

# The Barbless Hook

March 2020

Edited by Mark Spruiell



tri-valleyflyfishers.org

## President's Message

by Albert Mansky

It looks like this is going to be another short and dry winter. I haven't heard the "D" word being kidded around too much lately by the nightly weatherman. February was pretty dry and even a few new high temperature marks were set. The snowpack is below average for this time of year. I suspect when we hit the streams and rivers this year, we will not be seeing the high volume of water that we experienced last year, that delayed our fishing outings for a month or two.

I hope most of you were able to attend the Fly Show at the Alameda County Fairgrounds. It looked to me that the attendance was down as compared to the last couple of years. We did have twenty three individuals register at our booth, showing interest in our club. Rob Farris will be sending out an email to those individuals inviting them to our March 5<sup>th</sup> monthly club meeting. I just hope Rob can read the "chicken scratch" handwriting for the email addresses. For those prospective members we will have a pre-meeting at 6:30pm in the upper room in the club house, like we did last year. Please introduce yourself to them during the break and welcome them to the club. I don't know if all of those who registered at the fly show can make our meeting, but if we can sign up at least twelve new members that would be a good start for the club for the 2020 year.

There is a bill, HR 3742, that was introduced in the House of Representatives on July 12, 2019. In effect it would amend the Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Act. If you have the time and interest, please check it out at [this link](#). If my memory serves me right, this isn't the first time, and probably will not be



I went to the Delta and look what happened – a 30-inch striper. *Daniel Kitts*

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the last time, that Congress has tried to amend the Pittman-Robertson Act.

Jim Roberts will be our guest speaker at the March meeting. Jim has spoken to our group on a number of occasions. That's it for now. The weather is warming up fast, so get out there and do some fishing. With the events that are lined up for 2020, we should have some great outings and hopefully we can catch some fish.

Till then, see you there.

*Al*

## Fly Tying Get Together



Join us on Monday, March 2<sup>nd</sup> at 7pm in the fly tying room at the Livermore Rod & Gun Club.

We'll be tying the Booby and Beetle flies for Pyramid Lake. Both are simple ties so we will add a few twists to the patterns. For our next get together on April 6<sup>th</sup>, we will again tie up a load of Boy Scout flies.

## 2020 TVFF Board of Directors

### Officers

<b>President</b>	Albert Mansky
<b>Vice President</b>	Martin Loomis
<b>Secretary</b>	John Price
<b>Treasurer</b>	Chris McCann
<b>Past President</b>	Roger Perry

### Directors

<b>Auction</b>	Open Position
<b>Conservation</b>	Open Position
<b>Education</b>	Kent McCammon
<b>Outings</b>	Rob Farris
<b>Fly Tying</b>	Jim Broadbent
<b>Member at Large</b>	Ron Dueltgen
<b>Member at Large</b>	Tom Vargas
<b>Membership</b>	Steve Johnson
<b>Newsletter</b>	Mark Spruiell
<b>Publicity</b>	Open Position
<b>Raffle</b>	Martin Plotkin
<b>Refreshments</b>	Gary Prince
<b>Speakers</b>	Dave Fontaine
<b>Trout in Classroom</b>	Daniel Kitts
<b>Video Library</b>	Steve Johnson
<b>Webmaster</b>	Mark Spruiell

## Membership Dues

Dues for most returning members were due January 1<sup>st</sup>. Our new website will automatically send you renewal reminders. For your convenience (and the club's!), we ask that you pay your dues online. There are no additional fees for paying dues online with a credit card. Please contact Steve Johnson with any questions.

## March Meeting – Jim Roberts

Join us at our club meeting on March 5<sup>th</sup> as we welcome back Jim Roberts. Jim first got his guide license in 1995 and currently guides on the Lower Sacramento River for rainbows, the Trinity River for steelhead, the McCloud for rainbows and browns, and the Klamath for steelhead and salmon. He still enjoys the thrill and excitement of getting somebody into a fish or sharing knowledge with a fellow angler.

