

# On The Fly

Newsletter of The Suncoast Fly Fishers Our Website [www.suncoastflyfishers.com](http://www.suncoastflyfishers.com) Volume 18, Issue 6 June 2008

## *The Prez Sez by Ken Hofmeister*

### SUNCOAST FLY FISHERS MEMBERSHIP EVALUATION SURVEY 6-19-08 Constant Improvement

*We believe we can always improve the way we tie, cast, fish, and educate. We are committed to continually improving how we function as we benchmark with other groups. We solicit improvement ideas for our processes, services, and ourselves. We are committed to preserving our waters and marine resources. We keep searching for safer and more productive ways to enjoy our sport.*

In September of 2006, we administered our first SFF Membership Evaluation Survey. Members completed the survey and shared their improvement suggestions. Survey results were published in the newsletter and discussed at subsequent board meetings. A few of the improvements included: a new meeting place at Walter Fuller Park, joint outings with Mangrove Coast Fly Fishers, participation in FFF, casting clinics for women, and designated fly tiers. We have featured more guest speakers and introduced a fly box raffle. Membership has grown as we tried a few different outing sites.

Recently, your president was named to the Federation of Fly Fishers Best Practices Committee. In this role, he'll be contacting FFF clubs in the Florida, Southeastern, and Southern Councils to find out what they do especially well and how. These ideas will be captured and documented for access on the FFF web site. This is a terrific way to help each FFF club "raise the bar" and not have to reinvent the wheel when embarking on new ventures. Naturally, your board will be hearing about some of these best practices that might work well for SFF. As always, the members will be the judge of what works for us.

Now, it's time to take another look at how we can continue to improve. We have new members with new ideas. Let's capture some of these creative and innovative ways to make SFF even better at tying, casting, fishing, educating, and conserving our marine resources. You'll find a SFF Membership Evaluation Survey on page 10 of this newsletter. Please complete, sign, and submit at the June 19 meeting (extra copies will be available at the meeting).

Thanks for helping to make SFF a leading fly-fishing club. Ken Hofmeister, President

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**MEETING REPORT: May 15** by Bill AuCoin

**Russ Hampton: Fishing South Florida's Flood Control Canals**

Russ Hampton's first commandment is Do Not Feed the Gators.



Russ Hampton, featured speaker Photo by Bill AuCoin



South Florida canal gators Photo by Tom Gadacz

Feeding gators is the big no-no in Hampton's bible about how to reach paradise fly fishing South Florida's amazing system of flood control canals. The Clermont fly fisher punctuated his thou-shalt-nots with slides at the May 15 meeting of Suncoast Fly Fishers.

Fly fishing paradise is a 100-fish day with a 6-weight flipping a Spider Fly. Butterfly peacock bass, spotted tilapia, mayan cichlids and oscars ("bluegills on steroids") attack this minnow fly swimming just under the surface. These exotics are the most likely to strike, but the canal system hosts 32 different exotic fish, according to the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, so you never what's going to strike.

Sometimes paradise is attained when you come out into a little lake and you pick up the 8-weight with Hampton's white gurgler – with the weed guard – and cast it way back in the field of lily pads. Skitter the gurgler across the pads to an open spot. Bass lurk there.

In some canals, paradise is a snook, like the 18-pounder Hampton caught in Snapper Creek Canal (C-2). This 12-mile canal is situated in the Miami suburbs of Sweetwater and Kendall and is lined with lots of beautiful homes and parks). For fishing and launching information go to <http://www.floridafisheries.com/docum/snapper.html>. Another Hampton's favorite is C-111, Aerojet, an eight-mile canal that forks and bends and meanders for eight miles. Check it out at <http://www.floridafisheries.com/docum/aerojet.html>

While you research Snapper Creek Canal and Aerojet Canal, check out other Hampton favorites like Black Creek Canal, Cutler Drain Canal, Cypress Creek Canal, North and south

New River Canal, Snake Creek Canal, Tamiami Canal, the Miami Canal off of L-67, and the Holey Land Wildlife Management area.

For a free booklet with maps of all of the canals phone the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD), 561-686-8800, and ask for the "Facilities and Infrastructure Location Index."

There are more than 1,400 miles of canals in the South Florida flood control system and much of it is accessible with a little research as to the best place to launch. Sometimes you have the whole canal to yourself but, if you don't, just motor away from ramp area and you'll discover long stretches just to yourself and partner. Thou shalt never fish alone.

