

ARIES

SYLVESTER NEMES

Sylvester Nemes died at home on the outskirts of Bozeman on Feb. 3, 2011, with his wife of 65 years, Hazel Mary Barclay Nemes, by his side.

He was born in Erie, Pa., on April 2, 1922. His father, Dominic Nemes, sent for a bride from his homeland of Roumania, a beautiful young woman named Pauline Angel, making Sylvester a first-born American of an immigrant family. Growing up around Cleveland, Ohio, during the Depression, he worked



Nemes

tending a news stand helping his family and then became introduced to his mentor, a barber, who introduced him to the art of fly tying around 1938. With his new friend he learned to fish and traveled by bus to fish the Pennsylvania streams and Lake Erie with his newly made hand-tied flies. This led to his lifelong passion and writings on the history and lure of fly fishing, and he is the author of many books.

At the onset of World War II at the age of 19 he enlisted in the U.S. Army Air Force. Due to faulty eyesight he could not become an aircraft gunner, but worked on the ground with the crucial Fighter Control Squadron with the Eighth Air Force directing planes over the English Channel while being stationed at the Ibsley Air field outside of the New Forest in Hampshire, England.

It was a blind date that introduced him to the young English nursing student, Hazel Mary Barclay. The date took them to the ballroom for a dance at the Crown Hotel in Ringwood, Hampshire. She waited for him to return from his landing at Omaha Beach on D-Day+4, where he remained for nine months directing the fighter aircraft pushing back the opposition through northern Europe. He then returned to England, where they were married March 17, 1945, in Southampton, Hampshire, England at Saint Edmonds Church.

After the war while having a young family, Sylvester Nemes attended Kent State University in Ohio and received a bachelor's degree in English, leading to his career as a writer for many well-known advertising firms. Hazel and he remained in the Cleveland area for a while before moving to Detroit, Mich., where he worked as an advertising copywriter. They later settled around the Chicago area while he worked as an advertising copywriter.

In 1961 they moved to Crown Point, Ind., so they would be nearer her sister, Joyce Perry, in Michigan, who had also married a WWII soldier and lived on a farm near Grand Rapids, Mich. There were many wonderful years together fishing the rivers of Michigan while camping with their families. It was at this

time that Sylvester started his own business and worked as a photojournalist and traveled the midwest and some western states. The trips in the west usually followed "the hatch."

In 1982 Hazel and Syl spent some time in San Francisco before moving to Bozeman in 1984 and built a house at the base of the Bridger Mountains. The house overlooked the Galatin Valley and the various mountain ranges and rivers that became their playground. They spent many years fishing and entertaining fishermen and other enthusiasts from around the world. In 2008 Sylvester was given the honor of "Legends of the Headwaters" award by Trout Unlimited of Bozeman.

Hazel Mary Nemes remains living at the family home in Bozeman. The couple had three children. Their first child, a daughter Diane Nemes Corson, was born in England and is married to Lynn Hough Corson III; their second child, Eric Nemes, born in Berea, Ohio, resides in St. Louis, Mo., married and divorced from Diana Schaffer; and their third child, Gregory Nemes, born in Gary, Ind., died in 1984.

The grandchildren are Hallie Wynne Williams of Vancouver, Wash., married to Michael Williams, Effie Brown Alexander of Portland, Ore., and Sage Alexia Corson of Portland, Ore. Their son Eric Nemes' children are Ryan Nemes of St. Louis, Lee Nemes of Missouri, and Dylan Nemes, also of Missouri. Hallie's children, Sylvester's great grandchildren, are Jade Aubrey Williams, Asher Williams, and Ella Williams. Effie and her husband, Andrew Alexander, have another granddaughter, a little girl named Violet.

A memorial gathering will be held at 2 p.m. Sunday, Feb. 20, at the Fish Hatchery on Bridger Drive.

The family requests in lieu of flowers, donations may be made to the Sylvester Nemes Memorial Fund, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Department, c/o Friends of the Bozeman Fish Technology Center, BFTC. Hazel Nemes would like to thank Rocky Mountain Hospice for their beautiful compassionate care, and a donation may made to them in the name of the Sylvester Nemes family. For further information, please contact dianencorson@gmail.com.

SUNDAY, FEBRUARY 13, 2011

ON SMOKING POT AND FISHING

Gallatin County lawmakers voted with their parties this past week on a bill to repeal Montana's medical marijuana law.

Republican Reps. Tom Burnett, Gordy Vance, Kelly Flynn, Ted Washburn and Michael More voted in favor of repealing the act.

Democratic Reps. Franke Wilmer, Kathleen Williams and Mike Phillips voted against the repeal.

Park County's two Republican House members, Reps. Dan Skattum and John Esp also voted for the repeal.

Madison County Rep. Bob Wagner, R-Harrison, was one of six Republicans to join Democrats in voting against repeal.

Repealing the law would in effect outlaw using marijuana for medical purposes.

Also this past week, on a bill that would cut waterways defined as irrigation ditches out of Montana's stream-access law — making them off limits to anglers — most Gallatin County lawmakers voted "no."

Burnett, Wilmer, Williams, Phillips, Washburn and More all voted against the measure that some fear would whittle away at Montana's famous stream-access laws.

Vance and Flynn voted for the bill, which supporters say protects private property by ensuring manmade canals created to water fields aren't used by fishermen.

