



*The Evening*

# Hatch

THE NEWSLETTER of the MICHIGAN FLY FISHING CLUB

February 2010

## Project Healing Waters kicks off at VA Hospital

*MFFC volunteers held their first Project Healing Waters (PHW) session with a dozen veterans at Detroit's John D. Dingell VA Hospital on Jan. 6. Mike Duchin took the lead with the effort, working with the VA and other club supporters. He recruited Terry Herron, Joe Sattler, Bruce Strachan, A.L. Bulszewicz, Charles Gray, John Long, Howard Geller, Jim Holly, Thomas Kelly, Jim Aitken, Dean Williams and Mike Scott to assist in the kickoff session. At right, Dean Williams works with Navy veteran Paul Valentine. Look for a full report next month.*



## *Impromptu speakers start the new year*

*Joe Sattler (top) and John Long pitched in at the January 6 meeting, filling in for a last-minute speaker cancellation. Sattler demonstrated tying a sand-cased caddis pattern that proved to be especially effective in New Zealand last summer. Long offered a travelogue of several of his recent adventures, including Kwagama Lake, Montana and Mayaguana.*



## UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS

**February 3**

**Speaker: Chuck Scribner**  
**Topic: Testing Your Knots**  
Clarenceville Middle School  
7:30 p.m.

**February 10**

**MFFC Board Meeting**  
Clarenceville Middle School  
7:30 p.m.

**February 17**

**Eastside Meeting**  
Kolping Banquet Center  
24409 Jefferson Ave.  
St. Clair Shores  
7:30 p.m.

**February 24**

**Activity Meeting**  
**Featured Tier:**  
**Scott Bowerman**  
Clarenceville Middle School  
7:30 p.m.

**February 27**

**Members School**  
Northville High School  
45700 Six Mile Rd., Northville  
9 a.m. to 4 p.m.

**February 25-28**  
**Youth Fly Tying  
at Outdoorama**

Rock Financial Showplace  
46100 Grand River, Novi



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**Need a name tag?  
 Here's how to get one**

A "Nametag Sign-up Sheet" is available on the front table at most club meetings. Simply print your name as you want it to appear and put \$5 in the attached envelope. Nametag guru Paul DeJohn will see that your nametag is put on that same front table within 30 days.

**Pinto to head  
 Nicaraguan sport  
 fishing program**

Mario Salinas, minister of Tourism for the Republic of Nicaragua, has announced that MFFC founding member John Pinto has been named Executive Director of Sport Fish Nicaragua, a newly-created agency under the Ministry of Tourism (INTUR). Pinto's mission is to develop, maintain, promote and market new sport fishing programs for the Central American country.

Pinto, an accomplished fly fisherman, owns a fly tying/fishing tackle manufacturing company in Diriamba, south of the capital city of Managua, and has fished throughout Nicaragua since 1994.

Earlier in his career, he started and owned two fly fishing lodges in the Bahamas and was awarded the title of *Honorary Fly Fisherman* of the Bahamas in 1990 by the Bahamas Tourist Office.

As executive director of Sport Fish Nicaragua he is in charge of all current and new sport fishing projects and will attempt to make Nicaragua competitive with other countries like Belize, Costa Rica, Mexico and Cuba.

"Nicaragua has tremendous potential," Pinto said. "From snook and tarpon on the Atlantic coast; to dorado, tuna and billfish on the Pacific side. Rainbow bass (guapote) fishing in some of the north-central lakes is an entirely untapped resource," he added.

"A key task," he said. "will be to bring investors interested in sport fishing to Nicaragua and then pave the way for them to set up operations throughout the country. There are few organized sport fishing venues in Nicaragua currently. Everything is fragmented and needs to be pulled together," Pinto explained. "There is a lot of work to be done!"



**World-famous  
 Members School  
 set for Sat., Feb. 27**

If you're new to the sport or just want to reconnect with your inner angler, plan on coming out to Northville High School on Saturday, February 27, for the 2010 edition of the MFFC's Members Fly-Fishing School.

The school runs from 9 a.m. to 4 p.m. and provides a full day of information and practice involving all facets of fly fishing – casting, fly tying, knot tying, entomology and equipment.

Northville High School is located at 45700 Six Mile Road in Northville. Members and their families (no children under 16, please) are eligible to enroll in this comprehensive school. Coffee, donuts and lunch are provided.

The school is free for members and features a day-long Beginners class and many Experienced clinics.

The deadline for sign-up is Feb. 17. SO, sign up to attend as a student, in either the Beginner or Experienced clinics or sign up to help with food, set-up, tear-down and/or assist instructors. Take your fish-catching ability to a new level.