Jim is a sought after fly-fishing speaker. With thirty years' experience and his professional training as a teacher, Jim is able to share his knowledge to help other anglers make it to the next level. His goal both on the water and at a presentation is to make fly fishing instruction as fun and rewarding as possible. After 30 years his passion for chasing any fish with a fly is matched only by his desire to teach others about fly fishing.



## Da Raffle

### Martin Plotkin – Raffle Director

My thanks to all of you who stepped up with items for the raffle. We still could use some books and flies.

The March Raffle is proving to be great. Beside a Tenkara Rod Kit and New Scientific Anglers Fly Line, we'll have a half dozen + other items everyone can use. If raffle ticket sales are good, we'll be able to continue offering top quality items like these.



- \$1 1 ticket
- \$5 6 tickets
- \$20 25 tickets

Donations will be piffed with tickets added to tickets purchased.

## Club Auction – April 2021

### Marty Loomis – Vice President

Well, we are going to do it. The club will be having an auction not this coming year in 2020, but the following year in April 2021. There is just not enough time to put it together for this coming year. The reason for announcing it now is that a large part of the auction is member donations. The committee will be looking for donations, new and used, from club members to be included along with vendor donations. So don't throw it out or give it away, I will accept stuff between now and the auction. Periodically I will be putting something into the newsletter to remind everyone and get everyone excited. This is our biggest money maker for TVFF to help fund the club's conservation activities and other club expenses.

## New Members!

Several new members have joined TVFF in the last couple of months. Please take the opportunity to introduce yourself to as many of these folks as you can and make them feel welcome.

- Steve Dalcin
- Lori Day
- Jim Knecht
- Rick Laforet
- John Magee
- Mike McAlpen
- Jim McCabe
- David Meister
- Dale Tripp
- Robert Yates

*Welcome!*



## Outings and Activities

Many of our outings are described below. Please visit the [Event Calendar](#) on the TVFF website for a complete list of all upcoming meetings, outings and activities.

### Kistler Bass Ponds – March 28 & April 25

Kistler bass ponds are located outside of Oakdale, California. These are unguided trips, and excellent ones for both families and those new to fly fishing. The ponds are close to the Tri-Valley, have excellent shore access as well, and can accommodate large groups such as TVFF on several different ponds. Fishing is available from either the shoreline or from float tubes or pontoon boats.

Two dates are available: [March 28](#) and [April 25](#). The April date includes a BBQ lunch.



## April Meeting – Jay Murakoshi – April 2

Jay Murakoshi will be the guest speaker at our April 2nd meeting. He'll be giving a presentation on surf fishing the Central California coast. Social time starts at 6:30pm and the meeting starts at 7pm.

Jay started Flies Unlimited in 1973 and has been tying flies commercially ever since. He now runs a fly fishing travel business and travels to destinations such as Belize, Christmas Island, Baja Mexico, and will be adding New Zealand and Aitutaki (Cook Islands) to the list. He's on the regional advisory staff for TFO, pro staff for RIO, Hatch Reels, Renzetti Fly Tying Vises, Gamakatsu Hooks, Daiichi Hooks, Simms and Hareline Dubbin. He has spoken to over 10,000 people at most sports shows like the International Sportsmans Exposition, Fly Fishing Show, New Mexico Trout, a number of fly shops and sports shops.



## Fly Fishing Fundamentals Class – Starts April 15

TVFF offers our popular Fundamentals class for new members, and especially for those beginners just starting their fly fishing journey. The course objective is to educate and prepare new fly fishers with sufficient depth to enable each attendee to fully enjoy the sport and begin to effectively fly fish on their own in both streams and lakes.

The course consists of three nights of classroom instruction and a Saturday morning casting lesson with a certified FFI casting instructor, all for just \$40. Space is limited. Visit the [class page](#) to register or see the complete course agenda. The club's [event calendar](#) shows all of the class dates.



