
The Newsletter of the Columbia-Greene Rip Van Winkle Chapter #569 of Trout Unlimited

TU...TO CONSERVE, PROTECT & RESTORE NORTH AMERICA'S COLD WATER FISHERIES & THEIR WATERSHEDS

A VISIT FROM “WALT THE SHOE MAN”

Walt Bennet, better known as “the shoe man” at WALT’S SHOE REPAIR in Oak Hill, will be our guest speaker at the March meeting. He has repaired shoes for over 30 years, has worked on recaning chairs for almost 10 years, and occasionally fixes the plastic zippers on my mother’s or wife’s pocketbooks.

Walt lives a stone’s throw from the beautiful 10-Mile Creek, (well, maybe if you’re a pro baseball player it’s only a stone’s throw!) More importantly to a trout fisherman, he has helped coordinate the stocking of fish in Greene County. Walt will talk to us about the need for long overdue improvements to the 10-Mile Creek. This may be an ideal project for our TU group. Come and learn more about the project.

Hank

EVERETT HAS THE KNACK!!!!

If you ever have the opportunity to go to a Hudson River presentation by Mr. Nack, do not miss it. He was our guest speaker for 18 people at the chapter meeting on Tuesday 2-18-04. He brought a circular tray full of photographic slides and enough river lore to boggle the mind. His pictures included those of striped bass, Atlantic sturgeon, short-nosed sturgeon, American shad, and yellow perch. He explained the use of various types of nets used by his crew to catch the fish as well as specialized equipment for keeping them alive.

He has been involved with fishing and various projects as a commercial fisherman on the Hudson for most of his lifetime. Without using any notes, he described in detail various events that the pictures depicted including things like how many pounds of fish they caught on that particular outing and stories related to what happened to the fish. Several tales related to confrontations with law enforcement agencies and government officials that had humorous endings despite their serious beginnings.

One false impression that was somewhat disturbing, is the view that the Hudson River is improving. In some ways it is according to Everett, but in many ways it has lost its vigor due to the addition of chlorine to the river as part of the way sewage treatment plants treat their discharges. The treated water ends up in the river and kills much of the food that large fish depend on for survival. Mussels, snails, crayfish, small bait fish and others have virtually disappeared due to the chlorine, consequently, with the loss of this food chain, there has been a major decline in some of the fish population. Mr. Nack suggested the use of ultra-violet light to kill bacteria in the treatment plants.

With his knowledge and experience it appears that his continuing effort to revive the river will someday be more fruitful. It was an entirely enjoyable and enlightening evening. Our thanks to you, Everett, for taking the time and making the effort to provide us with such a night. Dick

FLY TYING CLASS COMPLETED

The fly tying class got underway this year on January 8th and concluded on February 12th at Columbia-Greene Community College. A total of 5 students signed up for it and most completed the entire 6 week course. Included in the group were two of our own chapter members, Pam Price, and Bruce Charbonneau. A faithful group of instructors from C-GTU showed up weekly and basically taught students to tie 12 different flies using the manual put together several years ago by members of the chapter.

The following instructors deserve your thanks for volunteering their time and effort to make this course another successful one: George Goth, Lynn Lee, Tim Lippert, Dave Rudloff, and Hank Theiss. We also had a guest instructor, Wendy Neefus, who did a masterful job at making the art of fly tying appear simple. I helped gather and stuff materials into plastic bags so that each student could go home and practice their new skills.

Despite bone numbing cold the course was completed on time and a few bonus flies were demonstrated during the course to peak the interest of the students. Dick

FLY FISHING COURSE PREPARATIONS UNDERWAY

Now it is time to prepare for the C-GCC fly fishing course that will begin on February 26th at Hudson High School. That will also be a 6 week class for 2 hours per night on Thursdays. The class will be broken down into two sections as has been done in the past. One hour will be devoted to classroom education in Room 14, and the other hour will be used for fly casting training in the gym.

If any of you have the time, we still need volunteers to teach certain skills. If you are willing to volunteer please call Lynn Lee at 828-5402 to see where you can help with the education part of the course...or just show up if you can help with the casting skills section. This course seems to be gaining popularity, so we have decided to limit the size to 24 students. At this time (2-16-04) we already have 13 people signed up for it. Whatever assistance and support you can give to the chapter in this endeavor will be appreciated.

