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

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

As of March 1<sup>st</sup> there are

**31 MORE DAYS TO TROUT SEASON!**

## **BAMBOO IN NEW YORK?**

No, it's Japanese Knotweed, a plant originally from Asia that is taking over our Catskill stream banks. Join Abbe Martin of Greene County Soil & Water Conservation District, and Jenn Grieser of the NYC Department of Environmental Protection's Stream Management Program to learn more about: this invasive plant, Greene County & DEP's partnership to address it, and how the Columbia-Greene TU Chapter may help. Under the guidance of Hudsonia, a nonprofit ecological research organization located in Annandale, Abbe and Jenn have been studying spreading stands of Knotweed along the Batavia Kill for two years.

Come to our next TU meeting, March 15<sup>th</sup>, and hear how we can all understand and address the knotweed situation throughout our region.

## **MASTER TYER BILL MILLARD!**

Septuagenarian, Bill Millard, brought his fly-tying skills and a small mountain of hackle, fur and supplies to our February chapter meeting. He left us with lots of good tying tips...and the mountain of materials too.

Bill has been tying flies since 1946 when he was introduced to the art by his Uncle Larry who was a long-time tyer. He told us that his family has been tying the longest of anyone in New York State...he said the Darbys told him that! Bill says that after being given his first lesson, he went home and tied 6 dozen flies.

His advice to tyers: "Never tie less than a half dozen...and tie the fly as if it were for someone else, not yourself. You'll do a better job that way." In the past, Bill had often tied 6 or 8 dozen flies at a time, for resale by his friend Don Traver, former owner of Don's Tackle Shop in Red Hook. Some of his special flies retailed for \$9.95 each.

At the chapter meeting, Bill tied a few wet flies and commented on their construction. "Wet flies don't use many materials," said Bill, "but what's important is what you use and how you use them." He made a special point about the amount of dubbing used. "Flies are skinny little

things. Everyone uses too much dubbing.” On a soft hackle fly, for example, Bill put only about a ½ to ¾ inch of dubbing on the thread before wrapping the thorax.

The chapter really appreciates Bill’s tying advice...and the two full tables of tying materials he brought for us to use in our tying classes. Thanks so much Bill! Dave Griffin

## **MARCH, APRIL, MAY, JUNE...**

### **...BUSY MONTHS FOR C-G TU!**

March 3, 10, \* 24, 31, April 7, 14 – 6 Thursdays **Fly-Fishing Course** **WE NEED HELP!**

PLACE: Hudson High School – Room 14 and Gym

TIME: 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

(\* To correct some incorrect advertising, we will not meet March 17th, but will meet the 24th.)

April 4 – Monday **Fly-Tying Workshop**

PLACE: Agroforestry Resource Center – Route 23, Acra

TIME: 7:00 p.m. – 9:00 p.m.

May 7 – Saturday **Students’ Day on the Stream**

PLACE: Routes 23 and 23A, at the ballpark parking lot

TIME: 10:00 a.m.

LUNCH PROVIDED by the chapter.

May 21 – Saturday **Greene County Shad Festival**

PLACE: Catskill Point

TIME: TBA

FLY-TYING AND CASTING DEMONSTRATIONS

May 29 – Sunday **Columbia Land Conservancy Shad Festival**

PLACE: Clum and Patchen Farm, Livingston

TIME: 4:30 p.m. – 8:00 p.m.

FLY-TYING AND CASTING DEMONSTRATIONS

June 4 – Saturday **Olana Fly-Tying Demonstration and Casting Lessons**

PLACE: Olana Pond

TIME: 12:00 Noon

## **WE HOPE THIS IS JUST THE BEGINNING!**

Donations of fly-tying materials came in from the following people:

Bill Millard, John Libruk, Bobby Fisher, Ron Baumann, HJ Theiss and Hank Theiss

Thanks for the materials you shared with our chapter to use in our fly-tying classes!

Hank

## OUR C-G CHAPTER'S VIDEO LIBRARY

Our club has a fantastic resource in its video library. It includes 11 fly-tying videos and 13 fly-casting/fishing videos. You may have seen Dave Rudloff carrying around a big wooden box that he built to house all the tapes. We again would like to thank him for taking charge of their distribution...and we would like to encourage everyone who is interested to borrow tapes from Dave.