Mosquitos are under control in South Florida's canal network but, apparently, canal gators still act like spoiled brats. Hampton said they've been hand-fed too many catch-and-release meals.

One time he was fishing the Miami Canal off of L-67. An 8-foot alligator swam alongside his bass boat for more than a mile. When he or his partner caught a fish, the gator would swim in close, jaws open, saying, "Hey Mister, throw me a fish." He never asked politely.

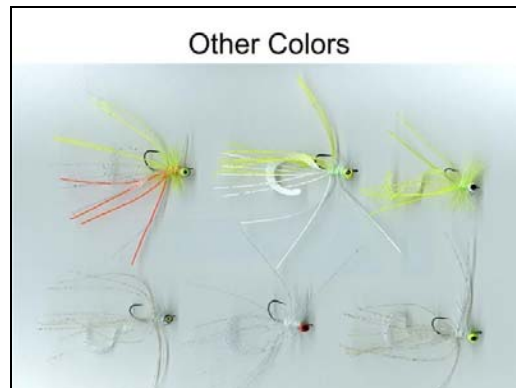
Russ cranked up the big motor and zoomed away to another spot, thankful he was not in a kayak.

Gators get skunked. Fly fishers score big.

*Russ Hampton is not a guide. He's a man who loves to fly fish and share what he has learned about fly fishing the Florida Canals and offshore, too. (He has caught striped marlin and sailfish on a fly rod.)*

Russ Hampton Saltwater Synthetics 12035 Browns Canal Drive Clermont, Florida 34711  
Phone: (352) 241-9210 Cell: (352) 408-2896

### **Some of Russ Hampton's Go-To Flies**



## THE OUTING REPORT: May 17-18 by Richard Oldenski

### Snook Night Fishing May 17-18 Outing

The night snook fishing extravaganza was a success! Most of us had a chance to go "mano a mano" against mighty snook. In spite of a stiff wind and not many lighted docks, we were able to find snook that could not resist our flies. The largest was 30 inches, taken by Tom Trukenbrod on, of all things, an ada-potata fly. Trout were also plentiful and hungry. Mark Hays scored in the trout category with one 20 inches long. Only four of us were awake enough to meet for breakfast at MacDonald's, while the rest of the membership, exhausted from the night's fishing, retreated to their beds. You should have been there!



Ken Hofmeister's 26" snook - May outing



Ted Rich casting in the Everglades - April outing

## FISHING TOURNAMENT -

Snook - Tom Trukenbrod - 30 inches

Trout - Mark Hays - 20 inches

**JUNE 17 PROGRAM:** Steve Gibson is our speaker for the meeting. He will discuss "Flyfishing from a Kayak". He will also tie the "Mighty Myakka Minnow" just before the meeting (6:30-7:00PM).

Captain Steve Gibson is a professional outdoor writer and photographer. A graduate of Marshall University, his writings and photographs have appeared in several publications, including Florida Sportsman, Gulf Coast Angler, Fly Fishing in Salt Waters, Saltwater Fly Fishing, The Fisherman, Cabella's Outdoor Magazine and Florida Fishing Weekly. He made kayak flyfishing the popular sport it is today! He is the Outdoor Writer for the Herald-Tribune Media Group in Sarasota.

## JUNE ACTIVITIES

**June Outing - June 21 -- Floating down the Hillsborough River by Richard Oldenski**

While the residents of the Tampa Bay are sweltering and sweating with record high temperatures, imagine yourself lazily drifting down a wild and scenic river, shaded by Southern oaks and cypress trees, a cool breeze at your back while dozens of sunfish and an occasional bass devour your foam spider. This vision will come to life at our June outing on the Hillsborough

River. We will launch in canoes and kayaks at Morris Bridge Park and leisurely float and fish the 4 mile stretch to the Trout Creek Wilderness Park. Lunch will be served at Trout Creek at Noon, but don't rush, you'll have plenty of time to fish and enjoy the wildlife and scenery along this beautiful part of the river. Maps and the sign up sheet will be at the meeting. To get there, take I-275 or I-75 to Fletcher Ave. Drive East on Flecters which becomes Morris Bridge Road. Both of the Parks are on Morris Bridge road. Partners will need to coordinate their drop off and pick up at the respective parks.

