

## It Takes a Fly-Fishing Club...

You know that old African proverb, “It takes a village to raise a child?” In my experience, not just any old community will do. It takes a particular village community – a fly-fishing club, a family-oriented fly-fishing club, one with the nurturing presence of women, and men who wish their progeny would please, damn it, get off their “devices” for once and join them on the water. Sound familiar? Well, that is because you are a member of one, yes, that one and only organization solely begun to include all social classes, ages, and genders, none other than the Northwest Fly Anglers Club of Seattle, Washington. This venerable 51-year-old institution was founded by male members (and female non-members) of the Washington Fly Fishing Club (WFFC) out of frustration with the stodgy-elitist, cucumber sandwich-eating, and, at the time of the NFA founding, male supremacist, no-children-no-women-allowed Washington Fly Fishing Club. You know the type, gentlemen who wade-fish in tuxedos.

I like to believe that I had a hand in raising Sasha Markovna Conner. After all, she is burdened with the patronymic curse of “daughter of Mark” to which at the very least I may point, since, and you may not believe it, she is my daughter. Alas, I must admit that whenever we ventured out on an NFA fishing outing, as soon as we arrived, she disappeared and I did not see her again, sometimes for a whole week, until we got home, at which point she retired to watch TV or play with her friend down the alley because for a time she was too little to have the cherished “device” of the day. If I told her that we were going on a fishing trip, before she asked where we were going, she wanted to know who would be there and ask, “Is Peter coming?” or Wytold, Bill (Gibson), Helsa or Kim, Carl or Maura, among others.

It all started with the Great Recession, or better the Great Housing Depression of 2008-2010, when we mistakenly decided that as a nation, we had built too many homes, which was patently untrue. If you do not believe me, then look at all the “Hoovervilles” up and down the West Coast or try to find an affordable home in which to live. I digress. Since working in architectural design and homebuilding, I was cast out of work. So, I had time on my hands but not a lot of money, particularly with the FDIC hot in pursuit with a punishing lawsuit in their hands. All this just tells you that I was by necessity a skinflint. One day reading the Seattle Times, I learned that the absolute best bargain in all of Seattle, perhaps all of the U.S., was the eight-session, twelve-hour fly-casting class offered by the club for the unbelievable sum of \$25, i.e. \$2.08 for each hour of instruction. My casting being rudimentary at best, I signed up, with no intention of violating the Groucho Marx promise to “refuse to join any club that would have me.” Taught by the generous and most welcoming Peg Van Natter assisted by her husband Bill with his impossible, at least for me, rotator cuff-tearing “give me a snap at 12 o’clock.” And aid from Scott McCracken with his most helpful “don’t look at your back cast, you’ve got to feel the line, trust it,” after just having been advised by others to always look at my back cast. There were several other kind and helpful tutors. The classes were wonderful. We even got to sit in a chair and practice casting as if in a boat. I missed one class for one reason or another and lo and behold, the next day I got a call from the instructor herself, who said that she was sorry that I had missed and that she would be delighted to come a half-hour early to the next class and catch me up to the progress of the other attendees. Really? These were the nicest people in the world. Groucho be damned, and with only a \$15 yearly membership fee, I joined.

This was in 2010. Sasha was seven years old. Early in the previous fall, I had introduced her to the wonders of fishing on a hike up to Dorothy Lake in the Alpine Lakes Wilderness after letting her practice casting a small hookless plug with a spinning rod in our backyard. At the lake, I also let her cast the plug. She became impatient and wanted to fish, thinking that all one had to do was throw it out there, and some fish would come and hook itself. Not wanting her to get discouraged not catching anything, she was advised that fishing was all about not catching, patience, and that the lake had been occasionally stocked in some years past with Brook Char Trout except the rumor was that they were now pretty sparse. After one cast with the dummy, she insisted. So, I tied on a Mepps spinner, and sure enough, the first cast of her life, a 13-inch Brookie. That kind of sealed her fate.