Hank

### VIDEO LIBRARY LENDING POLICIES:

1. The maximum number of videos any member may have on loan at any given time is two.
2. A deposit of \$10.00 per video will be held until the return of that tape.
3. The loan time limit for any one video is two months.

### FLY TYING

1. Stonefly Patterns - James Bowen
2. The Art of Tying the Nymph - Skip Morris
3. Tying Dry Flies – A. K. Best
4. Tying Terrestrials – A. K. Best
5. Tying with CDC - Shane Stalcup
6. Tying and Fishing Caddis Flies - Gary LaFontaine
7. Lake Flies that Work - Bob Newman
8. Glass Bead Flies for Trout - Joe Warren
9. Life Cycle of the Caddis Fly - Rene Harrop
10. Life Cycle of the Mayfly - Rene Harrop
11. LaFontaine Originals - Beatty and Stimpson

### FLY CASTING/FISHING

- A. Lessons by Lefty - Lefty Kreh
- B. A Casting Approach to Dry Fly Tactics in Tight Brush - Joe Humphreys
- C. A Casting Approach to Nymphing Tactics - Joe Humphreys
- D. Fishing the Dry Fly - Gary Borger
- E. Nymphing - Gary Borger
- F. Strategies for Selective Trout - Doug Swisher
- G. Nymphing Strategies - Joe Humphreys
- H. Joan Wulff's Dynamics of Fly-casting
- I. Fly Fishing the Beaverkill - Lee Wulff
- J. The Orvis Progressive Fly-Casting Method
- K. The Way of a Trout
- L. The Night Game - by Joe Humphreys
- M. Deep Water - (The History of the Ashokan and Schoharie Reservoirs)

## T U *Flies* INTO FISHING CLASS

For many years our TU chapter has sponsored a fly-fishing class in the spring. This year is no different and the public announcement to register for the class has been in the local media. By

now, it should have appeared in the following places: Columbia-Greene Community College Spring Class Listing Brochure, Hudson Register-Star, Chatham Courier, Catskill Daily Mail, Greenville Press, Windham Journal, Mountain Eagle, Albany Times Union, The Independent, Mid-Hudson Cablevision, Berkshire Cable, Valstar Cable, Clear Channel Broadcasting. It also went to the following outdoor writers: Dick Nelson, Lance Dellavechia, Robert Streeter, Fred LeBrun, and Harold Palmer.

We have had a loyal group of volunteer instructors who do a terrific job of conducting the classes each year and we are depending on them again this year. If you feel that you can help too, in any capacity, your efforts will be appreciated...please let us know. It is not necessary for you to be a member of Trout Unlimited to be a volunteer in this endeavor.

For those of you who missed it, the actual announcement appears below.

### FLY FISHING

This is a six-week evening course sponsored by the local Trout Unlimited chapter and covers the basics and methods of fly fishing. Topics include: equipment, entomology, knots, safety, reading water, and fishing streamers, wets, nymphs, dries and terrestrials. Each evening's class will offer an hour's instruction of one of the topics above and a second hour of casting practice. Written materials will include a booklet and other handouts that are provided by the Columbia-Greene Trout Unlimited Rip Van Winkle Chapter. Fly rods will be available, during class time, for those students who do not own one. Class will not meet on Thursday, March 17, 2005. To register for the course, call Columbia-Greene Community College at 828-4181, extension 3342.

Instructors: Members of the Columbia-Greene Trout Unlimited Rip Van Winkle Chapter.

Hudson High School - Room 14 and Gymnasium, 6 Thursdays

Begins: March 3, 2005 7:00 pm - 9:00 pm

Fee: \$50.00 (+ \$3 Registration)

Dick

## **FROM THE EDITORS: THOUGHT FOR THE MONTH**

*The ancients wrote of the 3 ages of man; I propose to write of the 3 ages of the fisherman.*

*When he wants to catch all the fish he can.*

*When he strives to catch the largest fish.*

*When he studies to catch the most difficult fish he can find, requiring the greatest skill and most refined tackle, caring more for the sport than the fish.*

EDWARD R. HEWITT

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

Mid-February...dead of winter. This morning was clear, sunny and very cold. There is surprising little snow on the ground, but on the way to the monthly fire company breakfast we drove by Ten Mile Creek, and it was choked with ice. "Maybe," I thought, "I'll see Hank and

we can at least talk about trout fishing.” I did, and we did, and somewhere in the conversation the words Buttermilk Falls emerged. They triggered some great memories.