Skattum and Esp voted for the bill. Wagner voted against the bill on second reading in the House, but voted in favor of it during third reading.

PATRIOT ACT AXED

In Congress last week, Rep. Denny Rehberg voted against extending provisions of the Patriot Act, helping what some are calling a Tea Party revolt in the U.S. House. The vote was a procedural one to allow Congress to fast track the one-year extension. But it fell eight votes short of what it needed.

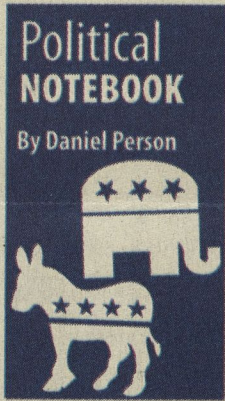
Some have questioned whether Tea Party Republicans deserve credit, since a vast majority of those voting against the extension were Democrats.

Then again, last year, when Democrats held a large majority in the House, a Patriot Act extension easily passed.

And, as the Cato Institute noted, the House still voted in favor of extending the act — just not in the numbers needed to fast track the bill. So, by Cato's thinking, the extension will probably happen, it just won't be easy.

THE THIRD RAIL

Sen. Jon Tester lashed out at President Barack Obama's high-speed rail plan this week, saying the money to pay for the rail



Political
NOTEBOOK

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Sylvester Nemes

(1922--)

Sylvester Nemes (pronounced Neemus) was born on the 2nd of April, 1922 in Erie, Pennsylvania. He attended Kent State University, in Ohio, where he studied English. He married Hazel M. Barclay, a British war bride whom he courted on the banks of the Test.

During WW II Nemes served in a fighter control squadron, following close behind the front from England through France and into Germany. While in England he obtained permission to fish the Leckford water on the Test, just a few miles upstream from Stockbridge. "I had to report to Mr. Bains, the riverkeeper," Nemes wrote in a private communication. "He told me I had to fish dry fly to rising fish only, and he gave me a handful of Olives and Welshman's Buttons in 12's and 14's. I caught many two pound trout. Later in Germany I fashioned a fly rod from a willow and tied guide rings on it which I found in an abandoned garage."

After the war, Nemes was an industrial photographer for 12 years before becoming an advertising copy writer.

Nemes's first contribution to fly fishing literature came in 1975 with publication of The Soft-Hackled Fly (Chatham Press). This classic little book contradicted the direction taken by most fly fishing works of the technical 1970's. It was written about a single simple subject, and it dealt with it in simple, clear prose: "I saw my first soft-hackled flies some fifteen years ago in Paul H. Young's tackle shop in Detroit, Michigan. The flies

were simple, yet extremely attractive. Drab, yet enticing. The slender bodies were of silk floss in any of three colors: orange, yellow, and olive green. At the head of each fly was a partridge hackle, wound very sparsely around the hook. Lying there together, mixed in the box, the flies looked alive and natural and very much like real insects..."

Nemes wrote his book extolling the virtues of soft-hackled wet flies because, "America was growing dry fly crazy. And I felt fly fishing literature was too technical. I don't think trout are as smart as some technical writers would have you believe. I also thought the romance was gone, and the mysticism."

In its earliest chapters, The Soft-Hackled Fly tells of Nemes's genesis as a fly fisherman and tyer, and how he rediscovered soft-hackles. Then the book covers fishing tactics for the simple wets.

A long chapter of the book is devoted to a detailed search for the origins of soft-hackled flies, back through the writings of Schwiebert, Skues, John Walter Hills, Stewart and Pritt, and finally to the first fishing writer, Dame Juliana Berners, in her 1496 work Treatise of Fishing with an Angle.

Dressings for fourteen flies are then listed, along with a color plate and a chapter of methods for tying soft-hackles. This is followed by more notes on tackle and the most effective presentation techniques.

It is the simplicity and charm of the subject, along with the simplicity and charm of Nemes's treatment of it, that make The Soft-Hackled Fly a unique fishing book for the 1970's.

A follow-up book to his first work, Nemes brought out The

Soft-Hackled Fly Addict in 1981 (published by the author). It delves more deeply into the history of soft-hackles than the earlier book.

The early chapters of the Addict credit the pioneering work of T.E. Pritt, H.H. Edmonds, and N.N. Lee, who wrote about the development of wet flies on the border streams between England and Scotland. Then Nemes gives the full dressings for all sixty-two of Pritt's original patterns, and includes the original color plates from Pritt's book, North-Country Flies. In essence, then, Pritt's book is contained within Nemes's book.

The remaining chapters contain new notes on fishing the soft-hackled wets, and new notes on tying them.

There is an additional short story at the end of the book, "The Upper Big Blue", which deals with some of the emotions that surround fishing.

Nemes's next book is titled Learn How to Fly Fish in One Day (scheduled for release in spring, 1986, by Stackpole Books). It is a basic beginner's book on fly fishing, and is broken down into three parts: three hours for casting, three hours for fly tying and knots, and three hours for fishing.

Nemes is currently retired, living in Bozeman, Montana with his wife Hazel. He "...has had some fine fishing with the dry fly in some spring creeks here...but I still like the unannounced take of a trout coming to a wet fly." He recently completed the first draft of a novel, Goodbye Crown Point.

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