Next Spring was the time to go on a real outing. Having read in the club Flypaper about the upcoming May jaunt down the Lower Deschutes River, hosted by Dana Bottcher, I went to inquire about attending the planned trip by visiting the casting festival on a lake in Monroe, Washington, where the NFA was staffing a booth, with Helsa, Kim and Scott McCracken representing the club. Also, NFA member Santa Claus was showing off his spey casting technique for all to see. I kid you not. (I believe that this was Stuart Lane, or maybe it was Greg Both.) At the booth, Sasha and I asked if they could tell us about the outing. Helsa and Kim advised that Dana was preparing all the food vegan and that we should be prepared for a change in the results that follow digestion. Scott overheard our conversation about the Deschutes and looked at diminutive Sasha, shook his head and said we would be crazy to go. Asked why, he said that it was a big, sometimes dangerous to float river, that one could not fish from a boat, and that the wading was treacherous given the size of the boulders in the shallows. Of course, I was concerned, so I called Dana who at the time was driving with Peter Maunsell to shop for the trip, notably for 2-day-old organic bread and overripe bananas which was Dana's wont. Dana soothed, everything would be fine, "piece of cake" and on the speaker Peter agreed. I could even borrow Dana's small Puma raft. Once again, the most generous people in the world. But they did not say a word about Colorado, Rattlesnake, or Moody Rapids.

Now Sasha and I reported for the 9:00 AM sharp assignation at Peter's home in Seward Park, where we waited a good 45 minutes for Dana to show up. Something about traffic and the time to load a trailer with gear up in Gold Bar. (By the end of the day we would learn about the loading of the trailer again and again.) Dana arrived with his under-powered 6-banger Ford Econoline van towing a closed-in trailer that was oddly out of balance. We unloaded and reloaded the trailer with all our gear and that of the other participants who were knowledgeable enough from experience to know that 9:00 AM sharp meant 9:30 at the earliest. With all items stowed, we were off to Vancouver, Wa. which was not on the direct route to Beaver Tail Campground on the Deschutes. Dana explained that we had to pick up the unpaid professional gear boat oarsman and honorary NFA member Tom Benner. Traffic was miserable, stop and start the whole way, which was the way the van traveled anyway as it, as I said, was underpowered and real slow up the hills. The windows in the back of the van did not open and it was hot that day and we begged driver Dana to please turn on the air conditioning, which he did not want to do because of extra gas consumption, but did it anyway for our convenience turning it on full blast knowing perfectly well that we would freeze and beg him to turn it down. He would then turn it all the way off and then we would swoon from the heat and ask for air and Dana would ask what we wanted, the air on or off. There were only two alternatives: on and freeze or off and suffocate.

Meanwhile, everyone was looking at Sasha, wondering what the hell she was doing there anyway. They asked how old she was, and I knew that she was underage. I had told everyone that she was almost nine. I had also told Sasha that it was only a small fib and that she needed to be almost nine. When she was asked how old she was, she forgot and said seven. I quickly reminded her of the birthday she had not had. She said, "Oh yeah, I forgot, I'm almost nine" with a broad smile and a little giggle and the jig was up.

In mid-afternoon, we made it down to Vancouver and drove round and round for 30 minutes looking for Tom's house. We implored Dana to give us the address so that we could look it up on our portable devices, but Dana insisted that he knew where it was and that he would find it. We finally got to Tom's house and there he was at 5'-8" or so, with the mound of his gear stacked on a pallet taller than he was. You know what that meant – unloading and loading the van again, but it was okay because he was essential to the trip as he was going to haul all our gear down the river while we got to maneuver light-boat to facilitate easy fishing. As the only unpaid essential worker, Tom got the envious passenger seat at the front where the window rolled down. Now it was getting late in the day, and we were hungry. We were informed that we had to stop for water for the trip anyway. That meant a gas station that just happened to be next to a fine Mexican Restaurant where Dana could get a delicious vegan meal cooked in lard. Believe me, there was a run on the Carne Asada that night given that we carnivores were facing a week without meat. We then spent forever filling the umpteen water jugs with the single very narrow diameter hose at the gas station but that was not until – you guessed it, we unloaded the trailer once again to get at the water jugs. Why had they not been filled before leaving Seattle? The same reason we could not air condition: petrol consumption.

