



# Flies and Lies

Newsletter of the Fly Fishers of Northwest Florida

February, 2023

## FFNWF

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Business Meeting  
1ST Tuesday, 6:30 PM

Bull Session - Tying  
2ND Thursday, 6:30 PM

Clinic -Casting, Tying,  
Lunch - 3RD Saturday  
9 AM

## **The Prez Sez:** *Happy New Year !!*

*Here's wishing you all a prosperous and productive 2023. For those of you who weren't able to attend the Christmas Party on December 13, it was a rousing success enjoyed by all who attended. We sold 56 tickets, raffled off some great prizes and had a very successful "silent auction" again this year. And I want to congratulate Pat Murphy who was selected as our "ANGLER of the YEAR".*

*Now back to work.....the primary business item for February will be the approval of the annual budget. With the economy and inflation such as they are, we have made some proposed budget adjustments which will require a membership vote to approve. So, if you want to have a say, please attend the meeting on February 7 and engage in the discussion. Until next month.... **Mick***

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## **Club Meeting: Tuesday, February 7. 6:30**

The program will be **Fly Fishing: Safety and Etiquette**, presented by our own Steve Hoffman.

## **Fly Tying: Thursday, February 9. 6:30**

**(same week as our meeting)** Just before the Big Game coach Pat Murphy will show us how to tie the **Game Changer**. Huddle Up!

## **Clinic: Saturday, January 18 9:00 am**

The lunch will be chef Joe's **Best Ever Chili**. Considering how good the previous chilies were, this one has to be really good!

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The Fly Fishers of Northwest Florida are happy to announce our annual

## **"Introduction to Fly Fishing Course" (FF101).**

Learn & practice the principles of Fly Fishing, equipment selection, Fly Tying, Fly Casting, and knots. The course spans 8 weeks on Mondays at 6:00 beginning March 13 at the Boy Scout House located in the Miraflores Park, 1600 E. Belmont St. Pensacola, FL 32501.

A downloadable membership form can be found at [fffwf.org/membership](http://fffwf.org/membership). Fill out the membership application and include a check to FFNWF for \$95.00 and mail both to Larry Sisney, Treasurer, 3610 Baisden Rd, Pensacola, FL 32503. Upon receipt you will be notified of enrollment. For questions, you may email [fffwfeducation@gmail.com](mailto:fffwfeducation@gmail.com).

## Fishing with Capt. Baz

I've said it many times before, and I'm saying it yet again... I just love our winter fly-fishing. You may not see as many fish or as many kinds of fish, but it's so nice being out there without all the other traffic. The water's too cold for the recreational boaters, the jet ski tours haven't started yet, the Pensacola Bay Ferries aren't knocking you down with their giant wakes, and most of the other guides are out in the woods hunting. The only thing that could make things better would be a few more decent weather days, but I'm certainly not complaining. We'll keep making the most out of what we get and try to fish every day with good sun and light winds.

We have four species to target in January: trout, redfish, false albacore, and black drum. The trout are in the bayous, canals, and mouths of the rivers that flow into Pensacola Bay. Some favorite spots are Hoffman and Gilmore Bayous in Gulf Breeze, Lafitte Cove, Bayou Texar, Villa Venyce and Santa Rosa Shores canals, Star Lake, and the Bayou Grande channel. You'll be blind-casting various colors of clouser minnows, and you want to fish them "low and slow". Use 9-10 foot leaders coming down to 10 or 12 pound test. Some old pros like Jerry Aldrich and Travis Akins liked to add a 1' section of heavy lead line to their butt section and tie the leader on to that. It helped keep the fly right down on the bottom where the trout are feeding. Winter trout fishing is great for beginners because long, accurate casts aren't all that important. Tie on a tan/white clouser minnow and heave it out there somewhere. Let it sink to the bottom, and move it a little every once in a while. You'll get some strikes and catch some trout. It's also a good time to practice your strip-strike. Most of my winter trout fishing is out of desperation when I get blown off the flats, lose my light, or my clients get cold and want out of the elements. Those protected bayous can feel mighty good on a cold day.