*Limbering up for a new fishing season.*

## Huge shoes left to fill in wake of two notable year-end deaths

by Mike Matuszewski

To avid readers of fly angling literature, the words “death of a riverkeeper” made up the title of a book by Ernest Schwiebert. They take on a much greater meaning as those of us who fish Up North marked the passing of two legendary riverkeepers -- Rusty Gates and Joe Kutkuhn.

Kutkuhn, the founder of the Upper Manistee River Association (UMRA) and a former Huron Pines Resource Coconservation and Development Council board member, passed away at his home on the Manistee. Huron Pines Director Brad Jensen said Kutkuhn’s “tireless volunteer efforts, along with his scientific expertise, helped Huron Pines grow as an organization and helped us to more effectively implement projects to improve northern Michigan’s coldwater rivers.”

Kutkuhn held a doctorate in Fishery Management Statistics. He tapped his professional experience with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to develop a number of practical projects to improve water quality and fish habitat of the Au Sable and Manistee rivers. He coordinated a study of stormwater runoff impacting the City of Grayling, providing baseline data that would later lead to preventing stormwater pollution from reaching the Au Sable River. His work leading the Upper Manistee River Restoration Committee resulted in the rehabilitation of many of the streambank erosion sites on that river. He was also instrumental in obtaining State of Michigan Natural River designation for the Manistee and was a founding member of HeadWaters Land Conservancy.

“We have lost another remarkable riverkeeper,” said MFFC President Pat Brazzil. “Joe’s contribution to the improvement of the Manistee River

was sensational. Our most sincere condolences go out to Joe’s fishing buddies, friends, family, UMRA members and especially to his wife Bobbie. Many of our members have fished the Manistee and we all have a tremendous amount of respect for what Joe accomplished as an active UMRA member. Manistee fly anglers owe Joe many, many thanks for his love of that spectacular river.”

Kutkuhn’s passing came on the heels of that of Rusty Gates, president of the Anglers of the AuSable and owner of Gates AuSable Lodge.

Writing in the *Detroit Free Press*, outdoors writer Eric Sharp offered this assessment of Gates’ passing: “If you want to experience Rusty Gates’ legacy, drive this winter to the Mason Tract on the South Branch of the Au Sable River and snowshoe or ski through the snowy, hushed woods to the banks of one of the least despoiled streams in Michigan.

“Listen to the wind sighing through the pines, the occasional soft ‘plop’ of a clump of snow falling from a high branch, the startling ‘grawk’ of a passing raven.

“Then listen to what you don’t hear. Drink in the silence when the wind dies, a quiet so intense, it can be unsettling, and absorb a solitude that can be experienced in few places in a state with 10 million people.

“Realize that is a rare view into what the world was like before the airplane and automobile, before highways and the logger’s axe. And know that the reason you don’t hear the ‘tunk, tunk, tunk’ of an oil well or smell its rotten-egg odor in this special place is largely because of Calvin Gates Jr., a valiant defender of the Au Sable River system.”

While we have much to be thankful for in what Kutkuhn and Gates accomplished with their allies, we know we have two very large sets of shoes to fill to maintain and build on their legacy.

## In the extreme ... Taking fly tying to an altogether new level

by Todd A. Schotts

Extreme sports are all the rage these days, right? Activities like sky surfing, mountain boarding and wake boarding offer an adrenaline rush far bigger than more conventional pursuits. Well, how about “Extreme Ultimate Fly-Tying”?

All you need to do is be able to tie flies outside in extreme weather conditions. A few of us have done this before ... like during some of our earlier Boy Scout Merit Badge Schools. You are probably wondering now, why would anyone want to do that, especially if you can be in a nice warm house. Well, that’s fine but no challenge; unless you have pets, kids, or a spouse who doesn’t share your love of fly tying.

I stumbled into this activity while partaking in Michigan’s annual deer hunt season. Now the deer blinds of some deer hunters are relatively palatial, having heaters and windows. Mine does not. I have four walls, a roof, and carpeting (*to help muffle any noise*) and openings where windows could go. This year I moved my blind to a lane between two swamps. I never thought that this lane would turn into a wind tunnel when the fall’s breezes began to blow. I think Gordon Lightfoot had it right when he termed them “the gales of November.”

On the first day, I tied maybe five cone-head muddlers in about eight hours. I ran into problems trying to keep my tying materials from blowing away as the winds howled in one opening and out another. I also had to keep picking material out of my coffee and sandwiches.