## Pyramid Lake – April 16

This is our annual spring trip to Pyramid Lake fishing for large Lahontan trout. [This event](#) may be either a fully guided event using local guides or individual fishing, based upon interest. In any event, the fishing will primarily be from ladders, or watercraft if the prevailing winds allow.

Several of our members will be on site the entire five-day period, but individuals can determine how many days they prefer to fish and set their schedules accordingly.



## Hat Creek Salmonfly Hatch – May 15-17

This is a 2 night-3 day trip to explore the 3.5 miles of fishable wild trout water at Hat Creek. It is scheduled for the traditional large Salmonfly hatch that occurs during this period, as well as several other hatches. We will be fishing five different areas on Hat Creek from knee deep riffles at the Powerhouse and mid-stream to the gin clear, quiet flats, and to the downstream area of thigh deep water. This is a wading trip although it is recommended to stay out of the water unless absolutely necessary as the fish are very skittish due to the fishing pressure. It is barbless hook, catch and release water only. Fishing styles can include Euro nymphing, streamers, and indicators in the riffles, with dry fly presentations on the flat water.



## Lake Almanor Hex Hatch – Late June

We'll be fishing the traditional Lake Almanor Hexagenia hatch in the late afternoon and evenings, plus early and mid-day fishing of local small creeks while awaiting the late, sundown hatches. This is a very exciting hatch and surface explosion of both large brown trout and bass just as the sun sets, so it is a frantic one-hour period of time, with pre-hatch deep nymph fishing earlier in the afternoon. This is primarily a float trip at the lake for the Hex hatch and wading for the small local streams. Two events are available for registration: [weekday](#) and [weekend](#).



## Baum and Manzanita Lakes – July 9-12

This is a three night, four day camping trip to [Baum and Manzanita Lakes](#) in the Shasta and Lassen National Park watersheds. You can fish from shore at both lakes but a watercraft is recommended. Participants can attend whichever days work for their schedules.

We'll be camping at Manzanita Lake campground in Lassen National Park. Manzanita is a wild trout fishery with special regulations hosting rainbows and browns. Baum Lake, near Burney, also contains rainbows and browns and is stocked by its on-site hatchery. Both lakes offer excellent dry fly fishing, and nymphs and streamers work well too.



## La Paz Mexico Ocean Fishing – July 11-18

This trip is a broad-based fishing excursion in La Paz, Mexico hosted by guide [Gary Bulla](#) with fishing for Dorado, rooster, mangrove snapper, yellowfin, grouper, wahoo, and cabrilla pargo. Cost includes all food, beverages (including beer) and single-occupancy accommodations. Gary runs a superb all-inclusive trip with the best fly fishing captains in the area and two lovely sisters that prepare great Mexican meals. He'll be on hand in La Ventana to share his vast knowledge, and he fishes with a different "pescador" every day to get you well acquainted with Mexican fish. His season, which runs April thru October, is mostly full for 2020 but he has held this week exclusively for our club. He will open it up to all others at the Pleasanton Fly Show. This is a great trip that should be on your bucket list.



## Truckee Watershed – July 24-27

This is a three-night, four-day [camping trip](#) at Logger Campground on Stampede Reservoir, with four days of fishing the Big Truckee, Little Truckee, and Milton Lake for rainbow and brown trout. It coincides with the peak of multiple aquatic hatches in the area and will include river wading opportunities and a day of either float tube or bank fishing at Milton Lake. Fishing techniques to be used include traditional indicator nymphing, Euro nymphing, streamers, and dry fly techniques. On the first evening, we are planning to have local guide Jon Baiocchi join us over dinner to discuss



where to fish, how to fish, and the current flies that are working in the areas at that particular time. It should be a great kickoff for 3-4 full days of fishing in the area since we won't be going in "blind" to the conditions.