Several of us have extra canoes and kayaks, so we should be able to get everyone in a boat. As an alternative, canoes and kayaks can be rented from Canoe Escape at 9335 E. Fowler (813-986-2067) or [www.canooescape.com](http://www.canooescape.com). They will put you in at Morris Bridge Park and pick you up at Trout Creek. A tandum kayak or canoe rents for \$16 per paddler; solo kayak or canoe for \$25. If you want to come to the outing but can't sign up at the meeting, call Richard at 727-345-8938.

### **Fly Casting Clinic, June 28 Saturday by Pat Domico**

We will meet at Ft. DeSoto Park at the end of East Beach for another very popular casting clinic. Hours will be 8 to 10:30 a.m. Richard will have the coffee ready for early arrivals as we check and set up our equipment. There will be a signup sheet at our June meeting. If you need equipment, make a note on the sheet or contact me at [pat4jaws@hotmail.com](mailto:pat4jaws@hotmail.com). Enver and Charlie will again be available to make sure everyone gets individual attention. This is for all levels of experience. After the session, you can ply the local flats to test your skills. Wear a hat, sunglasses and sunscreen. See you there!

Pat Damico

### **OUTING PREVIEWS:**

Outing Previews:

July - Anclote River

August - Alligator Lake

September - 4th Street North

October - Carl Hanson Memorial Tournament

**HAVE A GREAT FATHER'S DAY**

**TAKE YOUR CHILDREN FLYFISHING**

**OR**

**BETTER YET, INVITE THEM TO TAKE YOU FLYFISHING**

## DESIGNATED FLY TYERS for May 15, 2008

### Snook Specials a la Ken Doty and Alan Sewell



Allan Sewell & Ken Doty

Photos – Bill AuCoin



Sewell's (top) & Doty's Snook Specials

See Alan for all the step-by-step details to build his Enrico Puglisi-inspired snook fly. Alan wraps Neer Hair (lots of it!) with white thread. Some flash, of course. The eyes are molded plastic. Then the real artistry begins. How are you with scissors? Trim. Trim. Trim some more. Color with permanent markers. Scissors and coloring. Don't you see, everything we need to know we learned in kindergarten. Not.

"My white snook special starts with a Mustad 2 or equivalent. I use white waxed nylon thread to attach pearl Mylar flash, two white hackle tips, white marabou feathers (lead pencil thickness) tied on in small clumps along the top of the hook shank. Fill it up. Add Mylar film then one more clump of marabou feathers. Trim it up."  
Ken Doty

## WHY DON'T MORE PEOPLE FLY FISH?

By Capt. Pat Damico

*One of the comments frequently heard when discussing fly fishing with either a group or an individual is represented by the title of this article. "Why don't more people fly fish?" And to me it comes as a genuine surprise that when out fishing our Florida waters, seeing someone using a fly rod is a rarity. Conversely, in the Keys, it is very common sight.*

Even members of our local fly fishing clubs reveal that many primarily use more conventional tackle, and infrequently go to the long rod. There are exceptions of course, but frankly this phenomenon is difficult for me to understand.

In spite of these conclusions, saltwater fly fishing has become the fastest growing segment of our sport. Why? Because frankly -- it's fun!

Living in coastal Florida, where most have access to great shallow water estuaries, why do so few take advantage of this resource? They spend Saturday mornings in front of a TV, loving every minute -- watching someone else do what is in reality, just minutes away from their door.

Unlike the many other sports that we love to watch, but can't participate in, saltwater fly fishing is available to anyone who can hold a spinning rod.

So, if location is not a factor, what else contributes to this dilemma?

"I tried it but wasn't successful." What does this mean?

Is this person a not a successful inshore fisherman with conventional tackle, taking up fly fishing will definitely not improve their success. That's why most experts will tell you that fly fishing without previous successful fishing experience is destined to fail. The only possible exception would be if every trip was with an experienced guide.

Thus, you can conclude that knowing how to catch fish conventionally is a prerequisite to fly fishing success.

Knowledge of fish habits, location, tides, and stealth on the water should be the established basis for successful fly fishing. Whether you wade fish, paddle fish or use a skiff is really irrelevant if you are satisfied with your degree of fishing success. The fact of the matter is that many beginning fly fishers really enjoy the challenge of a new approach. And somehow, this ancient angling art is very compatible with nature, solitude, scenery, fellowship, and relaxation.

