Time to party!

Picnic by the Willamette

Our summer bash begins at 5:30 pm Monday, July 17

The McKenzie Flyfishers annual club picnic is finally at hand, and this year your Picnic Committee has added homemade ice cream and a raffle to what is always a popular club event. The main course will be hamburgers served fresh off the grill by your fly-fisher friends, and salmon prepared with special care from member recipes.

Remember this is a potluck event, so bring your favorite appetizer, side dish or dessert, along with your picnic appetite.

Come early to enjoy an extended “wet fly” starting at 5:30 pm, or even earlier to demonstrate your casting skills (or lack thereof) at 4:30 pm. The water is a little high this year, but “professionals” will be there to help keep you safe (if not dry) and keep your fly out of the trees; maybe even give you a chance to win the Biggest Fish prize.

When you arrive, stop by the greeter table to pick up your name tag and a free raffle ticket for you and each of your guests. Prizes have been offered that will make for an interesting raffle drawing after dinner. For those needing to be closer to seconds and the desserts, there will be seating available near the food, so have your limo driver drop you off right next to your table.

Please RSVP by noon Friday, July 14. Call (541) 343-3109, call or text (541) 505-2692, or email oakcrk@aol.com to confirm and indicate the number of additional guests you expect to bring. Email oakcrk@aol.com if you need directions to the Middle Fork of the Willamette River in Pleasant Hill.

Call your friends in the club to remind them of the details and remind them to come. We look forward to sharing a fun evening with you and your family.

— The 2023 Picnic Committee
Our patience is now rewarded

Fair-weather adventures can finally be pursued

By Jeff DeVore

Summer is here again and evenings on the river are good. Patience with the Oregon winter and spring weather has been rewarded, and Joanie and I are looking forward to sharing our backyard with all of you for another club picnic on the Willamette. Look for details and more information elsewhere in this newsletter with an outings calendar on Page 5.

For those of you who are still hesitating to attend a club outing, perhaps out of fear of venturing forth on the water, ignore those unseemly rumors and that newspaper sensationalism about the risks, and make plans to share a campfire with fellow club members. Contact fishmaster Steve Hackett, and then head down to the Big K Ranch for the Umpqua bass outing on July 20-22. The water will be warm enough that you will not mind falling in, but wear your life vest.

Check in with fishmaster Al Eckerdt to wade the Middle Fork of the North Fork of the Willamette on Aug. 5. The water is cold there, but there are no boats involved.

As for our traditional but recently dormant Kalama Cup outing on the North Umpqua, we haven’t heard much from our friends at the Evergreen Fly Fishing Club in Washington this year, mostly for lack of steelhead — but look for Greg Williams to find the perfect date in September or October to head up the Middle Fork of the Willamette for a day-outing above Hills Creeks Reservoir.

Finally, given how little pressure there has been on Gold Lake so far this year, look forward to success and a brook trout dinner prepared by your board and officers at Gold Lake Sept. 30.

For you fearless thrill seekers among us, there are still opportunities to get out there, so don’t miss out. And don’t miss the Aug. 16 club meeting at Ninkasi to find out new ways to stay dry and catch fish.

See you out there at the picnic.

— Jeff

Our club’s Life Members

• Jim Boyd
• Bob Bumstead
• Jim Dougher
• Skip Hosfield
• Bill Laing
• Hal Legard
• Glen Love (deceased)
• Frank Moore (deceased)
• Bill Neel
• Peter Patricelli
• Bob Rasmussen
• Mike Starr
• Dave Thomas
• Jim Williams (deceased)
Umpqua bass outing July 20-22

By Steve Hackett, fishmaster

Doug Cottel and I took a trip to the Big K Ranch recently to look over the facilities, river access and camping site for our upcoming bass outing. The 4-mile dirt road from Hwy. 138 to the lodge is a quiet drive filled with views of the river and meadows of grazing does, fawns and cattle. We were greeted by the owner Kathy and the office manager/events coordinator Emily. What a busy couple they are.

Emily took Doug and me to the Powerline area where we can set up for the three days of fishing and fun. This site is next to the last takeout on their property.

One area at the Powerline site (top photo at right) with the road leading to river access. That is the bed of my truck on the right.

We can set up on the edge of this field (lower photo) up against the trees on the left. The trees will offer good shade from the western setting sun.