## Southeast Alaska – August 28-September 5 – Martin Plotkin

Have you ever wanted to fish Alaska? I am sponsoring a [Tag-Along Fishing Trip](#) to Prince of Wales Island in Southeast Alaska. The trip will be at Mike and Sarah Warner's, Coffman Cove Adventures. We will plan to arrive at Prince of Wales on August 28<sup>th</sup> and depart on September 5<sup>th</sup>.

Coffman Cove is located near two dozen rivers within 5-90 minutes from the cabins and each offers something different to anglers. Depending on the river, we will be fishing for Coho, Pink or some Sockeye Salmon or Sea Run Cutthroat, Rainbow or Dolly Varden Trout. Each fishing



group will have a private cabin with full access to the amenities of the dining cabin. The trip cost includes lodging, meals, fish cleaning and packaging, use of a vehicle (fuel is extra), and transportation from the ferry or any float plane base on the island. This is a great trip for people looking for amazing river action. For complete details, click on the link above and contact me with any questions.

## Member Reports

### North Coast Steelhead – Bob McCollum

I fished a north coast river for two days recently just a few miles from the mouth. I was fortunate to hit nearly perfect conditions. The river had swollen and darkened from rain storms the week before. By the time I arrived, the water levels had dropped and the color had lightened to ideal “green” or “emerald” water.

I hooked five adult steelhead (three solidly hooked and fought) and landed two nice fish. I also caught six “half-pounders” (a nice distraction). These were hot fish fresh from the ocean. All hell broke loose as soon as I set the hook and the fish exploded from the water. They jumped and tail danced several times before they could be brought under control and eventually landed.

I grew up camping in the redwoods in the summer and fishing for small trout smolt with spinning gear on Super Dupers. Been a long-held dream of mine to fish for adult coastal steelhead in the winter. I've caught steelhead on the Trinity for more than a decade. The coastal fish are different. It was an incredible experience and a rare privilege to hook, fight, and land these fish. Can't wait for a chance to catch those big shiny fishes again!



## Andros Island, Bahamas – Martin Plotkin

Three of the five days we fished the weather didn't cooperate. In spite of the overcast and wind whipping up the surface we all caught fish and I believe all had a good time. Because we were in Andros, we missed the installation dinner but had one of our own with spiny lobster.

The group Barry Penner, Marty Loomis, Daniel Kitts, Roger Perry, Steve Johnson and myself met up on Nassau on Monday evening February 3<sup>rd</sup>. We did some sightseeing on Nassau the capital on the Bahamas on Tuesday and flew out to Andros early the next day.

After arrival, we walked down to the ocean and did a little fishing on the flats and a few of our group ventured out into the surf chumming for sharks with no success.

On Thursday, we started our five days of guided fishing with reasonably good weather. Then followed three days of overcast, windy weather, which made sight casting to fish almost impossible. With limited success, we did catch some blind casting to areas the guides thought might be holding fish. Our last guided day the sun reappeared part of the day and with it some shots and success casting to visible fish.

Martin, da fish meister.



## Feather River Steelhead – Mark Spruiell

You read that right, the lake guy has been hitting the river, with decidedly mixed luck. The fishing has actually been pretty good for me so far. I've been up to Oroville four times in the last month or so, and managed to land a total of about a dozen steelhead ranging in size from 18-28", including the wild fish at right. Several more escaped that I wish I could have gotten a closer look at.



I intentionally kept the rig very simple, drifting a single euro-style jig nymph under an indicator. I've had the most success with a sexy Walt's worm and a prince nymph in size 14.

The bad luck was of the two-legged variety. One of the river outings was on my way home from fishing at Baum. I parked my truck under the Table Mountain bridge near the fish hatchery. While waiting for Rob and Alan to arrive, I walked downriver and started fishing. My phone rings just a half hour later, right after an explosive fish had taken my fly along with half of the leader and the indicator. Rob delivers the bad news: someone had smashed a window on my truck. When I get back, I find that they had reached through the broken window and taken everything they could from the back seat, including my duffle bag with clothes and electronics, my tools, and my boat bag containing a half-dozen reels and spools and lots of other fishing gear as well. Ouch. Lesson learned the very hard way.

