



## *Flycasters, Inc. Broken Paddle Award History*

*1985 – 2017*

*by Marty Seldon, Bob Meacham, Bob Shoberg, & others*

The Flycasters Broken Paddle Award is given at the club's Annual Installation Dinner to a member that had a very unusual experience, made the best stupid or silly error, or messed something up while fishing during the year.

The award was originated by President Van Bozarth in 1983. This older award consisted of cans of Kadota figs donated by one of our members that grew them on his ranch and then had them canned. The award took on special significance and we had to give up the canned figs after one of them exploded in someone's kitchen cabinet. Some of the cans were either quite old or had gone bad. Dave Turner was the first Broken Paddle Award recipient.

The club asks all members to participate in finding interesting awardees that qualify for this special recognition. In many instances there is more than one story. Some of the recipients themselves are not completely sure what happened or why, but willing club members always come to their rescue. The best is in the telling.

### **1985 Dave Turner**

Two stories are told about this award. Dave says he received it for forgetting his waders on two fishouts and getting badly sunburned. Benson says it was for speeding after fishing trip. Benson tells us that he saw Dave speeding on Highway 101 and called him when he got home. Benson told Dave he was with CHP and

Dave had been reported speeding exceedingly fast, and that under a new program they were

going to cite him.....and he believed, and believed, and believed.

### **1986 Benson Kanemoto**

Benson claims that his award was Dave Turner's revenge for what he did to Dave the prior year and that he really never messed up that badly in 1986. However, other club members remember him catching several dead shad off the bottom of the river on a fishout, a more fitting award criterion.

### **1988 Dick Minetti**

Dick Minetti's Paddle winner was for braking his rod, then borrowing another and repeating it again as well as doing a beautifully executed "endo" into the river. It all happened at a the club shad fishout, as the Friedlanders describe it, "Back in those wonderful days when Road 48 was such a shad fisherman's dream. That day Dorothy Zinky effortlessly cast her line all the way across the swollen Sacramento, drifted it perfectly, and caught most of the shad. Dick Minetti took a big "high step" off the bank into a hole just above most of us, and went into a perfect roll, ker plumko! It was hilarious and all of us were watching. Dick, God rest his soul, being a shy and rather quiet guy, took it all in stride and we had great fun with him at that fishout."

### **1989 Don Bonnett**

Don says that his award was based on breaking a rod on two sharks or perhaps it was two rods on one shark. It was something like that.

### **1990 Terry Whitberg**

Terry Whitberg did the Nestera plunge back off his ladder on a Pyramid Lake, Nevada fishout. He lost his balance and slowly went over back first arms out stretched and flapping away, trying to regain what gravity was taking.

### **1991 Bob von Raesfeld**

Bob likes to try out new gear and this time it was Mark Warren's new "U" Boat float tube at Manzanita Lake. Bob may have under-inflated the tube and when he cast to the left without turning the tube around. All the weight on one side flipped the tube over and he could not release the clip with his weight against it. Bob pushed back upright several times to get air and to yell for help but the tube kept flopping over on top of him. Steve Hall, Mike Gains and Dean Lindberg as well as Ralph Eddy heard the commotion on the other side of the lake and said, "Bob is over there and he'll help the poor soul out." The ruckus continued and they saw Terry Whitberg and two men in a row boat rushing to help. Terry got their first and kept his head above water and the men in the boat righted the tube. Bob said as he was getting too weak to push up anymore he hoped that whoever got to him knew CPR. Terry and the men in the boat did get there just in time. Bob was coughing and vomiting for a few minutes and was totally exhausted. A little later Bob kicked over to the other side but at first did not admit to Dean that he was the one that went over. Bob later put in a fair amount of effort to get the manufacturer to use Velcro fasteners instead of the faulty buckles and they have since corrected the problem. The club was very happy that Bob was still around to receive the award.

### **1992 Dean Lindberg**

On a fishout, Dean had the honor of falling out of boat in Monterey Bay in front of most of the club. Bob von Raesfeld still seems to delight in embellishing on Dean's spill that year.

### **1993 Ray Lou**

Ray Lou was on a fishing trip with Dave Drennan. Dave took Ray to one of his favorite bass ponds and was pointing out all of the fish. While Ray was walking and looking at the fish he didn't notice that the shoreline was veering off to his left and Ray ended up falling into the pond. Word has it that Ray also stepped into a large hole on the Sacramento River three times that same year.

### **1994 Walt Robinson**

At the Installation Dinner prior to his award Walt Robinson was at one of the dinner tables whose centerpiece caught on fire from one of the candles. Walt ended up putting out the fire with a few glasses of wine and a glass of beer that were left on the table. Several members have accused him of starting the fire.