### **ITHACA IS GORGES**

In late August of 1967, with a commission in the U.S. Army and the Vietnam War swirling around all of us, I headed for Cornell’s ILR School. I was looking for a Masters Degree and hoping that the forces of peace would take over before I left Cornell. It did not happen that way. Brother Steve was there at Cornell too, finishing degree work in architecture. It was a very interesting place to be at that time; anti war sentiment was strong, very strong, but not unanimous. Dow Chemical came to recruit, and there were large, well-organized demonstrations. Black Americans were active on the campus during those same years, “strident” might be a better word. The cover of Life magazine one month was the classic photo of a dozen Black Cornell students, armed with shotguns, barring the entry to Willard Straight Hall which they had just “occupied.”

Steve was usually up to his ears or over his head in building architectural models and projects or performing duties of fraternity president, so we did not do as much fishing as I had hoped. We did fish Cayuga Lake from the shore a couple of times for early season lake trout. Steve also introduced me to Six Mile Creek where we always seemed to get a couple of trout near the bridge at Giles Road, and upstream from that point, where the large water pipe came from the dam, we would always get a couple more...usually good ones. We also fished the “inlet” in the spring, when the big rainbows are supposed to come up from the lake, but all we did was get cold on those excursions.

My long-time fishing buddy, Tom, was at Cornell then too, working on his PhD. In fact, we met and first began to fish together in Ithaca. Tom is far more disciplined on academics than I am, and was back then too, so my “Let’s go fishing,” calls were turned down more than I would have liked. But that does not mean that we did not get out with some regularity. We explored many places – frequently joined by our wives – and often caught some fish. An easy and common excursion for the four of us was an evening picnic to Stewart Park right in Ithaca where we would enjoy good picnic fare and leisurely fish for giant carp on ultralight spinning gear. One sultry early fall evening one of those funny-lipped behemoths actually pulled my ultralight gear off into the lake forever!

On the west side of Cayuga Lake, about 10 or 12 miles north of Ithaca, Taughanock Creek flows into the lake, dropping over a 200 foot waterfall just before it gets to the lake’s edge in one of the classic “glens” which are famous in the area. Above the falls the little creek runs from ledge to ledge with small pockets and plunge pools at the base of each ledge. Tom gave me a lesson in streamer fishing one evening up there. I watched him take four or five trout in rapid succession out of one pool by floating the streamer into the pool on a dead drift and then giving it just a little twitch as it flowed through the heart of the pool. On a rainy Saturday morning after a couple of fruitless hours of carp fishing at the park we snuck up to the giant pool under Taughanock Falls with my brother Paul (it was posted by the State Park but there was evidence that others had often preceded us) and heaved big silver spoons into the mists created by the falling water. Paul hooked and landed a very nice brown trout that stretched the width of a New York Times page and had a giant hump on its back. We still refer to it as the “hump-backed trout”!

At the southern end of the lake, south of town, there are two state parks: Robert Treman and Buttermilk Falls. Each encompasses and protects little creeks that have eroded beautiful gorges by cutting the soft rock of the steep hills sloping to the valley of Inlet Creek. Both parks have “upper” and “lower” sections which are connected by stone and log-paved trails built during the Depression by young men who, at the time, were the same age as Tom and I when we fished the creeks 40 years afterward. The trails are a marvel of simple engineering and the parks are real gems. One day I got another fly-fishing lesson in Buttermilk Creek halfway down the gorge. We could see trout holding in the very deep and very clear bathtub-like pools below each little waterfall or chute, but they just would not move for anything no matter how stealthy our approach. Tom switched to a tiny, very tiny, Jassid or ant, and the fish took notice. A few years later, when I had gone to work at The Rensselaerville Institute, we sponsored a program built around a newly published book entitled Small is Beautiful (about the benefits of small scale), and I thought to myself, “Yes, and sometimes on a trout stream too.”