Age is not a deterrent. Some of our very best fly casters are in their early teens or senior citizens. Knowledge made you a good conventional fisherman. Now you can take that experience to the next level.

Where can one learn to start fly fishing? Just head to your local fly shop -- preferably a place that specializes in this pursuit. They should have the knowledge and equipment available to get you on the right track and accelerate your learning curve.

Find an instructor who is a good listener and will not talk down to you. I have seen inept fly fishing teacher act like a cold shower to someone who was enthusiastic about getting started. Explain your concerns, and be certain they are addressed.

By the way, if their conversation begins with a \$650.00 fly rod, head for the door! Improvements in technology have made some entry-level rods, reels and fly lines that are really great and quite affordable.

I began at a young age with hand-me-down equipment, but a few patient adults were willing to share their experience with me and create an atmosphere of understanding that

helped me get started. Here you will find equipment in your price range, free fly casting clinics, as well as books and videos that you can take home to continue your learning experience.

Our area has two great fly fishing clubs that meet monthly, Suncoast Fly Fishers, and Tampa Bay Fly Fishing Club. An hour before their formal meeting, which usually includes a speaker, qualified casting instructors will help you with anything you want to know about fly fishing, using the club's equipment. A lending library of books and videos, discounts on equipment, and monthly fly fishing trips to area waters are just a few other benefits of membership. Someone will usually be tying flies and willing to suggest patterns for your particular needs. Many members would likely invite you to be their fishing partner. Their reason for joining was to learn, just like yours. To find a club in your area, go to [www.fedflyfishers.org](http://www.fedflyfishers.org), or [check this website](#).

Use your back yard to practice casting. Every evening after dinner, take out your fly rod for a twenty-minute session. Frequent practice will allow your muscles to develop memory and you

should feel more comfortable after a while. And remember -- a good caster seems to perform with minimal effort. You will eventually.

Once your casting ability improves, leave that conventional tackle at home. Devote all your time and energy to this new pursuit. Your first fish with a fly rod will be a memorable experience. I can assure you that, once you begin to reap the benefits of this sport, you will understand a wonderful dimension of fishing you never knew was there.

Capt. Pat Damico

St. Pete Beach

727-360-6466

[www.captpat.com](http://www.captpat.com)

## FLY OVER

by Bill AuCoin

### Switzerland's sharp blow to gamefish

Switzerland has banned catch-and-release fishing. Starting next year anglers are supposed to kill the fish immediately with a sharp blow to the head. On the bright side, the new regulations ban the use of live bait and barbed hooks. Details at [www.fishandfly.com/articles/](http://www.fishandfly.com/articles/)

### Fly Fishers live longer.

George Harvey, developed the first fly-fishing course at Penn State in 1934. He went on to teach fly fishing to an estimated 35,000 people and became known as the dean of American fly-fishing. He died March 31 at the age of 96. Details at [http://www.midcurrent.com/news/2008/03/george\\_harvey\\_dies.html](http://www.midcurrent.com/news/2008/03/george_harvey_dies.html)

### New books for fly fishers...

My Life Was This Big...and other *true* fishing tales. Lefty Kreh with Chris Millard  
The Fly Fisherman's Guide to the Meaning of Life. Peter Kaminsky

### Presbyopic?

Most of us over the age of 40 have aging eyes, a condition known as presbyopia and must put on "drug store readers" to see close up. Now, for fly fishers in this category, Ono's Trading Company ([www.onostradingcompany.com](http://www.onostradingcompany.com)) sells polarized sunglasses with bifocal magnifiers for tying knots and other close-up fishing tasks.

### Borski's Abel Special

**Abel Reels** is producing a limited edition of 50 Abel Super 12X models inspired and illustrated by Florida Keys artist Tim Borski. Borski gets #1. Bonefish & Tarpon Unlimited gets #2.

### When things go wrong

Here's an update on Capt. Rick Grassett of Sarasota, who made a presentation to Suncoast Fly Fishers in April. Grassett took a couple of guys tarpon fishing recently in the Gulf. This is from Grassett's report in the [Bradenton Herald](#): "...Chopper hooked up to a feisty 80- or 90-pounder with a chartreuse Toad fly, which is when the real fun began. Chopper was clearing his fly line when a large knot came up through his guides and separated the fly rod in the middle. Chopper fought the fish through numerous jumps with only the butt section of the rod. We got the fish back on the reel, recovered and reassembled the tip section of the fly rod, picked the knot out of



the fly line and had the tarpon close to the boat putting some real heat on the fish when a large bull shark showed up and ate the fish!