We drove up the Columbia and then up the Deschutes and the sun was setting beautifully over the hills of ripening dry winter wheat but that meant we would have to set up our tents in pitch dark after we once *again* unloaded and reloaded the trailer. I later learned that trip veterans knew that you should never expect otherwise and to keep a flashlight at the top of your gear bag. The next morning saw the first NFA nurturing of Sasha begin when she wandered over to the camp kitchen to ask if she could help with breakfast. That was a real surprise because you could never get her to do any chore at home. Dana's wife Helen saw Sasha and they became fast friends and the two of them went down to the hand pump to get water for doing dishes. That proved a disaster as carrying the bucket with Sasha, Helen overcompensated for Sasha's underage frame and wrenched her back badly. The trip was seriously in jeopardy. Dana took Peter aside and told him that he would now have to host the trip since Helen must to be taken back to Seattle and taken care of. Peter did not want to host because he knew that for Dana, for the food to be palatable, the recipe for each meal included sixteen ingredients. Several of them were a quarter of a teaspoon of some hidden away, never to be found spice. Dana is a fine cook. But I must inform you that it is impossible to make vegan French Toast. Given Peter's generous nature, Peter relented and agreed to host but only if everyone agreed to take a turn at cooking gourmet.

After the hosting issue was decided, what do you suppose happened? Correct! We unloaded the trailer to get to the rafts which had to be unrolled and pumped up and rigged out with metal frames. Peter took Sasha off to one side and taught her to flyfish and she caught a trout. What a fine club this was indeed. We fooled around fishing and once we got the boats inflated and tacked up with their labyrinthine (at least for me) frames, we fished the eight miles from the upriver boat put-in down to our camp at Beavertail. This was when I learned of the wonderful maneuverability of the Puma and, unfortunately, that the river was a continuously fast-moving tailwater below a large dam above. This meant that at May high water there were no visible natural structures for fish; no exposed gravel bars or islands from which to wade. Just boulders between which one might very well disappear forever.

The next morning dawned launch day, and that meant loading the gear raft. Everyone carried their mostly unnecessary stuff, ten times what was really needed, down to the boat ramp where veteran Tom, who had seen everything, set about sorting the pile of gear for intricate placement in the raft. We were all handed a small wooden cutting board. Puzzled beyond imagination, I turned to the sweet and friendly Kim Kreidler and inquired as to what they were for. He just said, "You will see." We mostly stood around handing over items of gear that were asked for, so there was time for the fly-fishing mentoring of Sasha to continue on the side. The club members were intent on making her the expert fly caster which she eventually became. Suddenly, the happy, calm and quiet Tom got perturbed and yelled out "Who the hell brought these silly plastic container store boxes?" To avoid opprobrium, I said that it was Sasha's idea to buy them, and they were filled with Sasha's gear and that I had not brought anything at all. Tom asked why I had not come with my dry bag. That startled me for a moment since I had not even seen my ex-wife for several years. (Writing that sentence qualifies me for honorary membership in the WFFC.) Kim showed me how a plastic dry bag was a stuff sack with rolled-up handles at one end. Kim pressed all the air out of a full one, creating a vacuum in the bag. Kim jokingly explained the vacuum would suck moisture through the inevitable pinhole. They were placed opening end down so that they would drain water out just like a good long washing machine soak cycle does.

Well, our ridiculous not-so-water-tight boxes got stacked away with all the other wayward paraphernalia into enormous piles at each end of the raft that not even a 7-foot-tall oarsman could have seen over. Then out came two large tarps and we all set about using our cutting boards to stuff the tarp down between the raft side and the gear so as to protect against water intrusion, after which the tarps were spidered over with tie downs and stretched tight to standard fare gear rings that had been heat-welded onto the raft sides. Then half a dozen of us heaved, mostly hoed, finally put our backs to the task and pushed the raft out into water deep enough to float the raft. Tom deftly turned the boat sideways so he could see down the river, running the 2,500-pound contraption sideways. I watched this man with his monster shoulder, torso, and arm muscles adroitly set up the raft perfectly for the riffled river bend ahead, turning at the last possible moment with perfect placement so as to negotiate white water without mishap, never really knowing exactly where he was going. I think that he could have done this in his sleep since, like a Mississippi river boat pilot, he could draw the river from memory.

The river runs down a gorgeous desert canyon marred only by the BNSF railway on the left descending bank, interrupting our sleep every night. I swear to God that I saw Warren Buffett engineering “his railroad” train down the track with the biggest grin I had ever seen, happily blowing the horn at every whim. Warren’s plains-spoken partner, nonagenarian Charlie Munger was down in his palace in Pasadena munching peanut brittle made by “his” candy company, See’s, all the while muttering “love that Standard Oil” as was his habit at the company conferences. Now Berkshire Hathaway surely has a snooty enough name to be a stock that members of the Washington Fly Fishing Club would readily buy. History relates that there were competing companies on either side of the river, each trying to be the first to build a railway. The team on the BNSF side had cheated and corrupted their competition with loose women and whiskey, which slowed their effort considerably. Now that would have been one time that I would have wanted to be on the losing team. (Having written that about loose women, I have been inducted into the WFFC Hall of Fame.)

