. The line and rod will provide a shock absorber if the fish decides to run, and big fish will run, especially when they see that net.

Learning proper skills to set the hook, play and land your fish will give you much more enjoyment in your fishing and you will be well prepared when you hook into that big fish. Your new skills will give you a memorable moment and an experience that will last a lifetime. You will also be in a minority group of anglers who really know how to hook, play and land a fish correctly.

Danny Barker
Fly Fishing Guide
River Fishing Report

Heavy generation continues for the White River around the clock. Getting tired of it yet? Well you aren’t the only one. Months of generation tend to wear on one’s soul and nerves. The monotony of the same water day in and day out gets pretty boring for the fisherman. If you are like me, you want to see the bottom. I want to see how floodgates and conduit gates have changed the bottom! I want to see fish! I want to see the vegetation. But mostly I just want a change of water from a lot to much less. Preferably down to minimum flow! How about you?

And we are so close to the deemed normal pool elevation of 659.0 MSL and as of this writing we are at 659.66. Beaver seems to be the culprit of all this extra water as they were holding back. I jest of course. Rain is the culprit. It has rained all year long. Another rain in October brought the lakes up again when we were close to getting back to normal. Hmmm! Normal? For me going back to the old 654.00 level without minimum flow would be normal. It sure seems that since this new flow has started along with the extra 5 feet of water that came along with it “Normal” is non-existent. Me-thinks the extra 5 feet of water is a bit too much for this lake as it was not designed for what we are asking it to do.

OK! Enough of the editorializing and on to the fishing. Speaking of high water, flies that are bright (mostly orange or peach) in color would be a good bet. Also, some white flies or streamers would also be a good choice as a few shad have come through and; with all of the generation we have had, a few will for sure come through! Which reminds me. Be prepared this year. Here is how I prepare for the year. January- Eggs and more eggs. February more eggs and shad patterns! Lots of sizes and weights. March and April: Caddis nymphs! nymphs and more nymphs with the occasional dry thrown in for the hardcore know it all. May and June: Then I move onto the Sulphur hatch with more nymphs along with some drys of various types ‘cause this surface action tends to be better than the caddis dry action. July, August and September the fly fisher better be prepared with various types of terrestrials from hoppers, ants, cicadas, spiders and beetles. Don’t forget the nymphal version of the dragonfly or damsel fly. In the meantime, and of course depending on the water levels, the fly fisher should have an appreciable and substantial supply of worms and midges in many colors and sizes. A tungsten bead of course on your midges unless you are using split shot. Did I say an enthusiastic supply of midges? Just in case I didn’t, let me reiterate this statement. Midges are prolific in our tail waters, so a bountiful and copious supply of these little creatures of various sizes and colors are an absolute for our rivers. It never ceases to amaze me as to the creations folks come up with that will catch fish.

So, let’s hope for a water change and some “normal” rain for the year; cause if you’re like me, you want to see the bottom of the river and the fish who live there.

Good Catching

Jimmy T.

Wishes & Fishes Fly Shop Bull Shoals.

Wishes & Fishes Fly Shop

627 Central Blvd
Active Conservation

Conservation is not a Spectator Sport

Theodore Roosevelt had the foresight to address issues that are still significant to fishermen today, understanding that if we want to ensure quality fishing opportunities, we must plan and act carefully now.

Members of NAFF and all fishermen realize our fisheries depend on clean, healthy water to survive. The phrase “we all live downstream” is overused and I am concerned we just pay it lip service without realizing what it means to us personally, our families, children, grandchildren and future generations.

THE BUFFALO RIVER STILL NEEDS OUR HELP:

The good news is the C&H hog CAFO is closed and the cleanup is beginning.

However, a permanent moratorium to provide permanent protection to the Buffalo River against future hog CAFOs has yet to be finalized. We need comments in support of the permanent moratorium sent to ADEQ by January 22.

Comments like, “I am a member of North Arkansas Fly Fishers and want to protect the water quality in the Buffalo River. Please Support the Permanent Moratorium on CAFOs in the Buffalo River Watershed” will be very helpful.

Written comments should be delivered or mailed to: Jacob Harper, Department of Energy and Environment, 5301 Northshore Drive, North Little Rock, AR 72118. Electronic comments should be submitted at http://water.adeq.commentinput.com/?id=6pAef

Conservationists like President Roosevelt, recognized those threats and charged all of us with the responsibility to act.

“We have fallen heirs to the most glorious heritage a people ever received, and each one must do his part if we wish to show that the nation is worthy of its good fortune.”

Theodore Roosevelt

Our collective voices resulted in the successful closure of the C&H hog CAFO, now let’s be sure there are no more CAFOs in the Buffalo River Watershed.

Conservation Is Not a Spectator Sport.

We can all be ACTIVE CONSERVATIONISTS.