### **1995 Chris Arbulish**

Chris received this award for hooking and fighting a rock in Monterey Bay for over 45 minutes. John James says this one and Carol's Award in 1998 had him in tears.

### **1996 Paul Leong**

Paul is the first to admit that he did not deserve the Broken Paddle Award and protested that Dick Gasser getting sandwiched in his float tube was more hilarious. However, part of our tradition is for the outgoing Broken Paddle awardee to make the final selection. In 1995 it was Chris Arbulish and Paul suspects that Chris wanted to get even for a prank Paul did to him on a fishing trip. Paul finally did admit to breaking the two Sage rods on successive fishouts. He also now confesses that he was so intent on avoiding the Broken Paddle Award that he completely hid the real incident that would have really qualified him that year. On a trip to Henderson Springs he had been warned by Ted Adachi that the rainbows were very spooky and to be very stealthy when approaching the banks. Paul found that they did spook and kept inching his way toward the bank when his casts fell short. As he got closer and closer...splash! The edge of the steep bank broke loose. Next thing he knew, half his body was struggling to hold on dear ground while the other half was frantically trying to get out of the water. He finally got back on top and managed to bring his entire body to safe ground. When he started to retrieve his rod a 16" rainbow attacked the fly. Paul was very happy that he landed and released the fish, but he was worried that Ted might have witnessed the dump and mentioned it to Flycasters. See, the right man won after all.

### **1997 Brain Gann**

There are two stories about this award. Perhaps they both happened. Brian fished all day with Paul Leong and kept complaining about how cold he was. He cursed his waders, only to find out later that they had a couple of holes in them and he never knew it. The second tale involves another 1997 fishing trip. Brian was tying a knot, put the line in his mouth to moisten it, and then got his tongue caught in the middle of the knot when he cinched it down.

### **1998 Carol von Raesfeld**

Carol Von Raesfeld: Carol and Bob were fishing with Bob's grandson, Bob had just taught the lad how to cast. Carol was near by in her float tube. Bob went back to the cabin for a minute. His grandson was standing on the shore casting his fly. He was standing on a point and casting around the point when he had positioned himself so Carol was floating behind him. She said she just about to yell to him not to cast when he did. His backcast rolled backed and his fly hooked the inflation tab on Carol's inflatable vest. the momentum of his forward cast pulled the tab and inflated Carol's vest. Carol had a hard time making it back to shore because the vest had bunched up and was cutting off the circulation to her arms.

### **1999 Hugh Miller**

Hugh was fishing in the East Fork of the Carson River and got into some large trout. The adrenaline was flowing. He spotted a "huge" rainbow trout and quickly maneuvered downstream to get in a better position. He cast once and then tried again with some difficulty. Rolling in laughter, the others in the party, called to Hugh to tell him that his neoprene reel cover was still on the reel.

### **2000 Marty Seldon**

At Fred Houwink's 95th birthday party, Marty was presenting Fred with a club certificate that he had framed with large flies that he had not debarbed. As he held out the frame to give to Fred, he got hooked and deep in his left hand. At first people thought it was a joke, but it took Mike McNutt some time and a trip to the car for tools to get him released. Mike pushed the hook through and nipped off the barb.

## 2001 Mike McNutt

Dean Lindberg and Mike McNutt launched Mike's boat at Sugar Barge Marina at the Dan Blanton November Striperfest. Mike had just had a \$1000 rewiring job and the Motor cranked right up with just a few turns of the key. Mike tried to turn on the Fish Finder. No power. Tried the lights. Nothing. The bilge pump. Again, nothing. Mike started to exclaim, with the wit and wisdom of a proud Marine, "The SOB that did this job was going to wish he and all of his ancestors were never born."

Dean hooked up his stern electric trolling motor he brought. Mike didn't have one and Dean told him it was a lot easier to move around with the electric. Mike finally relaxed and they went fishing. He told Mike to run the electric motor as slowly as possible as they cast along the riprap. Mike suddenly told him he had not only never run an electric, but that this was the first time he had taken his boat out. **FIRST TIME OUT?**

When Dean realized this, he began making steering suggestions to Mike and specifically told him to watch where his fly line was in relation to the motor and about mishaps fishing with Steve Hall. A short time later, Mike lost track of his fly line because the line swung under the boat and it happened. The shooting head was wrapped completely around the prop. Mike kept trying to turn off the motor and quickly put his 9wt Redington down on the rod holder, but did not secure it. Dean anxiously tried to tell Mike to turn the motor off with the toggle switch not the handle, and when he glanced back, Mike's rod fell on the deck and broke off the tip. Dean went back to the stern to help Mike with the line and finally had to take the prop off to unwrap it. The prop had cut up the first 5 or 6 feet of the shooting head. Mike couldn't believe it, broken rod and cut line at the same time. At dinner Bill Nash, tied a new loop on the shooting head and he was now able to use it on his 8wt rod.