When the ever-so-fickle winter false albacore show up you drop everything and go after them. They'll be running the shallow water in the Gulf looking for baitfish and usually have white terns dipping and diving around them. It's high-octane excitement when you can reach them from shore. I'll attach a couple shots from a few years ago when we had a good winter "run". I call the

Pensacola Beach fishing pier regularly for a "bonito" report. Right now the fish are in the surf at Navarre, and two days ago we found some in Pensacola Pass. After taking a wave over the bow of the skiff we decided to wait for a calmer day. That's going to be Wednesday, Feb 1. With a little luck I'll have a photo for next month's report.... The winter FA are in the 4-6# range and will take you into the backing in 5 seconds. Eight weight tackle, floating line, 10' x 12# leader, and sz 6, clear, gummy minnow will do the trick.



This past month has been all about the redfish. There are fish in all the usual areas of Santa Rosa Sound and the Big Lagoon. The Gulf has been slow so far, but I'm expecting the redfish to be in schools along the beach sometime in February. We've been finding some black drum in the Gulf, and they should be finding their way onto the inside flats at any time. Few things as exciting as seeing a "tailing" 25# drum with its nose in the dirt and its tail sticking a foot up out of the water. We haven't seen that yet this year but it happens regularly. Here's a shot of Carl Huhnke with the first black drum of the year landed a few days ago.



We've had excellent success with redfish on the few days with good conditions. Jeff Lampe kicked it off with a true "hog" on January 4. Keep in mind Jeff is a big 275# man. A few days later Andrew Dalby caught a monster in 2' of water on a Santa Rosa Sound sand flat. We don't usually land the really big ones on the inside flats, but Andrew



did a fabulous job bringing this one to the net. The fish took the old faithful EP minnow. A couple days later local FHP officer Tim Boothe landed a nice fish while his dad watched and took videos. Pic is of Tim and his dad, Gene Boothe. Finally, after two weeks of lousy weather, Carl Huhnke and I were able to get down to business...redfish business that is. Carl landed three fish that day all on different flies. I'm attaching some close ups for your viewing pleasure. That floating crab has been in my fly box over 20 years and only comes out when conditions are perfect. It's the only one I've got, and I'm afraid of losing it. **Capt. Baz**



**The Gulf Coast Council (GCC) of Fly Fishers International (FFI)** is proud to present their inaugural Gulf Coast Classic fly fishing festival, from Thursday to Saturday, May 4-6, 2023, at the Learning Campus - Gulf State Park in Gulf Shores, AL.

This unique facility offers state-of-the-art theatre area, meeting rooms, outside facilities, a restaurant and more. The activities for this event will be expanded beyond anything the GCC of FFI has ever offered to the fly fishing community.

Among the activities tentatively planned:

- Seminars
- Fly tying demonstrations
- Fly Tying Theatre
- Exhibitors and vendors
- Beginner fly casting instruction (free with admission)
- Beginner fly tying instruction (free with admission)
- Fly tying workshops (registration required)
- Casting workshops (registration required)
- Fishing Tournament (registration required)
- Fly Fishing Film Tour (F3T) (ticket purchase required, limited seating)
- "Lunch & Listen" conservation roundtable
- Raffles & silent auction for great items



*We're Going to Have a Baby!* Shower for Colleen and Wallace West on January 21. Thanks to everyone! Especially those who had never been to a baby shower.

## January Fly Tying



# Fly of the Month **THE GAMECHANGER**

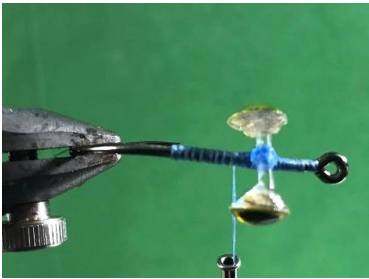
The gamechanger fly is a two material, easy to tie fly. The name arrives from the use of EP Gamechange Fibers that are a blend of slightly stiffer fibers, larger diameter than standard EP fiber. Gamechanger fibers are integrated with EP Sparkle fibers. 0% water absorption making a easy to cast fly. Fibers are almost indestructible. **Pat Murphy**