Treman Gorge and Park is, I think, an even more beautiful place than its sister on the other side of the valley. There are sixty-foot waterfalls, long runs and pools that are nearly inaccessible in high water, bottomless plunge pools, and glassy glides flanked by vertical banks that rise straight up for 20 or 30 feet. In early spring the ribbon of bottomland along the creek is a profusion of trilliums and other wildflowers. The place is just gorgeous, or as they say in Ithaca, gorges! We fished Treman fairly often back then and caught our share of trout, mostly small but almost always very cooperative. And the place remains as it was: brother Steve still fishes Treman at least once a year, and Tom and I both fished it 25 years after our stints at Cornell when our boys were all enrolled at Cornell together. At the close of one of those trips, after rainy hours on the little creek, we broke down our gear in too much of a hurry and drove all the way back to Medusa with Tom’s Orvis Battenkill on the roof of our van. The tip blew off, in all likelihood, somewhere on I-88, but the butt section did not roll off until just before Tom’s driveway where we found it a day later. It was a crushing blow for a fly fisherman, but Orvis replaced the tip, and Tom was back in business before that season ended.

Memories like these are great medicine for emergence from the blue funk of February cabin fever. On the way home from the breakfast I thought the ice on Ten Mile was breaking up.

## **HANK'S FLY BOX – Tom’s Red Quill Spinner**

Those of you who were unable to attend our January meeting missed Tom Emerick’s great fly-tying presentation using red quill. In a “thank you” note to him I asked him which red quill variation was his favorite. The following is Tom’s response:

*A favorite red quill variation of mine is the RED QUILL SPINNER. This is not original with me and I am not sure where I first saw it. Suffice it to say that this pattern has been around a while.*

*Hook: Dry fly standard length - # 14 for Hendricksons*

*Thread: #8 micro fine - rust*

*Egg: Lemon yellow Antron-type dubbing*

*Tail: Natural light dun or light dun microfibbets - one or two per side and about a full hook length long*

*Body: Well soaked quill from a Rhode Island Red (or similar)*

*Wing: White or light dun z-lon; or your favorite spinner wing material (light partridge, hen hackle tips, etc.)*

*Thorax: Your favorite rusty brown dry fly dubbing (the fine stuff is great, especially if you tie this spinner in smaller sizes)*

#### **TYING INSTRUCTIONS:**

- \* *The egg ball is tied in first and used to split the tails on either side.*
- \* *The red quill is tied in and the thread advanced to a point 1/3 a hook length behind the eye. The body can be smoothed with some well place thread wraps. The quill is advanced forward to the thread and tied off.*
- \* *The wing is tied spent with each side equal to 3/4 a hook length. Figure-eight the thread between wings and around the base to slightly raise the wings.*
- \* *Apply the rusty dubbing sparsely to your thread and figure-eight between the wings to create a thorax.*
- \* *Whip finish and cement the head if you desire.*

*Spinners require some patience, however, if you experience a good spinner fall you might notice some particularly nice trout taking advantage of their hapless prey. Good luck! Tom*

...again, "Thank You" Tom!

Hank

## **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 has changed their email address or doesn't want to receive the newsletter any longer** please notify one of us:

Dick Riccio (518) 851-7002

newsletter@cgtu.org

Hank Theiss (518) 851-9442

newsletter@cgtu.org

## **AND THE WINNER IS...**

**Joe Reina won the FREE February meeting door prize.** It consisted of red-quill-body flies that Tom Emerick demonstrated at the January meeting.

Our thanks again to Tom for his generous donation. **Those wishing to donate flies or other door prizes for the free monthly drawings should contact Dick Riccio.**

## **C-GTU MEETINGS**

**EVERY MONTH:** Our regularly scheduled meetings are held at 7:30 p.m. **at the Cornell Cooperative Extension Building on Mountain Road in Cairo, NY,** the 3rd Tuesday of each month (except July and August) unless otherwise indicated.

**THIS MONTH:** Tuesday, March 15, 2005 – **FREE DOOR PRIZE DRAWING.**

**NEXT MEETING:** Tuesday, April 19, 2005 – **FREE DOOR PRIZE DRAWING.**

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

**Chapter Officers**

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