Two CHP cruisers showed up a few minutes after I called 911. The officers gently scolded me about the two stupidly obvious mistakes that I made: parking under a bridge, and leaving tempting targets visible inside the cab. There wasn't much I could do about the latter, but I easily could have parked a little farther away in a location that was much more visible and might have dissuaded the vandals. I had a noisy, 2.5-hour drive home to contemplate my naivete.

I've been back twice since then, paying much more attention to my surroundings and the security of my vehicle and gear. No more problems yet. Hopefully my experience will serve as a reminder to the rest of the club: don't let the anticipation of getting on the water make you ignore some simple safety precautions that could save you from a really bad day.



## Chasing Skwalas on the Yuba or “How I learned to hate the cobble” – Rob Farris



A third trip to the Yuba east of Marysville in the last two months chasing those hatching Skwala flies, again. If it's not Steelhead on the Feather, this is the big game in Northern Cal right now unless you want to make the long hike to Pyramid for Lahontans, or maybe a guide trip down the lower Sac. So off I went after being well armed from a discussion I had with Jon Baiocchi at the Pleasanton show on where the fish were in the system this week.

Jon had directed me far downstream from Hammond Grove Park where I geared up. That meant crossing the river and hiking a substantial distance down the obnoxious cobble from the gold mining tailings. This stuff is hard to walk; like walking on bowling balls and softballs but I expected a workout and got all I bargained for. The hatch was awesome for a mid-winter hatch. They say that this is best year in the last 4-5 years for Skwalas, and if you know where to look for them you will see hundreds of them during the day sunning on the rocks, or even crawling on you. They don't spend much time on the water, so the fish are looking for those that fall in due to wind near shore, and cautiously avoiding potential predators.

The river is gin clear, as they say, and the fish can see you coming from a long way off. So once on the stream, I was employing all the stealth my knees could manage to kneel down and out of sight while fishing a key run about 125 yards long multiple times. Which is to say that I really exercised all my casting abilities as well with the required downstream presentations from said sore knees. But at least it was warm in the high 70's, with water temperature from 50-52 degrees over the day.

The real attraction is top water dry fly action but I only saw four rises all day in the main current seam. Other guys on the river were remarking that “you should have been here Saturday” with the river alive all day long with rises everywhere. Of course; story of my life to have to do things the hard way and one a day late. Nevertheless, I pitched four different Skwala dry fly patterns to no avail in all the current seams and soft water, and then sunk a tungsten Skwala nymph four feet beneath a Unit Skwala as an indicator. And the result was a nice 16” fat and feisty Yuba River rainbow. The Yuba is known for these fighters that have Steelhead genes with broad tails and this fish didn't disappoint. Aside from Steelhead I rate these rainbows as the best fighting in California. They are fast with broad shoulders, head downstream quickly, tire slowly, and always take 3 or 4 runs before being landed.



As exciting as that fish was, it was my only one during the day with only one more quick grab. So I fished dries, dry droppers, high stick/Euro style, and even an indicator with a good deal of weight for the fast current spots. The Yuba is not known as a high fish count experience, but the strength of these fish is awesome and will likely bring me back one more time before the end of the Skwala season this month.

## The Tier's Bench

### Monthly Club Get Together

Monday, March 2<sup>nd</sup> from 7-9pm at the Rod and Gun Club; small room next to the BBQ area.

This is a monthly get together where members can drop in and participate in discussions, learn skills, or tie flies. During each meeting we decide what subject will be discussed the following month.