**Less is more**

Tiffany Shepherd thinks the school district was okay with her teaching but not okay with her other job. A bikini mate aboard *Smokin' Em Charters* in Fort Pierce, Ms. Shepherd, 30, wore bikinis, perhaps less, on the boat. She has not been invited back to teach biology at Port St. Lucie High School next year. But everything's going to be okay. Playboy magazine is calling.  
.....Bill AuCoin

**WELCOME NEW MEMBERS**

The following individual joined FSS this past month. We welcome Jon and invite him to join a committee.

Jon Hoegstrom

**JOIN A COMMITTEE**

**WHY DON'T THEY? I WISH THAT THEY WOULD . . .**

SFF has over a hundred members who are full of good ideas and suggestions. We have lots of experience in fly-fishing organizations and on the water. Now is the time to put the energies and ideas to work as we continue to improve how we meet member needs by improving our processes, our people, and what we provide.

Join an SFF committee and help translate our vision into reality. Committees are: Casting Skills, FFF, Fly Tying, Membership, Newsletter, Outings, Publicity, Programs, Project Healing Waters, Raffles/Library, Web Site (and maybe we need additional ones).

Contact a chairman, board member, or officer to make your contribution.

..... President Ken Hofmeister

**HAVE A GREAT GRANDFATHER'S DAY**

**TAKE YOUR GRANDCHILDREN FLYFISHING  
OR  
BETTER YET, INVITE THEM TO TAKE YOU FLYFISHING**

**SUNCOAST FLY FISHERS MEMBERSHIP EVALUATION SURVEY JUNE 2008**

<b>YOUR RATING 1- TO 5+</b>	<b>CATEGORY</b>	<b>YOUR SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT</b>
	PROGRAMS	
	NEWSLETTER	
	WEB SITE	
	OUTINGS	
	SPECIAL EVENTS (EVERGLADES/COLEMAN CLASSIC)	
	PIG ROAST/AUCTIONS	
	COOPERATION WITH OTHER GROUPS (CCA, FFF, FWC, OTHER CLUBS)	
	CONSERVATION/EDUCATION	
	CASTING SKILLS	
	FLY TYING/FLY FISHING SKILLS	
	MEETING FACILITIES	

Please rate Suncoast Fly Fishers 1-5 (with 5 being fantastic) in these categories. Add your suggestions for improvement beside any less than 5 ratings. Please indicate which standing committee you would be willing to serve on. **Program** \_\_ **Outings** \_\_ **Membership** \_\_ **Casting Skills** \_\_ **Special Events** \_\_ **Fly Tying** \_\_ **Raffle** \_\_ **Auctions/Pig Roast** \_\_ **Publicity** \_\_ **Web Site** \_\_ **FFF** \_\_ **Healing Waters** \_\_ **Newsletter** \_\_ **Other** \_\_\_\_\_.

Thanks for helping SFF improve. Ken Hofmeister, President

## SUNCOAST FLY FISHERS

### *Our Aims and Purpose*

*The Suncoast Fly Fishers are dedicated to sharing their total fly fishing experiences and to developing interest in fly fishing in both fresh and saltwater. We shall promote and teach both fly fishing and related subjects of fly tying, rod building, fly casting and knot tying.. Through collaboration, fellowship, conservation and sportsmanship, we will help members become more skilled, have more fun and be more productive in the sport. Suncoast Fly Fishers support the conservation of natural resources, boating safety and fishing regulations.*

## LOCAL FLY FISHING GUIDES

Capt. Pat Damico, Tampa Bay;  
727 - 360-6466

Capt Rick Grassett, Sarasota Bay, Charlotte Harbor, Tampa Bay 941 – 923-7799

Capt. Pete Greenan, Boca Grande and The Everglades 941 – 923-6095

Capt. Mike Homer, Tampa Bay;  
727 - 418-5005

Cap. Ray Markham-----Sarasota & Tampa Bay 941 - 723-2655

Capt. Wayne Simmons, Tampa Bay  
727 – 204-4188

## SUNCOAST FLY FISHERS: YOUR COMMITTEE CHAIRS WORKING FOR YOU

Activities are at the heart of any successful organization. SFF's BOD has instituted the following Standing Committees to help us maintain a high level of activities that have proven to be popular with the membership and some new ones to fill a need as expressed through membership surveys. These

committees are generally chaired by board members but you do not have to be a board member to fill that position. If you would like to volunteer to participate on any or these committees, please speak to any director.