The next day Dean suggested that he play gillie for Mike because he caught 7 fish to Mike's none. He agreed whole heartily and they were off. Mike caught a few schoolie stripers and Dean managed a nice smallmouth, a 4 pound striper, and a little schoolie.

After the Striperfest BBQ they went out again, but the weather started to turn. With the wind and rain picking up, Mike suggested they pull the boat out. Dean went hooked up the trailer they left in the yard but backed down the ramp with the trailer only half way into the water because he wanted to first pull the bowline off the winch and hook up the boat without getting wet. Mike, not knowing what the plan was, drove the boat up onto the trailer, but was only able to get half way up the ways. Dean wanted to back down further, but Mike insisted they hook up the line and winch it in, now. As Dean cranked the boat in, the weight kept increasing because the boat was more out of water than in it. At this point, a young man who was already wet from cranking in another boat offered to crank it up for them because he could get his arm in better position. He was doing a good job when suddenly there was a loud, bad bang, the sound of something breaking. Sounds like the strap broke, right? No, how about the "U" bolt that anchors the winch post to the trailer. With help from bystanders and the young man, they finally were able to get the boat on the trailer after Dean backed it into the water a proper amount.

Locals told them where to find a "U" bolt, at the hardware/grocery store by the Island bridge. With their help at the store and tools, they were able to make a temporary fix to the winch post. By this time, they had had enough and decided to go home. Before leaving they decided to do a light check, and suddenly found that only the turn signals, 4-way emergency lights, and break lights worked. It was 6:30 p.m., dark, raining, and the only way for other drivers to see the boat trailer was to drive all the way home from Bethel Island with the 4-way flashers on. It's amazing the CHP didn't stop them. Adding it up, it was one fly line, one Redington 9wt, one

"U" bolt/winch, and a shot electrical system, all in two days. At least they didn't lose either the boat or the trailer and the club got a worthy broken paddle awardee.

## **2002 Jo Clark and runner up Bob Eury**

Jo brought her husband to the club's November Klamath River fishout. After the day of floating down river, they stopped short of where the car was. Jo, rather than going further down stream in the strong current to a safe way back up the hill, decided to take the shortest route back to the car and took off alone into the brush.

She got about half way in still on her bee line up the hill and suddenly found herself in a blackberry patch. She continued and it got a lot worse. There were long vines with stickers around her legs, around her arms, around her rod and she soon came to a complete stop unable to move. As panic set in, Jo, who says she never cries, broke out in tears.

Her calls for help finally reached her husband, already searching for her, and finding her shouted, "What are you doing in there and why did you do something so stupid?" The club machete crew got busy and in short order Jo was back on the trail with all her gear. She only had a few bangs and scratches and the club got its 2002 broken paddle recipient.

Flycaster Bob Eury got Runner-Up recognition this year. Bob, who recently moved to Eureka drove down to the same Klamath River fishout with his new pontoon bait. Bob got it all assembled, pumped up, and was off to the races. Several miles downstream, he suddenly found that his rear end was in the water and that he lost his supposed to be high up position. Bob pulled to the side, pumped up the pontoons and was off again. Needless to say this routine went about three times during the float and he never did figure out the problem. Because of the lateness of his nomination, President Sue Larson presented Bob with his award, a Fly Fisherman Magazine article on how to use a pontoon boat.

## **2003 Jim Issacson**

One of the club's oldest fishouts is for Lahanton cutthroat trout at Pyramid Lake, Nevada, 35 miles northeast of Reno. At the 2003 fishout, Jim Issacson was awarded the Flycasters Broken Paddle Award when he fell off his ladder, got soaked and had to go back to the cabin for a complete set of dry clothing.

## **2004 Pete Abreu**

This year's winner was a candidate for multiple incidents during the year. On the March Fishout to the Kings River our recipient, remembering a warning from that morning about rattlesnakes in the area, was approaching the river when he heard a rattling. Without actually seeing the snake he turned and bolted back across the rocky river bed and in the process slipped and fell. He not only skinned his knee but managed to break a fly rod in the fall. Then, during the June Fishout to Upper Klamath, using a newly acquired but very used float tube, he again heeded warning about over-inflation of such an old float tube and proceeded to under-inflate it to the point that he immediately sunk in the lake, getting completely soaked and filling his waders. He then over-inflated it and ripped a seam on the old tube, making it barely usable.

