

The Barbless Hook

September 2020

Edited by Mark Spruiell



tri-valleyflyfishers.org

President's Message

by Albert Mansky

Hi Guys and Gals:

Well, if it's not the virus keeping us in our homes, it's now the smoke for all the fires around us, on all points of the compass. I've lived in the Tri-Valley area for forty-one years now and have never seen the air quality as bad as it has been this past couple of weeks. I'm sure glad that I put air conditioning in my house some years ago. To top it off, this is the worst heat wave that I've seen in a long time. I guess you can chalk it up to global warming. Needless to say, I have not been doing any fishing lately. I envy those of you who are die hard and still get out there and wet a line.

I hope those of you who were able to Zoom into our monthly club meetings for July and August, enjoyed the presentations. Dave has done a great job in setting up these presentations for us. I'm looking forward to what he has in mind for us in the coming months. It's not too early start thinking about next year's Board of Directors positions. We still have open positions for Auction, Conservation, Education and Publicity.

In the meantime, stay safe and stay healthy.

Al



Chris McCann holding a 20" brown from Milton Lake.

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September Meeting – George Revel

Please join us on Thursday September 3rd at 7pm as George Revel, co-founder of Lost Coast Outfitters in San Francisco, will present Ten tips for Swinging for Steelhead – Lessons learned from California to Kamchatka Russia.

George is a three-time National Fly Casting Champion, rod designer, FFF Master Certified Fly Casting Instructor, and the former President of the venerable Golden Gate Angling and Casting Club in San Francisco. A well-traveled and seasoned outdoorsman, George knows the ins-and-outs of the industry and is passionate about making the sport accessible throughout a client's lifetime.

There's no need to register online for the meeting. An email will be sent in advance to all TVFF members with the link you can use to access the Zoom meeting.

Membership Update

At the August 27th board meeting, a motion was passed to extend a \$20 credit to all 2020 members on their 2021 renewal period in compensation for the limited club activities during the Corona Virus. More information will be provided soon.

Member Reports

Mike & Ginger Avila – Tarpon Caye Lodge

Two years ago, my wife recorded a fishing show called Seasons on the Fly. One afternoon we sat down to watch the show, which was about Tarpon Caye Lodge in Belize. It is a beautiful Island Lodge that provides fly fishing for Bonefish, Permit and Tarpon. When the show ended, she asked me if I had ever wanted to go on a trip like that. I told her I have always wanted to but believed that it would be far too expensive. Unbeknownst to me Ginger quickly emailed the owner, Sheldon James, a Canadian from Toronto, and a few moments later I was shocked to get a call from him. During our call he let me know he was the new owner of the



island lodge that only accommodates 8 quests at a time. I believe the pricing he quoted at that time was about \$3500 per person for a seven day stay. This included all costs except tips from the time you arrived in Placencia until they returned you by boat to Placencia. Next, he surprised me with a question of what my availability to travel was. I told him I was retired so I guess I am very available, why? He informed me that he had just had the following week's guests cancel so the island would be all ours. A possible fish story but who cares, he offered us a sweetheart price, Ginger booked us some air miles and we were on our way to Belize four days later. I think we spoke on a Monday and departed on Friday.

During our call he mentioned that he was flying to San Francisco on Thursday. When I asked why, he stated that he was going to some place called Pleasanton to set up a booth at a Fly-Fishing Show. I told him we were going to be in Pleasanton on Thursday evening prior to our Friday departure, so we picked him up after the show and took him to Barone's for dinner. He is a very gracious man who is extremely passionate about his island. He has also traveled the world big game hunting and has served as one of the principal officers of Safari Club International. During our dinner conversation we mentioned that we would be celebrating our wedding anniversary while on his island. On the appointed day we returned from fishing to balloons, banners, and a wonderful cake. They even had taken the boat to town to get Ginger a couple of bottles of white wine which she had been craving.

Our flight was San Jose to Dallas, Dallas to Belize City and then a small puddle jumping flight of one hour to Placencia where we were met by Tarpon Keys island manager Melvin McCaleb. After a beautiful 45-minute boat ride we were on our island oasis and bunking in a little yellow cottage built over the water. Just Ginger and I and six staff members to spoil us for the next nine days.

We would rise each morning and be fishing the lagoon next to the island for Tarpon by about 5:30 am using 3-inch glass minnow flies. The lagoon is 8 to 15 feet deep, the size of a couple of football fields and is wall to wall glass minnows, I mean billions. I asked our guide, Ernest Garcia, how the Tarpon are going to find my glass minnow fly. He said it will be easy for them, yours will look stupid. At about 8:30am we would return to the dock for a hearty breakfast and then it was off to the flats in search of Permit. The flats are beautiful, the Permit are there but they are very skittish, and the wind is always in your face. On a good day you might get 8 to 10 casts at a Permit, on a tough day only 3. Barracuda were plentiful, mixed with a few Bonefish, a hearty lunch, and an afternoon snorkel the days are easy to fill.



Back on the island just before sunset you are served a wonderful dinner with all the Belizean Beer and Rum you can handle. We had asked for seafood fare and we were spoiled with Conch, lobster, shrimp, and fish each night. We fished three days and then took a day off to rest, visiting a neighboring island for lunch and then kayaking around Tarpon Caye. We fished three more days and added a couple of relaxing days at the end of the trip.