This area is dry camping only. Propane grills and stoves. Propane fire pits are OK but must be elevated off the grass or on the gravel. I suggest we forego the firepits in favor of respecting the fire danger potential. There is a portable toilet at the landing, easy walking distance. Friday evening dinner is a potluck affair with hamburger, brauts, fixin’s and drinks provided. As always BYOB if you wish. I look forward to a table full of easy to fix goodies.

There are 4 river access ramps within the Big K property. The first and last have very steep inclines at the river. The middle 2 are easily negotiated. The water at each ramp can be fished with any kind of craft, float tube, canoe, kayak, SUP, or boat. I understand there is a significant but short rapid between the two middle ramps. It can be scouted from river right and portaged with smaller crafts.

However, Bill Laing strongly recommends NOT to run the Brad’s Creek rapid, especially at low flow levels. He notes it is very challenging and dangerous. Here are Bill’s recommendations: 1) If someone wants to explore the fishing below Brad’s, he suggests walk and wade or pontoon boat. 2) He recommends boaters launch at Stuck and take out at Rapp Bar. You can do this in half a day.

Currently we have 15 people signed up for camping, three with reservations at the lodge and four committed to a day trip. The cost is $30 each for camping and $10 for day access. There is room for more so let me know.
North Fork offers classic dry-fly fishing at its best

By Al Eckerdt, fishmaster

Following the Umpqua bass outing, our next club outing will be Aug. 5 on the North Fork of the Middle Fork of the Willamette River. We will plan to meet at noon at Kiahanie Campground for lunch and to socialize. Bring a lawn chair and your lunch. Noon Saturday is our only scheduled time to meet on this outing. Come a day early to camp if you wish.

Kiahane is a 90-minute drive from Eugene through the hamlet of Westfir and up the winding Aufderheide Scenic Byway.

Here is your opportunity to enjoy amazing dry-fly fishing waters, fun trails to hike and a crystal clear river that boasts being one the purest in the world. Last year most attendees who fished caught at least a few on both dry flies and nymphs.

We will send out later a detailed access chart that shows where to park, where to walk and how difficult the access is. Here are the details of the chart:

Access chart and detail about where the fish are located:

We have an updated chart showing every fishable turnout on the North Fork. The chart identifies every turnout that has river access; a legend showing difficulty of that access (1 is easy, 2 is medium, 3 is difficult, 4 is forget it). Also included are highlighted places where fish have been caught before and promising-looking water. It’s all here!

Fishing regulations are two trout per day, 8 inch minimum, fly fishing only, barbless hooks. There will be at least one more reminder which will include gear, special flies and all the detail needed.

The agenda for the day is tough: Arrive at the river whenever you choose. Leave whenever you choose. Go wherever you choose to fish. Show up at Kiahanie for lunch and see who else joined.

If you want a special day on a special river, please join us Aug. 5. And if anyone has questions, please let me know.

INVITATION TO JOIN
You do not have to be an expert fly fisher to join the McKenzie Flyfishers. Our monthly meetings, now in person at Ninkasi on Wednesdays, are an excellent opportunity to meet other area anglers and share tips. Our meetings feature the best of regional experts on subjects dear to the hearts of fly fishers. And our outings and classes are wonderful ways to hone skills and learn local waters first-hand. Interested? Email Tom at tomfauria@gmail.com.
2023 OUTINGS SCHEDULE

Several of these outings are still in the planning stages and are subject to drought, smoke and fire, bug hatches, pandemics, earthquakes, foreign and domestic threats and other factors. Overseeing our outings is Jeff DeVore who appreciates suggestions and especially volunteers to be fishmasters.

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<tr>
<th>DATE</th>
<th>LOCATION</th>
<th>FISHMASTER</th>
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<td>July 17</td>
<td>Club picnic</td>
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<tr>
<td>July 20-22</td>
<td>Umpqua bass</td>
<td>Steve Hackett</td>
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<td>Aug. 5</td>
<td>N. Fork Middle Fork</td>
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<td>Sept./Oct. TBA</td>
<td>Upper Middle Fork</td>
<td>Greg Williams</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sept. 30</td>
<td>Gold Lake (Death to Char)</td>
<td>Board of Directors</td>
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Possible additional outing locations are Diamond Lake and various forks of our local rivers. Outside of our regular outings, club members are encouraged to get together to fish anytime, anyplace. Invite new members along, share locations, boats, campsites, skills, flies and fish tales.