## **2005 Bob Shoberg**

The Annual Eagle Lake Fishout has become a tradition. Bob Shoberg was in the 7<sup>th</sup> day of his 4 day trip, not catching fish seems to make the time pass sooooo muuucch slooower. He had done everything he could to catch fish. He hung around with the right fishermen, fished where they fished and when they caught fish he asked the right questions. "Where did you catch it?" "What speed did you strip your fly?" "What line did you use?" "How deep was it?" "What fly" "What color is it?" "Do you have any more?" "No, can I borrow that one?" But, all without success. He even turned to his religion and anointed himself with Holy Water and smoke. Actually, it was Manhattens and

cigars, but it was the thought. He tried and tried.

On Saturday morning the group decided to travel the bumpy 4 wheel drive road out to Shrimp Island. Bob was excited because he had had success there in past years and he was sure to break his bad luck and catch a fish. We piled into the vehicles and Bob was riding with me in my Jeep. We crept along the 4 wheel drive road, sliding over bumps and dips. At one point the right front tire hit a deep hole. As the Jeep bottomed out in the hole I looked to my right and saw part of the door panel between Shoberg and the seat as he crashed into the roof. He then fell back into the seat in a pile. As the rear tire entered the dip I thought, "Gee, Wonder why Bob never told me he could levitate." While at the same time thinking, "What kind of dummy rides along a rough road like this without his seat belt on?" Bob can probably still show you the scars on his head.

We arrived at the Shrimp Island area to find the water flat dead calm, as if it were from the "Rhyme of the Ancient Mariner". We fished that area hard scattering out and moving over lots of water. Things were not looking good for Bob catching a fish. Moving along Bob waded out into a small bay created by a small point of land. On his second cast he found redemption. He hooked and played a nice thick trout with hoots and laughter emitting from him every time the fish tried to run. He was drawing a crowd, everyone on the shore came over to watch him with play his fish and even boats out in the water were stopping to see what all the noise was about. He finally got it close enough to consider netting. Removing his net from his vest he then brought the fish over towards him but it was just far enough away that every swipe of his net just hit the tail and prompted the fish to swim harder, bending the rod making more distance between Bob and the fish. Bob then proceeded to repeatedly try to net the fish but only succeeded in chasing it further out into deeper water. Finally after hearing all of the cries of "Bring him back into

the shallows" from everyone on the shore Bob was able to turn the fish and chase it back into the shallow water attempting to net it at almost every step of the way in, succeeding in only flipping the tail. At long last, and with a great roar of relief and laughter, he was able to slip the fish into his net. Success was his! He then brought his prize fish up onto the shore to remove it from the net and allow for posing with his 20" trout. After making sure all the pictures were taken he returned the fish to the water and holding it's tail moved it forward and back in the water until it was revived and swam back out into deeper water.

With the swagger of a successful fisherman Bob strode back over to his rod. Picking up his rod he excitedly commented, "I've got another fish on!" Only to quickly realize, "No, it was the same fish!" In all of his excitement and relief Bob Shoberg had forgotten to remove the fly from the fish's mouth.

### **2006 Ron Cremo**

Ron was initially noticed for this award when he went out fishing in his boat and took his dog along with him. His wife Joan warned him that their dog might jump out of the boat and suggested that he tie the dog up. Well Ron, being a well trained husband tied the dog to one of the oar locks but left about 6-7 feet of line between the oar lock and dog. While Ron was motoring down the lake and not paying attention he heard a splash. The dog had jumped out of the boat and with so much slack, the rope got wound around the motor and pulled the dog under water almost drowning it. Ron got the boat stopped, unwound the rope and got the dog back into the boat losing his only pair of glasses in the process but the dog was so scared to pressed its wet head and nose deeply into Ron's crouch and kept it there all the way back to the dock. There is no need to elaborate on what Ron looked like walking back to his car with a wet crouch.

If that was not enough, the clincher was at Eagle Lake... Flycaster Bob Shoberg was fishing about 15' from shore and heard a splash

behind him. Ron, while standing on the shore in less than 6" of water had fallen over his feet, broke his favorite rod, and as a bonus, filled his waders with water... While fellow Flycasters Bob Meacham and Terry Ward stood there watching and laughing.

## **2007 Walt McIntyre**

Walt McIntyre... where do I start?

