



*The Evening*

# Hatch

THE NEWSLETTER of the MICHIGAN FLY FISHING CLUB

January 2007



*Paul Goodman (center), Colton Bay Outfitters, gives members the lowdown on some of the new products available at the Ann Arbor-area shop.*



*Mike Schultz (right), Hank's Fly Fishing Unlimited, fresh from November's Alaska presentation, made an encore appearance last month.*

## Toys, trinkets and serious tackle dominate December meeting

Just in time for updating holiday wish lists and adding items to those letters to Santa, Paul Goodman of Colton Bay Outfitters and Mike Schultz of Hank's Fly Fishing Unlimited guided MFFC members through tables piled high with new fly fishing gear for 2007.

The annual show-and-tell ran the gamut: apparel, reels, flashlights, waders, wading boots, fly rods and items for drift boats.

Some of the eye-catching items on display included a line of Fishpond soft-sided coolers perfect for driftboat use; the Scott E2 "switchrod,"

a 10-foot-8-inch rod that can be used to cast conventionally or as a spey rod; the March Brown line of eight-piece travel rods; a line of Orvis wading boots that features both a zipper and laces; an Orvis Otter Creek vest that features easy access hand-warming pockets, and the Surefire line of flashlights to help get you off the water after those late-night forays in search of nocturnal lunkers.

## Bruce Richards named Angler of the Year by *Fly Rod & Reel*

According to *Fly Rod & Reel* magazine's Greg Thomas, Bruce Richards is "the most influential fly fisherman most anglers have never heard of."

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## UPCOMING MEETINGS & EVENTS

**January 10, 2007**

**Speaker: Kevin Feenstra**

**Topic: Steelheading in Michigan and Ohio**

**Clarenceville Middle School  
7:30 p.m.**

**January 13**

**5<sup>th</sup> Annual North Coast Fly**

**Fishers Tying Expo**

**Cuyahoga Community College  
Eastern Campus, 4250 Richmond  
Road, Highland Hills, Ohio**

**8:30 a.m. – 4 p.m.**

**January 17, 2007**

**Board Meeting, Clarenceville  
Middle School Cafeteria**

**7:30 p.m.**

**January 24, 2007**

**Activity Night**

**Clarenceville Middle School  
7:30 p.m.**

**February 7, 2007**

**Speaker: Jimmy Balogh, Hydrus  
Expeditions**

**Topic: Warm-Weather  
Destinations**

**Clarenceville Middle School  
7:30 p.m.**



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to snail mail?**

Get *The Evening Hatch* electronically and you help save the club money. That means dollars spent on printing and postage can get directed elsewhere – to speakers, education and other programs. Simply contact Membership Chair Paul DeJohn and ask to receive our newsletter via e-mail.



*Bruce Richards makes a point during a casting clinic at a 2005 MFFC meeting.*

**Bruce Richards named  
Angler of the Year  
by *Fly Rod & Reel***

*Continued from front page*

He is also *Fly Rod & Reel's* Angler of the Year. Richards' selection was announced in the January/February edition of the magazine.

Here's how this long-time friend of the Michigan Fly Fishing Club was described: "Born in Midland, (Michigan), in 1950, Bruce is a man who has raised Midwestern modesty and practicality to an art form, which goes a long way toward explaining why he's the most influential fly fisherman most anglers have never heard of. According to such angling icons as Lefty Kreh and Sage rod designer Jerry Siem, Richards is one of the best fly casters in the world and, as head product developer for flyline-maker Scientific Anglers, his work over the past 30 years has influenced the average fly angler's day on the water as much or more than anyone else's."

Congratulations, Bruce!

**Snow, snow, snow...  
Too much of it could  
cancel a meeting**

If bad weather closes the Clarenceville School District the day of a Club meeting, the meeting is automatically cancelled.

In short, a "snow day" for Clarenceville means a "snow night" for MFFC members. So, if you want to feel like kids again, be sure to check the morning's school closing list on radio, television or [www.mffc.org](http://www.mffc.org).

