February 2026 | Official Newsletter of St. Joe River Valley Fly Fishers

THE LOOP

Tom Rondo, Editor

Wednesday, February 18 at Finnies Next Door

223 S. Main St. South Bend, IN

SJRVFF WELCOMES:

CHARLIE PERKINS

of Mayfly Outfitters will be our speaker for February. His presentation will be on Patagonia.



About our Guest:

Charlie Perkins is the founder of Mayfly Outfitters, a brick-and-mortar specialty fly fishing shop, located on the north side of Holland. He has over 25-years of professional experience in the fly-fishing industry. In addition to his years of retail experience as a shop owner, he has served the mid-west states of Michigan, Indiana, Ohio, and Kentucky as a fly-fishing sales representative for companies including R. L. Winston, he is a long time FFI certified casting instructor, currently serves on the Board of Directors for the FFI Great Lakes Council, and is a Lifetime member of the FFI.

Charlie grew up fishing for trout on the South Branch of the AuSable with his father in the late 70s and early 80s. “Over the years, I’ve really grown to love fishing rivers for both trout and smallmouth bass. While dry fly fishing is my preference, I also really enjoy fishing streamers from a drift boat, and swinging wet flies while wade fishing.” “Over the past couple of years, I’ve spent quite a bit of time fishing with enthusiastic customers and my mostly college aged staff. I get just as much enjoyment getting them on a big fish or experiencing a really good hatch as I do fishing, myself.”

Charlie is a long-time resident along the lakeshore. He currently resides in Grand Haven, with his wife Paula, son Trent, and daughter Leah. He spent his formative years in Saginaw, moving to West Michigan shortly after he was married in 1993. He received his undergraduate degree in English and Economics from Albion College, and a Masters in Accounting degree from Grand Valley State University.

Auction Prep Column

SJRVFF Auction is March 18, 2026!

Please mark your calendars to attend the auction that occurs at our club meeting on March 18th. As you know, this is our primary fundraiser that supports all of the club’s conservation and education initiatives.

This year’s auction will include rods, guide trips, flies tied by club members, some great fly-tying materials, rod building materials and more.

We’ve got so much stuff we’re still putting the details together.

If you have any new or gently used equipment collecting dust or to give you a reason to buy a new rod, please consider donating the item(s) to the auction. If possible, please bring the items to the February meeting. If you can't bring them, please feel free to contact Billy at 574-607-7147 and he will arrange to get them from you prior to the day of the auction.

Thanks for your consideration.

Presidents Column: by Don Reber

Get involved!

As it has been said, *the strength of any organization is determined by the involvement of its members*. This certainly pertains to us. As an organization we attempt to provide you, the members, with educational and enjoyable programs that help you become a better Fly Fisherman. Accomplishing this takes a tremendous amount of work. As with a lot of volunteer organizations, many times the burden of this falls on the shoulders of a few hard working and dedicated members. However, we need MORE help and that's where more membership involvement is needed. We are currently looking to fill the following positions: 1 year director, Committee chairperson and members for the Nominating committee, Ghillie, Webmaster/ social media, Awards, Grants and Education. Please reach out to me if you have questions or would be interested in filling one of these positions.

Congratulations to Mark Bardusk for winning the Fly Tyer of the Year award. Mark could not attend the December meeting, so he received his award in January. Nicely done Mark!!!

Fly tying classes are back!! Thanks to Jeff Stanifer we started the intermediate fly-tying class on February 3rd. We are also in the early planning stages of holding a members only fly-tying day at the Elkhart Conservation Club. Watch for more information soon

Thank you for continued support and we hope to see you at the February meeting.

Don

DIRECTORS:

President:	Don Reber
Vice President:	Eric Graham
Treasurer:	Roger McFall
Assistant Treasurer:	Jim Oresko
Secretary:	David Van Antwerp
1 Yr Director:	Vacant
1 Yr Director:	John Mertes
2 Yr Director:	Jake Rigdon
2 Yr Director:	Greg Sautter
3 Yr Director:	Keith Frainier
3 Yr Director:	Ron Weaver

COMMITTEE CHAIRS:

Activities Coor:	Keith Frainier
Conservation:	Tim Scott
Financial Review:	John Mertes
Membership:	Don Reber
Nominating Committee:	Vacant
Ghillie:	Vacant
Raffle Director:	Greg Sautter
Webmaster/Social Media:	Vacant
Audio/Visual/IT:	Brandon Rasler
Newsletter/Loop:	Tom Rondo
Awards:	Vacant
Grants:	Vacant
Education:	Vacant

Meeting & membership

Membership Renewal Time!