We fishers soon launched to the sound of the exuberant hoots of Peter who was already catching one fish after another because he cheated, maybe. He ran his 13-foot pontoon up on submerged shallow gravelly bottoms, threw his anchor out and stood up surrounded by a protective raft frame, fishing downstream to the gullible trout that had never seen any hooks out there in the middle of the river. Technically he was legit as he was not fishing from a boat, only within it. We just had sour grapes because we had not been so smart and had not had his ingenious idea and ideal fishing rig. The rest of us did catch a few of the hybrid Redside Rainbow. The red resulted from the Rainbow invasion of Cutthroat Trout territory where they raped the natives. (Given that this article is partially about women suffering under sexism, or something like that, to further the argument, a female has to be harassed, so why not the female Cutts rather than the unsympathetic hatchery Rainbows; but maybe it was the other way around, I do not know.) The red bands on the sides were the only remnant of the Cutts. For us by-the-book fishers, it was tough going, unable to wade because of the boulders and only able to fish on the right side as all the fish were on the left side which was bordered by reservation land owned by the Indians (as it should be) which no one fished from, at least not when we were there. (I only say Indian rather than something “P.C.” because I once read that, tired of all the current convoluted terminology - you know, First Peoples, then First Nations, now Indigenous Peoples, certainly not Aboriginal or worse, Natives, the preference for the original term is communicated as “please, just call us Indians.”) We did catch fish, just not as many as Peter. But then again, Peter *always* catches fish. May I repeat that? Peter *always* catches more fish than everyone else, except the one day that Sasha caught many tiny smolts on the Grande Ronde River, which I will get to later.

Exciting things happened on the trip. One day we rounded a bend and, in the distance, Sasha descried penguins on one side of the river. Yes, penguins, way up north in freshwater. As we got closer, we realized that they were not penguins at all, only members of the Washington Fly Fishing Club wade fishing in their tuxedos. Also, one day we saw a lonely Dave Campbell hurriedly and determinedly walking downriver on the side with the vestige of a rail bed. We called out and he came over and bummed a ride as he had lost his pontoon boat that he had tied too loosely to the bank. He said something about dementia, but we assured him that he did not have it because he had not forgotten why he had brought the boat to the river. Not too exciting was the game that Sasha played laying down across the front bench of the Puma pretending to look at fish in the water but really napping because, of course, she was underage and needed a nap.

Now every day Tom Benner would be first to our campsite for the night. After tying up securely, our unpaid oarsman singlehandedly unloaded better than a ton of gear and carried it up the bank. Nobody wished to get there when Tom did because they might have to help. If we got to camp soon after he had finished the work, we found him conked out in his big lounge chair. Tom was over seventy. Just like Sasha he needed his afternoon nap. We all cooked when it was our turn, except for Tom who was otherwise unpaid. I later learned that he was paid some money, but it could not have been much because we all had only contributed a pittance for trip expenses, a little more than spice money. I must admit that Dana’s planned meals were delicious even if they lacked half the ingredients since we could not find them. One night Bill Johnston was tasked with the elaborate endeavor of making raisin bread pudding for dessert. Now I hated bread pudding because my German-American grandmother did not know how to make croutons or Pain Perdue with leftover bread (of which the club had a considerable amount, by now maybe six days old.) Bill labored for several hours on the pudding, and at the last



minute, Peter got tired of the smell of overripe bananas and decided to show off his amazing culinary skills by making Bananas Foster which he served flambé. Of course, no one wanted the pudding. I felt so bad for Bill that I became his lifelong friend by eschewing the flambé and, in an extreme test of will, gorged on bread pudding.

Sasha entertained us every night by grabbing a stick that she pretended to be a microphone, dancing around singing every pop music song that she had ever heard which I found embarrassing thinking that the guys might want to socialize. But nobody seemed to mind because the singing drowned out the continuously ongoing obnoxious sounds of the eructation and flatulence apparently caused by the digestion of, you are right, an all-vegan diet. This was why Washington Fly Fishing Club members generally sipped a *digestif* after every meal.