## **MATERIALS:**

**HOOK:** FTD MS100 #1/0      **THREAD:** BLUE 140d  
**EYES:** EP GAMECHANGE EYES 6MM YELLOW PEARL  
**TAIL/BODY:** EP GAMECHANGE FIBER ROOT BEER  
**COLLAR:** UV POLAR CHENILLE MEDIUM COPPER

## **INSTRUCTION:**



1. De-barb hook, lay smooth thread base hook eye to hook bend. Tie-in weight-less eyes center of hook shank. Cut full length small clump of fibers, taper clump to a thin tip, secure behind dome eyes. Extend tail clump 2-1/2-3 times hook shank.



2. Trim remaining tag end from clump and tie-in behind eyes over top of tail. After tying short clump in place, use scissors to cut a tapered back wing. Then pull tail upward to center tail fibers.



3. Tie-in a 4"-5" length of polar chenille behind eyes, palmer to EP eyes and around eyes, and wrapping 4-5 wraps front of tying off front eyes.

4. Whip finish and secure thread wraps with head cement

## **January 2, 2023 Club Meeting Minutes** *George Norton, Secretary*

**1630** The President called the meeting to order.

Minutes from last month were accepted and approved

**Treasurer's Report:** Club finances are in excellent shape heading into the new year. The Christmas Party's revenue exceeded expenses for the first time, and unlike past parties required no subsidies. Membership dues for 2023 were discussed. The Board may recommend an increase of five dollars

to \$35 for renewing members and \$42 for new members which includes a name tag. That will be part of the discussion of the 2023 budget at the February meeting. TR report was approved. Motion by Russ, second by Dave.

**Christmas Party:** The party was a resounding success! Congratulations to Pat Murphy, our 2022 Angler of the Year, and to Steve and Ellen Hoffman, who won the Energizer Award. The raffles, silent auctions, door prizes, and good food and fellowship were enjoyed by all. Many club members left with top of the line fly reels and rods. The members voted to return to SHCC in 2023 despite increased costs. The room is perfect for our needs, and moving elsewhere would take a major undertaking of time and resources. Special thanks to Jim W and his committee for all their hard work and planning.

**Fly Fishing 101** for starts March 3 and will run for eight weeks. The price is \$95 and includes the annual membership dues. If you know a candidate for the class, please contact Dave Handley.

**The 2023 Auction** will be May 20, the third Saturday in May. Steve needs help categorizing items in the basement. He also reminded everyone the club needs donations. The auction is a major fund raiser for the club.

**Presentation: "Fly Fishing the Watauga River in Tennessee."** Cliff lead a PHW group in November for three days of guided float fishing for trout. The group stayed at a B&B farm house (Meredith Valley Farm). The group fly fished three different sections of the river with guides (Elk Creek outfitters). All attendees caught a good number of trout using two small nymphs under an indicator. The Watauga is a tail water river and had a very low flow. Further downstream, the Watauga has an excellent smallmouth and musky fishery. Thanks Cliff for an informative presentation on this trout fishery.

**McKenzie Award:** We received a certificate recognizing the outstanding FFI club which will be framed and mounted in the clubhouse.

**Fishing reports:** The action has been slow. The annual bull redfish run in the Bay was poor. The Spanish mackerel, pompano and ladyfish moved south to warmer waters. George and Steve H picked up some small trout in the canals in early January while Capt. Baz did well sight fishing big reds in shallow water.

**Future events:** The three-day Fly Fishing Show in Duluth, Georgia is the first weekend of February. The Gulf Coast Conclave consists of twelve clubs from Lake Charles to Destin and will be held at Gulf Shores State Park, the first weekend of May. Gulf Shores has a 200 seat auditorium, three classrooms for seminars with fly tying and casting instruction. Fly fishing films will be shown. A fly-fishing tournament will be held on Friday details TBA. Gulf Shores is a short drive from Pensacola. Don't miss it.

**Meeting adjourned at 1935**