*Continued on page 5*

## Looking for a good read? Check out Gierach's recommendations

by Mike Matuszewski

Here we are midwinter and what's a fly fisher to do? One either inventories one's fly boxes and ties flies, preparing for the upcoming fishing season, or one reads about fly fishing.

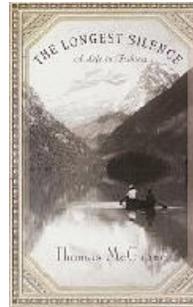
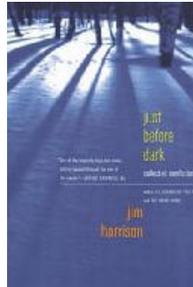
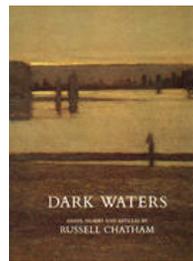
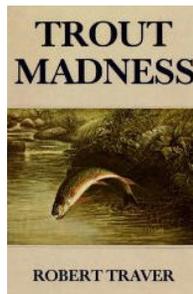
I've attempted to do both.

But, while reading John Gierach's 2008 book, *Fool's Paradise*, a Christmas gift from a fishing compadre, I stumbled upon a list of books that you may want to have with you if you're weathered in and unable to fish. What better time than now to prepare for such an eventuality?

Below are a few of John Gierach's recommendations.

While a travelling Gierach doesn't take instructional books with him on fishing trips, he says "I do make an exception for fishing books that 'are so well written it almost doesn't matter what they're about.'" Included on this list are *Trout Madness* by Robert Traver; *Dark Waters* by Russell Chatham; *Silent Seasons*, an anthology by Chatham; *The Longest Silence* by Tom McGuane; *The Habit of Rivers* by Ted Leeson; *My Secret Fishing Life* by Nick Lyons; and *Brook Trout and Writing Life* by Craig Nova.

Gierach also recommends a number of books, unrelated to fishing, "that have the unmistakable stamp of writers who are experienced outdoorsmen. Included are *The Congressman's Daughter* by Craig Nova; *Just Before Dark* by Michigan native Jim Harrison; *An Outside Chance* by Tom McGuane; *Seasonal* by Ed Engle (a past headliner at the Midwest Fly Fishing Expo); *The Meadow* by James Galvin, *Justice* and *Montana 1948* by Larry Watson; and *The Summer Guest* by Justin Cronin.



So if you're bound for the Dick Schott New Member Outing, the Trout Opener, the Rayburn Outing, Jim Telinda's trip to the San Juan or the annual foray to Montana, you may want to have one or more of these books with you – a dog-eared, used edition works best because you can leave it behind – just in case the weather gods conspire against you.

## Where to go? MFFC Travel Committee debuts

The MFFC Board of Directors has approved the creation of a Travel Committee. MFFC Founding member John Pinto, who has long advocated for this committee, will serve as the chairperson.

"This is not new," John said. "This is a continuation of a program that we had about sixteen years ago. And under this program several members experienced some pretty good fishing in some very cool places like Belize, Alaska, Nova Scotia and the Bahamas."

He continued, "This committee is formed to bring members up-to-date and reliable fishing information. The most important piece of equipment you can have is good, honest fishing

information. Otherwise that new Sage rod or Bauer reel means nothing. This club has provided its members over the years various 'how to' programs. You all know 'how to' tie flies, build rods and cast flies. This club has helped you learn these facets of fly fishing. This committee will be your vehicle to the 'where to' part of fly fishing.

"It is well-known that many people come to this club initially to learn where to fish and to meet people to go fishing with." John further explained, "There is a lot of knowledge in this club about some good fishing places and this committee's job will be to get that information out into the open for all to enjoy. And it will be our job to align ourselves with people in the fly fishing world who have the answers to the questions we'll be asking. This committee will make sure the members of this club get a bang for their buck.

"This committee will need your help. We want to make sure that we are researching the right destinations and you need to tell us your dream fishing spot. We'll do our best to get you there. That is why you joined this club. That is why this club was formed!"

"Okay, let's go fishing," he concluded.

