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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

September 3, 2019, Marquette, Michigan, and Manchester, Vermont

2019 Robert Traver Fly-Fishing Writing Award Results Announced

The John D. Voelker Foundation and the American Museum of Fly Fishing (AMFF) are pleased to announce the winner of the 2019 Robert Traver Fly-Fishing Writing Award. **“A Wet World That Burns” by Jimmy Watts of Bellingham, Washington**, tells the heartbreaking true story of the 1999 Whatcom Creek explosion and connects the author’s life of fire and water as a professional fireman and bamboo fly-rod builder with Liam Wood, an 18-year-old angler who was killed while fly fishing in the creek.

The winning entry will receive a \$2500 prize and be published in the Spring 2020 edition of the *American Fly Fisher*, the journal of the American Museum of Fly Fishing. The story was previously published in the Summer 2018 edition of the *Drake*.

Upon receiving the news, Mr. Watts said “This is so unexpected and wonderful! I’m ever grateful to the foundation and the museum, and to the judges, for continuing to share Liam’s lasting story and forever maintain it as a fixture in fly fishing history. Endlessly thank you!”

The Traver Award judges also bestowed **honorable mention recognition on two humorous short stories: “The Honeymooners” by Richard Chiappone of Homer, Alaska, and “Les Poissons Toxiques” by Michael Doherty of Seattle, Washington.**

The 2019 competition drew a field of 156 entries. Entries were judged anonymously to narrow the pool down to ten finalists. The other seven finalists were:

“Osprey, the Fisherman” by Colten Braybrooks of Seattle, Washington
“Some Fish Make Rivers” by Frank Sargeant of Union Grove, Alabama
“The Last Brook Trout” by Bob Linsenmen of Rose City, Michigan
“The Wading Game” by Kristin Millgate of Idaho Falls, Idaho
“At the Heart of Hollows” by Ben Moyer of Farmington, Pennsylvania
“The Manistee River Waltz” by Tim Schulz of Houghton, Michigan
“Learning to Mend” by S. Paige Wallace of Portland, Oregon

The Traver Award is named after Robert Traver, pen name for the late John Voelker, author of *Trout Madness*, *Trout Magic*, *Anatomy of a Fisherman*, the 1958 best seller *Anatomy of a Murder*, and his important historical novel, *Laughing Whitefish*.

The Traver Award was created in 1994 to encourage and recognize “distinguished original stories or essays that embody the implicit love of fly-fishing, respect for the sport, and the natural world in which it takes place.” The Traver stories and essays must demonstrate high literary values in one or more of these three categories:

- The joy of fly-fishing: personal and philosophic
- Ecological: knowledge and protection of the natural world
- Humor: piscatorial friendships and fun on the water

Since 1994, nineteen Traver awards have been given for winning entries. Two anthologies of the Traver Award–winning stories have been published: *In Hemingway’s Meadow* (2009) and *Love Story of the Trout* (2010).

Beginning in 2018, the Voelker Foundation and the AMFF joined forces to administer the Traver Award. For more information, see www.voelkerfoundation.com and www.amff.org.

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