The bane of camp life was the fierce up-canyon winds every evening. Kind, avuncular Tom saw our distress over fear that our tent might blow away and retrieved from his voluminous mass of gear some aluminum angle which he laid diagonally across the guy lines from our tents right where they met the stakes and loaded them up with river rocks. Tom proved himself in many other ways that trip. There is an intuitive generosity about him. The afternoon before the last day's row out, I knew something was up when everyone put their fishing rods away. When I asked why they were not going to fish the next day they showed worry on their faces about the prospect of negotiating the never even whispered about Colorado, Rattlesnake, and Moody Rapids. They did not want to break their expensive rods in the tumult of the chutes (get it, Deschutes?) I thought, heck with the rods, isn't anybody worried about breaking me? Now I was truly alarmed, scared for Sasha, because we only had a light-weight bouncy 11-foot raft, and I was certainly not an expert. Tom saw the consternation on my face and gently, softly took me aside so as not to offend my sense of manhood and offered to take Sasha down the rapids with him. You better believe that I accepted. (They had a lot of fun together and Sasha emerged calling Tom grandpa.) Thanks, Tom Benner.

The next morning everyone got up early because they had "get-home-itis." The fishing was over, and I suppose that everyone had to get back home to be on *their* devices. From piloting aircraft, I knew that rushing home was a dangerous practice. To facilitate the haste, I was unceremoniously rushed downriver and implored to row forward rather than gently guiding the raft as the current took me down, occasionally rowing backward (for me, often furiously) away from trouble. Yielding to the pressure, pushing hard forward on the oars, at one point I was about to go into a big, tangled mess of piled-up trees and said to myself, wait a minute, I am the captain if not at least the first mate of this albeit tiny ship and I'm going to decide how to guide it. Rowing *away* from rather than pushing *into* trouble, I made it through Rattlesnake, no problem. Moody was hairy in the little raft because of the enormous wave train, and I nearly flipped backward, bow over stern.

Making it down to the Heritage Park take-out point near the confluence with the Columbia, veterans of these trips had collective anxiety about what to do with our special diet expulsions that had been collected in suitable containers. Of course, there was a perfectly named S.C.A.T. machine for this purpose, but it seemed that it often did not work and then there was the question about who had brought a sufficient amount of dollar bills since the machine made no change. Also, the question arose about who was going to operate the contraption and if we should draw straws. Did some claim immuno-compromised conditions, singing scat because they just flat out refused to have anything whatsoever to do with the onerous task, given the tenuous state of their bowels? Well, the indefatigable and always happily willing Peter Maunsell stepped up. That is what catching all the fish will do for a fellow.

We frantically scrubbed the rafts, set them in the sun to dry, and organized all the gear to be loaded last out, first on which meant we would not have the pleasure of unloading before unloading! Any slacker would be excused to further inculcate Sasha in the elegant arts of fly casting, except for the chief slacker, whom Sasha would not listen to because he was her know-nothing father. On the trip back, we discovered that if the van was gunned going downhill, we could get up the hills at adequate speed, thus not infuriating those drivers behind us enduring miles-long whiplash. Also, the air-conditioning set at medium-low kept us all cool as cucumbers. Take that Washington Fly Fishing Club!

I am being a little harsh. The WFFC is now open to all and there is no doubt that the club has many fine people as members. Given *noblesse oblige*, they do tout their philanthropy, having set up a foundation in 1975. It is just that they resisted having women members for decades, despite multiple campaigns and heavy lobbying by the Woke. Ironically today they have an ethics conduct policy. Still tradition-bound, their board members-at-large are called ghillies, an old Scottish term meaning attendant (servant) for a gentleman (aristocrat) on a fishing expedition. My brilliant ex-doctor, a retired Harvard man, now serves as Second Ghillie. I guess the duties are less onerous than proctological examinations, particularly with vegan patients. You might have been wondering how the noble gentlemen WFFC members could have been wading so effortlessly in the deeply-chasmed rocks when we saw them on the Deschutes. Upon close inspection, we discovered that the ghillies had set them on pre-positioned stilts. The WFFC used to have monthly dinner meetings held at the posh Madison Park, Seattle Tennis Club, with an imposing view of Lake Washington. That ain't the Haller Lake Community Center, with no view of the water except the puddles gathered in the unpaved parking lot out back. I see that the WFFC has stepped down to meet monthly for dinner on Mercer Island. Dues are still double those of the NFA.

