

Welcoming **Dave Graybill** To The **Nickel Ads** **The Fishin' Magician**

This past week was one of mixed blessings for me. My wife Eileen and I got to spend an evening on the Icicle River in one of my favorite holes. This spot was shaded and cool, very scenic, and the fly fishing for small rainbow was incredible. It reminded me why I enjoy fishing so much. I also lost a good friend, who was an ardent fly angler.

I had known Irv Conner for many years, meeting him for the first time at one of the local fly shops, and then seeing him at meetings of the Wenatchee Valley Fly Fishers. He was a very active member of this group and served on its board and the board of the Federation of Fly Fishers. Conner pursued his passion for fly fishing at many remote locations from Belize to Alaska. He generously loaned me several boxes of flies for one of my trips to Belize.

I spent many hours with Conner "off the water" where he dedicated his time at meetings to help conserve our salmon and steelhead runs, and expand sport fishing opportunities. He worked hard to get steelhead fishing re-opened on the Wenatchee River, and other selective fisheries.

When you buy your fishing license and plan on fishing for salmon or steelhead on the Columbia River or its tributaries, you pay an additional fee of \$8.75. This money goes to a dedicated fund that can only be spent on projects that expand and improve recreational salmon and steelhead selective fisheries. Irv Conner was the person that first suggested this concept at local meetings with the Department of Fish and Wildlife and representatives of



local fishing groups. It was first intended to help just Upper Columbia fisheries, but was expanded to include the entire Columbia River and its tributaries. This fund has generated over \$1.5 million dollars a year. This money has helped maintain and expand fisheries along the entire length of the Columbia and thousands of sport anglers have benefited by being able to fish for salmon and steelhead on streams that would have otherwise been closed. Conner also served on the Salmon and Steelhead Stamp Endorsement Board that oversees the funding of these projects. His input will be missed.

His vision for special endorsement stamps

to support selective recreational fisheries for salmon and steelhead recreational fishing is working very well. I am sure that we will see other forms of this concept applied to other fisheries beyond the Columbia River. Thanks to Irv Conner the template has been created and many other fisheries and countless anglers will benefit from it.

Conner and I had lunch a couple of times and he coached me on the selection and use of flies to use in Belize, but in our conversations we traveled far and wide. He would get a distant look on his face while he described casting to a stubborn wild steelhead on a Canadian stream or battling a giant tarpon in Mexico. He was reliving this experience in his mind's eye, and the joy he felt as if it was happening right then. That was his real passion in fishing. Not the numbers or the size, so much, but the re-telling of the experience. I will very much miss hearing these stories. He and his wife Judy had many friends who will miss him, too.

Many of you may recall the great trout derby that was held at Burke and Quincy lakes this spring. It was done so well that everyone agreed that it should be repeated. Well, this same group, the Quincy Valley Tourism Association, has another derby planned. It's going to be the Northern Pikeminnow Fishing Derby held on September 24th and 25th. The staging area will be at the Crescent Bar Recreation area, but contestants will be able to fish anywhere on the Columbia River between Rock Island Dam and Wanapum Dam.

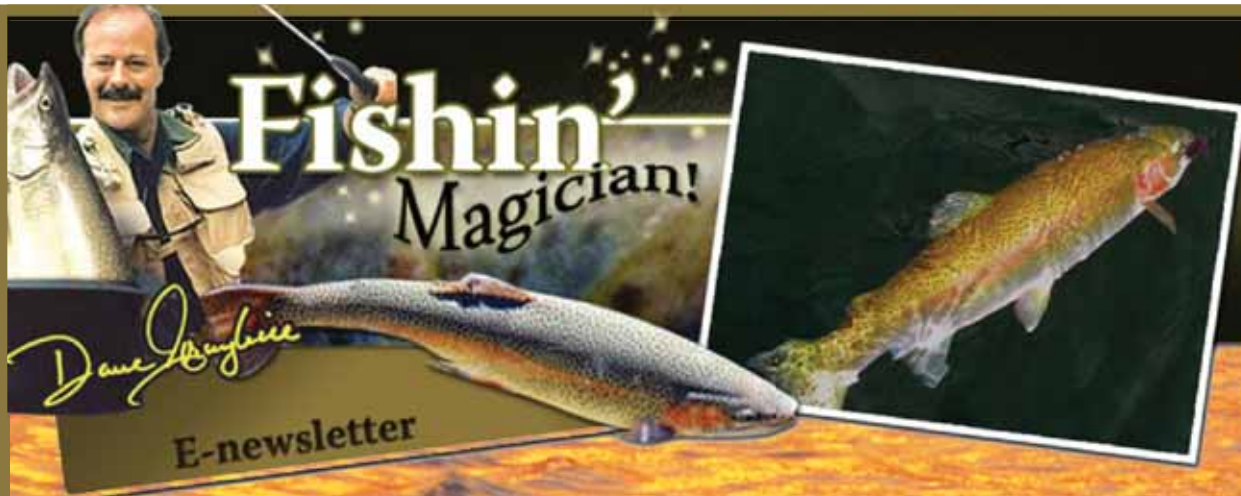
There will be 10 tagged fish placed in the river and they will be worth a total of \$30,000.00 if caught! There will be one \$10,000.00 winner and four additional tagged fish will be worth \$5,000.00 each. In addition to

these tagged fish there will be many other cash and non-cash prizes with a total value of approximately \$10,000.00. Winners will be judged by total weight in catch as well as single catch weight. Prizes will be awarded in the adult and juvenile divisions, but you must be 18 years of age or older to qualify for the tagged fish award. There's a \$20.00 entry fee per licensed adult 16 years of age or over. Anglers under the age of 16 may fish at no charge, but they must register to participate.

After Labor Day weekend, registration form will be available at Ace Hardware and Gates Tru-Value in Quincy, or Hooked on Toys in Wenatchee. Registration forms and rules are also available at the Quincy Valley Chamber of Commerce, located at 119 F Street in Quincy, WA 98848. Those interested in the derby can also access information by logging onto FishingMagician.com and clicking on the Quincy Valley logo on the Home Page. Derby rules and registration forms will be available to be printed out on your home computer.

Today another stretch of the Wenatchee River opens to fishing for summer run Chinook salmon. This is going to be an exciting fishery through October 15th. There will be more fish available to anglers and they will be much more aggressive. I am anxious to get out after them myself. This fishery, the first in over 20 years, was made possible through Endorsement Stamp funding, and Irv Conner's concept. Thanks Irv, you really made a difference.

Reach Dave at: www.FishingMagician.com
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