**Need a name badge?  
See Paul DeJohn**

Membership chairman Paul DeJohn is the contact person if you're in need of one of those natty MFFC name badges. See him at a club meeting. You'll need to bring him an envelope containing your name written out as you want it to appear and, of course, "five bucks" to cover the cost of the name badge. The badges are usually ready by the next meeting.

**For all the latest info  
check [www.mffc.org](http://www.mffc.org)**

The MFFC web site has all the information about our club that you want to know. It's the first place to see the most recent copy of the *The Evening Hatch*, meeting updates, meeting cancellation notices due to weather, the latest information on the Expo, club outings and schools. You can see recent pictures of monster fish caught by club members, too. If you haven't visited our site check it out at [www.mffc.org](http://www.mffc.org).

Webmaster Dan Gasparotto says keeping the site fresh is always a challenge and invites club members to send photos of their trips, outings, schools and links to other informative web sites. Direct the files and links to Gasparotto via the club web site (just click on Yoda at the bottom of the page), e-mail ([dan@acgprinting.com](mailto:dan@acgprinting.com)), or give him a disc at a club meeting.



*A younger (and smaller) Todd Schotts displays an early White River conquest.*

## ***A hidden gem: The White holds memories a plenty***

*by Todd A. Schotts*

This mid-northern Michigan river is rich in Indian lore. Tales of ancient battles are chronicled. An Indian burying ground is located near one of the cities where the river empties into Lake Michigan. The early Native American Indians called this river “Waubishippi,” but we would know this river as the White River.

This river drains Newaygo, Oceana, and Muskegon counties, a watershed of about 300,000 acres and includes about 253 linear miles of streams. The White River also flows through portions of the Huron-Manistee National Forest, and in the vast watershed you can fish for Browns, Rainbows, Brookies, Steelhead, Salmon, Smallmouth Bass, Pike, Walleye, and White Suckers. But also don't forget the various panfish. The White River is part of Michigan's state designated Natural River System.

The White River rises from the extensive Oxford Swamp, located in the northeast corner of Newaygo County where a number of feeder streams converge. Starting out, the White flows south toward White Cloud. Here the river runs into its first

major obstruction, the White Cloud Dam. As the river turns west for the next 10 to 13 miles, it loses its trout-holding capacity with very little structure, and grassy, sandy banks.

Then as the river flows by Luce Avenue to Hesperia, it regains its “trouty” characteristics with an abundance of gravel runs, deep pools and structure. It's just a plain excellent for trout. It's not long, though, until it runs into its second major obstacle, the Hesperia Dam. Both dams, White Cloud and Hesperia were almost lost back in the flood of 1986. I can remember fishing the Trout Opener that year at my Uncle's place out by Luce Avenue (*darn memory loss, cannot remember exactly where*). And as I was fishing a deep hole, I hooked into a Steelhead that got over the Hesperia Dam that year. Unfortunately for me, a 5-foot, ultra-light action rod just doesn't hold up to a leaping Chromer. It wasn't long before I heard the ominous C-R-A-C-K that spelled the end for that Steelhead encounter, my rod, and my day of fishing.

Leaving the village of Hesperia, the river meanders, widens and gets murkier. Before the river surges out to the final destination, you will come across the North Branch. The North Branch of the White River is situated in southern Oceana County; the South Branch is also known as the Main Branch of the White. Now as the river makes its final push as a river, you will go by muck fields and swamp before it enters what is classified as “Drowned River-Mouth Lake,” or White Lake. This lake has a surface of four square miles (2,571 acres) and is located between the cities of Whitehall and Montague. The lake is roughly 5 miles long, reaching a maximum depth of roughly 70 feet. At its widest, it measures roughly 1.25 miles across. It is here in Whitehall that the Indian Burying Point is located. Along with the Native American history, the area is rich in the history of the logging era. The last surge of this bloated river system runs through White Lake Channel into Lake Michigan.