Also, the vegan diet caused no noticeable difference in, at least my, what is called politely, regularity. Dana's menu was obviously extremely healthy and should be celebrated for its originality and ingenious quality and the bread was not so stale. I just got carried away with the narrative. One never makes fun of those to whom one is indifferent, and no one has ever been indifferent toward Dana Bottcher, the most treasured member of our club, the heretofore long-time tireless editor of the club newspaper. His work at hosting and the quality of the journalism attributable to him will never be surpassed. Hosting a multi-day fishing outing is an enormous task of planning, preparation, and packing, and maestro Dana had a method that he had worked out over a score of efforts, so if they seemed rigid to the neophyte that was only because the neophyte was inchoate.

Every year the NFA supports worthwhile conservation organizations protecting natural resources. For young adolescents, relatives, and even friends of the members, the club offers to pay for one attendee at the yearly Northwest Youth Conservation and Fly Fishing Academy and donates anyway if no one applies under club auspices. The week-long camp complete with full accommodations features august university professors that teach children ichthyology, conservation biology, ecology, and even entomology. And of course, offers extensive courses in fly tying and casting. The teenagers practice fishing with real ghillies (servants to the kids who are treated like royalty) on both streams and lakes in the vicinity. The students graduate in a celebratory ceremony, honored with a fishing vest, and a full fly-fishing rig complete with a fly rod and reel, fly line, flies and fly-tying materials, and other suitable swag. Sasha was sponsored by the club and attended two years running, where, in her second year, long-time NFA member Bob Young mentored her in the finer arts of casting where she learned to double haul and shoot line, cast with extreme accuracy, and gained an elitist knowledge of techniques such that she does argue with Peter Maunsell for hours over minute details of the art. (Maybe she should apply for membership in the WFFC.) She even bested Peter one day on a club outing on the Grande Ronde catching twenty fish, mostly salmon smolts, with one or two decent trout, although I suspect that Peter was angling for the larger ones. He describes her as a caster as good or better than any NFA member except for those nationally certified in the discipline as instructors.

Over the eleven years spanning the ages from, an almost nine, seven to eighteen, by far the most active and youngest yet-to-be adult member of the club, Sasha attended a score of outings. Sasha gets along so well with the members of the club because they are all so old, at least for those her age. She has no compunctions about being around older men and women because her father was 55 years old the day she was born. (Honestly, he was almost fifty-four.) Whenever we went through a grocery line together when Sasha was a child, people would remark on how wonderful it was that I spent so much time with my granddaughter. I always thanked them for the compliment, saying that I was in reality her great-grandfather, and they would say, "You know I thought so, but didn't want to say," or something like that. Sasha got so tired of this routine that she countered "He's lying about his child bride."

Although difficult to name all those NFA village residents who helped to raise Sasha, here is a partial list: Helen Bottcher on the Yakima, Rebecca Souther who adopted her for a weekend on a club outing on the

Olympic Peninsula, Helsa Peterson, Kim Kreidler who drove her back to Seattle after a week-long trip on the John Day, David Paul Williams for showing a photo of her on a bad hair day in his book on Western Smallmouth and tutoring Sasha on the John Day, Mike Olson and Susanne Staats, Carolynn Sells, Bill Gibson, Wytold Lebing, Jim Cox befriending her on a John Day donor trip where she rowed big spenders during the historic heat wave in June 2021, Carl Johnson and Maura who helped her onto their Montana neighbor's horse initiating her career in equestrianship, Dustin Robinson on the John Day and Grande Ronde, Peg Van Natter early in her casting. Thanks to Jim Higgins on the John Day for introducing her to lightweight tackle. And although not an NFA member, thanks to the world-famous inventor of the bow and arrow cast, Joe Humphreys, of Penn. State University, who taught Sasha how to euro nymph at the internationally competing USA Youth Fly Fishing Team clinic in Ketchum, Idaho. Special, special thanks to Peter Maunsell. Thank you NFA members, thank you NFA club, thank the village for infusing Sasha with that most superior quality of having grit.



Sasha on the John Day, photo by David Paul Williams