Thank You
Steve Blumreich
President
Friends of the North Fork and White Rivers
417-839-0193
Sblum1326@gmail.com
“New” NAFF Outing Program

We are going to start the new year with a revised Club Outing program. The idea with the outings is to provide opportunities for NAFF members to learn about fishing venues that are beyond our local Bull Shoals and Norfork tailwaters and to introduce new NAFF members to other fishing locations. The outing schedule will be published several months in advance of the outings. This will allow club members to plan ahead. The default date for outings will be the Thursday following the monthly club meeting. We will meet at the McDonalds on the east end of town for carpooling and depart at about 7:30. The outings will be pretty much “rain or shine”. To sign up for an outing or if you have questions, contact Mike Tipton. 870-404-8845 or michaeltipton@centurytel.net. If you have an outing suggestion, I am very interested in hearing it!

The current outing schedule is this:

January – Bayou Access, Spring River
February – Dam #3, Spring River
March – North Fork of the White: Patrick Bridge (Missouri)
April – County Oaks B&B Pond, Mountain View

The January NAFF Fishing outing will be to the Bayou Access on the Spring River. The Spring River originates at Mammoth Spring in the town of Mammoth Spring just below the Missouri state line. The Spring River is a good alternative when there is high water on the Bull Shoals and Norfork tailwaters, especially during the cooler months. In the summer there is a heavy canoe hatch and the Spring is famous as a “party river”.

Getting to Bayou Access is a bit complicated, so it is good have a guide for your first trip.

The outing is scheduled for Thursday, January 20. We will meet at the McDonalds at the east end of town and plan on heading out at 7:30 or so. It is a 70 mile drive to the Bayou Access and takes something less than 90 minutes to get there. For fly suggestions check out Mark Crawford’s Spring River Fishing Report for the last couple of months. To sign up, or if you have questions, contact Mike Tipton 870-404-8845 or michaeltipton@centurytel.net
“Secret Weapons” Intermediate Fly Tying Class

Guides know that flies don’t have to be complicated in order to catch scores of fish. Over the years some fly patterns have produced around the globe under a wide variety of circumstances. In this class, Dennis Galyardt will explore these “go-to” flies and the bag of tricks of how to fish them. Although some are old reliables and may seem easy to tie, others are new creations that have proven themselves time and again. Many of these require different techniques to fish them properly, but catch rates improve dramatically when you discover how fish respond to them. You can fish these flies with confidence, knowing they will produce.

Class is limited to 12 intermediate students with moderate fly tying skills. Vice, tools and some materials are required.

The class will be held on Saturday, February 22, 2020 at the Van Maatre Senior Center, 1101 Spring Street in Mountain Home...where we host our monthly membership meetings. The class will run from 9:00 a.m. to 3:30 p.m., and lunch will be provided. The class is free for NAFF members. This is a class for experienced tyers only, and again only 12 students will be accepted.

To register, please contact Ceil Gasiecki at 219-776-9620 or at ceciliagasiecki@yahoo.com.
Events of Interest to NAFF Members

Every Friday 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM  Open fly tying at Daly’s Ozark Flyfisher

January 2020
01/06/2020 6:00 PM – 8:00 PM  First sessions of Beginners’ Fly Tying Class at ASU Mountain Home
01/07/2020 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM  NAFF Board Meeting, First Security Bank
01/14/2020 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM  Sowbug Roundup Meeting, Baxter County Library
01/21/2020 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM  NAFF Membership Meeting, Van Matre Senior Center
01/23/2020 7:30 AM – 4:00 PM  NAFF Outing (Spring River, Bayou Access)

February 2020
02/04/2020 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM  NAFF Board Meeting, First Security Bank
02/08/2020 6:00 PM – 9:00 PM  TU fund Raising Banquet, Elks Lodge, Mountain Home
02/11/2020 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM  Sowbug Roundup Meeting, Baxter County Library
02/18/2020 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM  NAFF Membership Meeting, Van Matre Senior Center
02/20/2020 7:30 AM – 4:00 PM  NAFF Outing (Spring River, Dam #3 Access)

March 2020
03/03/2020 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM  NAFF Board Meeting, First Security Bank
03/10/2020 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM  Sowbug Roundup Meeting, Baxter County Library
03/17/2020 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM  NAFF Membership Meeting, Van Matre Senior Center
03/19/2020 7:30 AM – 4:00 PM  NAFF Outing (North Fork of the White - Patrick Bridge Access)
03/26/2020 – 03/28/2020  Sowbug Roundup Baxter County Fairgrounds

April 2020
04/07/2020 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM  NAFF Board Meeting, First Security Bank
04/14/2020 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM  Sowbug Roundup Meeting, Baxter County Library
04/21/2020 7:00 PM – 9:00 PM  NAFF Membership Meeting, Van Matre Senior Center
04/23/2020 7:30 AM – 4:00 PM  NAFF Outing (“Farm” pond, Mountain View, AR)

May 2020
05/07/2020 1:00 PM – 2:00 PM  NAFF Board Meeting, First Security Bank
05/12/2020 1:00 PM – 3:00 PM  Sowbug Roundup Meeting, Baxter County Library
05/14/2020 7:30 AM – 4:00 PM  NAFF Outing (TBD)

TBD  NAFF Spring Picnic