Membership renewal dues can be paid at the club meeting or by mail to:

SJRVFF
P.O. Box 933
South Bend, IN 46624

You can also pay your dues by credit card through the web site. Click on the "Join SJRVFF" tab and down toward the bottom you will see where you can pay via PayPal.

The dues are still just $30.00 for individuals and $45.00 for a family membership.



Meeting Details:

Doors open at 6:30 PM
Meal at 7:00
Meeting starts about 7:30

Location:
Finnies Next Door
223 S. Main St. South Bend, IN

Parking is free.

Meal cost $25.00/person

Menu

TBD

We need you to RSVP for dinner or we cannot provide a meal for you. Get your name in!
RSVP by emailing at
rkmcfall4999@att.net
or call
269-470-4801

Please respond by 9:00pm Friday.



20th Annual Tie-A-Thon Launches to Support Healing and Education Through Fly Fishing

South Bend, IN – November 2025 — The 20th Annual Tie-A-Thon is officially underway! What began two decades ago as a small community effort in northern Indiana has grown into a national movement uniting fly tyers of all skill levels for one shared purpose — to give back through the art of fly tying.

This milestone year, Tie-A-Thon is proud to support five exceptional organizations whose missions use fly fishing to promote healing, growth, and education:

- Reel Recovery – based in Massachusetts, helping men living with cancer find renewal through fly fishing retreats and fellowship.
- Fishing the Good Fight – based in Colorado, advancing men's mental health awareness and connection through fly fishing.
- Black Mountain Home for Children, Youth, and Families – located in North Carolina, empowering youth through outdoor education and fly fishing programs.
- Lee University Fly Fishing Education – located in Tennessee, integrating fly fishing into higher education as a tool for stewardship and personal growth.
- Casting for Recovery – National – headquartered in Bozeman, MT, supporting breast cancer survivors through healing fly fishing experiences across the country.

How to Participate:
Fly tyers are invited to tie and donate 100 flies of a single pattern.
All skill levels are welcome — tying 100 of the same fly is one of the best ways to hone your craft while helping others.
Flies are due by April 11th, 2026.

To participate:
1. Choose a pattern from the list at tieathon.org.
2. Tie 100 flies of that pattern (color and style are up to you).
3. Email tieathon@gmail.com with your chosen pattern.
4. Mail completed flies to:

Tie-A-Thon
711 Forest Ave.
South Bend, IN 46616

Flies Patterns	Hook Size
Adams	14
Ants	20-18
Beetles	18-14
Blue Winged Olive	22-18
Clouser Minnow	4-8
Elk Hair Caddis	14-16
Griffith Gnat	22-20
Hare's Ear	12-14
Hoppers / Madam X	10-14
Jimmy's Rubber Legs	10-12
Mickey Finn	8
Pheasant Tail	14-16
Soft Hackles	14-16
Sow Bugs	14-18
Squirmy Worms	10-14
Trico	20-22
Woolly Buggers	6-10

20th Anniversary Celebration
The celebration wraps up on April 11th, 2026, at the Elkhart Conservation Club in Elkhart, Indiana. Tyers and supporters will gather for a day of camaraderie featuring a raffle, lunch, and live tying sessions — a fitting tribute to 20 years of giving back through fly fishing.

For more information, updates, and artwork reveals, visit tieathon.org or follow Tie-A-Thon on Facebook and Instagram.

Media Contact:
Tie-A-Thon
Email: tieathon@gmail.com
Website: tieathon.org

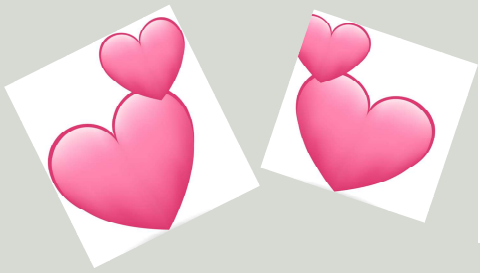
FISHING THE GOOD FIGHT

BLACK MOUNTAIN HOME

LEE UNIVERSITY

Casting for Recovery

REEL RECOVERY
Be Well! Fish On!

UPCOMING EVENTS	FEB 14	FEB 18	MAR 17	MAR 18
	St.Valentine's Day	Club Meeting 6:30pm - Finnies Next Dorr	St. Patrick's Day Go catch green fish!	Annual Club Auction

Looking for the perfect Valentine's Day gift. Consider Ann Miller's book, Upper Midwest Hatches.



THE LOOP

NEXT ISSUE: MARCH 11, 2025

The Loop is published the 2nd Wednesday of the month, September through May. If you have story, article idea, photo, artwork, or need to get something off your chest.
Contact me at: **thomas.rondo@gmail.com**