*A stretch of the White near the Hesperia dam.*

This river system is fairly shallow and can be easily waded. But never take it for granted as deep pools are intermixed with fast water. The bottom of this river is similar to the Au Sable or Pere Marquette; with shallow gravel riffles, dotted intermittently with holes and runs.

Hatches to match include Sulfurs, Gray Drakes, Ephrons and an abundance of Caddis and Stoneflies. Stoneflies emerge in late February and March, with the primary hatches taking place in May, June, July, and August. And, remember your Elk Hair Caddises and your Stonefly patterns. But don't forget that throwing streamers like Woolly Buggers and White Zonkers may aid in moving a nice Brown or Rainbow. If you're traveling to the White, make sure your fly box contains a mouse pattern for the White's upper reaches.

This hidden treasure of a river has a special place in my heart. I can remember going up to my Uncle's place for the opening day of Trout Season with my dad every year when I was young. We weren't familiar with the art of fly fishing, but we still had a blast catching brookies and creek chubs using worms and hooks. Oh, and I cannot forget that dancing Chromer that one year. Unfortunately, my father passed away just over four years ago; so we don't have any of those opening day memories to make. But I cannot wait to go and do some fly fishing in the areas where he fished when he was a youngster with his brothers or where we fished as an anxious son watching and learning from his mentor, his father. This one is for you, Bub.

**Spotlight Tier:**  
**Charley Stevens**  
**& his Palomino Midge**

by Al "The Hackleman" Haxton

Happy New Year to everyone! I hope all got what they wanted for Christmas and not what they deserved.

Sitting here writing this I was struck by the fact that this is for the Guest Tier for January 2007. WOW ... 2007 already. It seems like just a few months ago I was writing about the opener for 2006 and then writing about the trip to Yellowstone. Time sure does go fast, or as some say "Time flies, especially when fly fishing."

Speaking of the Yellowstone trip, the trip is sold out and has a rather big waiting list. If you are not on that list, please wait until next year; this year's trip is full and then some.

In fact, this year's trip sold out in record time and we have a large group of 'newbies' to introduce to the fine art of fishing for big fish in huge rivers with fast currents. As part of that education I warn all first timers: buy a

bear bell, buy bear spray, and listen to the oldtimers about flies and areas to fish.

We'll keep that "oldtimers" theme for the January activities meeting. Mr. Charley Stevens will demonstrate a couple of good flies for fishing the western streams we will visit in August. (Now, I don't mean that Charley is an "oldtimer," just that he is "experienced" in fishing the Yellowstone area)

Charley is a long-time member of our club and has spent a lot of time behind the fly tying vise. He enjoys fishing for most species and has been known to tell a "tall tale" once in a while. He has been on the past few trips to Yellowstone and his application was #1 this year. Last year Charley bought himself a new Winston rod while visiting one of the area fly shops near Yellowstone and reports that the new rod "has fish in it.. For those who have not visited that area, there are about 6 fly shops in West Yellowstone, 6 on the drive from Bozeman and another few down the road a few miles in Idaho near the Henry's Fork River.

There is, in a phrase, lots of "shopping opportunity" in that area.

Charley has caught some very nice trout on our trips and he is going to tie a couple of the flies that have been good for him in the past. I will include the pattern for one fly, the Palomino Midge, but will not print the other pattern for fear of physical violence if I do so. For the second pattern you will have to stand close because he is promising to speak softly about this "secret" pattern.

If you are going to Yellowstone next year, or have other fishing visit plans, watch as Charley shows a great pattern and then shares a truly 'secret' pattern to help you, perhaps, catch the trout of the year.

**The Palomino Midge**

**Hook:** Dry fly size 14 to 18  
(smaller if you can see it)

**Thread:** Black, size proportional to hook

**Body:** Ultrafine vermille

**Thorax:** Peacock herl or dark olive antron

**Thorax cover:** White Polypro yarn extending over the hook eye