In July at the Manzanita Lake Fishout Walt traveled up to Lassen Park with Jim Consel. Walt was driving his SUV and arriving at the Manzanita Campground on Thursday they drove around looking for a reservation sign on a campsite that said "Flycasters". They drove through all of the many loops multiple times and did not find campgrounds marked for "Flycasters" without realizing that it might be under the name of the Fishmaster, "Davis". They had seen a sign for a Group Campground a few more miles into Lassen so they decided to make a run up there to see if the "Flycasters" group was at that site. Somewhere along the way they both noticed a repetitive metallic sound coming from the SUV. Thinking they were having problems with a U-joint or drive line they stopped along the side of the very narrow roads of Lassen Park and tried find the problem. Neither being able to get under the car they decided to straddle the roadside ditch to get clearance to get under the vehicle. After straddling the ditch and getting a look under they discovered that they must have hit a stick or branch and it had bent a piece of sheet metal up and that was hitting the coupling at the back of the transmission each time the drive line rotated. They fixed the noise problem and went back to looking for the Flycasters. By the time they got back to the Manzanita Campground, other club members were in the reserved sites and they located the proper sites. Not a great start to Walt's trip.

One of the things about the Manzanita Campgrounds is that the showers are not in the campgrounds but attached to a general store at the entrance to the campgrounds. So, when it

became time to take a shower, you had to either walk a short distance or take a car and park at the store. Walt decided to save his energy for the fishing and chose to drive over to take a shower. Only problem is the showers area is not too secure and so people tend to leave their valuables in the car. Walt however also left his keys in his car and came back to find he had locked himself, and Jim, out of the car. Then it turns out the Park Rangers are not equipped or allowed to open locked cars. Walt soon found out that the nearest towing company, and slim jim opener, was half way to Red Bluff. So Walt placed a call and waited well over an hour for the tow truck and driver to get his SUV open. The 50 cent shower had rapidly becoming a much more expensive item. Walt was still not having a great trip.

After a couple of days of fishing Manzanita Lake without hooking, landing or touching a fish Walt & Jim decided to go outside the Park and try their luck in Hat Creek. So, on Saturday afternoon they headed out to fish Hat. Parked at Hat Creek, they were getting rigged up when Walt realized he had broken his fly rod at the ferrel. Not having a back up rod he looked in his SUV and found a roll of that magical "Duct Tape". He duct taped his rod together and fished it that afternoon, again coming away with the same results he had in Manzanita Lake.

So, in one short trip Walt McIntyre had gotten a little lost, had to do emergency repairs (minor as they were) on his SUV along the side of the road, locked himself out of his vehicle and had to pay to get it opened, broke a fly rod and gotten skunked fishing. Walt followed that by totally missing the campground at the Kings River fishout...

## **2008 Mike Brinkley**

During the Manzanita Lake Fishout in June, one member of our club distinguished himself as deserving the Broken Paddle Award.

Mike Brinkley arrived at Manzanita Lake but forgot his wading boots. After borrowing a set of boots from Rene's, Mike proceeded to rig his fly rod and leaned it against the car. He closed the car door on his favorite rod. His 7 piece rod became an 8 piece broken rod. Mike then had to borrow a 4 weight fly rod from the fishmaster Bob Davis.

While launching his float tube Mike turned his back and the tube floated out into the lake witnessed by Walt McIntyre. In his attempt to catch his float tube Mike tried to run across the top of the water with one flipper on, one off. There was a lot of splashing before Mike sank.

Finally while waiting for everyone to finish dinner on Saturday Night, in the midst of a 1/4" hail storm, he asked the cook why we didn't have ice cream to top the fresh apple pie.

**2009 – No winner** – Apparently in 2009 nobody was observed making stupid or silly error, or messing something up while fishing during the year. At least, nothing worth receiving such a prestigious award.

**2010 – No Winner** – This award is decided upon by the previous year winner. Mike had moved to Oregon and was not at club fishouts.

## **2011 Steve Duckett**

Steve Duckett was the high bidder for the Buck's Bag float tube at the Winter Banquet in February. Steve decided to try out his new tube on the Shadow Cliffs fishout in early March. Arrived Saturday morning, he got his gear all set up, inflated his new tube and headed for the water. He placed the tube on the water, waded out, sat down in the tube, it suddenly popped a fill value seam and immediately collapsed. He

ended up with water rushing over his waders and got completely soaked. He then slogged back across the parking lot to his car with his equipment dragging the flattened tube and, needless to say, it was the end of his fishing day. He did hang around to visit with some of the other members for a few hours to dry out before heading home.