This year we are using the media more efficiently to disseminate the information to the public via a Public Service Announcement. There is no charge for this valuable service. The newspapers as well as the television cable networks in both counties, and the Albany Times Union have the announcement. In addition, Dick Nelson and Lance Dellavechia, the local sportswriters, have it. Dick has already published the information in the Hudson Register-Star. **We owe our thanks to all these media folk** who have helped to get the course information out to the public. Dick

STOCKING VOLUNTEERS

This note is not to remind you to put socks on in the morning, nor is it a notice to throw volunteers into the water, but is meant to inform you that if you want to be notified of trout stocking dates, times, and places for Columbia and Greene County streams, creeks, rivers, ponds and lakes, keep reading.

You will be notified of all stockings if you are interested in being a volunteer. If you would like to be involved in this annual spring project, you do not have to attend every stocking time. You can pick and choose from the dates that become available. You do not have to notify anyone if you can or cannot be there. All you need to do is show up at the designated meeting place and at the appropriate time. The stocking is done during the week and it takes anywhere from 3 to 5 hours (approximately) to complete the day project. We usually meet in the morning between 10:00 a.m. and 11:00 a.m. and are finished by 3:00 p.m. We have never done any weekend stocking for the past 5 years, and that will probably be true this year too.

The actual job is to move trout, from large tanks on the back of a DEC flatbed truck, to the stream, pond, etc. This is done using 5 gallon plastic buckets provided by DEC. The DEC representatives fill up the buckets one at a time with fish and water, and the volunteers take them to the stream and dump them in. These "carries" are usually 20 to 100 feet. Sometimes a "bucket brigade" is formed and we stand in a line to pass the full buckets to a person at the end of the line who dumps them into the water, and then the empty buckets are passed back up the line to be refilled. The full buckets probably weigh 30 pounds, more or less. There are also "bridge dumps" where the DEC reps release the trout into the water using hand nets. In some cases they use tubes connected to the tank and sort of "flush" them out the tube into the water. That's when we watch. There is no guarantee on how busy you might be with the crew. It all depends on how many people show up for the day. The more people that show up the less there is for each individual to do, but if only a few people show, then the volunteer will be busier.

You need to wear appropriate clothing and footwear. If you want food or beverages bring those also, or be prepared to make purchases. DEC does not buy us lunch and we do not stop to take a lunch break, so it's "eat on the go".

Having said all this, now comes the important part. If you have an interest in being part of the volunteer stocking crew for this season, you must let me know so that you can be contacted when the stocking information becomes available. Sometimes we get one day's notice, sometimes we get 1 week's notice...it is unpredictable. So, send me an e-mail, call me, or send me a note in the mail. I will need your name, e-mail address or phone number or address (or any combination of them) in order to contact you the quickest way. You will be put on a list of volunteers and will be notified for each stocking event. Below is my information.

Dick Riccio, Stocking Chairman

203 Route 9-H Hudson, NY 12534

518-851-7002

newsletter@cgtu.org

SPRING RAFFLE UNDERWAY!

The prizes are as follows:

1st - Orvis graphite 4pc. 5wt. rod, reel and case.

2nd - A selection of "Dette Flies" tied by the Dette family of the Catskills, \$50.00 worth of tying materials from "Blue River Anglers", and a custom wader hanger.

3rd - A beautifully framed trout print and a signed copy of "My Side of the River," by Roger Menard.

SPECIAL THANKS TO THE SPONSORS of our TU CHAPTER FUNDRAISER:

Blue River Anglers, Middleburgh 827-8000

Black Dome Press, Hensonville 734-6357

Catskill Paint Co., Rensselaerville 239-8490

Rudloff Construction, Medusa 239-8397

THE CURRENT ON"LINE"

IF YOU RECEIVED THIS NEWSLETTER BY MAIL AND HAVE AN EMAIL ADDRESS PLEASE CONTACT ONE OF THE CO-EDITORS SO OUR TU CHAPTER CAN SAVE MONEY ON MAILINGS.

Also, if anyone doesn't want to receive the newsletter any longer please notify one of us:

Dick Riccio (518) 851-7002

Hank Theiss (518) 851-9442 newsletter@cgtu.org

FROM THE EDITORS: THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH

It is the constant – or in constant – change, the infinite variety in fly fishing that binds us fast. It is impossible to grow weary of a sport that is never the same on any two days of the year.

THEODORE GORDON (1914)

La ROCCA'S CORNER – "Fish Tails & Fish Tales"

A "January thaw" will usually produce the first restlessness in a northeast trout fisherman. A "February thaw," maybe because you never hear that expression, is guaranteed to produce more than a restless itch. That itch may never get to the level of real activity, but even when it does not, the mental exercises it prompts can be very specific and lively. Here is an example of a little mental debate that I've wrestled with during our present "February thaw." I think it began on a return trip from New York City where we had traveled to visit with our son, daughter-in-law, and newborn grandson. As we drove north on the FDR I looked to the right out over the turbid and swift currents of the East River and imagined the schools of striped bass that will run its depths in a few months. "Big, nasty water," I said to myself.