### Fly Tiers Library and Trading Post (LTP)

Most fly tiers, like me, have materials which would probably last several life-times. Often, to tie a new fly, we need a small amount of material which means buying some from the net, which may arrive next week, or jumping in the car for an hour+ drive to a fly shop in the area.

To remedy this, we created the LTP. The LTP has two resources: the Library for getting small amounts of material (a couple of feathers, small swatch of hair, etc.) and the Trading Post for exchanging your excess with others. Here are the details of how it will work. Both the library and Trading Post are only available to members.



**Library:** The library will be supported by donations of fly tying material from members. The material will be packaged in gallon sized zip locks with colored labels about the contents. Any member may take a small amount of material for a project and make a modest donation (\$1 min). The donations will be used to buy supplies and, if any is left over, other material for the library.

**Trading Post:** The trading post allows members to exchange excess tying material for other material. Any member may submit a gallon sized zip-lock bag with the material along with a very brief description to Jim Broadbent. Jim will assess a point value to the material based on his experience (Jim's decision is final). The material will be labeled with a different colored label than the library. Members may exchange their points for material in the trading post. Martin Plotkin will arrange for the LTP to show up at all general, board and fly tying meetings. It can also be accessed by special arrangement made with Martin.

## Education

### Kent McCammon

Our educational programs are designed to accelerate the learning of both new members to Fly Fishing, and cover more advanced topics for those looking to expand their knowledge. Detailed information and registration for all club educational offerings can be found on the [Education](#) page of the club website. We encourage you to register early as classes have maximum sizes and fill up quickly every year. And if you have any requests for specific classes please let me know and we'll explore introducing them.

Here are the upcoming educational opportunities:

- Fly Fishing Fundamentals consisting of four sessions (expanded from three in 2019) beginning April 15<sup>th</sup> with a supplemental practical on water session at the Kistler Lake trip on April 25<sup>th</sup>. See the Events listings for more detailed information. Signups are available directly on the [event page](#).
- Fly Tying get togethers that occur the first Monday of most months in the Fly Tying back room at the Livermore Rod & Gun club.
- Fly Casting is available throughout the year with many different specific classes from basic tight loop casting to double hauls, shooting heads, and sinking lines. Our excellent resident certified instructor schedules these Saturday morning classes depending upon interest. Please complete the form on the [Casting page](#) to express your interest.
- Guest Speakers are a consistent element of the club educational program. In the past we have welcomed guides, equipment manufacturers, safety experts, rod builders, and experienced club members to share their knowledge on specific topics and fishing styles (e.g., euro nymphing, lake fishing, etc.). Our Director of Speakers is always interested in your input so don't hesitate to contact Dave Fontaine if you have any suggestions for speakers.

## Items for Sale

### SeaEagle Raft

SeaEagle Pack7 Fishing Raft Kit used one day. Works great but I've just purchased inflatable kayak. This raft is a big improvement over a float tube. It's lightweight with a solid removable wood floor. Complete with carry bag, oars, pump, rod holders, gear compartments and other features. On sale from SeaEagle at \$399. Your price \$200 (firm).

Contact Gary Prince – [garysprince1@gmail.com](mailto:garysprince1@gmail.com) – 925-623-5360



### Rod for Sale

Sage 14', 8WT Spey Rod w/RIO Skaget Line (hardly used) - \$150

Contact Martin Plotkin – [angler@outlook.com](mailto:angler@outlook.com)