This was made even more relevant because in 2010 Steve was awarded the club's Angler of the Year as outstanding angler, now only the next year to be receiving the Broken Paddle Award. In the words of 2011 President Wade Goertz, "Oh, how the mighty have fallen!"

## **2011 Runners Up (but not by much) Dave Pellone & Rick Davis**

It might be a little unfair, nominating **Dave Pellone** for the Broken Paddle Award. After all, he is a first year member and new to fly fishing. However, I believe the following story be considered.

At the Bridgeport Fishout in June of 2011, Dave Pellone made plans to tag along with fishmaster and club president Wade Goertz while fishing the East Walker River. *This ill guided decision alone would probably put Dave in the running for The Broken Paddle - but there is more to this story.*

The two parked their vehicles just upstream from the bridge. Wade was geared up and ready to go in short order, while Dave needed time to get his rod rigged and to put on his wading boots and vest. Wade pointed out the short trail to the river's edge and told Dave to come down as soon as he was ready. After having fished in one spot for about 20 minutes and Wade saw no sign of Dave, so he moved upstream a few yards. Another 15 minutes passed and still no Dave. Wade moved a little further upstream to fish. After twenty minutes at this spot without success, having fished for almost an hour, Wade was ready to move on to another spot on the East Walker and returned to where he and Dave had parked. Nearing the cars he noticed Dave was just getting ready to

tramp down to the river. Wade asked, "What took so long?"

"You won't believe it" replied Dave pointing to his wading boots. "I got these wading boots on sale and this is the first time I have worn them. As soon as I tried to put my feet in I could tell they were too small. I spent 30 minutes trying everything to get my feet inside ... and I just knew I had bought the wrong size. And they weren't just a little too small - they were too small by more than an inch. I kept loosening the shoelaces more and more ... no luck. I took off my socks and tried a different pair - no change. I started to think I was going to have to wade the river in my street shoes. I finally looked inside and saw that I had never taken the wadded up paper stuffed into the toe of the boots!"

With an upcoming fishing trip to a private lake in Northern California destined for large trout, **Rick Davis** decided to get in some casting practice. He loaded up his equipment and headed out to the ponds in mid-February. He set his gear on the table under the gazebo and started to set up his rod. Standing in the area at the junction of the two ponds he began feeding his line through the guides. With his mind on the big trout he was planning on hooking, he fed the line up the length of the rod, the butt sitting on the ground. To reach the tiptop he had to reach up, stretching up and stepping back slightly as the rod lowered, he backed off the edge of the first pond, his foot slipping down the side of the pond and falling completely into the pond getting soaked from head to toe. Since the ponds had not yet been cleaned before the club casting classes, he was not only wet but covered in the algae and muck. With the sides covered by the algae Rick had to struggle to get back out, embarrassed and wet.

Luckily he had driven his SUV making the trip home a bit easier and the vehicle easier to clean up.

## 2012 Trent Jorgenson

The story spread quickly through the fishing world, has been retold at campfires and gatherings and has come back to us as both legend and lore. Evidently, while fishing during the Pyramid Lake Fishout, Trent Jorgenson dragged his ladder out into the lake and while standing on it had some "balance issues", not unlike that of a drunken man trying to stay upright. And, he is now known by the Pyramid locals as the "Teeter Totter Ladder Man".

## 2013 John Luis, and the Yamsi Ranch

When I received the broken paddle award in 2012 Wade Goertz pointed out if you read through the list of recipients through the years, how the broken paddle award kind of read like the Flycasters clubs "Hall of Fame". He also indicated how it became my responsibility to choose the next in line to receive this prestigious award. This responsibility I took to heart.

Soon after I began to notice *what I considered* to be a fair amount of politicking going on by some of our members as they began relating some good stories worthy of the "*hall of fame*". It dawned on me I should pay attention to the fact we are all fly fisherman who have a reputation or the ability to let's say "stretch a story" and that I should be on my guard, careful not to be led to far by a "*stretched*" story told by an experienced fly fisherman.

John Luis had once told a story claiming that while up on the Yamsi Ranch he had gotten so stuck in the swamp ground of the river that it had virtually cleaned him of all his gear, waders, vest, rod etc.. to hear him tell it he was lucky to get out in his underwear. Mired in muck up to his thighs and forearms he had to roll out of the swamp and crawl out on hands and knees.

To give you some perspective of what I considered *the color* in John's tale I'll try and relate a story I had once read of a Montana cowboy who had become infamous for his ability to stretch a story.

