



Box 524 • Lander, WY 82520

OUR 40TH
ANNIVERSARY!

ORVIS
ENDORSED
FLY-FISHING
GUIDE



OUR 40TH ANNIVERSARY! 2017 NEWSLETTER



In 1976, just four months after we were married, Paula and I spent five months in New Zealand, climbing, backpacking, and fishing. That was the start of a love affair that has affected our entire lives. We are recently returned from another jaunt there (one of many over the years), and I am remembering how formative the beauty, people, and fishing of New Zealand have been on our entire lives and especially on Sweetwater Fishing Expeditions. Shortly after returning from New Zealand that first time, we decided to start our guiding in the Wind River Mountains. This is our 40th season! Can you believe it? It's been a lifetime of memories and rewards for us and a very healthy lifestyle. I get notes from long ago guests saying how much their mountain trip meant to them. And we've had some who've been coming since the 80's or even 70's. All our family has been involved. Paula has been steadfast behind the scenes, always chipping in when needed. The girls, Molly and Louisa, have been chief assistants on quite a bunch of trips (Louisa as young as 12). And Hank is now doing our mountain trips, as well as everything else. He looks to be a chip off the old block. Thanks to each and every one of you for making this rewarding life for us.

The 2016 year was the second wettest on record (125 years) in Lander, with over 21 inches of moisture. And it still felt dry in the late summer (one of the driest July-August periods). Our spring fishing on the Bighorn got waylaid with high flows, but our summer and fall flows

were very steady and we did quite a number of floats down at Thermopolis. These included **Alan** and **Mark Nordheim**, **Susan Hassett** and **Fred Caslik**, **Chuck Schuster** and **Karla Wagner** (with another boat of Chuck's buddies), **Gary Simmons**, local gal **Cathy Purves** and her bother, **Mike Vandierdonck** (as usual), **John** and **Penny Ritterbusch**, and **Michael Johns** with his son **Joe**. We filled in our summer calendar with day fishing on the Sweetwater and other local streams. We had **Allen Branton** from Saratoga, the **Nordheim** brothers with friend **KC Bishop**, **Ron Baer**, **Doug Gibson** and his wife **Cheryl**, **Michael Ramicone** and his friend **George Bouvin**, **Jim Dunn** (who loves September in Wyoming), **June Aprille**, **Justin Jinright**, **Matt McCain**, and **Octavina Costache**. This seems like a lot of fishing on our small waters, being that we had a very busy schedule in the high country.

The only mountain trip I didn't help Hank on was an early backpack trip he did with **Rich Johnson** and his son **Jake**. These world travelling fishermen were after a worthy golden trout. They made it happen! The hikingest crew we've had in a long time was **DJ Jennings**, **Lindsey Wilson**, **John** and **Penny Ritterbusch**, **Jim Leslie** and his son **Jason**. It seemed like these folks hiked 10 miles or more every single day, taking advantage of every fishing

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opportunity we offered. Our next trip had fishing partners **KC Bishop** and **Mark Nordheim**, with Mark's bother **Alan**, **Mike** and **Anne Harper**, and **Barry Mantell**. This crew thrived on the camping life. **Leon Patterson** and friend **Rick Stetson** were joined by **Brian Patrick**, **Rich Amerian**, and **Ruth Esperance**. I just can't believe how much people love to be near our high peaks. Fishing is almost secondary. Hank and I finished the high country season with the **McDonalds**. Hank had met **Miles** in the Bahamas several year back. Miles really wanted to break his grandson, young **Miles**, into fly fishing when he was old enough. This was the year. They were joined by Miles' wife **Pat**, his brother **Alan**, and daughter **Deirdre** (young Miles' Mom). We had a wonderful time and young Miles is now on his way to a lifetime of flyfishing. Hank finished his season with his **Fred Mueller** fix. (Fred is +60 going

on 18). They car camped and visited all sorts of fishing water for a week. Fred loves our area including the high mountains.

Jim Ferguson had a busy

summer locally and he has now been rowing the boat on the Bighorn. His mountain season was enlivened with help from his niece **Anna Ferguson**. Together they provided another memorable trip for **June Aprille** and her crew. This year's trip consisted of **June**, **Nelson O'Bryan**, **David** and **Kath Hall**, and **Bill** and **Kathy Monday**.



Jim and Anna also helped a crew organized by **Greg Eddings** to come to their full potential. Jim did a final short mountain trip alone with **Steve Corby**.

The future looks bright! We have a big snowpack so far in the Winds. Hank and Jim will be doing our mountains trips. Paula and I are stepping back a bit and doing some things on our own, like fishing for brown trout in Iceland in July. We do have a new role in life. We are now grandparents of **Luca Wren Hunkerstorm** (son of **Louisa** and **Nick Hunkerstorm**, born September 16). Our Wind River Mountains are still beautiful and hopefully will stay that way. There is always another road to follow in our Wyoming country.

Please feel free to join us, chat, or come by for a beer or cup of coffee!

George Hunker



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