2023 MFF Board and committee heads

President: Jeff DeVore
President elect: Open
Secretary: Steven Hackett
Treasurer: Walt Petty
Directors at-large: Arlen Thomason, Caleb Hund, Stephen Maher, Roger Stover

Committees of the club

Membership: Tom Fauria (chair), Bala Palani
Conservation: Arlen Thomason and Dave Thomas
House: Jim Dougher
Library: Carolyn Mason
Outings: Greg Williams
Newsletter editor: Ted Taylor

Programs: Al Eckerdt (chair), Jim Mitchell, Jim Rhoten, Bill Laing, Mike Brinkley, Dave Bailey
Website: Stephen Maher
Education: Roger Stover
FFI Rep: Jeff DeVore (chair) Dave Bailey, Mike Emery
Auction: Greg Williams
Annual picnic: Jeff & Joanie DeVore
Holiday party: Bill Neel
Technology: Caleb Hund
Listserv: Carolyn Mason

Projects
- Project Healing Waters: Phil Johnson
- Adopt-A-Highway: Carolyn Mason
- KORC: Carolyn Mason
- McKenzie River Discover Center: Bill Laing and Steve Hackett
- eDNA: Mike Brinkley and Dave Thomas
Great turnout at our Casting Clinic 2023

McKenzie Flyfishers and their guests took over the full length of the shoreline along the “pond” section of the canal at Alton Baker Park on the last Wednesday in June. We had novices and pros and ‘tweeners all working to improve their fly casting with the friendly, expert guidance of Barry Olson and his team of coaches, including Carolyn Mason, Michael T Williams, Bob Rasmussen, and Phil Johnson. Providing further support were Tom Fauria, who brought a welcomed ice chest of bottled water, and Steve Hackett, who brought rods that he borrowed from ODFW to complement the loaded reels provided by Jeff DeVore.

It was a beautiful, warm evening and at one point we had more than 30 anglers participating. I didn’t get a chance to talk with everyone but I can say that the feedback I heard was unanimously positive. One of the things most of us appreciate about fly fishing is that learning and improving is never finished … there is always room to get better. In addition to bettering our casting many enjoyed just as good a time visiting with one another in the shade of the stately trees a few steps away from the pond.

Many thanks to all, and I hope we can do it again next year… maybe even coaxing a few more MFFers to join in the fun.
Crane Prairie did not disappoint

Fish, food and dramatic weather made for a memorable outing

By Tom Fauria

The 2023 Crane Prairie Outing June 22-25 is now in the books. It was well attended by Ted Taylor, Walt and Kathleen Petty, Carolyn Mason, Steve Savill, Arlen Thomason, Stevie Brehm, Mike and Linda Matthews, and fishmasters Tom Fauria, and Phil Johnson.

The Cranebows remained hard to locate spread out in the shallower water, still not in the deeper channels. Catching was intermittent but thrilling when it happened. If my memory is correct, Steve Savill, Mike Matthews, and Phil Johnson shared “high rod” honors for most hookups, “broke-me-off” stories and fish-to-the-net.

Since I couldn’t fish very well with an arm in a sling, the campfires each evening were a highlight. We gathered around the campfire each evening recounting events of present and past happenings on the water as well as favorite camping memories and mishaps. The special features that made the campfires even more enjoyable were ample dry wood, comfortable evening temperatures and the marked absence of skitters to harass us!

We planned a club lunch for 1 pm Saturday. Phil began barbequing brats around 12:30 pm. I set the picnic table with potato salad, baked beans, chips, condiments, etc. Everything was ready to go for a 1 pm lunch launch. What we hadn’t planned on was unexpected weather from Mother Nature in the form of a HUGE rain squall commencing with light rain at about 12:50 pm and then exploding with thunder, lightning, and a torrential downpour at our designated lunch time.

Undaunted, the McKenzie’s went with the flow (literally and figuratively) quickly adapting. Phil set up a folding table under the RV canopy, everyone pitched in to move the food to shelter before it became soaked. Most ate lunch standing under the canopy and a few folding chairs unfolded in available space. This was
accomplished with quiet efficiency supported by a few chuckles and NO whining. Once again, the club overcame the forces of nature attempting to foil a social get-together. By 5 pm, the squall passed, and several of us returned to the lake with the hope that the bite would be on. The lake, now calm without a breath of wind, offered breathtaking vistas of snow-capped volcanoes and a memorable sunset — but few fish were eager to grab our offerings. A good time was had by all!

McKenzie Flyfishers
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