As the gentlemen cowboy was in town at the local watering hole, with a crowd of fellow cowboys within earshot he tells how his horse had fallen in a gopher hole breaking the horse's leg, rolling on top of him breaking his leg as well. Laying under his horse in excruciating pain and unable to remove himself from under his horse he scanned the horizon for another rider but in such open country another rider was quite a reach and likely not to happen for days. An unsuspecting patron unaware of the cowboys reputation asked "well how were you able to save yourself". On this the cowboy struck "Well I had to walk 9 miles of open country before I found a pole long enough to wedge that horse of my broken leg".

I'm guessing that cowboy was probably quite a fly fisherman maybe even as good a fly fisherman as John Luis.

As things go it turns out John's story was confirmed at the Flycasters meeting by John Hyde the owner of Yamsi Ranch when he related the story of how he had pointed out to John Luis and Rick Davis how a mule deer or some cattle must have gotten stuck and struggled through the swamp, that it had cleared quite a path to the river. John Luis informed him it was actually he who had nearly lost his long johns trying to extricate himself from the swamp. To hear John Hyde tell it the path was so well cleared by John Luis it has led many an unsuspecting fisherman to the same fate.

#### **2014 Terry Ward** aka "Dunkin' Donuts"

After the days at Lava Lakes for the Oregon Fishout several of us decided to head over to Davis Lake, about an hour south, to fish for trophy sized Bass. This is the Davis Lake in Oregon. One of our party was fellow club member Terry Ward. Now, Terry has a reputation of being slow but deliberate, usually being the last one rigged up and on the water for any group.

At Davis Lake for some unusual reason, Terry was quick and the first person ready to get onto the lake. From our launch point, one had a narrow channel to navigate for about 60 yards

to get to the open water, between the piles of lava rock on one side and the reeds on the other. Terry was in his float tube before everyone else and launched.

Terry then made an unscheduled stop for Dunkin' Donuts.

I, Bob Meacham, had just sat down to change from my sandals to my fins when I heard a huge SPLASH! Looking up I could see the underside of Terry's float tube with water splashing all around it about 40 feet down the channel. Then, in a scene reminiscent of the water scene in the movie "GI Jane", I saw Terry's wet shaved head surface from being completely submerged under the water, pushing up the float tube over the top of him as he came up. In the time it took me to run across the dirt, wade out to him and the top of my waders, he had disappeared and resurfaced like that three more times struggling with the tube (he was still strapped into it) and trying to get his footing with his swim fins on (not an easy task). Grabbing his tube and his jacket, I help stabilize him so that he could get his footing and stand up. We were in about 4 ½ feet of water. Looking around it reminded me of a "yard sale". Both of his rods were sticking up out of the water, his hat and gear was floating everywhere. Soaked to the skin, he easily made it back to shore while I retrieved his rods and gear. Turns out one of his rods fell off the front of his tube and he had reached for it getting his center of gravity out in front of the tube, allowing it to flip up from the back.

It was a scary situation but luckily the only things lost were a pair of sunglasses and Terry's dignity.

## 2014 Runners up -Dave Pellone and Mason Siem

The first morning of the Truckee River fishout, Fishmaster **Dave Pellone** dutifully awoke at 5:30am and brewed a big pot of coffee.

Everyone agreed it was good coffee and some even had a second cup. As everyone finished breakfast and was gearing up for a day on the Little Truckee River, Dave threw away the last of the pot and started cleaning up. Walt McIntyre quietly asked if there was any coffee - it seems he had never gotten even a first cup. Always eager to oblige, Dave filled the pot and placed it on the stove and lit the fire. Within minutes it was bubbling away --- Walter asking every few minutes "Is it ready yet?" and the water in the see through bubble was still clear and consequently the coffee wasn't ready yet. 20 minutes passed and still the water ran clear - -- 30 minutes and Dave checked and said, "Something must be wrong with the coffee pot - it's just not brewing." Dave turned off the fire and continued to get ready for fishing. Walter was heartbroken - no morning coffee ...

Wade Goertz decided to investigate and lifted the lid of the basket to see if the coffee grounds had ever gotten wet --- and spotted the problem ... Dave had filled the pot with water and lit the fire but had neglected to add coffee to the brew basket.

Upon hearing this Walter once again asked "So, are you going to make a fresh pot of coffee or not?"

Since it was getting pretty late in the morning -- - Dave replied, "Sorry Walter, I messed up. You can have the first cup tomorrow morning" Walter had the look of a kid who had just been told that Christmas had been cancelled.

So, a runner up goes to Dave for his coffee making skills.