### Trips in the works include:

**Where:** San Juan River, NM  
**When:** June 2010  
**Species to pursue:** Rainbow trout  
**"Trail boss":** Jim Telinda

**Where:** Kwagama Lake, Ontario  
**When:** August 2010  
**Species to pursue:** Brook trout  
**"Trail boss":** John Long

**Where:** Mayaguana, The Bahamas  
**When:** October 2010  
**Species to pursue:** Bonefish  
**"Trail boss":** John Pinto

**Where:** Alaska  
**When:** August 2011  
**Species to pursue:** Trout, grayling, salmon  
**"Trail boss":** TBD

## A real pro steps into February's Featured Tier spotlight

by Todd A. Schotts

Because February can be the bleakest of winter months, we decided to put a little different spin on things for our Featured Tier offering at the Feb. 24 activity meeting. We'll have a professional fly tier in the house to demonstrate some of his favorite Great Lakes steelhead patterns. Joining us will be none other than the "Fly Guy" himself, Fremont, Michigan's own Scott Bowerman. You may have seen Scott tying at one of our summer meetings a few years back or at the Midwest Fly Fishing Expo where he's been a regular. You may have even seen him at one of the tying shows around Michigan or Ohio.

I asked Scott how he got started into this crazy world of hackle spinning and deer hair stacking. He said about 35 years ago he was watching a Roland Martin fishing show. "They were fly fishing for tarpon and at the end of the show they tied the flies they were using that day." He was so interested he asked Santa for a fly tying kit. He said he remembers that his first flies were not much to look at. "They sort of resembled a chicken with a hook in its butt," he said. But they were his and he was proud of them.

When Scott was 16 he started tying flies commercially. Today he said he ties more than 10,000 flies a year. He supplies flies for Pappy's in Wellston, Pere Marquette River Lodge in Baldwin, Hesperia Sport Shop and White River Outfitters in Hesperia, and Parsleys Sport & Fly Shop in Newaygo. In his spare time he also ties flies for his own guided fly fishing trips on the Muskegon and White rivers. Three years ago, he signed on as a fly designer for Umpqua Feather Merchants. Over the past couple of years Umpqua picked his patterns "Steelhead Candy" and the "Sparkle Body Stone Fly" as featured flies for Great Lakes Steelhead.



*Scott Bowerman, February's Featured Tie, at his vise at December's FFF-GLC Fly Tying Expo.*

So, what does he have on tap for his trip in the MFFC tying spotlight? He's planning on demonstrating Sucker Spawn, the Viagra Caddis, Schmidt's Caddis and the Nuke Egg. If time permits, he will demonstrate his lifelike stonefly.

In addition to tying, he'll have a variety of his Spring Steelhead patterns for sale. The flies will be selling at wholesale prices: Caddis Larvae and Steelhead Candy at \$12 per dozen, the egg patterns (*Crystal Eggs, Nuke Eggs, Sucker Spawn*) at \$6 a dozen. They can be mixed and matched so you don't have to purchase a dozen of any one pattern. One request: please try to have the correct change. And if he doesn't have what some people want he will take orders at the wholesale price. As previously mentioned, he is a licensed guide on the Muskegon and White rivers. If someone is interested in a guided wade fly fishing trip, he does have some dates open. The cost is \$125 per person per day with a maximum of three anglers per day. There are no Tuesday or Friday dates available for 2010 and 2011. He can be contacted at: [scotttheflyguy@yahoo.com](mailto:scotttheflyguy@yahoo.com).

So, if you're hoping to get in some spring steelheading in 2010, this meeting will help you get prepared for some hot and heavy action.

## In the extreme ... Taking fly tying to an altogether new level

*Continued from page 3*

Added to that, I had to stop and keep scoping out the deer. You're probably thinking there couldn't have been that many deer.

Wrong.

I saw 53 the first day. Unfortunately, the only buck I saw was the one my nephew shot that evening about 5 p.m.

On day two I changed patterns, switching to a flashback nymph. The wind, however, didn't abate. I decided to swirl, coming and going out of all the openings at random.

There were fewer deer to scope (37), but, again, not a single buck. My tying production nearly doubled. I tied seven flies and I'm sure I helped out the field mice with some extra dubbing that had blown all over the floor.

The last day of my hunt, I was still hopeful – both to tie more flies – I opted for a foam fly this time -- and to bag a buck. Wrong again. I did see 31 does and fawns, no bucks. Despite the renewed winds and extreme cold, I did manage to tie a few more flies on this third attempt. I tied a total of nine flies before my fingers stopped functioning.

I learned my lesson. Next year, I'm going to invest in plexiglass windows and some kind of heater. So maybe it won't be quite so extreme after all.

Tight lines and snazzy flies.



***Ultimate  
enthusiasm ...***

*Dozens of MFFC members converged on the Ultimate Fishing Show in Novi last month to promote the upcoming Midwest Fly Fishing Expo and the fine art of fly tying, all part of the ongoing effort to introduce the sport to the young and young-at-heart.*



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