BIG WATER, SMALL WATER

(Suspend the rules of grammar here for a bit; I think you'll pick this up!)

John: So, there's about a month before opening day. Where will you fish that first morning?

John: No where! I haven't gone out on opening day in ten years or more...too darn cold...getting old...you know.

John: Yeah, yeah; I know, but where will you go on the first trip of the season?

John: Oh, okay.

Well, I'll probably head for one of my favorite little creeks close to home. The water will likely be in pretty good condition...or at least predictable condition...even from home I'll have a good sense of whether it is low and clear, high and roily, or bank full and just a bit off color...which I am sure it will be on opening day! Water temperature will be a little cold, but for a novice like me the small water will be easier to "read." I'll be able to identify more precisely where those still lazy browns and brookies are likely to listlessly lie...or so I think. And finally, because I am sure that those trout will be right on the streambed, that small water will make it easier to get my tung head hare's ear or the split-shot laden tippet with the big wooly bugger right down to the bottom where it needs to be. And wading, if I have to do any at all, will be easy and safe.

On the other hand, maybe I will head for big water. Conditions will be less predictable, but if I call ahead or hit it just right by luck, there's a good chance I'll get fish. After all, there are just plain more trout in that big water...so many per mile and all that stuff...and holdovers too. And who knows, maybe the rainbow run will have started. Sure, there will be barren stretches, but this time of year those big deep holes will be the town meeting hall for fish. The water might be a degree or two warmer, or maybe not. You know, I just don't know about that. But it doesn't matter, there is enough still water in those holes that I can flip out the hare's ear or wooly bugger with an easy roll cast and let it sit on the bottom just like garden hackle in my pond. Over the years I've even caught a few trout like that early in the season. Wading, of course, will be a little more difficult and dangerous, but if I get wet or cold, I can run down to the diner and get warm and at the same time probably have a great conversation with a couple of fellow wet, cold trout.

So it is settled. *I don't know where I'll go on the first day out!*

HANK'S FLY BOX – Rusty Spinner

After coming inside from some cold cross country skiing, (I'm not coordinated enough for downhill skiing like Wendy Neefus and Dave Rudloff are), I sat down next to the wood stove and went through my fishing vest to see which flies are low in number. Immediately it is evident that I don't have many spinners...probably because I am not sure how or where to fish them other than when it's obvious to me that a spinner fall is in progress just before dark.

An article written by Ed Engle titled "A New Spin on Spinners" in the American Angler November/December 2003 issue, enlightened me to his thoughts on spinners. Mr. Engle states, "*Spent-wing patterns can make excellent attractor flies, even where there are no bugs on the water.*" He goes on to suggest tying a larger dry-fly pattern on as an indicator, then tying about 30 inches of tippet material to the hook bend, and tying a small spent-wing spinner on the end of the tippet. This is my recipe for Ed Engle's Rusty Spinner.

RUSTY SPINNER

Hook: Dry fly size 14 to 20

Thread: 8/0 brown or orange

Tail: Clear or light micro fibbets; tied split

Abdominal Thorax: Fine rust colored dubbing

Wing: Clear antron or Aunt Lydia's white rug yarn (tied as a spent wing)

INFORMATIVE WEBSITE

If you get confused about selecting hooks for tying, as I do, (Mustad, Tiemco, Daiichi, Orvis, Partridge), Michael Scott has compiled a chart to make it easier to compare hooks. See the following website: www.killroys.com/hooks/hookchrt.htm

MEETINGS:

EVERY MONTH: Our regularly scheduled meetings are the **3rd Tuesday of each month (except July and August)** unless otherwise indicated. We meet at 7:30 p.m. at O'Brien's Restaurant on Route 23B in Leeds, NY.

THIS MONTH: Tuesday, March 16, 2004

NEXT MEETING: Tuesday, April 20, 2004

COLUMBIA-GREENE RIP VAN WINKLE CHAPTER #569 OF TROUT UNLIMITED **Chapter Officers**

President	Lynn Lee	(518) 828-5402	president@cgtu.org
Vice President	Hank Theiss	(518) 851-9442	vicepresident@cgtu.org
Secretary	Tim Lippert	(518) 239-8490	secretary@cgtu.org
Treasurer	Dave Rudloff	(518) 239-8397	treasurer@cgtu.org

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George Goth	Term ends 2006	(518) 622-0837	directors@cgtu.org

Keep current...with The Current! Dick & Hank (CO-EDITORS)