It was reported that one of our members, **Mason Siem**, headed up to the annual Pyramid Fishout in 2014. In searching for a good place to fish he drove his vehicle too close to the water's edge and onto the soft shore getting stuck all the way down to the axles. After some futile attempts to get out, some frustration and searching he was able to find another fisherman with a pickup to pull him out of the mud. And, if that was not bad enough, he also got skunked for the entire trip.

So, a runner up goes to Mason for both his superior driving and fishing skills.

## 2015 Jim Bjerrum

While fishing Little Virginia Lake in his float tube in June, Jim was having a hard time staying afloat.

Jim assumed it was because he hadn't been in his float tube in a while and that he was a little out of his element. As he continued to kick around the lake he was having more and more difficulty keeping upright.

Jim kicked over to the far shore and figured he would re-position himself --

As he neared shore he gave a mighty shove to get his rear end back in the seat and discovered that nearly all the air had gone out of his float tube.

It would have been funnier if Jim hadn't gotten himself into a close call with going completely under ... but he kept a cool head and struggled to shore.

A cool head and a completely soaked Jim had to dry off on the bank and hike the long trail back to his car at Little Virginia Lake resort.

Jim did the rest of his fishing that week from shore ....

## 2016 Gairel Gandrud

It hardly seems fair ---

Not only was this Gairel Gandrud's first trip with the club – it was his first trip fly fishing

In fact it was Gairel's first DAY fly fishing.

Gairel and his wife Mary Beth were on the Beaverhead River in Montana, guests at the Big Hole Lodge on the 2016 Montana fishout.

The banks of the Beaverhead are pretty steep and Mary Beth was having trouble getting up and out of the river – her gallant husband Gairel moved in to lend a hand.

Gairel was able to help Mary Beth up onto the bank, but as he stepped up the bank himself he fell backwards completely into the Beaverhead.

Soaked from head to toe – Gairel spent the next couple of hours drying out his waders and his shirt.

Thank God Gairel wasn't hurt – other than being a bit cold and wet – but it seems a shame that his chivalry resulted in his being awarded the Broken Paddle Award.

**The Future:** All members are asked to be on the alert for good nominees during the year and alert them to the Club President and the prior year's recipient as soon as they happen.

## 2017 Chuck Hammerstad

Chuck tells the following story which took place on Christmas Island.

*While fishing a flat targeting mainly bonefish, my guide Menty spotted a suspended feeding Triggerfish well within easy casting distance. I cast my bonefish fly in front of the Triggerfish and after about 5 twitches of the fly, the Triggerfish took the fly. After an immediate long run across the sandy flat, it stopped and made a fast run toward a coral flat where Menty was standing to deter the fish from going onto the flat and cutting the tippet on the sharp coral. The fish turned and took another long run to a large hole in the sandy flat, which it entered with the fly still in its lip. Menty walked up to the hole and motioned for me to join him near the hole while reeling in line. With the rod still bent, Menty handed me his radio, sunglasses, buff and cap and proceeded to dive about 3 feet down to the hole and came up holding the Triggerfish by the tail. Thanks to Menty, this was my first Triggerfish to the hand in three trips to Christmas Island.*

*To free my hands to hold the fish for a photo, I returned his gear and then he transferred the tailed fish into my left hand while keeping the fish's head in the water. With my camera in Menty's hand, I placed my rod under my right armpit then placed my right hand under the belly of the fish and moved it into a horizontal position to capture a couple of photos. **I was not thinking about the position of my rod in front of the fish's mouth when suddenly the Triggerfish chomped down on the butt section of my fly rod and crushed the graphite rod with its powerful jaw and large teeth.** The aggressive Triggerfish would not release the grip on my rod until the fish and rod were lowered into the water. After the fish let go of my rod, Menty took some photos of the 5-6 lb. Triggerfish. By that point, however, the fish had gotten its revenge: it had damaged my rod so severely that the bottom section broke after a slight flexing, creating a 5-piece rod out of my original 4-piece rod. We released the "Trigger" unharmed, but now I needed another rod to continue fishing. After summoning the boat, I retrieved my back-up rod and continued to fish the flats the remainder of the day.*

*Back at The Villages Lodge that evening, all of the guest fly fishers wanted to hear the story of my encounter with the revengeful Triggerfish. It will be story that will probably be told many times by those who were present to hear the tale.*

*Unfortunately, we didn't get a photo of the fish with the rod in its mouth. However, the photo (above) shows the rod in position under my arm prior to the fish biting into the butt section. This was an unforgettable moment that I will always remember as the "Revenge of the Triggerfish."*