Committees are as follows:

- Casting Skills - Pat Damico
- FFF Liaison - Pat Damico
- Fly Tying - Alan Sewell
- Membership - Pat Damico & Joe Dail
- Newsletter - Paul Sequira
- Outings - Richard Oldenski & Mark Hays
- Publicity - Roger Blanton
- Programs - BOD
- Project healing Waters - Terry Kirkpatrick
- Raffles - John Rodgers & Tom Hummel
- Webmaster – Tom Anderson



"Never trust a man who doesn't fish"  
(Teddy Roosevelt)

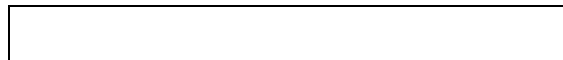
### Platinum Real Estate

Roger Blanton—Broker

Please contact me if you are buying or selling residential, commercial or investment property. A full service real estate and mortgage company.  
Phone: 727-515-5247  
Fax: 727-864-4950  
E-mail: Roger.Blanton@hotmail.com  
Website: PlatinumRealtyOfFlorida.com

## YOUR BUSINESS AD HERE

A good way to help your club and advertise your business economically to fellow club members and other interested readers is to place an ad in our newsletter. Take a Business Membership and get a business card sized advertisement in every issue of "On The Fly". You provide a copy ready advertisement. See Treasurer Enver Hysni or Secretary Joe Dail.



# SUNCOAST FLY FISHERS

## Club Officers

President: Ken Hofmeister  
727/521-1637  
Vice President: John Zientarski  
727/391-1480  
Secretary: Joe Dail  
Treasurer: Enver Hysni

## Board of Directors

Roger Blanton - Pat Damico - Mark Hays - Richard Oldenski - John Rodgers - Paul Sequira - Alan Sewell

“On the Fly” is the monthly newsletter of the Suncoast Fly Fishers (SFF), a not-for-profit organization offering fly fishing and fly tying instruction to members and visitors. Club membership includes newsletter subscription. Send e-mail submissions to:

psequira@tampabay.rr.com

**Visit Our Website:**

<http://www.suncoastflyfishers.com>

**Next Club Meeting: June 19**

**Time:** 6:30–7:00 PM Activities,  
7:00–8:30 PM Meeting and Program

**Location:** Walter Fuller Park

7891 26<sup>th</sup> Ave. North  
St. Petersburg, FL 33710

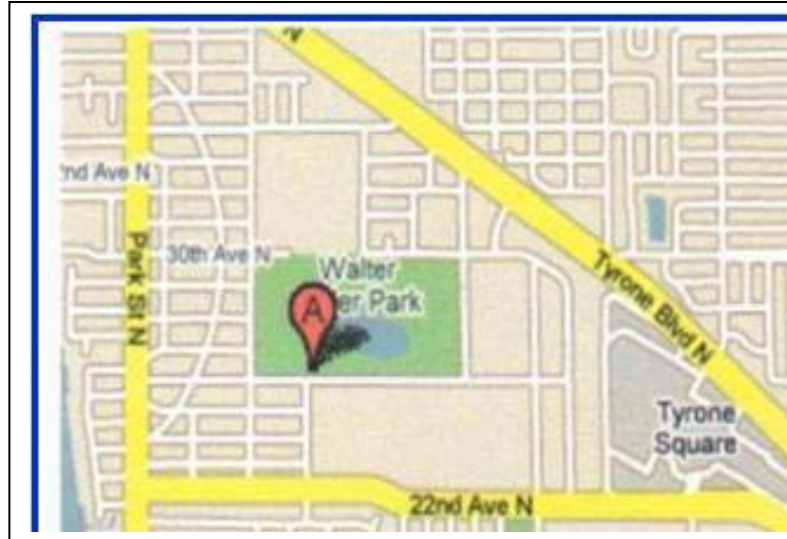
**Program: 6:30-7:00PM Flytying with**

**Steve Gibson - Mighty Myakka**

**Minnow**

**7:00-8:30PM – Steve Gibson-**

**Flyfishing from a Kayak**



On The Fly



**P.O. Box 40821  
St. Petersburg, FL 33743-0821**