Ginger and I would highly recommend the experience. The staff are super welcoming, Mel the chef, not Melvin the manager, cooks her fanny off for you and loves to please. Ernest our guide was patient and extremely hard working. The scenery and wildlife are breathtakingly beautiful. Each day you are visiting the world's second largest reef system.

For more info visit their website at www.tarponcaye.com. The videos on the website do an excellent job of capturing the beauty of the area as well as the difficulty of the Permit fishing. I guarantee your casting will improve over your stay or you may need arm surgery when you get home.

Final score:
Bonefish, Jacks & Barracuda – Plenty
Tarpon – 4
Permit – 6 refusals

So now we have to go back!!! Call me if you have any questions.



Putah Creek Closure

Knoxville and Cedar Roughs wildlife areas, both in Napa County, and Putah Creek Wildlife Area in Solano County, have been closed until further notice by the California Department of Fish and Wildlife (CDFW) due to the proximity of the Hennessy and LNU Lightning Complex fires.

The wildlife areas are closed for all public uses including hunting and hiking. The A Zone deer hunt season, dove hunt season and fall wild turkey hunt season will be closed for the remainder of the year. The closures will help ensure public safety and allow CDFW to fully evaluate the effects of the wildfire.



When the wildlife areas are considered safe for public use, [CDFW](#) will issue a press release announcing their re-opening.

Pebble Mine Back to the Drawing Board

Phil Monahan – Orvis

For more than a decade, anglers, hunters, nature-lovers, and conservationists have argued that the proposed Pebble Mine would present a clear and present danger to the unique ecosystem of Bristol Bay, which supports the world's largest run of wild salmon. When the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers issued the final Environmental Impact Statement last month, it seemed to many that our arguments were falling on deaf ears.

But last Thursday, the Corps sent the Pebble Partnership a letter—[published online today](#)—which contains this remarkable statement:

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Alaska] District made Clean Water Act Section 404(b) (1) factual determinations that discharges at the mine site would cause unavoidable adverse impacts to aquatic resources and, preliminarily, that those adverse impacts would result in significant degradation to those aquatic resources.

Unless the Pebble Partnership submits an approved plan to mitigate all of these adverse effects, no permit will be issued.

This. Is. Big.

In a press release, Trout Unlimited explains that these findings “creat[e] a significant barrier to the project moving forward.” ([Click here to read the full press release.](#)) Until the Pebble Partnership can adequately explain how it can mitigate “direct and indirect impacts” on 2,825 acres of wetlands, 132.5 acres of open

waters, and 129.5 miles of streams at the mine site and 460 acres of wetlands, 231.7 acres of open waters, and 55.5 miles of streams along the transportation corridor, the project is dead in the water.

“This is a good day for Bristol Bay,” says Orvis President Simon Perkins, “for the largest sockeye salmon run on Earth and for the American businesses, local Alaskan cultures, hunters, anglers and outdoor enthusiasts that it sustains. . . . For over a decade, Orvis has worked alongside Trout Unlimited, native Alaskan tribes, our customers and industry partners to keep this unique part of the world pristine. We thank everyone who continues to speak up throughout this process and we ask that people continue to engage and voice their support for a Pebble-free Bristol Bay.”



The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has acknowledged what we have been arguing for years: that Pebble Mine presents a clear and present danger to the ecosystem of Bristol Bay. *Image by Pat Clayton, Fish Eye Guy Photography*

No Time to Let Up

There is no doubt that this is wonderful news for everyone who values wilderness, but it is definitely not the end of the story. Anyone who has ever watched a slasher movie knows that just when you think the killer is dead for good, he shows up behind you with a carving knife. We cannot stop fighting against this project until there are no available avenues to approval.

When news of some sort of Pebble project denial started percolating in Washington last week, the hope was that the President would simply deny the permit. But that was not the case. We can still use our voices to ask the White House to put a fork in this project once and for all.

Items for Sale

Smith top-end “Guide Choice” Sunglasses in original package, and unused

I wear prescriptions so unfortunately these won’t work for me. These are high-end glass (not plastic lenses) with Matte Havana frames with stainless steel hinges. The ChromaPop lenses are polarized bronze mirror color (best for fishing) with anti-reflective and hydroeleophobic coating and with an 8 base curvature. [Smith website](#) retail is \$239 + tax & shipping. Will sell for \$125 or trade for a new Thomas & Thomas 5 weight, 10’ fly rod (LOL).



Contact Rob Farris – (925) 286-5502 – RFFarris@comcast.net

Wolff Apex Vise – Fred Lunday

I have a fly tying vise I wish to sell. It is an Apex vise from Wolff. It has a pedestal base and C clamp. It is rotary. It will fit 6/0 to 32 size hooks. Make me an offer.

Contact Fred – (510) 398-8276



Pontoon Boats – Dennis Rankin



9 ft Colorado Pontoon, Trout Unlimited, good condition (one fill valve needs work or replacing), complete with oars, 27# thrust trolling motor and old battery. \$150.



6½ ft Bucks Bag Pontoon, complete with oars, good shape, also has live fish bag. \$175.

Contact Dennis – (925) 784-5666