## Gear for Sale (lines are new in box or like new condition)

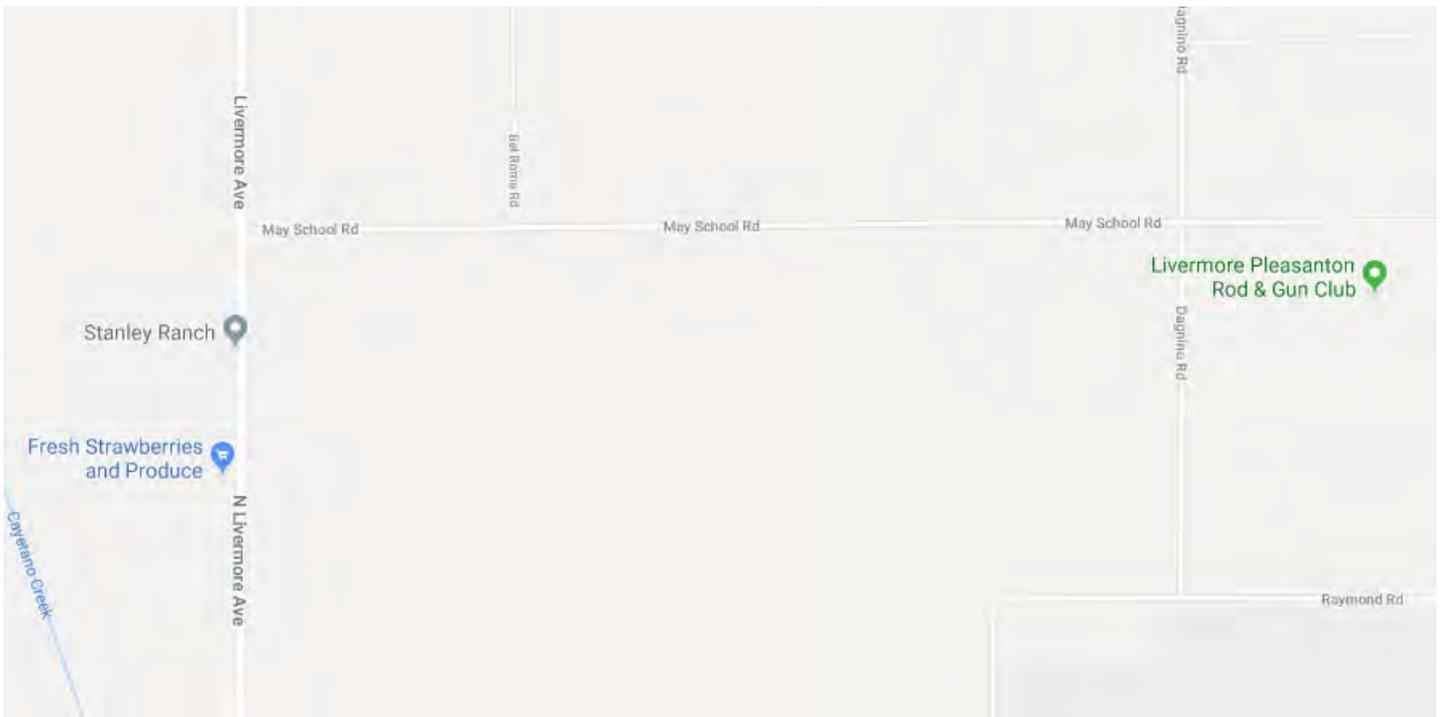
1. RIO Bonefish WF-7. \$45
2. RIO In-Touch Salmon/Steelhead WF-7. \$45
3. SA GPX WF-9. \$40
4. Shakespeare Model 606 Trolling Motor. 12 lb Thrust. Excellent Condition \$25
5. Fishin Buddy Model 2201 Bottom Line SideFinder. Excellent Condition \$25

Contact Gary – [gjturri@comcast.net](mailto:gjturri@comcast.net) or (925) 786-5184 cell

## Directions

We meet at the Livermore Pleasanton Rod and Gun Club at 7pm, typically on the first Thursday of every month. Check the club's [event calendar](#) for upcoming meeting dates.

Click the map for Google Map directions to 4000 Dagnino Road:



Exit Highway 580 on North Livermore Avenue

Proceed North on North Livermore Avenue to May School Road (~2.5 miles)

Turn right onto May School Road and proceed to stop sign at intersection with Dagnino Road (~1 mile)

Entrance to Rod and Gun Club is directly across intersection

