The 1996 Buz Buszek Memorial Fly Tying Award winner was John Edward (Ned) Long of Tahoe, California. Born in Delaware, Ohio on December 8, 1922 his nickname of Ned was picked by his mother before his legal surname. She wanted a son with the nickname of Ned. When Ned was four, his family moved to Glendale, California.

He attended college at USC and obtained a Bachelor of Arts degree. It was while he was in college that he met his wife Betty on a blind date. August 12, 1998 they will celebrate their 50th wedding anniversary. They have three children.

He worked as an insurance broker for 30 years and then retired. He worked briefly as a realtor until he decided just to enjoy retirement.

Ned was taught fly fishing by his older (13 years older) brother Jim when he was 10 years old. They would fish around Mammoth, California for rainbow and brown trout.

He started fly tying at the urging of Don Martinez of West Yellowstone and Woolly Worm fame. Needless to say he became an addict. His wife Betty, says he has every book ever written about fly fishing and fly tying. He would take fly tying classes to improve his skills. Brother Jim was also talked into tying flies by Ned, but he didn't jump into it with the same enthusiasm as Ned.

Although Ned feels he was lucky to win the Buszek Award we all know that he was very deserving. He has been innovative and taught extensively before he lost an eye to a melanoma. Extended body and pullover flies have been two of his specialties. Ned said he didn't invent the pullover design but he did change materials and improve on the general concept. One of his most popular patterns is his extended body Damselfly Nymph. Commercial fly tying has not been Ned's bag because he says, "it's too boring." As a demonstration fly tyer at shows, he always attracts a crowd.

Ned joined the Federation in the late '60s and was one of the founding fathers of the Tahoe Truckee Fly Fishers. He served as president and held every other office possible. This club has been active in conservation issues and has been very helpful to the California Department of Fish and Game by doing surveys and helping wherever possible.

One of the honors Ned and Betty had was fishing with Buz Buszek. Betty says that she got mad at Buz one day when she hooked a steelhead. He wouldn't help her land it! His attitude was, you hooked it you can land it which she eventually did.

Today his favorite stream is Hat Creek and he has two favorite lakes in the Tahoe area: Martis Lake and Milton Lake. Favorite flies for the lakes are calebaitis and his Damsel Fly Nymph.

Like all of the Buszek winners before him, Ned is a real credit to the award as well as being very deserving in his own right. He is a prototype Buszek winner: an excellent fly tyer and a fine gentleman.